

# “Džemal Bijedić” University of Mostar

University organization and structure

Dr. sc. Sead Pašić, Vice Rector for teaching process  
Sead.Pasic@unmo.ba

# Our reality

Recent historical background of Mostar and present local policy are unfortunately creating an environment where University exists and works.

Unresolved political and economical relations, lack of adequate legal framework, influence of policy in the University work, etc, represent huge problems to unobstructed University work.

In addition, they have an impact on academic freedoms and University autonomy.

Bosnia and Herzegovina joined to Bologna process in 2003.

However, The Framework Law on higher education, as a basic document for implementation of this reform, was adopted in 2007.

Between 2003 and 2007, higher education institutions were functioning in accordance with different legal frameworks what caused lack of standardization in this area.

For example, “Dzemal Bijedic” University of Mostar is still functioning in accordance with the old Law on Universities of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that was adopted in early nineties of the last century.

# Our reality

In accordance with Framework Law competences for higher education are on the entity level in Republic of Srpska, and in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, they are on the cantonal level.

This implies that higher education will be determined at least by 8 different Laws on higher education.

Cantonal Law on higher education is still not adopted in Herzegovina Neretva Canton, even though we witnessed few poor attempts.

Two public universities that exist in this region (“Dzemal Bijedic” and Sveuciliste) practically, are working in accordance with different laws and do not have a formal framework to the reform activities.

We are implementing some kind of reforms only because of the enormous efforts made by staff and students.

However, it is evident that scopes of such kind activities are very limited without proper standardization and synchronization with environment.

# University Management Structure

When it comes to the management, there are two levels of management at “Dzemal Bijedic” University of Mostar:

- *University level*
- *Faculty level.*

Even though, the Bologna principles as well as the Framework Law on higher education determine certain rules on university integration and integrated university. Apart from few integrated offices, there are still no visible integration at “Dzemal Bijedic” University .

In accordance with the old, but unfortunately still in force Law on University, Statute of University regulates and determines, in details, the functioning of university management. Management bodies at the University are as follows:

- *Rector of University*
- *University Council*
- *Teaching and scientific board.*

# Rector of University

**Rector** organizes and directly manages the University. Responsibilities:

- Representing the University,
- Making sure that Councils decisions are duly implemented and he/she is responsible for legality of University activities as well as the activities of its bodies,
- Promoting of PhDs, honorary PhDs, and professors to whom the University grants the honorary status,
- Rector orders the implementation of financial plan and the investment plan,
- Rector signs all diplomas that are issued by University,
- Preparing and submitting the Reports on implementation of work plan,
- Performing other management – like and other tasks that are assigned to the Rector in accordance with specific decisions made by University bodies

Council elects the Rectors from the one of professors at the University. Rector's mandate is two years and there is a possibility for re-election.

In his/her work, four Vice Rectors assist Rector: for education, for science and research, finances and for international cooperation.

# University Council

**University Council** is the highest management body at the University, and it consist of **24 members**: (?!)

- 16 members represent Faculties (two members from each Faculty)
- 5 members are representing students (representatives of students' organization)
- 3 members represent cantonal authorities

Competence of University Council are:

- Adopting Statute and other legal documents at the University;
- Producing of an Annual work programme and determining the University work report,
- Adopting a long term University development programme,
- Adopting an annual financial plan and adopting the balance sheet of the University,
- Accepting to new curriculum,
- Deciding upon establishing new departments, Faculties and Institutes,
- Deciding upon establishing of new educational and research units,
- Electing Rector, Vice Rectors and General Secretary,
- Confirming the election of teaching staff and associates into the scientific ranks.

# University Council

University Council has sessions, which are held when necessary, twice a year at least.

President of the Council manages the work of University Council. A president convenes the sessions according to his/her initiative, on the Rector's proposal as well as according to the proposal of institution within University.

Council can fully and legally discuss and decide during one session if the majority of members are present at the session. The decision are reached by public voting, by majority of votes of all Council members that are present at the session.

For members of University Council cannot be elected:

- *Rector,*
- *Vice Rectors,*
- *University General Secretary*

Mandate of the Council members is four years.

The biggest changes in the future organizational structure should be made within this University body.

# Teaching and scientific board

**Teaching and scientific board** is a professional body consisted of 23 members:

- Rector,
- Vice Rectors,
- Deans,
- One representative from each Faculty and
- Two representatives of students.

Mandate of Teaching and scientific board is two years.

Main competences of Teaching and scientific board of the University are:

- Determining the curriculum of undergraduate and postgraduate studies organized by University ,
- Appointing the Commission for obtaining a doctoral (PhD) degree ,
- Electing teachers and associates to work in University and accepts the election of teachers and associates into scientific and professional ranks,
- Determining the right of the Faculty to organize postgraduate studies and obtaining doctoral degree (PhD),
- Determining the study proposal for establishing new higher education institutions, .....



# Secretariat of the University

Administrative structure of University is organized through **Secretariat of University**.

On the top of Secretariat is General Secretary, with following responsibilities:

- Coordinate the work of all services at the Secretariat,
- Prepares materiald for the University bodies,
- Organizes the activities regarding the implementation of Decisions made by University bodies,
- Orders execution of financial plan that is allocated to Secretariat,
- Reports to the Council on its work at least once a year

Within the Secretariat of the University, there are several departments:

- *Legal and general affairs - responsibilities*
  - Providing legal assistance to Faculties,
  - Writing the Work contracts for employees at the University and some of its members,
  - Writing of Decisions on termination of work contract and carrying out the activities regarding employment and termination of employment,
  - Conducting all procedure of public purchase,
  - Maintenance and security services of premises,

# Secretariat of the University

- Accounting and finance department,
  - Making a proposal of University financial plan;
  - Working on determining the total income, revenue, allocation of funds for salaries and extractions from the gain;
  - Following the situation of the University funds and funds of its members and prepares the proposal for the allocation of the funds;
  - Following and standardizing with regulations in force, the level of disbursement that are business expenses (functional expenses, per diems, etc)
  - Bookkeeping activities;
  - Recording the fixed assets, office inventory and premises of all organizational units;
  - Calculating the salaries, payment of contemporary service contracts, author's fees and other kinds of fees at the University and its members;
  - Keeping different files, making and submitting reports.
- Information, publishing and library department,
  - Standard library services,
  - Purchase of professional literature, and increasing the library fond,
  - Constant care about library users, facility and library archive ....

# Secreteriat of the University

- International cooperation,
  - Cooperation agreements with other Universities and higher education institutions;
  - Work of University network for international cooperation;
  - Work on international projects;
  - Events organized by University with the coordination of International Relations Office;
  - Work of students engaged in the International Relations Office;
  - Work of foreign language fellows engaged in International Relations Office.
- Students' centre,
  - Accommodation and food service to students,
  - Care for students,
  - Extracurricular activities,
  - Communication with other Students dormitories and authority representatives on the matter of students' standards ....

# Faculty Management Structure

University “Dzemal Bijedic” still has almost parallel faculty management structure. Faculty Management Structure consists of:

- *Board of Faculty,*
- *Supervisory board,*
- *Dean*
- *Teaching and scientific board;*

**Board of Faculty** is a board, which manages the faculty. It is appointed by the establisher, and consists of 5 members:

- *3 representatives from faculty*
- *2 representatives of local authorities.*

Jurisdiction of Board of Faculty consists of:

- a) adopting the Faculty regulations and other legal acts,
- b) appointing and dismissal of the dean,
- c) adopting teaching plans and programs,
- d) planning financial business activities and adoption of the balance sheet,...

# Faculty Management Structure

**Suprevisory board** is a faculty controlling board. It consists of 3 members, of which one is a faculty representative, and they are appointed by the establisher.

The most important duties of the Supervisory board are:

- a) Controls and analyzes anual reports of business activities,
- b) Checks the regularity and legitimacy of book keeping and informs the establisher of the faculty, the Board of Faculty and the Dean about the findings.

**The Dean** is appointed by the Board of Faculty, based on the proposal of the Teaching and Scientific Board, and is elected from the group of professors in full time employment. The Dean is appointed for the period of 2 years and can be reelected again. The main duties of the Dean are:

- a) Manages the faculty,
- b) Represents the faculty,
- c) Cares for work legitimacy,
- d) Organizes and coordinates the teaching process, ....

# Faculty Management Structure

**Teaching – scientific board** is a professional body of the Faculty. It is consist of:

- all teachers,
- representatives of associates or associates and
- representatives of full time students.

The Dean presides over the Teaching – scientific board.

The competences of the Teaching – scientific board also include:

- determining of new curriculums for undergraduate and postgraduate study level,
- adopting the programme for science and research at the Faculty,
- proposing the composition of the Commission for obtaining the doctoral degree (PhD),
- electing teachers and teacher's assistants into scientific and professional ranks, ...

# Weaknesses of the institutional structure

- “Dzemal Bijedic” University is a relatively weak association of Faculties. Existing management structure is organized in accordance to the old Law on Universities.
- This Law is practically taken over from the former system and it has not been changed for nearly 20 years. Today, it is evident that this Law is too old and it represents a serious obstacle to more dynamic University development, particularly when it comes to organizational structure changes and University management.
- New state Law of Higher Education gives many progressive solutions, but in our case is not directly applicable.
- According to the existing organizational scheme, faculties have full legal, financial and organizational autonomy what results in relatively limited opportunity for reform activities from the level of University
- In some areas, University role is reduced to consultations and coordination without a possibility for making specific decisions and influencing their implementation.

# Weaknesses of the institutional structure

- If we also take into account the financial dependence of the University from the local authorities and political games, it is absolutely clear that university management has limited possibilities and competences when it comes to general policy of University development.
- Internal organizational structure of the rectorate is not set in appropriate way. For example, vice rectors are in the different positions. Two of them, vice rector for finance and vice rector for international cooperation has adequate offices – Accounting Office and International Relations Office. But, vice-rectors for education and scientific/research work still has no appropriate offices - Office for education, and Office for science and research.
- As a result of participation in different international project , we have established some specific offices: University Information Centre – UnIC, Office for Quality Assurance, Career Centre, and the like. Unfortunately, these offices still are not included in the University structure in the proper way. Many good and specific ideas that are result of different researches and international projects, sadly, never came into life precisely due to this reason.



# Weaknesses of the institutional structure

- It is obvious that we can find a reason for a rigid and hard-to-change management structure within the **University itself**. Basic communication culture, lack of conscience regarding the need to changes, agreements, strategy development are often not made when it comes to the University progress and making crucial decisions. Unfortunately, the individual interests or the interest of one higher education institution very often prevail, due to the relatively bad system.
- Internal University problems combined with the external political and economic situation in the environment lead to almost unbelievable solutions at the University regarding the activities and the obligations of the founders, financing, legislative, establishing certain necessary offices and departments, and the like.

# Attempts to change and future plans

Future plans and changes in the University organizational structure and management can be based only on Framework Law on higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By article 13 of this Law is defined that University has following bodies:

- Board of University,
- Senate and
- Rector.

University can have following organizational units:

- Faculties,
- Academies,
- Colleges or
- Scientific institutions,

They carry out:

- Teaching process,
- Scientific and research work
- Work related to art

in one or several educational or scientific areas.



# Attempts to change and future plans


By a short analysis of the Framework Law, we can conclude the following:

- Law is precise when it comes to the obligatory bodies. They are Board of University, Senate and the Rector.
- The Law does not define, in advance, that University must consist of Faculties, Academies, Colleges and Scientific institutions.
- The law does not define aforementioned organizational units must be kept.
- For the University, it is important that a teaching process, science and research work and work related to are carried out within its premises.
- Statute and other documents, that defines organizational structure University, will define the election of the internal structure – based on curriculums of the study groups.

University did not wait for the time in which the higher education will become, finally, a priority of any authority. On our own, we have started certain projects where a new (improved, more flexible) organizational structure and system of responsibilities occupy an important place. Naturally, this is an initial organizational solution and it should be defined by University Statute in a final form, if and when a new Law on higher education in Herzegovina Neretva Canton is adopted.

# Attempts to change and future plans

- The Law, as well as the needs of the University, do not leave any space for discussion on if the University changes are necessary (the reform of organizational and management structure). The lack of adequate legal framework does not change the fact that is an urgent issue and that needs to be resolved.
- In the present situation, University cannot hesitate because integration is possible even on the voluntary basis. The more we delay the integration our chances to consolidate the University in a way to Bologna Process are less. This brings the issue of quality and process of accreditation of institution as well as the study programmes into the spotlight.
- By delaying the implementation of reform activities and priority projects in certain area, University will lose its strategic advantage.
- This Tempus project and its implementation came at the “Dzemal Bijedic” University of Mostar and the changes ahead of us at prime time.



# Thank You for Your attention

“Džemal Bijedić” University of Mostar  
Dr. sc. Sead Pašić, Vice Rector for teaching process  
[Sead.Pasic@unmo.ba](mailto:Sead.Pasic@unmo.ba)