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## **PECULIARITIES OF THE COMPETITIVE SPECIALISTS TRAINING IN AGRICULTURAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS**

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### **SUMMARY**

Human sciences take pride of place in higher vocational education. This article provides a short discussion of the importance of some humanities for both a person educated in a certain professional institution and for the educational system in general. Philosophy, political studies, sociology, and history are among such crucial disciplines.

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A prominent role is given for acquiring social and humanitarian knowledge in the process of individual's spiritual and social development, in the worldview and acute social awareness formation. The intellectual component of the training facilities structure should be flexible and dynamic. In modern social sciences a new way of thinking includes a change in the nature of learning, i.e. the unity of scientific knowledge processes and methods, the flexibility and complexity of thinking, the relationship between emotional, sensual, intuitive components, and the combination of visual-spatial and logical thinking. Only professionals with highly creative professional thinking are able to work professionally enough, that their work matches the high level development of social relations in the today`s competitive society.

The purpose of social and humanitarian sciences (as soon as they are created) is not just the knowledge of societies, but also involvement in its correction and improvement. Both, society and its separate areas were investigated constantly, the tasks how to find specific management technologies for social processes appeared. Methodological problems of social cognition started to be actively distinguished within the "sciences of culture" system based on certain philosophical and methodological ideas.

In the current circumstances the importance of basic training for a specialist is increasing steadily. This is due to the dynamism and immensity of the tasks, that humanity has to solve as it develops. The increasing integrity of the world and degree of interaction between different aspects of life involves introducing for everyday use information about complicated processes with the global nature. In order to respond adequately and furthermore to participate in these processes a person intends to be fully developed and well-educated in any matter, whatever his/her sphere and direction of training in a higher education institution is.

Individual's professional and social development is based on the knowledge. A person masters the object of his or her creative activity by means of knowledge while perfectly improving it. In 1971, D. Bell claimed that "the concept of the post-industrial society underlines the key role of theoretical knowledge as the axis around of which the new technology, economic growth and the new society stratification is developed" [15; p. 20]. Sociological research consistently shows the relationship between the educational level, as well as psychological and social personal characteristics. Experts predict that the labor intellectualization is a decisive factor of global competition in the XXI century.

The introduction of new technologies, informatization and automation of production make changes in professional activity, for the implementation of which the development of multi-directional and universal skills is required.

In the post-industrial society the "specialism" is giving way to universalism and professionalism. The establishment and development of professional personality mainly depends on the higher education institution, whose very particular role is intended to transform the universal human values into the individual's spiritual and professional values system.

Through the basic and vocational education system, a person acquires knowledge, develops his or her intellect. The human ability to work depends on the level and quality of shared knowledge and professional skills. These are the indicators that determine the individual's intellectual and professional potential.

The mental outlook provides the basis for creative professional activity. The education lays the foundation for professional thinking, forms the cognitive component of the individual's professional awareness, by this creating the intellectual background of professionalism. However, a certain amount of knowledge, as well as professional skills do not guarantee professionalism. Ultimately, it is formed through the common way of human life and depends on personal qualities.

The role of self-education in professionalism development tends to increase nowadays. The development and production intensification, progress in science and technology, and the

change of professional activity nature require from the professional constantly to enhance knowledge both in the material production field and in the field of spiritual. Recently, the establishment of an individual's intellectual culture is identified as a core function of the education system: a person should not simply reach a certain amount of knowledge in the process of developing, but also learn how to think independently and out of the box, how to create and assume responsibility for decisions. "One of the most important functions of education is to discover and to develop natural special abilities (and opportunities) of a human" [7; p. 99].

Creation of continuous education system in the modern society, appropriate corrective measures and modernization of basic and vocational education with remaining of its traditional forms, humanization, humanitarization, and "socialization" of education are the vital steps towards the development of a professionally competent specialist of the XXI century [12; p. 8].

It should, however, be noted that often in current standards the term professionalism implies only a certain particular specialty. More frequently, the idea that a person does not need knowledge and skills that are not in the obligatory list for acquiring the profession (i.e. they are not the core of an individual's future professional activity) appears. For example, the future physicist does not need literature, a mathematician does not need history, as well as a literary scholar does not need chemistry, etc. That's one of the most significant mistakes of contemporary attitude to professionalism, based on one-way narrow view on it.

Many researchers see the problem in the fact that the vocational school does not provide breadth and depth of knowledge in general. One of the problems of modern vocational education "An understanding that first of all it is necessary to acquire the forms, way of action, but not the theory, principles and methods is increasingly recognized. Moreover, there is a tendency towards the education focused not on the personality formation, but on the training of a professional with operational thinking" [10; p. 57-58]. Clearly, the term "professional" is used here in its narrow meaning, the same as an "expert", i.e. partially developed employee that has professional knowledge and skills allowing him to carry out certain technical operations, but they are not sufficient for full and creative professional activity.

Modern research literature gives preference to the narrowly specialized training. In many higher educational establishments, the "substantive" (informative and reproductive) training dominates, rather than methodological (integrative) education, which provides multifaceted approach to the training of future professional activity. The tendency to the general education disciplines profiling and the raising of theoretical material to the level of instrumental practice took hold. Many instructors of the humanities faced this process in higher education

institution at the beginning of the 1990s, when “non-major” disciplines were expelled from non-humanitarian institutions. That means that the quantity of learning hours was declined, many courses were reclassified as elective, etc.

In most industrialized countries, the emphasis was made on vocational education: “Nowadays our education combines detailed study of a limited number of abstractions with a superficial examination of a great number of abstractions. We suffer from book-learning in our school routine” [11; p. 260]. In this situation, the problem of vocational and basic education is substantially updated, since vocational education is designed to study particular phenomenon and serves as a basis for technological development in the broad meaning of this word. At the same time basic education forms the core of the individual’s worldview.

To obtain vocational education and professional skills of any particular type of work becomes socially beneficial and socially valued. In these circumstances vocational education turns into a priority value. Specialization in education is not a threat for the full development of human personality. Conversely, vocational education is a necessary and significant component of elementary professionalization. This is an important stage towards becoming a professional. The problem is that specialized knowledge, in time, becomes the most socially valued and replaces other universal human values. Moral standards and aesthetic values become secondary, and subordinate to specialized knowledge. Social education and education in the humanities of an individual is declared unnecessary.

According to the words of N. Chebyshev and V. Kagan, the phenomenon of “discontinuous thinking” is the reason of an excessive specialization of vocational education: “Students cannot use scholarly knowledge as the motivation basis or a deep understanding of their professional activity. Students are not trained to use the potential of basic sciences for a holistic, methodical solution of cognitive and professional tasks” [13; p. 50].

The oncoming post-industrial, information civilization needs a new model of basic and professional education, the preparation of not mass and standardized, but creative thinking people, which are able to identify innovation, and constant improvements of all-round person. In recent years, people came to realize a need for general and humanitarian training of specialists in the field of technics and sciences.

In today’s world, not only vertical relations of professional activity, but also broad horizontal social and cultural relations of professionals play a very important role. Nowadays, a professional cannot dispense with acquiring basic socio-cultural values, wide “experience of society”. Thus, the concept of professionalism includes a harmonious combination of professional skills and abilities with breadth of vision, the ability to evaluate the situation

and associate own professional tasks with the requirements of the current reality. In this respect, professionalism becomes not only an important part of the individual's professional activity, but also one of the main characteristics of the morally well-conditioned person.

In modern society, the humanization of education is the most important precondition for the establishment and development of personal professionalism. This process guides all participants of education to respect for persons, to develop human autonomy, to establish humane and moral fellowship between teachers and students. Education humanization is based on the democratic style of the relationship between the participants of the pedagogical process in strict conformity with the principle of respect for persons (both for student and teacher), and in view of the spiritual and moral potential within the education content through involvement in human culture [5; p. 26].

Today, education in the humanities is being updated as a major component through which cultural development reorientation of every individual takes place, to meet the spiritual wishes and needs of people. In accordance with education modernization, higher education is aimed at harnessing the world's social and humanitarian knowledge. Social knowledge implies human knowledge about the society as a whole, and about its separate aspects and components. The system of social sciences includes economics, sociology, political studies, psychology, management, decision theory, etc.

Thus, the humanities in the faculties of agriculture and engineering occupy a special place. Higher education is not just a continued training, the acquiring of new knowledge and profession, but also the continuation of young people education, with shaping their vision of life, their place in the society, the expansion of their cultural worldview, i.e. the processes, which started in school and family.

The specific feature of the humanities teaching lies also in the fact that a student unlike a pupil is a completely independent, practically full person. However, pressing questions of modern person socialization still remain relevant. This part of the general problem is also related to the teaching and study of the humanities. Exactly social studies and the humanities can contribute to the process of the most effective development of young people.

The said provision is not something completely new. It did not appear these days. The crucial difference from the past is probably that previously this problem was given an exclusively ideological value in our country.

In a sense, this specific feature remains relevant in modern society, but along with it new tendencies, which had not existed before, appeared.

First, education in the humanities in universities does not exist abstractly, outside socio-historical, political and economic reality, current content and structure of which are complex and complicated.

Secondly, this situation encourages the diversity of understanding and interpretations, approaches and directions of the educational process, which entails new reasons for tasks and solutions.

Finally, the provision on the optimization and effectiveness of teaching and study the humanities, different variants of their assessment (optimization and effectiveness) are not always straightforward in connection with the complex understanding of reality, the contentious views on society, its fundamentally different theoretical conceptualization.

Today's experts have to be able to think creatively, independently cope with complex problems in a definite kind of activity. Moreover, he needs constantly to face new knowledge and technologies, to improve qualification. Systematic development, professional and personal improvements become the essential conditions for the successful work of any person engaged in professional activity. The main demonstration of professionalism as a higher level of personal professionalism is the ability to free creative activity, to the practical change of the world. This feature is largely related to the establishment and development of the individual's intellectual professional culture as a capacity to professional growth, to acquire new knowledge, to solve complex professional problems in the conditions of dynamism of society.

Shaping the ability to catch, perceive and analyze social processes in some special way is one of the main objectives of sociology. The study of sociology by university students, including non-humanitarians, also aims to shape social thinking and understanding of social problems by the students, their sources and possible solutions, which is a necessary component of the knowledge system of future professionals.

Political Science plays an important role in the individual's worldview development process. It helps to find the objective historical base of a particular policy and government, to reveal and explain the activity of the political elite, leaders, parties, political behavior of certain groups and social classes. The most important aspect of the modern political science is to discover the nature of political activity. The humanitarian function of political science is manifested not only in the dissemination of scientific knowledge, but also in promotion of individual's socialization, the formation of civil positions. Political education is one of the ways of development individual's political culture. Since politics has an important impact on the individual lives and lives of entire peoples, any person needs to acquire political

knowledge and culture, regardless of his or her profession, political awareness. These are actually the qualities that are necessary for a today`s professional.

In the last decade in Ukraine the role of economic studies and management disciplines has significantly increased due to the radical change in the vector of economic development and the penetration of new economic and social phenomenon. Real professionalism of a worker in the modern world, regardless of the sphere of activity, implies a deep knowledge and understanding of economic processes, formation, development and functioning laws of the social relations system in interaction with the economy.

The humanitarian dimension of social and humanitarian knowledge is represented by a cycle of philosophical disciplines intended to study the history and theory on a human as a unique spiritual being. In the higher education training of such specific subjects as History, Cultural Studies, Religious knowledge, various philosophy sciences (History and Theory of Philosophy, Ethics, Aesthetics, Science of Logic, etc.) are aimed at promoting the intellectual, moral and aesthetic development of future professionals. Basics of Philosophy are included in the methodological support not only of scientific research, but also many types of professional activity. They are necessary for desktop and applied researches.

In recent years in modern high school democratic traditions are being grown, development conditions for personality based on the use of the diversity of culture are being improved, its national wealth and common heritage of mankind, which are represented in the humanitarian cycle of all educational disciplines. These disciplines transform the values of the world culture from the subject matters to highly appropriate education and human life and activities.

The humanization of the educational and cultural process in the system of higher education is aimed at preparing specialists, whose professional qualifications are only one aspect of their holistic existence.

It must be mentioned that only harmonious combination of specialist disciplines, natural sciences subjects, social and humanitarian disciplines in the educational process is the key to the individual`s successful professionalization. Today`s complex, dynamic world is the result of the interaction of man and nature. Understanding of the processes in the world depicts the general culture that includes not only the social and humanitarian dimensions, but also the natural sciences aspect. As N.V. Karlov rightly pointed, “without the knowledge of the basic laws of nature, a humanitarian, especially the professional one, particularly in the area of law and economics, becomes as dangerous for the society as a pure, nude and cynical technocrat” [2; p. 15].

Thus, at the beginning of the XXI century real professionalism consists of two necessary intellectual components: 1) the formation of intellectual worldview, the acquiring of a certain knowledge system, which includes both general education knowledge of the laws of nature and society, as well as the expertise in something necessary for successful professional activity. Vocational education plays an essential role in this process, the necessary component of which is general humanitarian training. It promotes the spiritual and moral development of the individual. 2) The formation of a culture of thinking, the ability to think independently and out of the box, how to solve complex professional and social problems.

The professional's ability to systematic intellectual development and self-improvement, creative activity and modernization is the main element in the modern world.

The new informational civilization requires a new educational model. It prepares all-round specialists, creative personalities who have a high level of general and professional culture. The most important characteristics of the information society in the scientific and educational spheres are the change of the status of science, acquiring of a new integrative function, humanization, and the convergence of sciences and the humanities given the increasing significance of the emotional sphere.

In recent years, the concept of social development, based on the priority use of scholarly knowledge, is receiving increased attention in education.

At the same time the continuous growth of the requirements to the level of professional training of specialists on the job market forces to constantly improve the system of vocational training. Vocational education develops on the basis of an extensive knowledge network and the introduction of new information and communication technologies [6; p. 130-135]. The modernization strategy of today's education aims to achieve the high quality education for all, its availability and mass character, and to create a system of ongoing education [3; p. 3-5]. Decisive progress has been made on this road. Ukraine becomes integrated into the world educational system. Education remains a sphere of national interests; there is an idea in the public consciousness of making higher education as a national heritage.

Social and humanitarian knowledge plays a significant role in the process of spiritual and social development of personality, the formation of worldview and active social attitude. The result of the humanization of the education process should be the harmonious combination of basic knowledge, vocational knowledge and spiritual components (moral, aesthetic and social values) in it. Social sciences and the humanities develop in a person the ability to broad and at the same time deep awareness of professional problems. Only a broad-minded person, who is able to evaluate his or her own work both from the point of view of professional



practicability and the universal human values of truth, goodness and beauty, can become a true professional.

The main features of the new paradigm of social and humanitarian knowledge of the XXI century can be described as follows. There is a convergence of nature and social studies, and the humanities on the basis of the axiological component of scientific work. The development and improvement of the social cognition approaches and principles that are directly relevant to their subjects become more intensive and deep, also new methods are being developed [4; p. 533-536]. The subjective, personal dimension of the research subject of social sciences and the humanities is receiving more attention. More frequently, the social and humanitarian scientists shift their focus of the cognitive interest to the stakeholders.

The concept of professionalism in the field of social science and the humanities is expanding, as well as an understanding of close connection between professionalism and the individual's morality is increasing. More frequently, professionalism in the social sciences and the humanities involves knowledge and fulfillment of the professional ethics requirements.

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