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MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS IN NUS ON EXAMPLE OF TWO JOINT PROGRAMS WITH CHINESE PARTNERS

УПРАВЛІННЯ МІЖНАРОДНИМИ ОСВІТНІМИ ПРОЕКТАМИ НУК НА ПРИКЛАДІ ДВОХ СПІЛЬНИХ ПРОГРАМ З ПАРТНЕРАМИ З КИТАЮ

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Abstract. With increasing competition in the global education sphere, the only way to a decent functioning of the Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine — to match the high international standards. This cannot be achieved without active international activities aimed at the development of international educational programs. Concept and implementation of International Educational Programs of the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding are used as the basis of this study. The object of study is an International Educational Programs of NUS, and subject is — the successful functioning of the mechanisms and the implementation of these programs. The mechanisms of the implementation of two key programs in terms of project management is being studied. The development of Sectoral Distribution of Responsibility for project management training programs «2 + 2» and «4 + 0» was performed. They are proposed as fundamental approaches of project management that are applicable to a variety of other programs that already exist, or are planned to be implemented by the universities of Ukraine.

Keywords: sectoral distribution of responsibility; the fundamental approaches of project management; international educational program.

Анотація. Концепції та виконання міжнародних освітніх програм Національного університету кораблебудування імені адмірала Макарова взяті за основу даного дослідження. Розроблено секторальні розподіли відповідальності при управлінні проектами навчальних програм «2 + 2» і «4 + 0». Вони запропоновані як принципові підходи управління проектами, що можна застосувати для безлічі інших програм вже існуючих, або тих, що плануються до реалізації ВНЗ України.

Ключові слова: секторальний розподіл відповідальності; принципові підходи управління проектами; міжнародна освітня програма.

Аннотация. Концепции и выполнения международных образовательных программ Национального университета кораблестроения имени адмирала Макарова взяты за основу данного исследования. Разработаны секторальные распределения ответственности при управлении проектами учебных программ «2 + 2» и «4 + 0». Они предложены в качестве принципиальных подходов управления проектами, применимых для множества других программ уже существующих, либо планирующихся к осуществлению ВУЗами Украины.

Ключевые слова: секторальное распределение ответственности; принципиальные подходы управления проектами; международная образовательная программа.

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

The formation of Ukraine as an integral partner of the European Union and serious player in the global arena is impossible without strong integration of not only economic factors, but cultural and educational components.

The Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union signed on June 27, 2014, includes the process of implementation of European standards into many areas of life activity and healthy operation of a State. In particular, this concerns also the educational process. Everyone knows the high standards of the West in the educational field which means the increase of the Ukrainian education level.

The globalization of the educational services market causes the transformation of national education systems of many countries. As a strongly marked indicator of this phenomenon there can be such countries as the USA, the UK, South Korea, Eastern Europe countries, etc. For Ukraine, as for other European countries, except from the system reforms, the most important factor of higher education reform is the introduction and development of the Bologna process as a consequence of globalization [1].

On June 19, 1999, 29 European Ministers of Education signed the Bologna Declaration [2] which became

the catalyst of the development and modification of the Sorbonne Declaration ideas [3] on the European Higher Education Area. It promotes closer contacts between European countries in the development and strengthening of intellectual, social, scientific and technological potentials, academic and general cultural enrichment.

The academic mobility of students, a wide degree of autonomy in decision-making and active international activity are the most important components of the successful life activity of European universities. Considering the European model of education, we should take into account a factor of competitive activity. The educational services of the West are connected to the market economy and act according to the simple and hard «supply and demand» law. The specialty which is not interesting for the market employment cannot compete and the university has to cut it with all its consequences (redundancy, decrease of study load, etc.). In fact, the ability of Western universities to adapt to the constant changes of our time is the key to a successful operation.

Accepting the European standards, the Ukrainian higher educational establishments should be aware that they accept also the conditions of healthy competition not only between each other, but also between the European

universities. And if the universities in the UK, France and Germany has a little interest for the majority of Ukrainian applicants because of the historically formed circumstances of pricing and other factors, then the universities of such countries as Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic look more attractive and real. The general level of satisfaction with the education system in these countries is higher than in Ukraine, as the «Report on Human Development over 2013» data evidences [4].

In conditions of the increasing competition in the global education area, the correspondence to high criteria and international standards is the only way of functioning of the higher educational establishment in Ukraine. And this cannot be achieved without the active international activity which is aimed at the development of international educational programs.

Heading for the international integration, we should remember about the needs of Ukrainian regions on which the university works. Currently, there is uncoordinated work between the higher education and potential employers in conditions of development of market relations and the labor market. In the industrial regions of Ukraine it is primarily connected with the active modernization of industrial enterprises: purchase of modern high-tech equipment, usage of the latest software, expansion of the range of products. It leads to the need for constant updating of training programs for junior specialists in accordance with the realities of regional labor market [5].

To achieve these aims, the management of higher educational establishment should be a balanced mix of professional managers, specialists on project management, supervisors and teachers which can flexibly and effectively react to any circumstances of modernity.

The «Creation of a University of the European Type» program has been still fulfilling at the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding since 2008 as a part of the «Concept of the NUS Development». The concepts and fulfillment of international educational programs of this university are used as the basis of this study.

The international educational programs of the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding are the object of study, and the mechanisms of successful functioning and fulfillment of these programs are the subject of study.

LATEST RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS ANALYSIS

The international activity and cooperation with foreign organizations was carried out according to the «Concept of the NUS Development» and «Tasks of the National University of Shipbuilding», the vector of the development remains unchanged.

The object of the study is an international study programs of Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding, and the subject is the successful functioning of the mechanisms and the implementation of these programs.

The Scientific Educational Centre of International Cooperation has effectively held the activity on attracting the foreign citizens to study at the NUS. Thus, from 2011 to 2016 there is a record tendency on the increase of foreign students, postgraduates and trainees who want to improve their skills over the entire period of the university existence (Fig. 1). Thus, as at the beginning of 2008 there were only 88 foreign students at the NUS. As at the beginning of February, 2016, 1073 foreign citizens from 24 countries studied at the NUS. The number of foreigners at the NUS has increased in more than 13 times which is a high indicator of the dynamics of the international cooperation development.

A training program is developing at the NUS with the International Maritime College (Zhejiang International Maritime College), Zhoushan, China. Over four years 70 Chinese graduates (junior specialists) of the college were directed in order to obtain the higher technical education (Bachelor degree) in the «Marine Engineering» knowledge field (Specialty «Ships and Ocean Engineering», «SPP») on the «2 + 2» program. In summer 2013 the first graduation of Bachelors in this program (13 people) was held and in summer 2014 the second one (14 people) was also held. 30% of graduates continue their education in a Master's program. In 2015 — 17 people. In 2016 preparing for the graduation of 22 people.

The agreement with the management of the Jiangsu University of Science and Technology, China, is fulfilled on the co-operative Bachelors' training in the «Ships and Ocean Engineering» direction on the «4 + 0» program. There were 181 students over 2012–2015. Currently there is a campaign to enroll the fifth group.

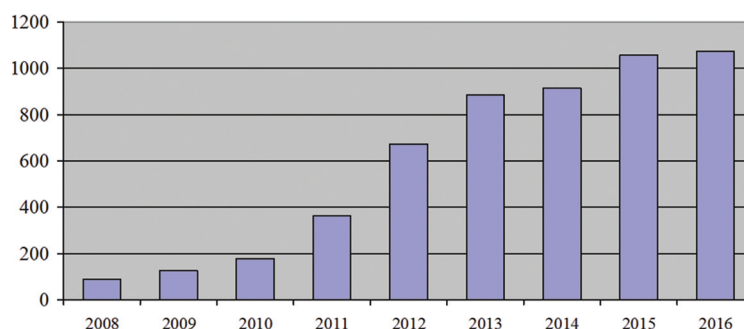


Fig. 1. Number of foreign students in NUS

In 2012 the agreement was signed on the Partnership and Cooperation between the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding, Mykolaiv, Ukraine and Batumi Navigational Teaching University, Batumi, Georgia. Within the cooperation the educational counseling NUS center in Batumi was opened on the basis of the BNTU to fulfill the training of students on the Bachelor programs. 217 students were enrolled on the training in various specialties. Currently there is a new admission campaign.

The negotiations have been continued and the preliminary agreements on the forms of cooperation in the direction of the Specialists' training with the government agencies and universities of Poland, Norway, Belgium, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Turkmenistan, China, Estonia, Argentina, etc. have been reached.

The close contacts are maintained with international programs of academic exchange like the Fulbright Program (the USA) and the DAAD (Germany), the CampusFrance Ukraine Bureau, in which students and teachers of the university participate annually on the competitive basis. The graduates of the programs are actively involved in various activities of these establishments (e.g. Fulbright Alumni Ukraine Association).

ARTICLE AIM — studying the possibility of applying the fundamental project management approaches of the two basic international NUS training programs for existing and planned related international programs of Ukrainian universities.

BASIC MATERIAL

A number of educational programs are successfully fulfilled in cooperation with foreign partners at the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding, Mykolaiv. Let us consider the implementation mechanisms of two key programs in terms of project management.

The «2 + 2» Program.

Specialty: «Ships and Ocean Engineering».

Teaching language: English.

Partner: Zhejiang International Maritime College, China (ZIMC).

Year of agreement signing: 2010.

Study duration: 2 years in China, 2 years in Ukraine.

1st graduation: June 2013.

The main point of this program is to train the students for a bachelor degree on the basis of two-year training in China followed by the study continuation in Ukraine. A state-pattern diploma of Ukraine is the final result.

This is a complex project which is included in the concept of the general NUS program of formation of a University of the European type. In this context, the fulfillment of training potential in the international arena is understood.

A group of students is the input data for this project. The final aim of the project is gained when these students obtain a Bachelor's diploma. The Educational Scientific

Center of International Cooperation in Ukraine and the International ZIMC office in China manage this project. The International Relations and Learning and Teaching sectors distribute the duties upon program functioning at the NUS. The success of this project can only be achieved under the close cooperation and collaboration with other university departments, mostly with the Shipbuilding Institute and its leading departments and it resembles a coherent clockwork mechanism in which everything stops in case of a unit failure.

As is shown in Fig. 2, each structural subdivision which is involved in the program is responsible for specific tasks which allow successful carrying out of the project. There have already been completed two projects by July 2014: two groups graduated with Bachelor's diplomas, the total number of graduates is 27 people. In 2015, there are plans to graduate 17 new young specialists. The study continuation of some graduates on the Master's Program is a positive complementary product of this program. It should be noted, that the Master's program is carried out in Russian, so the attention is paid to the Russian language course during two years of study in English.

Basing on the experience of successful fulfillments, it should be noted, that the «2 + 2» project is subjected to a number of problems despite the visible rational distribution of responsibilities. All the problems are based on such a concept as a «human factor». It shows itself both by the students and by the methodologists, specialists and teachers. It gets also worse by the fact that a fairly low percentage of teachers knows English sufficiently to conduct lectures and practical activities in English, despite the large number of highly qualified personnel at the NUS. This is a slowing component under the integration into the global educational process and one should work seriously on this issue.

One teacher teaches several disciplines and when he/she can not be in the class for some reasons, nobody can replace him/her. In this case, the ESCIC learning and teaching sector controls the situation. It reschedules classes for the days which are more comfortable for the teacher who missed the classes. This, in its turn, can cause other teachers' dissatisfaction, whose schedule changes as a consequence.

The solution of conflicts and minimization of harm by means of the human factor are one of the most important roles in the project of the Educational Scientific Center of International Cooperation.

Only the well-coordinated work of structural subdivisions reinforced by a general program of development and formation of a University of the European type ensures the successful project fulfillment. The management of such a complex project requires the overall focus of the leaders' powers of three powerful subdivisions: the International ZIMC office, the NUS Educational Scientific Center of International Cooperation and the NUS Shipbuilding Institute.

It should be noted, that there is a high demand in the employers' market in China on the product of this project — the graduates of the shipbuilding industry. So, all the graduates of the first group were employed at the leading enterprises in Shanghai and Zhoushan. The graduation of the second group has been held recently, so there are no current data about their employment at the moment, but the preliminaries give a reason to conclude that these graduates will find a good place in life.

The «4 + 0» Program or a Double Degree.

Specialty: «Ships and Ocean Engineering».

Teaching language: English.

Partner: Jiangsu University of Science and Technology, China (JUST).

Year of agreement signing: 2011.

Study duration: 4 years.

1st graduation: planned in July 2016.

The main point of this training program is to prepare bachelors on the basis of integrated curriculum between the Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding and the Jiangsu University of Science and Technology. The training is carried out in China in the JUST classrooms and laboratories with the help of both Chinese and Ukrainian teachers. The part-time and distance studying technologies are widely used. The result is a so-called «double degree», a Bachelor diploma of the Chinese state standard and a Bachelor Diploma of the Ukrainian state standard.

The double degree programs are not new to Ukrainian universities; however, their main inclination falls on a partnership with Western universities which is noted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine [7]. But the NUS is a pioneer and leader in Ukraine in the fulfillment of such a program with the Chinese partners.

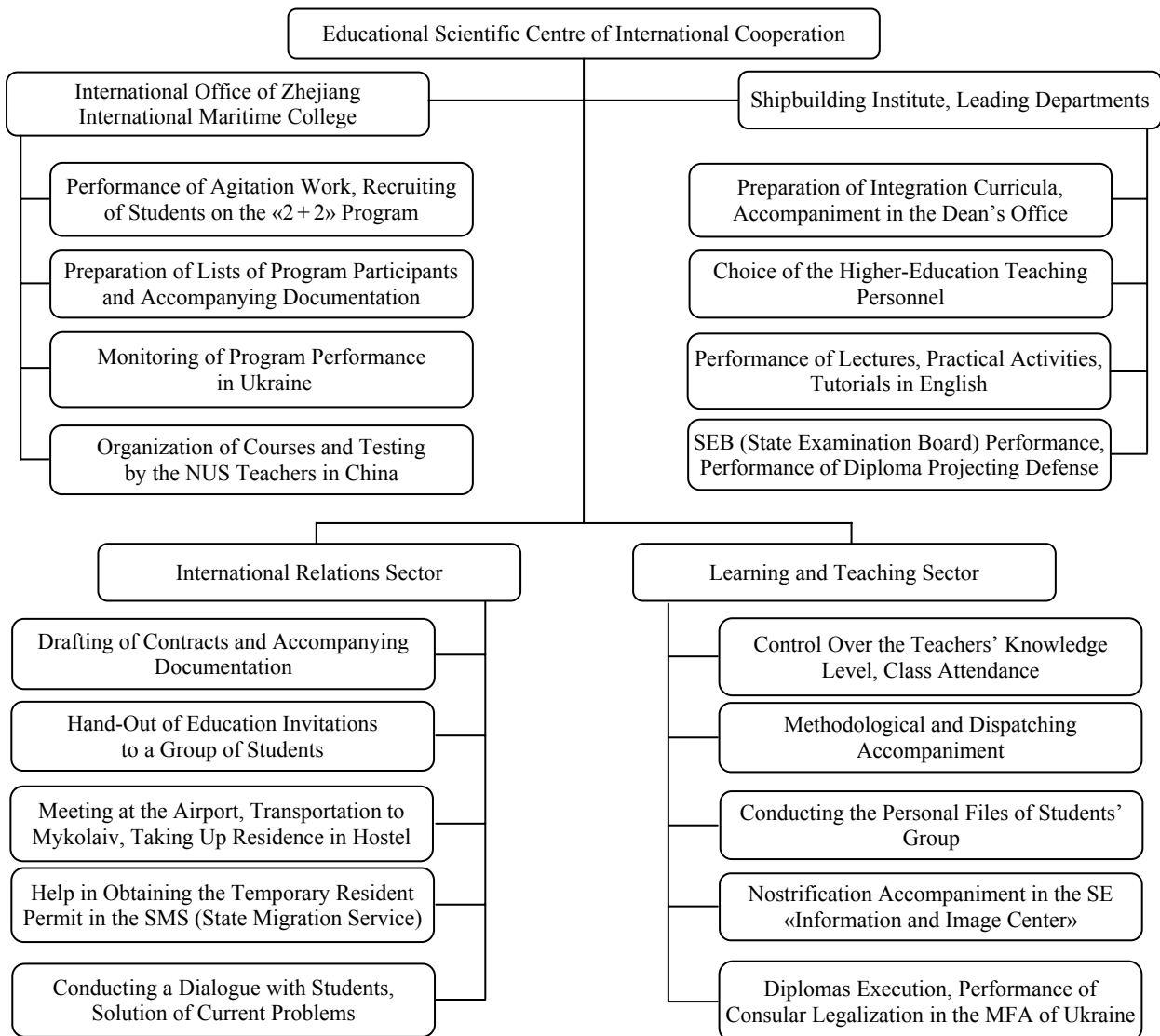


Fig. 2. Sectoral Responsibility Distribution under the Project Management of the «2+2» Training Program

This project is also a part of the program of the NUS development and formation of a University of the European type. It is structurally multi-layered and its successful fulfillment depends on the coherence of actions, both in Ukraine and in China. If we compare it to the «2 + 2» project, it requires much more advance preparation which also implies the approval of higher authorities.

The initial stage of the project fulfillment is to develop a common integration curriculum which will be implemented into the study process of the NUS, as well as the Chinese partner. In parallel to the curriculum development there is work on the supplements to the main contract which will be the fundamental rules of the project fulfillment. The agreement stage begins after the approval of the integrated curriculum and supplements by the senior management of the universities. The Chinese party submits documents for the approval to the Board of the Jiangsu Education. The Ukrainian party agrees the integrated curriculum with the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. Once all the formalities are completed, the fulfillment of the program begins at the local level.

A distinct division of responsibilities between two parties is required for the successful management of this project. It is achieved by the formation of committees on both sides which are responsible for the project. These committees are responsible for the management of its project part at home university, as well as for the close cooperation with the committee of the partner university.

From the both parties the committee includes the Vice-Rector on the International Affairs, the Head of the International Department (Center), the director of the Shipbuilding Institute (School). In Ukraine the committee coordinates the work of the Educational Scientific Center of International Cooperation which is responsible for the successful project fulfillment by the NUS. The duties are divided between the International Relations and Learning and Teaching sectors.

Taking fig. 3 as an example, the complexity of this project becomes obvious, because if you remove at least one component from it, the whole project is doomed to failure. Without the qualitative mechanisms of the control over the project the final result cannot be achieved

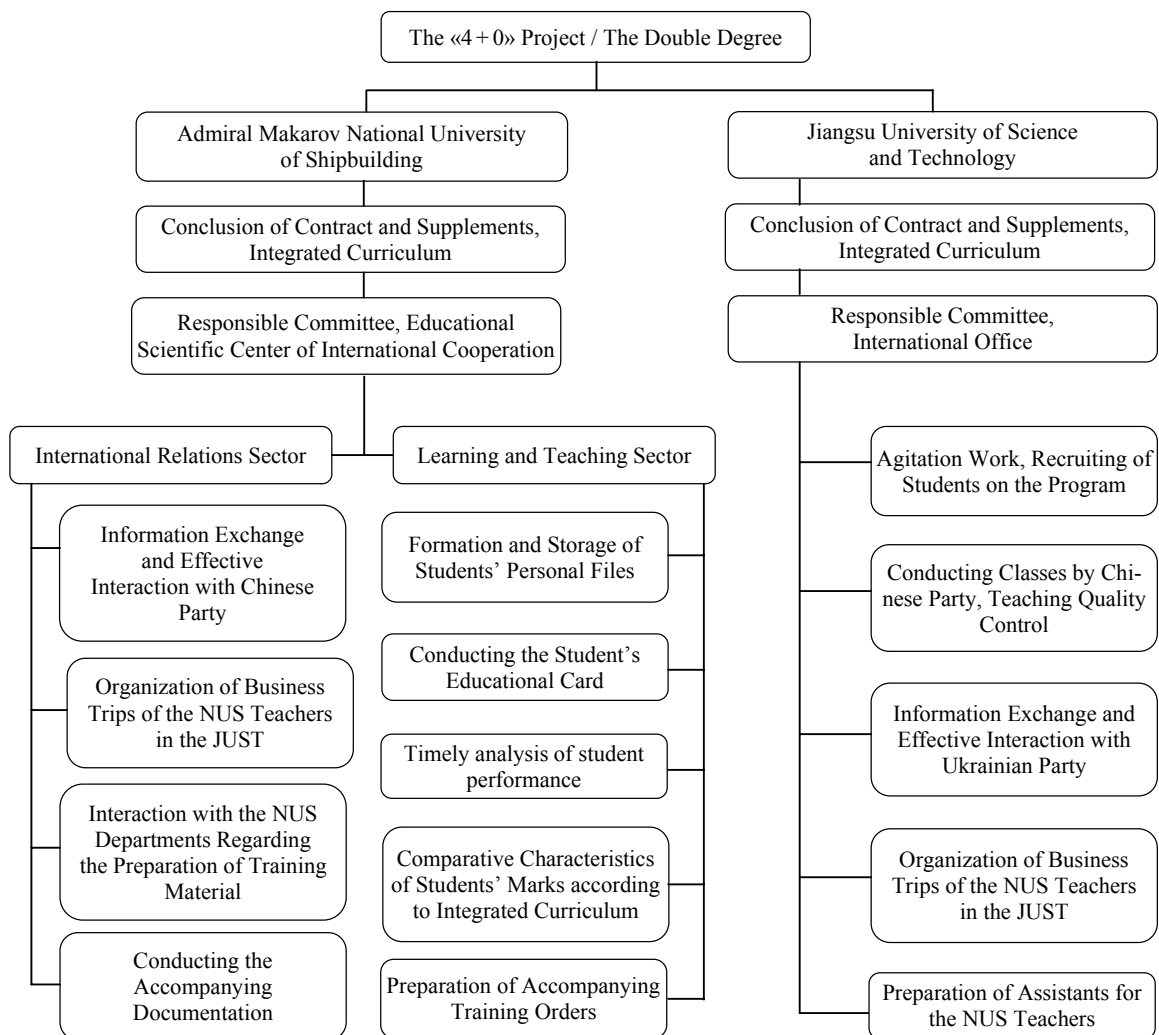


Fig. 3. Sectoral Responsibility Distribution under the Project Management of the «4 + 0» Training Program

either within the performing parties or by mutual control between the partners. The key element of the control is the proper distribution of tasks, efficient monitoring conducting of their performance and, in case of deviations from the stated conditions, efficient decision of arising difficulties. The methodology of planning approach is applied at the NUS to fulfill this project. It allows carrying out the systematic analysis of work readiness. Basically, a semester control system is applied.

The effective management of the «4+0» project is impossible without two key criteria:

1) close interaction and mutual understanding of the project managers with executives;

2) effective interaction of the executives with each other, especially in the «Ukrainian-Chinese executives» tandem.

The process from forming a curriculum and supplements to the agreement to the issuing the dual degree is impossible without strict observance of all the terms of this project. The terms (indicated in the supplements) of providing the training materials of various academic disciplines, as well as the terms of staying of the NUS teachers at the JUST are a serious work indicator on this project of each of the parties. In particular, the NUS which is the executive of a number of requirements must fulfill all its duties in a certain timeline in order to achieve the common aim. Otherwise, the sanctions mechanisms will be involved which lead to the financial losses and can expose a successful project fulfillment to a risk.

As the executives of the project the top-class experts in their field of education and project management are selected by the NUS. The responsibility for certain training directions lies upon the department, not upon the particular individuals, because in case of a negative response of the «human factor», the substitution is picked up by the senior executives of the department or another way is found to solve the problem.

The NUS applies successfully the mechanism of the «responsibility distribution» in which the primary responsibility for a positive result lies not only upon the main executive which is the Educational Scientific Center of International Cooperation, but also upon all other

structural subdivisions of the University which are involved into the project. Therefore, a synergistic effect is achieved by the joint efforts aimed at the fulfillment of duties of the University.

CONCLUSION. Summing up two main NUS international curricula, we can conclude that the similar fundamental approaches of project management can be applied for them despite their differences. They are also applied for various existent programs or programs which are planned to be fulfilled by the higher educational establishments of Ukraine.

These approaches:

1. The key role in the project fulfillment should be held by the specific structural subdivision such as the international department, center, a dean's office...

2. In this case, the responsibility for the project should not lie only upon the specific subdivision. One should use the «responsibility distribution» mechanism at most, so that each involved subdivision in the project has its own responsibility for their work.

3. When working with a foreign partner, one should achieve the maximum interaction and feedback. The coordinators or entire coordination groups should be assigned from both sides for this. They will be in contact with each other throughout the whole project.

4. The specific feature of the training programs is that the terms of their fulfillment are known in advance and cannot be significantly corrected. Therefore, maximum efforts in this project management should be based on the control over the quality of the provided services.

5. Under the fulfillment of such projects great attention should be paid to the minimization of the harm of the «human factor». This is achieved by means of the experts' training on the principle of intersubstitutability. Two or more teachers are required on one discipline.

6. Under the conditions of a market competition in the international arena of educational services it should not be forgotten, that any mistake in the management of educational projects of such a level can lead not only to the decrease of orders, but also it can worsen the prestige of the university.

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