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**“Change in Classroom: Promoting Innovative Teaching & Learning to
Enhance Student Learning Experience in Eastern Partnership Countries”,
PRINTeL**

Appendix 1

Approved by

The Decision N 7/4

21 February 2019

of YSU Academic Council

Chairperson of YSU Academic Council

A. H. Simonyan

«21» February 2019

**OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR 2019-2021
OF TEACHING STAFF DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF
YEREVAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

YEREVAN 2019

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1. Objectives

Mission:

The basic activity of Teaching Staff Development Department of YSU is aimed at promoting continuous development of YSU teaching staff members' professional, pedagogical and personal qualities, integration of contemporary teaching methods and technologies and dissemination of best experience.

Vision:

The Teaching Staff Development Department of YSU seeks to become a leading centre of innovative teaching technologies that develops professional and pedagogical skills and personal qualities of the academic staff through realization of teacher training programmes as well as teaching and learning experience exchange.

2. General Information

The system of Yerevan State University (hereinafter YSU) teaching staff professional development has been implemented since 1968, in the status of the Faculty of Teachers' Professional Development. The teachers' training was realized in accordance with specialties, initially for about 500 hours and in the last decade for 72-100 hours. At the end of the programme trainees defended a graduation paper and received diploma or certificate.

In 2002 the faculty was restructured into the Teaching Staff Development Department (hereinafter Department). On June 29, 2007 the concept of the Teaching Staff Development Department was approved by the Academic Council. The concept was directed at promoting continuous education in YSU and within the system of postgraduate additional education it viewed teachers' professional development as a major programme.

Within the last decade the YSU teaching staff professional development programme has been worked out in a new way thus coming into line with the regulations of the strategic development programmes of the University. Since 2011 the new "Educational-scientific programme for YSU teaching staff professional development based on credit system" has been elaborated. It is a 2-stage programme the separate cycles of which (2011-2016 and 2016-2021) are aimed at the development of YSU teaching staff potential by promoting continuous improvement of its pedagogical-psychological and professional skills.

The peculiarities of YSU teaching staff development programme are:

1. educational, research & learning blocks with obligatory and voluntary components;
2. the measurement of workload in ECTS credits;
3. the total workload – 30 credits, and the duration – 5 years;
4. final certification of trainees.

For the purpose of providing effective management of the training programme, by order of YSU Rector a corresponding committee under the vice-rector's chairmanship was created and corresponding responsible persons of educational subdivisions were appointed. As a result of periodically undertaken monitoring processes necessary changes and additions are being made in the programme. The Teaching Staff Development Department has a corresponding webpage (extension.ysu.am).

The 10-year target-oriented training programme is presently in progress. Nevertheless, several results can already be concluded:

1. about 850 lecturers/teaching staff members have developed their professional and pedagogical skills;
2. the cooperation as well as the exchange of best teaching experience between the lecturers of different educational subdivisions has been enlarged.

As a result of the process monitoring a number of key issues have been brought up:

1. the low level of lecturers' motivation for training;
2. unsatisfactory skills of some trainers;
3. incorrect definition of the training courses outcomes and associated with it the inconsistency of assessment methods;
4. the inaccurate distinction between beginner and experienced teaching staffs' training needs;
5. unsatisfactory application of innovative educational technologies.

The mentioned key issues were also included in YSU Strategic Development Programme for 2016-2021, where for finding solution to them there were envisaged 2 main measures (issue 1.2):

1. To create a teaching and learning support centre for the purpose of topicalisation and development of teaching staff's pedagogical abilities and skills.

2. To develop the in-house institutional mechanisms of encouragement and dissemination of best pedagogical experience, to contribute to the integration of modern teaching and learning methods and technologies.

YSU Teaching Staff Development Department's operational plan for 2019-2021 is aimed at ensuring comprehensive solution to the mentioned key issues.

3. The Main Directions in the Activity of Teaching Staff Development Department

The most important direction in the activity of the Department is the realization of training courses for beginner and experienced teaching staffs, as well as the implementation of other initiatives aimed at the integration and dissemination of modern teaching and learning methods and technologies in the University. These include:

- separate teacher training programmes and courses;
- pedagogical consulting;
- organization of scientific conferences, workshops and seminars directed at the dissemination of innovative teaching methods;
- the realization of the initiatives supporting the integration, exchange and dissemination of best modern teaching experience;
- completion of experimental and research projects aimed at the development of teachers' pedagogical, methodological and technological skills;
- publication of various materials (manuals, guidelines, etc.) directed at the instruction and dissemination of modern teaching and learning methods.

3.1. Separate Teacher Training Programmes and Courses

As result of 7,5 years' period of the realization of the teaching staff professional development programme functioning in YSU since 2011, two drawbacks have been indicated (Appendix 1):

- the unsatisfactory level of application of innovative educational technologies;
- unsatisfactory availability of courses directed at the formation of teachers' modern pedagogical-methodological skills.

For the purpose of elimination of the above-mentioned drawbacks as well as the updating of the programme it is suggested to make the following changes in several educational blocks of the undergoing teacher training programme:

3.1.1. To implement "Innovative methods of teaching" module (appendix 2, module 1.3) in the **General training block** of the undergoing programme. The module includes the following 5 courses with 1 credit workload (10 hours of classroom + 20 hours of independent study):

1. Collaborative active learning in the classroom;
2. Active learning and ICT-enhanced teaching: m-learning and gamification;
3. Video as a teaching tool;
4. Active learning in the flipped classroom;
5. Hybrid/blended teaching and learning.

3.1.2. To include "Online learning technologies" component of the 4th educational block ("**General voluntary courses**") in module 1.2 of the 1st educational block.

3.1.3. To include a new component, namely "Teaching in foreign leading universities" (for example "Participation in the ERASMUS+ Staff Training Mobility Programme" (for each course (min. 10 hours) 1 credit) in the 5th education block.

- 3.1.4. To organize the training of the teachers not yet included in the programme in accordance with the revised educational block of the programme since 2019-2020 academic year, by differentiating the programme for beginner and experienced teachers.
- 3.1.5. The following components of the programme (Appendix 2) with 6 credits general workload are obligatory for beginner teachers:
 - a) From ICT voluntary courses – 1 course (module 1.2):
Online teaching technologies (3 credits).
 - b) From “Innovative methods of teaching” 1.3 module – 2 courses:
Active learning in the flipped classroom (1.3.4),
Hybrid/blended teaching and learning (1.3.5).
 - c) From “Pedagogical-psychological methods” educational block:
Teaching, learning and assessment basics (1 credit).
- 3.1.5.1. To take corresponding measures directed at including the obligatory educational components for beginner teachers of paragraph 3.1.5. in “Scientific and educational programme for researchers preparation at YSU” educational block as an obligatory module (since 2019/2020 academic year).
- 3.1.6. For experienced teachers 2 courses from “Innovative teaching methods” are voluntary for 2019-2020 and in the new training programme for 2021-2026 – they are obligatory.
- 3.1.7. To elaborate feedback mechanisms (surveys, focus-groups, etc.) as well as to carry out annual monitoring for the purpose of continuous improvement of training courses.
- 3.1.8. In 2019 to retrain at least 200 teachers in accordance with the revised teaching staff professional development programme.

3.2. Pedagogical Consulting

The promotion of cooperation and exchange of knowledge, skills and best teaching experience within teaching staff, and the creation of corresponding communication environment are among the main objectives of the Department. The latter objectives are to be carried out with the help of the institute of consultants through defining the following actions:

- 3.2.1. To form the staff of consultants from trainers and teachers having relatively active participation in the programme.
- 3.2.2. For the purpose of providing consultants with financial reward, to add a corresponding rate (0,25) to their teaching workload.
- 3.2.3. To determine the following consultation topics:
 - the arrangement of educational specification/programme;
 - formulation of educational outcomes;
 - the arrangement of the calendar plan (work programme) for the course;
 - the application of innovative forms of teaching and learning (active, group-based, problem-based, etc.);
 - the application of teaching and learning management electronic systems;
 - development of pedagogical-psychological skills;
 - consultation on the basis of the overview of lesson observations and student surveys.
- 3.2.4. To bring up consultation needs of teachers by realizing corresponding activities:
 - a) meetings at educational subdivisions;

- b) reception of teachers' applications for consultation in electronic version on the basis of a worked out form;
- c) implementation of surveys among teachers, comparison of the surveys and submissions;
- d) consultation within limits of hours.

3.2.5. To create a catalogue of informative-methodological and education resources.

3.3. Scientific Conferences, Workshops and Seminars

This direction of the Department calls for the solution of the following issues:

- the exchange and dissemination of the best teaching experience, introduction of educational models of excellence;
- the discussion of the issues relating to innovative teaching and learning methods;
- the dissemination of various results of different development projects;
- popularization of various pedagogical consultation issues.

For the purpose of solving the above mentioned problems the following operations should be realized:

3.3.1. To organize annual national conference (scientific conference) on innovation and dissemination of best teaching experience, to publish the results in a separate handbook. To organize the scientific conferences since 2020.

3.3.2. To organize in-house institutional workshops and seminars aimed at the formation and development of the skills of teaching and learning with innovative methods. To organize workshops or seminars at

least once a semester since 2019 academic year after the completion of target trainings at YSU.

3.3.3. To reward the participants of the workshops and seminars (credits granting, letters of appreciation or other forms of award).

3.3.4. To summarize and publish the results of the events on the webpage of the Department.

3.4. Dissemination and Reward of the Best Experience

In the process of teaching and learning the complete application of innovative educational technologies necessitates the creation of corresponding educational environment and communication culture at YSU. The following activities serve for this purpose:

3.4.1. **To create a virtual academy of teaching and learning.** This will enable all the interested groups to communicate online on teaching and learning issues. The working policy of the virtual portal will be developed by the end of 2019, and it will become operational in 2020.

3.4.2. **To create teachers' non-formal communities.** The teachers enrolled in the programme will create at least 5 professional communities in accordance with the specific forms and methods of teaching and learning:

1. Collaborative active learning in the classroom;

2. Active learning and ICT-enhanced teaching: m-learning and gamification;
3. Video as a teaching tool;
4. Active learning in the flipped classroom;
5. Hybrid/blended teaching and learning.

Each community will have its moderator who will guide the discussion of the portal.

3.4.3. To organize workshops and seminars on innovative technology-enhanced teaching key issues.

3.4.4. To identify of the following means of rewards for innovative teaching:

- To identify a subsidy for teaching in innovative methods in accordance with the statute on “Accounting and Provision of Subsidy of YSU Lecturers for the Performance of Several Types of Work”.
- To conduct a “Best teacher-innovator” annual competition in accordance with the differentiated nominations.

3.5. Development Programmes

To include within the frame of the activity of the Department the registration and realization of development projects directed at teachers' professional development, in particular:

3.5.1. To continue and enlarge the engagement in the international programmes, that are aimed at the reinforcement of the capacities of the Department, the development of teachers' professional and pedagogical skills and intergration of innovative methods.

3.5.2. To work out a new project funded by European Commission and aimed at the implementation of lecturers' teaching certificate programmes and the integration of a corresponding framework in YSU.

3.6. Publications and Learning Materials

To work out, publish and disseminate printed and electronic materials:

- a) educational and informational leaflets highlighting the implemented innovative methods;
- b) a manual on teaching in innovative methods (until 2020);
- c) a periodical publication, which will present:
 - materials summarizing the results of seminars and workshops;
 - the most remarkable observations carried out by counsaltants;
 - results of research and experience relating to teaching;
 - the field-related news covered by RA and EU partner universities.

4. Organization and Operation

In the University professional development and training programmes are realized by Teaching Staff Development Department. The Department is managed by the head together with the coordination of Vice-rector on Academic Affairs.

4.1. Structure

The Department has two units: teachers' professional development unit and vocational training unit.

The first unit realizes the programme of teachers' professional development. The activities directed at the realization of the programme are coordinated by a corresponding committee, the meetings of which are summoned twice a year. Within the committee there are included the Director of Quality Assurance Centre (hereinafter QAC), the head of the Department, the head of the Unit and councilors (teacher-experts) under the chairpersonship of YSU Vice-Rector on Academic Affairs. The committee plans and coordinates the management and strategic development activities.

The realization of the activities of the programme is reserved to the Department:

- the Department organizes and realizes daily activities and provides a link between programme participants;
- the councilors with the support of QAC work out the contents and methodology of the courses.

The infrastructure of the Department includes 3 active learning laboratories and 1 audio- and video studio for recording and production of video-lectures.

4.2. Passports of The Civil Service Position

The functions of the Department as well as the ones of units and the obligations of the workers are defined in accordance with the constitution of the Department and the passports of the civil service position.

1. The head of the Department organizes the work of training programmes and supervises its implementation.
2. The head of the Unit organizes its current activities.
3. The workers of the Unit:
 - 3.1. ensure the realization of courses and technical service;
 - 3.2. receive the applications concerning the training (as well as pedagogical) needs of teachers, provide the availability of information, organize meetings and disseminate results;
 - 3.3. prepare and edit the materials of scientific conferences, workshops, seminars and publications;
 - 3.4. provide the remote control of the programme, arrange the virtual portal, prepare the materials for telecommunication, periodically refresh the website of the Department.
4. The teacher-experts involved in the programme:
 - 4.1. conduct courses;
 - 4.2. provide pedagogical consultation;
 - 4.3. hold discussions at QAC and educational subdivisions;
 - 4.4. conduct scientific conferences, workshops and seminars;
 - 4.5. guide discussion of problems on the virtual portal and undertake preparatory works concerning the publications on innovative and technology-enhanced teaching and learning methods.

4.3. Cooperation

In YSU teachers' training programme the cooperation between all of the participants involved is highly important. In this field the following activities are emphasized:

4.3.1. The Department communicates with YSU educational subdivisions on issues related to the programme and the courses and provides their feedback. For this purpose, the Department actively uses the webpage and printed publications:

- periodically updates the webpage;
- subscribes for the news;
- publishes the main news on YSU portal;
- creates and disseminates leaflets concerning new courses.

4.3.2. Teachers' training needs are identified by means of conducting corresponding surveys and using the information analysis for making amendments in the contents and methods of courses, as well as for teachers selection and training.

4.3.3. The question of the new courses integration is discussed by the committee of the programme.

4.4. Quality Assurance

The Department realizes the functions of quality assurance of delivered separate courses, complete programme and different services:

- 4.4.1. Conformation of the development process and presentation format of the training courses to YSU-adopted standards;
- 4.4.2. Periodical evaluation of courses and training programmes by means of surveys in either online or paper versions;
- 4.4.3. Working out of differentiated questionnaires in accordance with the fields:
 - courses and training programmes;
 - consultation activity;
 - scientific conference, workshop and seminar;
 - the activity of the staff of the Department.

The results of surveys are analyzed and summarized in corresponding reports and their conclusions are used for the purpose of improving different components and processes of the programme.

4.5. Capacity Building

For the purpose of continuous development of the skills and abilities of the Department staff a range of activities is envisaged to be undertaken:

- 4.5.1. To reflect the changes and additions made in the operational plan for 2019-2021 of the Department in the workers' passports of civil service position.

- 4.5.2. To bring up the professional needs of the Department workers and accordingly plan out the process of their professional development and necessary skills building;
- To organize for the Department workers corresponding seminars with the objective of working out operational procedures and documents, as well as discussing programme-related key issues.
 - To plan workers' training activities (course, scientific conference, research programmes, etc.).
 - To cooperate with training institutions of other HEIs of the RA, to get introduced to the similar experience of leading international universities.

4.6. International Relations

The University is largely integrated in international programmes and is a member of a range of international university associations. YSU with the help of the Department of International Cooperation has signed contracts and agreements with more than 200 universities and research institutions of up to 50 countries of the world. Programmes relating to students and teachers exchange, joint diplomas, distance learning, etc. are being realized. YSU actively participates in ERASMUS+ programmes and coordinates the PRINTEL Project.

Within the frame of different international projects, it is envisaged to strengthen contacts with a number of partner universities through signing contracts with the University of Porto, the University of Barcelona, FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences in Graz, Linkopings University and Catholic University of Leuven and to continue the cooperation particularly in the direction of teachers' professional development.

It is also planned to join international organizations and partnerships in the field of teachers' professional and pedagogical skills development.

The Structure of the Educational Block of YSU Teachers' Professional Development Programme (2016-2021)

№	Modules of Educational Block
1.	General training
1.1.	<i>English for academic purposes</i>
1.2.	<i>Information and communication technologies (ICT)</i>
1.2.1.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
2.	Pedagogical-psychological training
2.1.	<i>Teaching, Learning and Assessment Basics</i>
2.2.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
3.	Professional training
3.1.	<i>Contemporary professional issues</i>
3.2.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
4.	General voluntary courses
4.1.	Online learning technologies
5.	Other forms of professional training (training, internship, summer school, etc.)

The Structure of the Revised Educational Block of YSU Teachers' Professional Development Programme (2019-2021)

№	Modules of Educational Block
1.	General training
1.1.	<i>English for academic purposes</i>
1.2.	<i>Information and communication technologies (ICT)</i>
1.2.1.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
1.2.1.1.	<i>Online learning technologies</i>
1.3.	<i>Innovative learning methods</i>
1.3.1.	Collaborative active learning in the classroom
1.3.2.	Active learning and ICT-enhanced teaching: m-learning and gamification
1.3.3.	Video as a teaching tool
1.3.4.	Active learning in the flipped classroom
1.3.5.	Hybrid/blended teaching and learning
2.	Pedagogical-psychological training
2.1.	<i>Teaching, learning and assessment basics</i>
2.2.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
3.	Professional training
3.1.	<i>Contemporary professional issues</i>
3.2.	<i>Voluntary courses</i>
4.	General voluntary courses
5.	Other forms of professional training (training, internship, summer school, teaching in foreign leading universities etc.)