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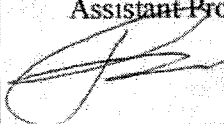

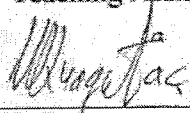





WORK PACKAGE	8
WP Type	8.2

University of Kragujevac

Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja

THE REPORT ON MENTORING THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS OF
BACHELOR ACADEMIC STUDIES
FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2015 TO 1ST JULY 2016

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July 2016

Vrnjačka Banja

Project task:

8.2. Implement employer/professional body/student support committees to help sustain student recruitment

Description of project task:

In order to support students in solving their problems and possible concerns and dilemmas encountered during the course of studies, the 1st year students of undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjacka Banja, University of Kragujevac, were assigned mentors. During the winter and summer semesters of the academic 2015/2016, in the form of group and/or individual consultations, the students were offered help in solving all and any dilemmas related to improving the success in studying, the quality of academic programs, as well as the quality of teaching and working conditions. The Report contains information on all the activities undertaken during the mentoring work with the students. The final goal of the undertaken activities was the improvement of study conditions at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjacka Banja, University of Kragujevac.

Description of outcomes:

This report is the result of the joint work of the teaching staff at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja, University of Kragujevac.

In the academic 2015/16, the fifth generation of undergraduate students was enrolled at the study programme Hotel Management and Tourism at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjacka Banja, University of Kragujevac. This has been the first time to organise the mentoring.../mentorship with the university freshmen organised within the TEMPUS Project "Modernization and Harmonization of Tourism Study Programs in Serbia". The mentorship implied the work with students divided into smaller groups. The aim of the mentorship was to improve the studying conditions and raise motivation among first year students through offering support in overcoming the current issues and doubts that students may encounter during the course of studies. The activities undertaken by mentors have had more a positive influence on studying conditions, students' degree of satisfaction concerning the process of studying as well as studying outcomes.

1. Descriptive information concerning the undertaken activities

1.1. Cooperation with students and the given support

In the period 01.10.2015 - 01.07. 2016, during the academic year 2015/16, the following teaching staff have been assigned as mentors of the 1st year undergraduate students:

- Nebojša Pavlović, Associate Professor (in charge of the group of students with registry numbers 01/2015 to 28/2015 and 71/2014),
- Aleksandra Mitrović, Ph.D. (in charge of the group of students with registry numbers 29/2015 to 56/2015),
- Vladimir Kraguljac, B.Sc. (in charge of the group of students with registry numbers 57/2015 to 84/2015)
- Miljan Leković, M.Sc. (in charge of the group of students with registry numbers 85/2015 to 112/2015).

The mentors have been responsible for offering support in dealing with the current issues and/or doubts, monitoring problems and dilemmas faced by the students, undertaking necessary actions, observing the improvement in the students performance and the rate of passing exams, the teaching process, studying conditions and the level of students' satisfaction. Both group and individual sessions have been organised on regular basis.

The overall number of the group consultations was 18. In the course of consultations, the following issues were particularly emphasised:

- the insufficient number of the examination terms,
- short period of time given between colloquial tests and examinations,
- the necessity for organising additional exercises concerning one summer term course,
- different teaching staff attitudes towards absence, i.e. treatment of non-attendance as justified and non-justified. The following were named as the reasons of absence: health

problems, absence due to attending the International Congress of Hospitality and Tourism Students (Turizmijada), attending tourism fairs, blood donation, taking part in promotion activities of the Faculty and other individual reasons.

The following are the proposed solutions:

- the number of the examination terms was increased from 5 to 8,
- the first two terms, the application for the exams was administered free of charge,
- the time interval between colloquial tests and examinations was increased,
- additional number of exercise classes was organised during the summer term 2015/16,
- the criteria concerning absence justification were harmonised (the maximum number of non-justified absence was defined and the students were given the possibility to justify those with the doctor's excuse or the signature of Vice Dean for Students' Affairs concerning absence due to attending Turizmijada, tourism fairs, blood donation, promotional activities and other personal reasons).

Individual consultations were organised once a week, and the students were informed about the possibility to contact mentors regardless set terms, as well as by e-mail. The individual consultations brought about the following individual doubts and problems:

- financial difficulties in paying the scholarship by self-supporting students caused by difficult financial situation of the families they originate from,
- specific health problems (psychological problems caused by students' homesickness and adapting themselves to a new environment),
- different demands set by students who are employed (excuses for absence, getting teaching material and information important for studying certain courses, etc.),
- adaptation of students whose mother tongue is not Serbian and who are not acquainted with the Cyrillic script.

The previous problems were solved in the following way:

- Students are familiarised with the procedure for asking the disposal of tuition fees, exemption from payment of tuition fees, reducing the amount of tuition fees and the like (to be submitted to the Faculty management and the responsible staff),
- Teaching staff was informed about the specific health problems and employment of individual students by the Dean for Academic Affairs, and was asked for understanding in justifying absences,
- the updated information on the courses was made available to the employed students at the Faculty site and the Faculty bookstore, as well as through consultations with the teachers and assistants,
- the foreign students were provided teaching and examination material in Latin script, with special understanding and explanation of specific terms given by teachers and assistants.

In addition to the above stated solutions for group and individual problems of students, the following activities were realized in order to improve the success and progression of studying, teaching process and studying conditions in the future, to increase the degree of student satisfaction and the like:

- the teaching material was improved by publishing new textbooks, monographs, manuals and scripts,
- the quality of consultations was increased which aimed at achieving better understanding of the subject matter by the students,
- seven guest lectures were given by expert speakers in the field of tourism and hospitality on the following topics:
 - ✓ Women in Entrepreneurship,
 - ✓ Touristic offer of Merkur in the development of Vrnjacka Banja tourism,
 - ✓ Sustainable Tourism Development and Food Safety,
 - ✓ Current problems in rural tourism,
 - ✓ What a hospitality student needs to know before finishing the college?,
 - ✓ Festival of classical music Vrnjci, and
 - ✓ The importance of museums for the development of modern tourism with a case study of the Valjevo National Museum.
- a workshop entitled *Branding tourism potentials of Serbia* was organized which eminent speakers from the field took part in,
- numerous proposals set by the students in the conducted survey were adopted,
- the technical equipment used in teaching was modernized, e.g. sound system, interactive whiteboard, etc.

All these activities were carried out within the framework of the TEMPUS project.

2. Quantitative indicators

In 2015/2016, 114 students enrolled the first year of undergraduate studies at the study program Hotel Management and Tourism, out of which 81 female and 33 male (Table 1). Their overall average mark in secondary school was 4.17 (max. 5.00), while the total average number of points awarded for the entrance exam was 51.73 (max. 60) (Table 2).

Table 1: Number of students and their sex structure

Sex	No. of Students
Female	81
Male	33
Overall	114

Table 2: The average mark in secondary school and the average number of points at the entrance test

Sex	Secondary school mark (max. 5,00)	Entrance exam points (max. 60,00)
Female	4,24	51,60
Male	4,01	52,04
Overall	4,17	51,73

Mentors were available for group consultations in the predefined terms, and for individual consultations, in terms previously agreed with an individual student. The total number of held consultations was 18 for group consultations and 86 for individual consultations (Table 3). In addition, students were able to contact their mentors by e-mail. Students reacted very positively to the introduction of this type of work.

Table 3: The number of group and individual consultations

Type of consultations	Number of consultations			
	Aleksandra Stanković	Nebojša Pavlović	Miljan Leković	Vladimir Kraguljac
Group	5	6	5	2
Individual	30	25	20	11



At the end of the winter and summer semesters, the regular annual survey among all students of the Faculty was carried out. The results of the survey on the degree of satisfaction of the first year undergraduate students are shown in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4: The results of the survey on the degree of satisfaction – winter term (2015/2016)

Question	Mark (1-5)
The organisation of the Instruction	4,53
The content of the subject matter	4,08
Students' involvement during instruction	3,98
Examination	4,27
Average	4,21

Table 5: The results of the survey on the degree of satisfaction – summer term (2015/2016)

Question	Mark (1-5)
The organisation of the Instruction	4,57
The content of the subject matter	4,21
Students' involvement during instruction	4,21
Examination	4,23
Average	4,31

Tables 6 and 7 provide an overview of the results of the exams taken in January and June examination periods. Both cases recorded good exam results: the passing rate in January and June examination periods was 82% and 84%, respectively.

Table 6: The results of the taken exams – January examination period

Applied	Gave up	Not passed	Passed	Average mark
393	24%	18%	82%	7,67

Table 7: The results of the taken exams – June examination period

Applied	Gave up	Not passed	Passed	Average mark
396	17%	16%	84%	8,32

During 2015/2016, 5 students dropped out, 2 of which enrolled to the first year of undergraduate studies in the same academic year (Table 8). The most common reasons for dropping out were financial inability of parents to support school fees, as well as various problems of a personal nature.

Table 8: The number of drop-outs

Sex	Number of students	
	enrolled in the same year	all
Female	0	1
Male	2	2
Overall	2	3

3. The comparative analysis with the students of the previous generation of undergraduate studies 2014/2015

A comparative analysis of the results of the 2015/2016 and 2014/2015 January and June examination periods testifies a positive impact of mentoring on improving the studying success and the passing rate at the exams (Tables 9 and 10). Data from Table 9 show that, in January examination periods, the students enrolled in 2015/2016 achieved higher passing rate in exams (82%) compared to the previous generation of students enrolled in 2014/2015 (80%). Higher passing rate in exams was achieved with a slightly lower average grade, which can be attributed to an increased amount and scope of the teaching material, enriched with current issues and newly developed materials with the aim of improving the quality of the teaching process. Table 10 data show that in the June examination periods, the students enrolled in 2015/2016 compared to the 2014/2015 generation achieved not only significantly higher exam results (84% and 76%, respectively), but a higher average grade (8.32 and 7.57, respectively), as well.

Table 9: Comparative analysis of the examination results – January examination period

Year	Applied	Gave up	Not passed	Passed	Average mark
2014/2015	385	18%	20%	80%	8,11
2015/2016	393	24%	18%	82%	7,67

Table 10: Comparative analysis of the examination results – June examination period

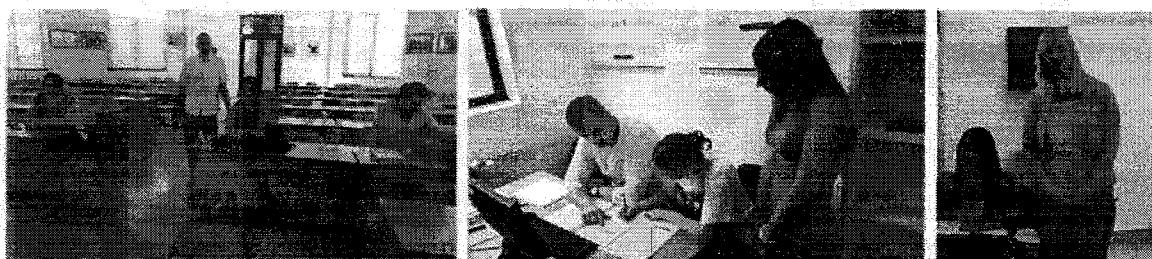
Year	Applied	Gave up	Not passed	Passed	Average mark
2014/2015	362	23%	24%	76%	7,57
2015/2016	396	17%	16%	84%	8,32

A particularly good indicator of the degree of the students satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the studying conditions and the quality of teaching and pedagogical work of teaching staff is the percentage of students who dropped out (Table 11). Out of the 101 students enrolled in 2014/2015, 5 students dropped out, which makes 4.95%. On the other hand, the percentage of students who dropped out in 2015/2016 is much smaller and amounts to 1.79%. This indicates a higher degree of satisfaction of the students enrolled in 2015/2016, which can also be attributed to successful mentoring.

Table 11: Comparative analysis of the number of drop-outs

Sex	Number of students			
	2015/2016		2014/2015	
	Enrolled for the 1 st time	All	Enrolled for the 1 st time	All
Female	0	1	4	9
Male	2	2	1	2
Overall	2	3	5	11

The realized activities clearly testify about the contribution of the mentoring to solving the students' current problems, the quality of studies and the acquired level of knowledge. Mentors especially emphasized the students' satisfaction with the provided support in facilitating and enhancing the process of studying, which consequently affected their achievements. Students suggested that mentoring becomes mandatory component of teaching and pedagogical work of the teaching staff at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjaska Banja.



Attached is the decision of the Teaching and Scientific Council of the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjaska Banja on the appointment of mentors for the first year undergraduate students.

На основу члана 120. Статута Факултета за хотелијерство и туризам у Врњачкој Бањи (пречишћен текст, бр. 303 од 17.03.2015.г.), Наставно – научно веће Факултета за хотелијерство и туризам у Врњачкој Бањи, на седници одржаној дана 24.11.2015. године, донело је

ОДЛУКУ


о именовану ментора за студенте прве године основних академских студија

I Овом Одлуком именују се ментори студената прве године основних академских студија и то:

1. др Небојина Павловић, доцент за ужу научну област Менаџмент и пословање,
2. Александра Митровић, асистент за ужу научну област Рачуноводство и финансије,
3. Миљан Лековић, асистент за ужу научну област Општа економија,
4. Владимир Крагуљац, асистент за ужу научну област Информатика.

II Задатак ментора је да прати рад студената током студирања основних академских студија.

НАСТАВНО - НАУЧНО ВЕЋЕ
ФАКУЛТЕТ ЗА ХОТЕЛИЈЕРСТВО И ТУРИЗАМ У ВРЊАЧКОЈ БАЊИ
Број 1520 дана 24.11.2015. год.

ПРЕДСЕДНИК
НАСТАВНО-НАУЧНОГ ВЕЋА

проф. др Драгана Гњатовић