



International Bulletin

Issue 7, April 2020

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Faculty of Philosophy during COVID 19

Since 11th of March 2020, the Faculty of Philosophy has stopped the teaching and research activities within its premises. Following the instructions of the Ministry of Science and Education and the University, teaching activities have continued online. Distance learning methods were introduced on 16 March 2020 and their implementation continues until further notice.

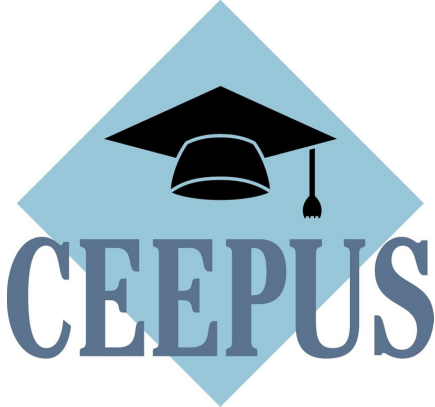
Online teaching has continued through online platforms for distance learning, including: Microsoft teams, ZOOM, although approaches and methods vary across the different Institutes/Departments. Technical support teams have been formed, both for the students and staff to assist them in this process.

According to the University Rulebook adopted in relation to teaching activities during COVID-19, as well as the Faculty Decesion regarding teaching and other activities during COVID-19, the exam examination session has been postponed until further notice. During the COVID-19 measures, students can submit written assigments and participate in online classes, which can lead towards 30% of their overall grade.

All research project activities have been adapted to continue through online work and consultations.

Preparations for the Faculty Jubilee conference continue as planned, and we remain optimistic to be able to host more than 150 participants in September 2020.

The Faculty remains open and operational with appropriate measures to protect the health of the community.



Faculty of Philosophy joins two new CEEPUS networks from 2020-2021

At the beginning of April 2020, the central CEEPUS office sent out the results for the committed CEEPUS networks in the academic year 2020-2021. Faculty of Philosophy was accepted as a partner University in two CEEPUS networks: CIII-AT-0502-11-2021 - Bioethics and CIII-SK-1315-03-2021 - Shared History of Central Europe. Involvement in these two networks will broaden the Faculty international cooperation and enrich student and staff mobility possibilities.

CEEPUS network 'Bioethics' is coordinated by the University of Vienna, Catholic Theological Faculty, Department for Moral Theology. It involves 21 partner universities from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Albania. Apart from regular and short-term mobilities, this Network offers summer or spring schools for MA and Ph.D students. A number of partners within this network are also eager to work on the joint PhD programme, which will be discussed in the upcoming meeting of coordinators in Olomouc (Oct 2020). Academic coordinator within this Network from the Faculty of Philosophy, Skopje is prof. dr. Dejan Donev, from the Institute of Philosophy.

CEEPUS network 'Shared History of Central Europe' is coordinated by the Matej Bel University Banská Bystrica, Faculty of Arts, from Slovakia. It involves 13 partner universities from Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro and North Macedonia. This network intends to strengthen the transnational cooperation in the field of research and sharing knowledge of joint history of Central European and Balkan countries, which has historically been overlapping one another's development throughout centuries. Academic coordinator within this Network from the Faculty of Philosophy, Skopje is assoc. prof. dr. Nikola Minov, from the Institute of History.

Next CEEPUS application deadline for student and staff mobility in the winter term is 15 of June 2020.

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY PARTICIPATION IN CEEPUS NETWORKS IN 2020-21

CIII-MK-1409-02-2021: Central European Social Policy and Social Work Network (CESPASWON)

CIII-SI-0113-14-2021: ARHEOPED

CIII-SI-0906-06-2021: Pedagogy and Andragogy in Central Europe (PACE)

CIII-HR-1107-05-2021: Philosophy and Interdisciplinarity

CIII-AT-0502-11-2021: Bioethics

CIII-SK-1315-03-2021: Shared History of Central Europe

- On March 11 2020, KU Leuven started with a shift towards online education. The process was accelerated a week later, when very strict measures were taken by the Belgian government with regard to social distancing. Then, on March 20, it was decided in consultation with the Rectors of the Flemish universities, to continue online education until the end of this semester. Adjusting to this 'completely digital' didactic approach is for most lecturers quite challenging, but both at the central level and at the faculty level many efforts are made to support the colleagues with limited or no experience with online teaching. First of all, lecturers are invited to make full use of 'Toledo', the digital teaching environment of KU Leuven. This platform had mainly been used in the past for communicating with the students and providing them with course content online, but now they discover that the platform also allowed for forum discussions, the organization of online tests and the posting of virtual assignments. Many lecturers find their way to the auditoria that are specially equipped for recording or videoconferencing. Skype for business is also promoted for videoconferencing, especially when two-way communicating is necessary and lecturers are shown how they can use their own pc to make a class recording or screencast (a.o. by using Kaltura Capture). However, other educational forms are less easy to be replaced by a digital version like traineeships. Also the writing of papers, Bachelor's papers and Master's dissertations is hindered by the closure of the libraries, although many sources are accessible online and there is an active 'scan-on-demand' unit operating. Still, depending on how long this situation continues, there is concern that certain learning goals will not be met or that the envisaged research results will not be reached. At the moment, the organization of the June exam period has started, which is of course for several reasons, a tremendous challenge.
- Since mid-March all labs have been closed (except the ones involved in Covid-19-research) to ensure the safety of all staff members. New on-site research activities may not take place. Working from home has become the standard way of living these weeks. Research that is not depended on big scientific infrastructure in the Faculty of Arts can continue from home, but this too is heavily impacted by the closure of the libraries, in as far as the research is based on primary or secondary sources that are not available online.
- The collaboration between UKIM (Faculty of Philosophy) and KU Leuven in the framework of the H2020 RETOPEA continues. However, a mid-term meeting scheduled for 31 March – 2 April in Granada had to be cancelled and postponed to September 2020. Several collaborators of the project were about to present their findings at the European Social Science History Conference in Leiden (The Netherlands), but that too was cancelled and postponed. Also some activities involving the participation of local schools in North Macedonia have to be rescheduled. However, though online media the research and coordination activities continue, and we are hopeful that we will be able to catch up at a later stage.

Research and Teaching during COVID-19 at Aveiro University, Portugal

- The University of Aveiro, Portugal closed all face-to face activities on 12 March, when there were 78 confirmed covid-19 infections in the country. This was made as a preventive measure, even before all schools and universities were officially closed in the country. Since then, all teaching and learning activities are held online, mainly by using Moodle and Zoom. This was a radical change since many professors were not used to resort to e-learning. To help in this process, the university is offering online courses to professors in order to prepared them to conduct e-learning activities. Those courses include both the use of online tools and the adaptation of teaching methodologies. The study regulations and the academic calendar have been adapted to allow all activities to be performed online.
- All work travelling and all face-to-face events and meetings were suspended the 12 of March. Faculty, research fellows and staff carry on working remotely so, despite the natural limitations, project activities are maintained. Project meetings are normally held by video conference. Public events have typically been postponed or canceled. With some exceptions (e.g. biology and health), the activities that require the access to specific laboratories have also been postponed.
- I am currently involved in the FAST ERASMUS + KA2 project (FASTing Accessible Study Technologies (FAST): Accessible Learning Management System in Humanities and Social Sciences), led by Prof. Aleksandra Karovska Ristovska, from the Faculty of Philosophy - UKIM, in Skopje. The main objective of the project is to create a generic model of an accessible learning management system for use in the humanities and social sciences. It is, therefore, perfectly aligned with the challenges of reducing face-to-face interaction imposed by the current Covid-19 crisis.

Prof. Dr. Gonalo Paiva Dias
ESTGA/GOVCOPP
Universidade de Aveiro



Research and Teaching during COVID-19 at University of Rome Tor Vergata

After the kickoff meeting in Skopje for the European ERASMUS+ project AD HOC coordinated by prof. Viktor Lilcik, prof. Michele Angelaccio coming back to Rome has adapted all of his main activities to smart working and smart learning. In particular, he has completed the H2020 European submission proposal CUSTOM for Cultural Tourism, in cooperation with the team from the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje including prof. Viktor Lilchik, prof. Elizabeth Dimitrova and assoc. prof. Irena Teodora Vesevska from the Institute of Art History & Archaeology. The process has been actively managed in less than a month by organizing a digital submission process for the H2020 Call.

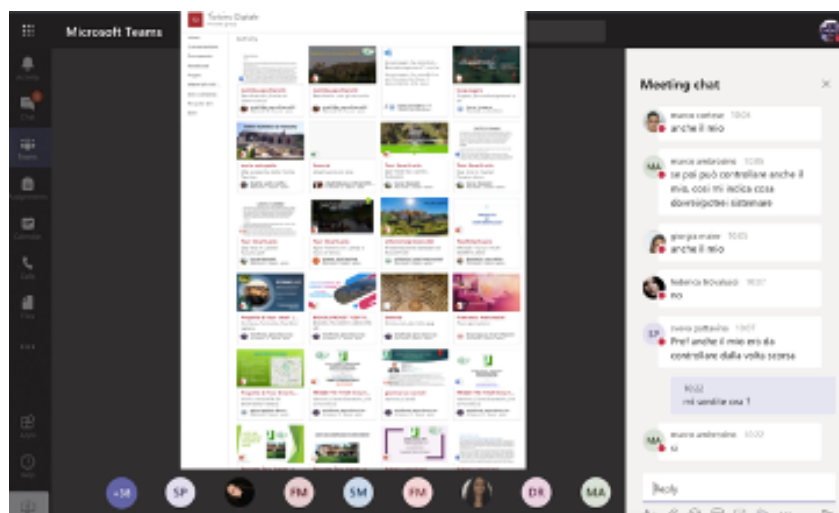
Prof. Angelaccio is a computer scientist active in several fields of Digital Tourism and Smart Cities. In the last year he has worked in the field of e-learning by proposing new agile learning methods already applied in several cases at University of Rome Tor Vergata in which students, teachers and stakeholders from enterprises cooperate in a unique framework by following agile development strategies used in digital software design.



Assoc. Prof. Karovska, Prof. Angelaccio, Prof. Lilcik during AD-HOC Kick off meetig in Skopje, February 2020



Learning Working Group for Digital Tourism Course at Tor Vergata Campus by Prof. Michele Angelaccio (Agile learning) before 2020



Agile Learning+ Smart Learning after 2020

Currently, through smart learning way by use of Teams Virtual classroom, more than 80 students from Tor Vergata University are agile developing digital tourism around Rome (Lazio region), yielding a final joint digital tourism project composed of more than 80 places of different interest from cultural and naturalistic point of view.

- My name is Hanna and I am a student of Balkan Studies at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań in Poland. My studies were one of the most important reasons why I have chosen to come to Skopje for an Erasmus + exchange. I wanted to improve my language skills and also get to know Macedonian culture a little bit better. When I first arrived in Skopje, everything seemed a bit chaotic, mostly because of the formalities, connected with visa, which I still had to finish upon my arrival. I also had quite a challenging time creating my timetable at the University, however the staff at the Dean's office at the faculty turned out to be really friendly and helpful. Once I was done with all of the formalities, the actual adventure started. I decided to try to take part in courses which were taught in Macedonian as I found it the best way to improve my language skills. I attended classes like: Serbian literature, old Turkish literature, Macedonian language, Turkish language and also Serbian language (at the Faculty of Philology). I also attended courses offered by the Faculty of Philosophy, namely the History of Macedonia under the Ottomans and the Introduction to Philosophy. All of the professors are really understanding and helpful. First month or two were pretty difficult language-wise, but with the time it got easier. Right now, I would even say, that I can communicate in Macedonian pretty fluently and I wouldn't achieve that without this exchange.
- From the very beginning I was planning to stay for two semesters, and so I did. Currently, due to COVID-19, the situation got a bit more complicated and I am not able to do exactly what I have planned. However, the University tries to assist us and somehow adapt to the situation, organizing some online courses for students. It is not ideal, but no one could expect the problems we are facing now. The International Relations Office keeps us well informed.
- Apart from that, I made some really good friends at the University and even outside it. People here are actually open minded, although they often were surprised by my choice to come to North Macedonia. During the first semester I managed to travel a bit and I have seen some of the most iconic places in the country. I really enjoyed it and it let me observe the Macedonian culture not only in the capital city but also in some smaller towns or even villages.
- During my trips I even bought myself one of the Macedonian folk costume (collecting of such costumes of some of the countries I travel to is some kind of a hobby of mine). You can see it on the photo, which was taken by my friend during a stay in Prilep.
- In general, I am really content with my experiences I made in here. I will remember that as a big adventure worthy going on. I surely plan to visit Macedonia some more times in the future.

Hanna Zieleniewska, Erasmus exchange student in
2019/20 at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje





I am a postgraduate student (MSc) at the Faculty of Philosophy, Institute of Classical Studies in Skopje, currently carrying out exchange via CEEPUS at the Department of Classical Philology, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana in Slovenia. The courses that I am attending include: "Interpretation of Latin texts", a seminar at which we work on translation and interpretation of poetry from the ancient Roman poet Horace; "Interpretation of Ancient Greek texts", another seminar for which we are translating passages from the works of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius and a course I am personally especially happy and grateful for having the opportunity to follow; "Modern approaches to Latin and Greek Linguistics", a very interesting course where I am following an introduction on ancient papyri documents; and also "Modern Greek Language". Apart from these subjects from the Department of Classics, I am also following a course "Slovenian as a Foreign Language". Before the faculty closed, I also got a chance to attend few lessons of some courses from the Department of Comparative Linguistics (also at the Faculty of Arts) that I find very interesting, and which unfortunately are not taught at the University in Skopje, such as Old Indian Grammar (Sanskrit) and Comparative Morphology of Old Irish Language.

Unfortunately, for most of the subjects, I managed to have only one or two classes in person, before the Faculty closed. But even in spite of that, I can say that I am really pleased with the way the study process went. The professors are very pleasant and open for collaboration, the administration of the Faculty is very well-functioning, and the building itself is modern and very well-equipped with all kinds of auxiliary studying tools: computers, projectors, "Phonolaboratory"- a classroom provided with equipment for practicing speech when learning a foreign language.

After the lockdown started taking place, the professors and the staff were quite diligent and very up-to-date with many different possibilities for continuing the lessons online, and managed to get adapted to the newly arisen situation quite well and quite quickly. The mode and the form of the continuation of the study process during the current crisis, mostly depends on the professors' personal preferences. Variety of platforms are being used: Skype, "Zoom", "Google Classroom", "e-Učenje" or "e-Izobraževanje", a handy study platform for attaching study materials and making online quizzes and tests, "VIS system" (electronic index), etc. In addition, the professors are maintaining contact with us via e-mail and are always available for questions and consultations via e-mail. For some of the subjects, we do not have any online meetings with the professors, but we do get homework assignments by e-mail, to work on at home and to send them back to be checked and graded by the professors. Also, the student dormitory where I am staying is keeping us residents up-to-date, by regularly posting important news and announcements on their website and also by sending them to our e-mail addresses.

So far, even in spite of the crisis, this mobility turned out to be a great chance for me as a student, not only to learn new things, but also to retrieve some knowledge of things which I have been studying at my home university in Skopje a few years back, but which inevitably went pale with time. Also, having the opportunity to be able to live on my own and study in a different country is a great and very useful experience. I am really grateful for being granted this opportunity and would definitely recommend it to students at all study cycles.

Slobodan Tanaskovski, CEEPUS exchange student, summer semester 2020