

UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD

Trg Dositeja Obradovića 5
21 000 Novi Sad, Serbia

Number of students at the University: 45000

Number of faculties within the composition of the University: 14

University Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling of University of Novi Sad

Dr Ilije Đuričića 3, Novi Sad, Serbia
<http://www.razvojkarijere.uns.ac.rs/>
+381 21 485 2041
ssonja@uns.ac.rs

The University Centre is an organizational unit of the University of Novi Sad established to ensure an effective system of support to undergraduate and graduate students in developing their knowledge and skills which they will find significant for employment or further education and for liaison between the academic and business community.

The activities of the University Centre include:

- developing competencies, knowledge and skills of students which are crucial for their employment;
- provision of information to students on opportunities for additional education, scholarships in the country and abroad, and job offers;
- ensuring liaison of students and employers by organizing vocational practice and training programs in leading companies and organizations in the country for potential employment;
- organizing presentations on companies, their business ethics and recruitment policies;
- consultancy to students having dilemma with respect to choosing career or positioning at the labour market after graduation;
- other counselling services with respect to career development;
- coordination of work of career development centres at the faculties within the University;
- monitoring of accomplishment of strategic objectives in the sphere of employment in cooperation with the Committee for Strategic Development within the University Council.

Number of permanently employed / persons engaged on a different basis in the Centre: 1 / 10-15 (staff conducting practical work)

Average number of contacts / interactions with clients/students (personal, by phone, e-mail): 0 - 50

Current units / services in the Centre:

- ✓ Career information
- ✓ Career counselling
- ✓ Career education
- ✓ Liaison of academic and business community/ services for employers

The following is available to students:

INFORMATION:

- ✓ Access to information on practical work and job competitions
- ✓ Information on companies and employers
- ✓ Information and advice for self-employment / entrepreneurship
- ✓ Receipt of job advertisement by e-mail
- ✓ Information brochures, guides, leaflets for students

COUNSELLING:

- ✓ Psychometric testing
- ✓ Scheduling career counselling /face-to-face session
- ✓ Short counselling on the spot / open door – counsellor on duty
- ✓ Career counselling and information with the use of a computer in the Centre
- ✓ Career counselling and information by e-mail
- ✓ Reviewing and correcting CVs
- ✓ Reviewing and checking motivation and cover letters, references

EDUCATION:

- ✓ Workshops, e.g., career education, job-seeking, etc.
- ✓ Soft skills trainings
- ✓ Trainings for career guidance skills and development of employability
- ✓ Simulation of interviews (with employers and counsellors in the Centre)
- ✓ Interviews / meetings with employers

- Website
- Library
- Employers Directory

The following is available to graduate students:

- ✓ information on practical work for graduate students,
- ✓ information on post-graduate studies for graduate students,
- ✓ information on scholarships for graduate students,
- ✓ alumni information, contacts and help

The following is available to employers:

INFORMATION AND PROMOTION:

- ✓ provision of information on companies for students
- ✓ publishing job vacancies and other advertisements
- ✓ promotion of advertised permanent and occasional job posts
- ✓ promotion of opportunities for practical work
- ✓ targeted distribution of job advertisements
- ✓ targeted promotion of events at which employers take part
- ✓ possibility of holding presentations for students by companies

ASSISTANCE AND CONSULTANCY:

- ✓ special section at the site dedicated to employers
- ✓ consultancy on issues of employment and engagement of graduate students
- ✓ consultancy and assistance in organizing practical work
- ✓ collection of candidates' applications
- ✓ pre-selection of candidates
- ✓ communication of selection results to candidates
- ✓ monitoring and evaluation of practical work programs

Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling

Consultation

Practice

Jobs

Courses



University program of work practices in the Assembly, the Provincial Government, the provincial administration and funds, departments and institutes founded by APV

Practice



- eight-year duration of the program
- over 250 participant practitioners
- 30% continue employment

Program 2010/11

- 68 students
- in 26 offices

University program of work practices in local governments and businesses in the APV JK 2010/11



- in cooperation with the Assembly of APV
- donation to the American Embassy and the OSCE
- 29 practitioners
- in 18 municipalities

University work placement program in the NIS

17 practitioners



Practice Program in the Fond, "European Affairs" APV

10 practitioners

Practice Program in the Office of International Cooperation, ACIMSI, Office of accounting and the Center for Career Development UNS

20 practitioners



The project "Virtual job interview"

Is the software with the primary goal of providing better prepare young people for the job search. Facilitating the exercise of conversations with the help of this software and the expert advice of the Center for Career Development Youth will have a better chance to find a job that suits their preferences and insights in the theory and practice, it can and should complement each other.

REVIEW OF TO-DATE ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT COUNSELLING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD

Sonja Šovljanski
University of Novi Sad

BASIC INFORMATION ON THE CENTRE

In view of ensuring a professional university service with an effective system of support to undergraduate and graduate students in development of knowledge and skills significant for employment and further education, and in view of strategic liaison of the academic and business community in Novi Sad, Vojvodina and Serbia, the University in Novi Sad established the Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling (hereinafter referred to as: the Centre) in 2007. The office was officially opened in October 2008.

The Centre was established in order to ensure a better positioning of the University in Novi Sad as a modern European University and its faster and more efficient integration in the European sphere of university education. The Centre's activities should compensate for the long-term absence of cooperation of the university and industry particularly in the process of student education and training. The establishment of the Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling, which has been operating in most modern European universities, was regarded as one of the best examples of good practice and proven efficient system of resolving the "as-seen" state.

The Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling aims at preparing students for coming out at the labour market after graduation, for providing them contacts with employers and offering the support in the acquisition of the knowledge and skills required in a modern business world.

The services that the University Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling offers to undergraduate and graduate students include the following:

- assistance in writing professional resumes (CVs), cover letters, job applications;
- workshops, trainings and seminars of soft skills and for career development;
- information on free job vacancies, practical work, volunteering and scholarships;
- presentations of companies and meetings with employers;
- brochures with advice during employment process and career development;
- useful literature in the Central University Library;
- computers for students with continuous Internet connection;
- possibility of making their own profile and leaving a CV at the Centre's site.

In view of ensuring a better cooperation between companies and enterprises and liaison between undergraduate and graduate students, the Centre offers the following services to employers:

- company presentations
- workshops and lectures
- programs for practical work and volunteering
- advertising free job positions

Users of Centre's services:

- all students of the University of Novi Sad, as well as those who graduated at one of the faculties in the last three years;
- employers;
- staff employed at faculties in the composition of the University.

All services of the centre are free of charge for registered students and employers. Undergraduate and graduate students of the University of Novi Sad can register through web portal www.razvojkarijere.uns.ac.rs and then use all the services provided by the University centre.

In accordance with the Rulebook on the establishment of the Centre, the Council of the University Centre consisting of two representatives appointed by the Senate and one member of the Board of Directors of Crown Prince Alexander II Foundation for Culture and Education ensure the operation of the University Centre. The Council was officially established during 2010.

RESEARCH

ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TOWARDS ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT COUNSELLING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD

The basic problem of the research was related primarily to the issue how students regarded the initiative for the establishment of the Centre for Career Development at the University of Novi Sad, in particular, what services the Centre planned to offer or was offering were regarded as more required by the students. The average mark of all items was 3,802 in total which shows a high positive relationship of students towards career guidance services. This finding was in accordance with the research conducted by the Centre for Career Development of the University of Belgrade where the average mark for all services of the Centre was 4. The centres for career development are one of the first and still rare stations where students and young graduates can receive career guidance services in Serbia. Taking into account this fact and the economic situation where youth employability is very low and difficult, these findings confirming that students need assistance and support in relation to employment and career building are expectable.

The subjects regard the services directly related to possibilities of employment in near future as the most required: information on relevant jobs (4.20), information on vocational practical work (4.03), provision vocational practical work (3.91) and ensuring employment (3.97). These findings are also in accordance with the needs of Belgrade University students where the same services are regarded as the most required. Therefore, it may be presumed that those in need of career guidance see the provision of employment as the greatest problem or need.

The next highest mark refers to the service of information on possibilities of further professional training (4.13). This finding reflects the fact that young university graduates are in a great need for further professional training, where the problem of employment and other career needs are left behind.

This may also be concluded according to the following services with lower but still high marks: information on scholarships (3.96), information on vocational lectures (3.84), preparations for job interview (3.81), creation of databases with relevant data on students and making them available to employers (3.91), company presentations, their business ethics and recruitment policies (3.84), career guidance (3.85) and information on the state of vocational occupations employment (3.71). Therefore, career services in the most direct relationship with the business community and/or professional further training of university graduates have been recognized as the most needed services.

The services with the lowest marks, but still significant include: brochures with useful advice in career development (3.46), assistance in creation of a CV (3.63), literature in the sphere of career development and soft skills (3.48), professional orientation (3.56), other soft skills workshops and Workshops on active job seeking (3.65), database of occupation profiles (3.62), information on employment status of vocational occupations (3.71) and awards to students with the highest average mark (3.62). It seems that students least need soft career skills services, information on profiles and state of occupations, as well as on awards for accomplishments during studies. Similar findings were established in relation to Belgrade students.

The subjects were inquired on what the Centre should do to make the greatest contribution in their opinion, where the greatest number (78%) of subjects indicated better information and only 18% of them indicated a faster and easier employment, while 4% of students indicated other career issues. 61% of students who used the Centre's services had used the information service in comparison to the service of education and counselling. Similar findings were established with Belgrade students where 58% of students indicated that the Centre might contribute to better information of students, 26% of students indicated that the Centre might contribute to better qualifications and 16% indicated that the Centre might contribute to a faster employment. 40% of Belgrade subjects used the information service more than other services, while 45% of students responded positively to the question "Can the Centre contribute to a faster and better employment?".

Therefore we may conclude that young undergraduate and graduate students have a positive attitude towards the services of the Centre and that they regard better career information as the greatest contribution of the Centre.

Further findings show that there is no structural difference in attitudes towards services with respect to the type of faculty students attend and with respect to gender, while the difference exists with respect to experience in services. The results show that the subjects who have used the Centre's services evaluate the need for services more positively – brochures with useful advice on career development and other workshops for soft skills and career development (presentation skills, organizational skills...), while those who have not used the Centre's services evaluate the service "Provision of employment" more positively.

REVIEW OF COMPLETED ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE CENTRE

SERVICES FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS FOR WORK PRACTICE

- University program for work practice in the Parliament, Provincial Government, provincial administration bodies and funds, directorates and agencies established by the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, 2008 – 2011 (the total of 192 practicing students in more than 30 offices while 30% became later employed in those offices).
- University program for work practice in local government bodies in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in 2010/11 (28 practicing students in 17 municipalities).
- Work practice program for Novi Sad University students in the Fund "European Jobs" of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina in 2011 (10 practicing students).
- Summer work practice program for students in the Serbian Oil Industry in 2011 (17 practicing students).
- Work practice program for students at the University Centre for career development from 2009 to 2011 (45 practicing students).

AWARDS TO STUDENTS OF BASIC UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES, INTEGRATED BASIC UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE ACADEMIC STUDIES – MASTERS AND TO STUDENTS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES UNDER FORMER SYSTEM OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AT FACULTIES IN THE COMPOSITION OF NOVI SAD UNIVERSITY

Every year, the University awards students for their accomplishments during studies, vocational and scientific work, artistic and sport achievements. More than 1100 students were awarded by diplomas or pecuniary awards for 2009/10.

WORKSHOPS, TRAININGS AND SEMINARS FOR CAREER AND SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND LECTURES FOR STUDENTS

The Centre organizes various lectures and workshops for developing skills required for easier employment. Some of those lectures and workshops during 2011 included: the presentation of Unisus company, Eurobank scholarship for best performing students, Presentation of the program of volunteering abroad, Infostud – a companion towards a successful career, How to make a successful career in Delta Generali Insurance, etc. Some of the workshops conducted by practitioners during 2011 included:

1. PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION
2. BUSINESS ETIQUETTE
3. ASSERTIVENESS – How can a critique be a good thing?
4. CREATIVE DECISION-MAKING
5. VIRTUAL INTERVIEW
6. SELF-PRESENTATION SKILLS

The average mark for workshops, lectures and presentations subject to evaluation is 4.54.

INDIVIDUAL CAREER GUIDANCE

The team of the Centre for Career Development and Student Counselling organizes individual career guidance that will last until the end of June 2012.

Career guidance is the process which ensures that an individual recognizes and use his/her resources in order to make a right decision in relation to his/her career, as well as to successfully resolve problems on his/her path for the achievement of professional objectives. It is an indirect approach in guidance – a counsellor does not determine what student should do, but helps a student to make informed decisions, to recognize his/her own potentials and consider all available options.

It means that students can do the following through cooperation with their own counsellor:

- can pass the test of professional orientation (TPO) and receive appropriate interpretation of results,
- can perform consultations and receive feedback on their CVs and motivation letters,
- can prepare better for their future business interview (if they wish, this can be done by means of the software simulating the conversation between candidates and employers),
- can solve some additional issues in which a counsellor can provide his/her assistance (making significant decisions, recognizing his/her own values, competencies and potentials in view of better self-promotion, recognition of potential faults in order to overcome them and increase possibilities for future employment, etc.).

REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION

More than 1300 users were registered by the end of 2011, to include undergraduate and post-graduate students and young graduates of the University in Novi Sad. The Centre regularly informs students on free job posts, vocational practical work, scholarships, competitions, seminars and courses through mailing list,

social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), the Centre's site, notice board on faculties and through media. More than 50 notifications of this type were sent in this way during 2011.

The Centre regularly presents its services to students at the following fairs: KONTEX – Fair of Business Opportunities, Education Fair “Road Signs”, Education Fair EDU- Fair, “Career Days”, as well as the employment fair of the National Employment Service.

FUND OF BOOKS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT – a part of the collection the Central Library of the UNS is located in the Centre's premises, the total number of books being 157. They can be searched by key words “Career Development” through online catalogue at the site of the Library.

PROJECT “VIRTUAL JOB INTERVIEW” intended for graduate students exercising job seeking and facilitation of their preparation through simulation of job interview.