

Diversity as opportunity for increasing quality in teaching civilization based on specific strategies for specific target groups in Romanian Higher Education

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Two panels are to be developed in our study concerning a new model of student in the Romanian Higher Education institutions. First, it is about heterogeneous courses composed of students belonging to several cultures and languages. Second, it is about a new model of students that makes its appearance in our universities at undergraduate (Bologna system) /graduate Master level - students with children and full time or part-time employees that belong to the Internet generation or have the desire to enter the virtual world in order to cope with the hectic schedule of the school work.

Since 2007 when Romania became a full member of the EU, an increased student mobility has been registered *from*, but also *to* our universities, involving a new dynamic, richer, diversified academic environment. In the new Romanian Law of National Education published at the beginning of 2011 there are mentioned multicultural and multilingual universities, rights to set up university extensions, and joint Higher Education study programs. The main issue is to know *how* and *at what extent* the university could play its part of being an opportunity for "living together", reconciliation and mutual understanding by means of teaching civilization every time the occasion comes, not only in special study programs.

In addition of a greater diversity, professors must face a new model of students - older and busier, who no longer accepts to live without a computer support, is increasingly turned to using the Internet, consulting Web-pages and specialized databases, being more pragmatic and oriented towards efficiency. Therefore professors could take in due account the "serendipity" as an important principle of a creative teaching of civilization based on "learning is wondering" and "learning through discovery", for facilitating intercommunication among students of different nationalities and cultures, older, busier and employed students, as well as the learner-centered IT&C instruction, for defining cultural contexts and solve the problem of a new model of student. My paper deals with the efforts for better ranking of a small, but deeply involved University of Pitesti in Romania, acting with performance on the study programs level. Some case studies, developed over a period of five years, target 5 statistical parameters: *attendance percentage, active participation, interest/motivation degree, will of adaptation/knowledge transformed into behavioral attitudes, academic results* in homogeneous vs. heterogeneous groups of students. Strategies are used for dealing with diversity meaning quality, by teaching civilization in non-specific programs: creative and positive use of diversity, allow diversity manifest, explain and promote differences between individuals, highlight the common ground of various participants, create synergies based on differences, increase understanding and adaptation in diversity, and finally **use diversity to add value.**