

OPINION

from Assoc. Prof. Kristian Stoianov Hadjiev, PhD, NBU, "Administration and Management Department, HE Area "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional Field 3.7. Administration and Management (Social Management)

on scientific publication for participation in a contest for the occupation of the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Management of Education and Culture), announced in State Gazette No. 83 / 22.10.2019, with candidate Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Atanasova Blagoeva

I. Assessment of Compliance with Minimum National Requirements and NBU Requirements

The contest for associate professor in the professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Management of Education and Culture) was announced in accordance with the established legal order for the needs of the Administration and Management Department, NBU. The composition of the jury of the contest has been appointed by the Rector of NBU, Order No. 3-PK-52 / 20.11.2019.

One candidate is participating in the announced competition - Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Atanasova Blagoeva. The submitted documentation for the competition meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Article 2b) and the Rules for its implementation (Article 1a, paragraph 1), as well as the requirements of the NBU, set out in Appendix 2 of the NRAS at the University.

As it is evident from the self-assessment provided, the candidate Ch. Assist. Dr. Elena Atanasova Blagoeva fully fulfills the minimum national and NBU requirements for occupying the position of Assoc. Professor at NBU. The total score of the candidate (995 p.) in the evaluation indicators exceeds the required minimum (570 p.) significantly (75%).

II. Research (Creative) Activities and Results

1. Evaluation of the monography, the creative activities or other publications corresponding to the volume and completeness of the monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and applied scientific contributions of the author.

The presented monography manuscript by the candidate Ch. Assist. D-r Elena Blagoewa is on the topic „Internationalization of Higher Education in Europe. Development and Management of Internationalization processes in Europe as an Element of HE Management”, Sofia: NBU, 2013, 160 p. (monography, ISBN: 978-954-535-795-4, Reviewers: Prof. A. Todorov, Prof. R. Nikolova, Prof. S. Alexandrova). The emphasis in monography is **on the processes of internationalization as an element of higher education policy and governance in Europe**. The author examines the various elements of the internationalization process by applying a systematic approach to the analysis. The focus is on a theoretical framework that considers internationalization as part of higher education policy; regulations, mechanisms and institutions at supranational level that enable the development of internationalization; the strategic management and organization of activities at supranational, national and institutional levels. The direct findings of the studies allow the author to reasonably argue that a successful university of the future has as its characteristic a high degree of internationalization. **A theoretical model for a preliminary institutional analysis of readiness for internationalization is proposed**, based on Levin's theory of innovation as a factor for change in organizations. On the basis of a comparative analysis of existing practices, the qualitative stages in the development of internationalization, possible strategies and models for administration have been defined. They can be **evaluated as scientific-theoretical contributions**. The monography manuscript is useful for researchers and consultants in developing strategies for the internationalization of higher education at national and institutional levels. **In summary, I accept the claims submitted by the candidate for the scientific contributions of the monography, which are formulated correctly and synthesized, and reflect the results and achievements of her research in the studied issues.**

2. Assessment of contributions in other attached publications made after the appointment of the academic post “Ch. assistant. ” It also includes an evaluation of the requirement for peer review of publications.

Another focus in the research work of the candidate is the implementation of European Union policies in the field of culture and education. The results are presented in Dr. Blageva's book „European Dimension in Education and Culture – Policies and Management”. Sofia: Avanguard_Prima, 2017, 253 p. (ISBN: 978-619-160-752-5, Reviewers: Prof. T. Stoitsova, Assoc. Prof. E. Bancheva). The following results of the author's research may be evaluated as **contributions of an applied nature**: the emerging trends from the analysis of the most important strategic documents for education and cultural policies over the years; the analyzed legal regulation regarding the integration of cultural aspects into other policies; the summarized relevant information on education programs, initiatives and instruments at all levels, direct and indirect support for cultural cooperation and cultural aspects, cooperation in both areas with third countries, which can serve as a practical guidance in project preparation and cultural / educational initiatives.

For her participation in the contest for “Associate Professor”, Ch. Assist. Dr. Blageva has presented also the following publications: articles and scientific reports, published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information – 2; articles and scientific reports, published in non-refereed scientific peer-reviewed journals or in peer-reviewed collective volumes – 13; a published university textbook or textbook used in the school network – 1. These publications do not repeat ones presented for obtaining PhD degree. A large part of the publications of Ch. Assist. Dr. Elena Blageva has been cited in other researchers' papers, which is a certificate of positive acceptance of the theses and the results of her research.

All of the candidate's publications are in thematic areas of the announced competition - Management of Education (with a focus on higher education) and culture. Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Blageva demonstrates good knowledge and skills in interpreting the theoretical formulations in the areas studied.

An overview of the scientific works and publications of the Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Blageva allows to evaluate highly their scientific content and their usefulness in practice in terms of the achieved results.

3. Citation from other authors

Compared to the number of publications, the citation presented by the candidate in the competition are even more impressive. According to this indicator, the candidate for Associate

Professor earns 70 points, exceeding the required number, which is 50 points.

4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice.

Ch. Assist. Dr. Elena Blagoeva has participated in a range of international and national projects under Programs PHARE, Erasmus, Tempus, Ideas, OP SEIG, OP HRD. She has been an author and manager of the Jean Monnet project “The EU policy in education and culture” in the period 2010-2013 (176673-LLP-1-2010-1-BG-AJM-MO). The results of her work on the projects show that the candidate is an established researcher with contributions to national and international development of knowledge and practice in the field of educational and cultural management.

My overall assessment of the research activities of Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Blagoeva is positive. The candidate is credible in her scientific field, and the results of her research work meet university standards. Her active involvement in national and international projects and, in some cases, their leadership, the preparation of analyzes and opinions on the implementation of her research tasks, as well as her publications in authoritative journals show that the candidate is an established researcher with contributions to the development of knowledge and application in the management of education (in particular higher education) and culture.

III. Teaching Activities

Dr. Elena Blagoeva is a lecturer in Bachelor and Master degree programs at NBU. She teaches courses named „Management Ethics“, „EU Policies in Education and Culture“, „Intercultural Competences for work in International Teams“, „Comitology“, „Intercultural Dimensions in Management“, „Project Management“, „EU Policies“, etc. She teaches courses in English in the programs “ Engineering of digital services ” and „Digital Humanity”: “Globalization and Sovereignty” and “Project Management”. The course „International Funding for Research and Development in Public Administration ” is included in the PhD programe “Organization and Management of the Non-production Sphere (Public Administration)”.

The candidate also actively participated in the development of joint international bachelor's and master's programs.

Dr. Blagoeva has published one textbook for students - EU Policies in Education and Culture, Sofia: NBU, 2012. - 207 p., ISBN: 978-954-535-716-9. The fulfillment of requirements

for publication of learning materials in the teaching modul “Moodle НБУ” (in accordance with the “Ordinance on the Employment of Full-time Teachers”) for the period of the appraisal is over 100%.

For the eperiod of appraisal Dr. Blagoeva has been a scientific supervisor of 30 students, has prepared 36 scientific reviews and has participated in 126 examination committees (Resource: NBU Intranet System 2012-2019).

Her teaching activity is appreciated by the students. The average grade of students for the satisfaction with the courses of Dr. Elena Blagoeva is 4.52 out of 5 (according to the Certificate from the Center for Quality and Evaluation).

For improving and expanding her teaching skills and knowledge, Ch. Assist. Dr. Elena Blagoeva is actively involved in the training program for the teaching and administrative staff of NBU. She also has been a trainer in various initiatives of the Training Resources Center and the International Relations Office at NBU. In 2014 at the invitation of the College of Education, Porto and the Second Chance Portuguese Association of Schools, she was a lecturer in the frame of the Forum „Creative Methods in Informal Education”.

All this allows me to evaluate Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Blagoeva as an established, responsible and correct lecturer. Her teaching activities are strongly related to the subject of the contest, and the accumulated teaching experience is completely satisfactory for the occupation of the academic position "Assistant Professor" in the professional field 3.7. Administration and management (management of education and culture).

IV. Administration and Community Activities

The candidate is a member of several national and international organizations – Bulgarian Association for European Integration; Center LACTEA (member of the Board of LACTEA – Sofia); has been a member of European Association for International Education; Member of the Board of “Concepts-Bulgaria” Foundation.

From administrative point of view Dr. Blagoeva has been engaged in the work of a range of university committees in NBU – Recognition of Foreign Degrees Commission (2010-2012); HESP Stipends Commission (1999 – 2009); Erasmus Mobility Commission (2000 – 2009); Strategic Development Commission (2000 – 2006). She has been a Program Council Director

(2015-2016) and Program Director in the department of Public Administration (2012-2013). She has actively participated in organization of scientific seminars, international conferences and round tables in NBU.

The applicant for the contest conscientiously fulfills her academic obligations (participates in regular meetings of departmental / program councils), observes admission time as a teacher and regularly conducts her academic classes.

The conclusion to be drawn is, that with her administrative and social activity Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Blagoeva contributes to the development of good management practices at NBU, as well as to the improvement of the educational process in various master's and bachelor's programs at the University.

V. Personal Impressions (If any)

I have known Dr. Elena Blagoeva since her appointment at NBU as an assistant. My personal impression is that she is highly responsible, creative, precise and initiative in her work. She enjoys authority among his colleagues and good reputation among students, maintains good contacts with practitioners.

VI. Opinions, Recommendations and Notes regarding the activities and achievements of the candidate

The scientific publications submitted for review by Dr. Elena Blagoeva have been developed on a solid theoretical basis and analysis of a wealth of empirical material. Her findings and practical recommendations are well reasoned. I have no specific critical remarks on the content of the scientific works of Assoc. Dr. Elena Blagoeva.

The following recommendations may be made to her future research and teaching activity:

- to continue expanding the theoretical foundations and scope of her research;
- to continue combining research and teaching work with that of expert and consultant;
- to continue to publish textbooks on the subjects taught by her.

ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ

Based on the overall research, teaching work and teaching activities of Assoc. Dr. Elena Blagoeva, the significant scientific contributions received and the response they have found in the scientific literature, I consider that she meets the requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor (Docent) in accordance with the Law on Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its implementation, as well as the requirements of the NBU set out in Appendix 2 of the NBU Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff.

With complete conviction and responsibility I propose **the candidate Chief Assist. Dr. Elena Atanasova Blagoeva to be elected to the post of Associate Professor in the professional area 3.7 Administration and Management (Management in Education and Culture) at NBU.**

Date:.....

Signature: