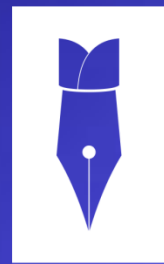




Representation and Influence of Student
Representatives in Organs of Degree –
granting Educational Institutions and
Integrative Role of the Student Parliament
at the University



Strengthening Student Role in Governance

SIGMUS

and Management at the Universities of Serbia

What is European Tempus project Sigmus?

The Project SIGMUS is designed to strengthen
the role of students in governance and
management at the Universities of Serbia

What is representation and how is it arranged?

- ✓ Representation is student membership in organs of Degree – granting Educational Institutions
- ✓ By the Higher Education Law, it is defined for every organ in particular
- ✓ It depends on the practical solutions in the statutes of Degree – granting Educational Institutions

Organs of Degree – granting Educational Institutions

There are four main organs of the Degree – granting Educational Institutions:

1. The Student Parliament
2. The Management Body
3. The Professional Body
4. The Executive Body

The Student Parliament

- The Student Parliament is the main organ of students influence on organs of Degree – granting Educational Institutions
- It is made up of students exclusively
- It is not sufficiently well defined by the Law
- It is the only organ which elects its representatives for the other organs

The Management Body

- The Counsel of Degree – granting Educational Institutions
- A form which gives students about 1/6 of the members
- They have the identical rights as all the other members of the Counsel of the Degree – granting Educational Institutions
- The only thing they cannot do is to be elected as the President of the Counsel
- In over 97% of Degree – granting Educational Institutions, the legal representation of students is respected
- The numbers of students – members is mainly 3 or 4

The Professional Body

- The Senate (at the University), The Academic Council (at the Faculty), other professional bodies
- Students are represented up to 20%
- Students suffrage is rather limited
- The average representation in Serbia is 13,7%
- The highest level of representation is 32%
- In 9% of Degree – granting Educational Institutions, students do not have their representatives in the Professional Body

The Executive Body

- The Head of University (at the University), the Dean (at the Faculty)
- In their work, they are helped by the Head of University's Collegium and the Dean's Collegium
- The Student Vice-Chancellor/Dean is a member of the Collegium

The title is centered and framed by two large, light-gray stars. The text is enclosed in a decorative frame consisting of two L-shaped corner brackets, one on the left and one on the right, with a metallic gradient and a drop shadow.

Differences between representation and influence

- ✓ Influence is not the same thing as representation
- ✓ Representation is a basic requirement for the influence, but it is not a dominant factor
- ✓ There are a number of other factors on which the influence depends

Factors that determine the impact

- the right to vote and the right to speak
- presence in the sessions of the
- knowledge of the matter by the student representatives
- motivation of the student representatives to work
- the division of student representatives (wasting votes)
- other division members of the body

The right to vote and the right to speak

- voting rights (defined by the law) – the real impact
- 17,4% of Degree – granting Educational Institutions students are not entitled to vote in Teaching Academic Council
- 5% of the students do not have equal rights, moreover 3% do not actually have a right to vote in the council of Degree – granting Educational Institutions
- Right to speak - the potential impact
- Almost always recognized, even if not the right to vote

How many students use the right to speak?

- the Teaching Academic Council in 18.25% of cases students "often participate in a discussion", in 73.02% of cases students "occasionally participate in a discussion " while in 8.73% of cases students do not take part in a discussion at all.
- in the council, students often take part in a discussion in 28.33% of cases, in 66.67% of cases students occasionally take part in a discussion, while in 5% of cases students do not participate in a discussion at all.

Attendance at the meetings of bodies

- Students members of Degree – granting Educational Institution, attend the plenary sessions on average 82%
- Reasons for negative presence (absence) of the student representatives:

- omission of the service that is actually responsible for this
 - Student Representative absence

In the first case, one that has not been informed he could not attend

In the latter case, it is their private obligations assumed the presence of session

Knowledge of the matter by the student representatives

LEGISLATION

Before making the decision students should be familiar with the legal and statutory solutions to their status. Gaining additional knowledge is often independent process because there are no publications.

There are three ways of acquiring knowledge, and each has its flaws:

- Seminars and trainings (not often enough, and for a limited number of participants)
 - Learning on personal experience (slow)
- transfer from older to younger (knowledge and skills kept in a closed circle)

Motivation of the student representatives to work

- basic motive - the willingness of students to help their home institution to properly exercise their rights and to respect the interests of students.
- additional motivation - the desire to cooperate with the management, teachers and collaborators on home institution, additional to those which can be realized in the regular classroom. CAUTION!
- The need for the introduction of new forms of motivation:
 - scholarships for student representatives
 - ekstracurricular award credits.

Division of student representatives (wasting votes)

- In 78% of the students always take a uniform attitude, mostly in the 18% vote for the same, in less than 1% rarely, and in about 5% of students never have a consistent view.
- Completely or largely excludes the impact of students on decision making in the management of Degree – granting Educational Institution.
- Division of student representatives to actually is the best indicator of divisions in the student parliament
- Chronic lack of compliance of attitudes of student representatives usually have an epilogue in the upcoming elections for the student parliament.

Other division members of the body

- As representatives of the student division decrease the influence of the students, and the other division members of the body, increases the influence of students.
- Student representatives should be up to the task
- When the body of a participation 20% of students and 80% of teachers and professors when they are divided into two uneven camps, student influence in decision making is 100% (to adopt only those decisions that support the students)

Integrative role of university student parliaments

- ✓ In the process of integration of the university, a university student parliaments can play an important role
- ✓ University Students Parliament is not just a simple collection of college student parliaments.
- ✓ Integration of functions of student parliament at the university level:
 - Crisis Management
 - soft impact through consulting

Crisis Management

- In emergency situations Student Parliament of faculty in a number of cases addressing the Student Parliament of University
- In 37% cases to Students Parliament of University, in 20% to university staff, in 9% to SKONUS or SKASSA, in 8% of cases to the Ministry, 17% to the others, and in 8% to cases no one.

Soft impact through consulting

- Student Parliament on small and medium-sized colleges do not have sufficient capacity
- They often turn to Student Parliament of the University for advice who usually has a large capacity - soft impact
- Subsequent changes in the law, some functions of the Student Parliament, which require greater capacity, should be relocated from college to university level



THANK YOU