

DIMITRIE CANTEMIR CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST**EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION REPORT****2022****Introduction**

I was invited to join to the evaluation team of the institutional evaluation process of the Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest (DCCU) as an external evaluator for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The evaluation took place between Wednesday 4 May and Friday 6 May 2022. In this process as a foreign expert evaluator, I was responsible for establishing an overview of the focusing on the main points of the improvement of quality and future development aspects with outlining the main dimensions of present and future challenges of the university. Before the three-day long visit, I received the self-evaluation report of the institution. During my stay in Bucharest with the help of the colleagues of the DCCU I had the possibility to insight the documentations of the evaluation process and collect information about the university.

Background

Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest was founded in 1990 as a private higher educational institution. The educational programs offered by the university in Bucharest and in other Romanian cities soon became attractive and the institution managed to follow up the needs of the market. The university became the part of the Romanian higher education system and the European Higher Education Area. Parallel with certain priorities and educational fields that has been important from the beginning there is a permanent evolution of education programs in the university. As a result of the changing demand and financial sustainability, certain programs terminated in the last years. The university underwent external evaluation process in 2010 and 2015 which were

specialist training in the reference fields and meeting the demand for professionals, according to the Romanian society development needs. The overall objective of the university is to develop and promote the institution as specialist training provider and generator of scientific knowledge.

It is important to point out that Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest as a private institution must cope with the challenges of a competitive higher education market, national and international visibility and recognition on scientific, educational, and other fields and it has to offer attractive study programs which are based on the real demands of the students. It seems that the present answers of Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest for these permanently appearing challenges are generally successful, as the earlier mentioned steps toward stability happened in the last years but it is important to point out that parallel with maintaining the present situation the university also must find other market niches where it could operate successfully in the future.

Management, organizational structures, human resources

DCCU has a coherent, integrated, and transparent management system (A.1.2., A.1.2.1.) based on an effective and efficient administration, adapted to the mission and objectives of the institution. The current management structures of the university and their duties are indicated in the University Charter and organization chart.

According to the self-evaluation report of the university, representatives of students (25% of the academic structures) are elected by the students and endorsed by Faculty Councils to be members of the university and faculty management structures. All information of public interest is available on the DCCU website in Romanian and English languages as well. It is important to point out that due to the increasing internationalization strategies of the institution, every information can be found in English which could be a perfect framework and basis for the more intensive internationalization in the future.

Tuition fees of the university are competitive, and the university provides various incentives for students who enroll in a second faculty or students who graduate their first faculty within DCCU. Also, the University provides incentives for members of the same family studying with DCCU.

The university has implemented the Bologna principles, which allows the institution to connect to the European Higher Education Area, although the third level, PhD studies are missing from the educational supply.

Parallel with the earlier mentioned internationalization, the foreign language educational supply of the university is also growing. This strategic orientation certainly could help the university to reach and attract more potential national and international students.

The university staff includes 175 tenured teaching staff and 52 associate teaching staff. The tenured teaching positions include 20 professors, 7 readers, 75 lecturers, and 7 instructors. The teaching staff of Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest have proper competencies, qualifications, and academic degrees which certainly results a good level of performance in education processes. It is important to point out that the foreign language skills and competencies of the staff are quite good and high.

Some teaching activities are developed by recognized specialists, from the outside of the university, which bring their important contribution to the teaching programs with their specific knowledge, field expertise and competencies.

Physical assets

Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest is permanently working on reaching a good material base for education. The educational process takes place in buildings owned by the university. Physical assets (Criterion A.2.) are in accordance with the needs of the students and the educational process. The classrooms and seminar rooms, halls, teaching laboratories are in a good state, well-equipped with IT devices, software, and teaching materials. The university buildings are equipped with internet.

assistance for students (A.2.1.4.) depending on the financial situation of the university as granting of scholarships and other forms of financial support as well as other social assistance to the students.

Students

According to the self-evaluation report of the institution, 7961 students enrolled in the 2021/2022 academic year in DCCU, of which 3648 in undergraduate programs, 2876 in the part time type of education and 1437 masters' students (1396 in the standard type of education and 50 in the part time type of education).

The decrease of number of students in the last years resulted in the liquidation of some faculties and educational centers in the country. Liquidation was due to the lack of profitability of study programs. Although the number of students is certainly lower than it was few years ago, one of the most important attractions for the students is the flexible organization of the educational process.

According to the self-evaluation report of the institution, more than 50% of the graduates of Bachelor and master's study programs provided by DCCU are employed within two years after graduation. From the total number of graduates (2019-2020), 63,68% are employed in their field of specialization, 29,17% find employment in other fields, and only 7,15% have not found a job.

Regarding to the further studies (B.2.1.2.), more than 40% of the graduates of DCCU continue their studies. DCCU has a Career Guidance and Counselling Center (CCOC), and this organization unit is responsible for the career counselling for students (B.2.1.5.). CCOC maintains cooperation relations with the business environment and with public institutions to conclude internship partnerships and to perform surveys on labor market developments and changes in the qualifications structure.

Students are also taking advantages from Sports Club of the university and the Dimitrie Cantemir Student Club which organizes the cultural life of the students. The university provides accommodation for students as well.

developed in line with the National Strategy for Research, Development, and Innovation for 2014-2020, with the European Research Area (ERA) development plan and policies, and with the Framework Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest Program for Research and Innovation 2014-2020 (Horizon 2020).

The DCCU scientific research strategy is in line with the University mission. In consideration of the institution prestige, it would be important in the future to continue to organize conferences and workshops which could be very important for the national and international visibility of the institution and beside the 'outsider' lecturers and participants it gives possibility for the students and teachers from Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest to present the results of their research activities.

Although national and international collaboration has been in focus from the beginning, the university must concentrate on permanently to participate and generate special research programs which also could lead to create a special image and knowledge which – over the applied education characteristic of the institution – could contribute to find the specific position of the university and offer special programs for the community.

International visibility and collaboration

DCCU pays more and more attention for collaboration with universities, or other institutions in Europe and all over the world. To manage these connections effectively relies on the available financial background, the level of intention to establish and manage partnerships and cooperation from which the partner institutions could benefit and finally, how much work is invested in managing these relationships properly, if partner institutions have the same level of interest. In case of DCCU it seems that there is strong intention that parallel with managing the present international directions, establish new partnerships to raise the level of international visibility and collaboration of the institution. This strategic orientation could be an important part of the internationalization of the university. With the participation of the colleagues of the partner institutional

The institution's internationalization strategy aims at continuing to develop cooperation with inter-institutional partners from all regions of the world, supporting staff and student mobility, implementing efficient strategies, and monitoring the sustainability of its activities. It is also important to point out, that one of the most important targets of the DCCU is internationalization, digitalization, business cooperation, boosted by the policy of the newly elected Finish rector of the institution, dr. Marja Liisa Tenhunen.

Quality management

DCCU was among the first private universities to design and implement quality assurance processes based on the ISO 9000 standards.

According to the self-evaluation report, DCCU has a set of operational structures, the infrastructure, and has developed the quality assurance structures and policies (C.1.1.) and strategies (C.1.1.2.) to generate the institutional framework for quality assurance and its continuous improvement, to consolidate the quality culture and update its internal quality standards in accordance with national reference standards and performance indicators for evaluation and quality assurance in higher education.

Reviewing the structure and activities of quality assurance of the institution, these processes seem to operate well, but it is important to point out that the main principle and objective must be that quality assurance become an integral part of the organizational culture of the institution. The evolution and development of a real organizational culture of quality assurance at every stage of university operation should be in focus permanently.

Conclusion

My report is based on what I have experienced; what I have seen, what I have read and have heard before and during my visit. I hope that some of my comments will help the university management in the process of permanent improvement. According to the fact that from the time of the last evaluation visit the university has done several steps to stabilize its operation and make strong

I also wish that Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest would find the right way for success and the right position in the Romanian Higher Education.

Finally, I would like to thank to the Rector of Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University of Bucharest and all the University staff for the pleasant atmosphere and the support during my stay in Bucharest. At least but not last special thanks to ARACIS for giving me the opportunity to participate in this evaluation process in Romania.

Pécs, 05-18-2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Iván Zádori', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

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