

NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY



In July 1989 some university teachers and researchers established the Society for New Bulgarian University. The aim of the Society was to work for reforms in the Bulgarian university. On 18th September 1991 the Society obtained university status from the Great National Assembly under the name of the New Bulgarian University(SG, ? 80/1991).

The first period of NBU development - 1991-1993 was related to the establishment of the institutional framework of the university and to its identification in the public domain. On 17th October 1991 the General meeting of the Society formed, out of its members, the Interim Board of Trustees of NBU. **Prof. Bogdan Bogdanov** was elected Chair and provisionally exercising the functions of the Rector. The Interim Board of Trustees developed the general directions for development of the university and specified its program for action; established the university structures, approved their compositions and internal regulations.

In 1991/1992 were established two main units, functioning as schools: the Free School and Correspondent School (Radio-university). They provided courses, qualification programs and distance learning. At the Free School were established the departments – the research structures of the university.

During this period, the educational programs were experimental by nature and with professional orientation, but still then was introduced the credit system, which encouraged student mobility and initiated the inclusion of NBU into the national, and later on into the international, academic community.

The courses had an unlimited freedom of topics and involving of lecturers, of content and forms of teaching, of ways of attracting the students. The students freely combined courses that they have selected into their educational programs. The principle of educational programs' formation – teams, united by enterprising personalities – laid the foundations of the self-government of the university structures.

During the second period of the NBU development - 1993-1998, was formed the regular Board of Trustees of the University (1994). It had large public representation - the local authorities, the business, and non-governmental organizations. On 14th March 1994 were adopted the Regulations for the Structure and Activities of NBU, which contained a detailed structure of the university and defined the forms of management and self-government. The Academic Council was established (1994), which together with the Board of Trustees became the other fundamental managerial body of the New Bulgarian University. In 1995 the functions of the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Rector were differentiated, which initiated the beginning of the division of the strategic and financial from the academic power at NBU. The Chair of the Board of Trustees of NBU was **Prof. Bogdan Bogdanov**, and Prof. Ivanka Apostolova was elected Rector of NBU.

In 1993 were established the Undergraduate School and the Graduate School, as well as a wide range of educational programs. At that time, for the first time in Bulgarian university, there were introduced the educational degrees bachelor, master and doctor. There were also established the departments, whose main functions were research and development of the programs. The

departments unite the teachers from a single scientific community. In this period were established the local centers in Varna, Plovdiv and Veliko Turnovo, and later on - those in Vidin and Vratsa.

In the middle of the period 1993-1998 the management of the university headed towards planned development. In 1997 NBU worked out its first business plan, naming it "Document for self-evaluation and institutional development". Its elaboration was internationally supported by means of a sequence of seminars, workshop sessions and all-university conferences. After 1998, NBU started realizing its mission, turning it into structural and educational policy. During the academic year 1999/2000, 16 basic programs were formed, as the basis of the bachelor programs; therewith NBU started the realization of its idea of liberal education. Education of Artes Liberales type was discussed at the NBU conferences - "All-university education – aims and need" and "NBU programs and program policy", as well as with the representatives at the Saltsburg seminar.

On 5th July 2001, NBU obtained institutional accreditation for the maximum 6 year period.

During the academic year 2001/2002 started the basic program Artes Liberales, consisting of optional courses, covering the basic spheres of knowledge. The tendency of extending the general education in the other basic programs intensified. An accompanying program (minor) was introduced at the Undergraduate School, the training being carried out in parallel with the main program (major). The Graduate School programs were reorganized for attaining of narrow specialization. The Schools started the process of development and introduction of more distance leaning courses, provided in parallel with the full-time form. In September 2001 Raina Kabaivanska carried out her first master class in Bulgaria at the New Bulgarian University.

In 2002 Assoc. Prof. Segei Ignatov, Ph.D. was elected Rector of NBU. During the academic year 2003/2004 the university implemented a new program reform, oriented towards liberalization of the education, incorporating the basic programs into the bachelor degree programs and creating 24 bachelor programs.

The University's activity is managed by a system of plans – five year strategic plans, three year development plans and semester action plans.