

**Никишова А.В., Кривоносова Е.В., Рыбакова С.М.**

Белорусский государственный технологический университет, г. Минск, Беларусь

E-mail: ekrivonosova@tut.by

## УЧАСТИЕ КУРАТОРА В ПРОЦЕССЕ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ СТУДЕНЧЕСКОГО КОЛЛЕКТИВА

Существование института кураторства в течение многих десятилетий не решает проблему определения функций куратора студенческой группы, его роли в формировании коллектива, она остается весьма актуальной. Нами исследована деятельность куратора в учреждениях высшего образования. В ходе практического исследования нами установлено, что значимым является использование в работе куратора таких ключевых позиций как технологии адаптации, снижения уровня тревожности, минимизации материальных и жилищных трудностей и тайм-менеджмент. Опрос кураторов, осуществляющих свою деятельность в студенческих группах первого и второго курсов, выявил ряд проблем: 1) студенческая группа представляет собой еще совсем незрелый коллектив, что затрудняет эффективное взаимодействие; 2) большинство первокурсников не готово к новым вызовам, требованиям нового расписания и, в конечном итоге, они оказываются в ситуации сверхнагрузок, что зачастую приводит к возникновению стрессовых ситуаций; 3) некоторым студентам приходится испытывать давление со стороны родителей или преподавателей в стремлении получить хорошие отметки, заслужить авторитет в новой студенческой группе. Анкетирование студентов первого и второго курсов показало недостатки воспитательного процесса, такие как неполная информированность учащихся о своих правах, обязанностях и возможностях, предоставляемых новым статусом студента; пожелание первокурсников получать своевременную квалифицированную помощь куратора в учебе и разрешении конфликтных ситуаций, в адаптации, контроле успеваемости и посещаемости, связи с родителями; недостаточная реализация организаторской функции куратора. Проведенная исследовательская работа даёт основания сделать вывод, что задача создания коллектива на основе студенческой группы может быть решена при успешной реализации деятельности института кураторства как педагогической системы. Наиболее продуктивным для процесса обучения следствием решения обозначенной задачи является повышение степени доверия на уровне «куратор – студент» и, конечно же, непосредственно в студенческой среде, что, в свою очередь, приводит к повышению мотивации к процессу обучения и, как результат, снижению показателей по неуспевающим и отчисленным студентам.

**Ключевые слова:** куратор, коллектив, личностно-ориентированный подход, технология адаптации, тайм-менеджмент.

**Nikishova A.V., Kryvonosova E.V., Rybakova S.M.**  
Belarusian State Technological University, Minsk, Belarus  
E-mail: ekrivonosova@tut.by

## CURATOR PARTICIPATION IN A STUDENT GROUP FORMATION

The existence of the supervising institution for many decades does not solve the problem of defining the functions of the student group supervisor, his role in the formation of the team, it remains very urgent. We have investigated the activities of a curator in higher education institutions. In the course of practical research, we found that it is significant to use in the curator's work such key positions as adaptation technologies, reducing the level of anxiety, minimizing material and housing difficulties, and time management. A survey of curators working in student groups of the first and second years revealed a number of problems: 1) the student group is still a completely immature collective, which complicates effective interaction; 2) most freshmen are not ready for new challenges, the requirements of a new schedule, and, ultimately, they find themselves in a situation of overload, which often leads to stressful situations; 3) some students have to experience pressure from parents or teachers in an effort to get good grades, to earn authority in a new student group. A survey of first and second year students showed the shortcomings of the educational process, such as incomplete awareness of students about their rights, responsibilities and opportunities provided by the new student status; the wish of freshmen to receive timely qualified assistance from a curator in their studies and resolving conflict situations, in adaptation, monitoring progress and attendance, communication with parents; insufficient implementation of the organizational function of the curator. The conducted research work gives grounds to conclude that the task of creating a team based on a student group can be solved with the successful implementation of the activities of the institution of supervision as a pedagogical system. The most productive for the learning process consequence of solving the indicated problem is an increase in the degree of trust at the level «curator - student» and, of course, directly in the student environment, which, in turn, leads to an increase in motivation for the learning process and, as a result, a decrease in indicators. for unsuccessful and expelled students.

**Key words:** curator, team, personality-oriented approach, adaptation technology, time management.

The proper and competent arrangement of the extra-curriculum activities in modern higher education institutions is determined by the management, which consistently implements such functions as planning, organization, regulation and control of these activities. It is the institution of curatorship that introduces and implements the relevant management of student groups.

Provided by the university regulations, the work of the curator is organized in accordance with the «Instructions regarding the organization of the work of the curator of the student group in higher educational institutions» (the resolution of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus, 27.11.2007, №77). According to the Instruction, the curator must gain professional competence, which implies knowledge of psychology and pedagogy. The curator is aware of the personal responsibility for the formation of knowledge about the national idea, citizenship, and the upbringing of a high moral and political culture. In his work, the curator introduces a personality-oriented (individual) approach to the upbringing of the student, unconditional respect for a student as an individual, promotes the internal development and personal self-fulfillment, contributes to the formation of the world outlook and ideology [7], [8].

I.L. Vasyukov, A.N. Volkov, E.S. Borodina believe that education, mentoring, upbringing of students is carried out in each of the major divisions of the University, i.e. departments, groups, etc.; it is manifested in the transformation of consciousness and behavior of the staff (students, teachers, administration) in accordance with the set of moral regulations of society, state and higher educational institutions [1], [2].

The term «sociometry» refers to the measurement of interpersonal relationships in a group. The founder of sociometry is a well-known American psychiatrist and social psychologist J.L. Moreno did not accidentally develop this method. According to J.L. Moreno, the totality of interpersonal relationships in a group concerns its primary social and psychological structure; their characteristics largely determine not only the integral characteristics of the group, but also the state of mind of a person [18].

In the first year, the student group is still a very immature team. The most detailed concept of the collective, which we share, belongs to A.V. Petrovsky. He considers a student group as a collective consisting of three strata (layers). Primarily, in the

first layer, the direct contacts between people based on emotional acceptability or unacceptability are implemented; in the second layer, these relations are mediated by the nature of joint activities; in the third layer, which is the core of the group, the relations are developed on the acceptance by the group members the common goals of group activity; this layer corresponds to the highest level of development of the group, therefore, its presence allows us to state that we have a collective [13].

In connection with the need to strengthen educational work, upbringing of students, the role of the curator and his range of responsibilities is expanding. Any educational work must begin with the fact that the curator is aware of the educational functions, i.e. duties, activities performed in the process of formation of the individual and the student team [4], [5], [11].

Methods and methodology of the study. According to our point of view, the goal of the curator is to form, develop and improve the relationships in the third layer and obtain, as a result, a cohesive team. However, the first-year curator has to start this process from scratch, at the moment when yesterday's applicants are united into a group of people who barely acquainted with each other. Let us focus on the issues to be solved by «newly-minted» students and try to identify technologies that will help curators to educate a worthy team out of a group of beginners.

Admission to the university marks the beginning of a new life for every applicant. Leaving the parental home, a student enters a new stage of life. This is time of gaining self-confidence and self-understanding, acquiring new knowledge, comprehending a profession that largely shapes the view of life in the long term.

Most students are not ready for new challenges, the demands of a new schedule and, eventually, find themselves in a situation of overloading, so they need additional time to adapt to a new life. The task of the curator at this stage is to help the student get assimilated in a new rhythm of university life, «reset» oneself, mentally and emotionally prepare for any problem that can be encountered at the university level, as well as reduce the level of stress and anxiety.

Let us analyze a few technologies that, in our opinion, can help to overcome the first difficulties.

The first technology is the development of assimilation capacity, in other words, the technique of adaptation to a new life. Regardless of whether young people are students entering the environment of a student hostel or campus for the first time, or, being already students, they return to student life after spending the holidays at home, they will definitely need a period of adaptation, especially in the first option. The first year of university studies is always very difficult and complicated, and this applies to almost all aspects of adapting to university life. We should expect some misunderstanding of how different some situations will be interpreted in comparison with home or school. In addition, it is extremely important for the student not to fall into despair because not everything works out. In any given situation, time is needed. Perhaps something may come out a little disappointing, but if there is a goal, the student will certainly assimilate into the university environment. For a successful and speedy adaptation, a newcomer needs to try and find like-minded people in educational and extracurricular activities. Visiting interest groups, sports sections, active participation in the life of the university, faculty, course, group greatly contributes to this process. The aim of the curator is to introduce students to the available opportunities, to organize various events so that students receive all the available information with detailed instructions and explanations.

The next technology is the technique of reducing the anxiety level. Finding a student outside the usual framework of the family environment, longing for home can provoke a state of anxiety. However, thanks to modern means of communication, a student still has the opportunity to stay in touch with parents, family members and friends via the Internet and all sorts of instant messengers.

It is not so easy to create a certain circle of friends and like-minded people in a new place, but, despite this, the student should not make the mistake of thinking that he/she will have to take the position of adapting to others with different interests. After all, to have new friends in the university space, you just need to be patient, sincere and devote yourself to what you like to do.

In the third place, we put forward the technology of minimizing material and housing difficulties. It is generally accepted that all students, both budget-based and fee-based, finance their living

expenses. Students of the study-for-fee form of education also have to pay for their education. Not all students are given the opportunity to get a place to stay in a hostel, many of them are forced to resort to rental housing to solve this issue, and it is really challenging to find an ideal option in an unfamiliar city. Here they take into account many factors, e.g. the distance to the place of study, rental rates, amenities, roommates, etc. Students are constantly experiencing housing problems. Therefore, in order to avoid stressful situations, the curator, together with the educational department of the educational institution, should take care to provide the appropriate addresses for applications even before the arrival of students for study.

The technology of emotional balance also performs an important role. It happens sometimes that students have to experience pressure from their parents or teachers in their quest to get good grades. Even if this impact is not obvious, many people have a fear that they will not succeed in their studies. In this case, the help of the curator is expressed in moral support and making explanations in terms of the readiness of students to the fact that studying at the university is much more difficult than at their previous stage and, as a result, it is necessary to focus more on the educational process, rather than on the desire to get a good average score. It is also worth reminding that the only way to avoid psychological anxiety and justify the expenses is to find the right balance between enjoying free time and concentrating on studies.

Eventually, there comes another technology, i.e. time management technology, the so-called time management. It happens quite often that due to attempts to learn to live without parental care, i.e. independent and autonomous life, performing the necessary household duties themselves, sometimes, perhaps, finding additional income to compensate for the expenses of parents, students do not have enough time for competent time management and, as a result, their behavior becomes unstable. The help of the curator in this direction is also irreplaceable [17], [20].

The analyzed technologies allow us to summarize the following: the goal of the curator is to inform the supervised group, as well as each student individually, about the technologies for overcoming difficulties; to create conditions and prerequisites for their implementation in order to facilitate the

accelerated process of their socialization in a new life hypostasis.

The results of the study and their discussion. Based on the analysis of the content and methods of work of the above-mentioned technologies, we have developed special questionnaires for students [3], [8]. To obtain reliable information during testing, the questionnaires were anonymous. Thus, the first-year students were asked about their expectations and ideas about the curator, and the second-year students were asked to evaluate the work of their curators and the complexity of their own adaptation to studying in a higher education institution. 142 students took part in the survey. Let us focus on the analysis of their results.

The first question was «Do I really need a curator of an academic group in a higher education institution»? The responses in different groups were quite unexpected. In the first-year student groups, half of the answers were «I don't know»; the answers «yes» and «no» were about a quarter of the number of respondents. The responses of the second-year students revealed an interesting trend, namely: in the groups where the curator worked actively, informed parents in a timely manner about problems with the academic performance and attendance, the majority of the answers were «no», while in the groups where the curator's work was hardly noticeable, the majority answered «yes». But in the group, where the students' academic performance was at a sufficient level, and the curator worked well and coped with the duties, the answers «yes» and «no» were equal.

The second question was formulated as following: «What are the functions and responsibilities of the curator from your point of view»? The answers of the first-year students convince us that the curator is primarily to inform about various aspects of student life, provide assistance in studying and resolving conflict situations, conduct educational work, monitor academic performance, provide moral support, and also facilitate the adaptation of first-year students. As for the responses of the second-year students, they put the help in adaptation in the first place, followed by the control of academic performance and attendance and communication with parents, then the organizational function of the curator was indicated, and, finally, the function of informing, helping with studies and educational work.

The question of the questionnaire «What qualities should a curator have?» showed the following results. The most valid and essential qualities for first-year students were responsiveness, benevolence, sociability, responsibility. It is also significant that the curator is fair, cheerful, active, calm and adequate. Such characteristics as politeness and tact, courage and honesty, decency and punctuality were also emphasized. Second-year students value most patience and responsibility, sociability and goodwill, understanding and ability to tackle problems; these features are followed by responsiveness and interest, adequacy and rigor. Confidence, creativity, a sense of humor, stress tolerance, determination, fairness, and punctuality were also emphasized.

Answering the question «What kind of help do you expect from a curator?», two-thirds of all students surveyed indicated that they do not expect any help. The remaining part of the first-year students who participated in the survey agree to any help, most often it is help in adapting and studying. According to the second-year students, they need help in resolving conflicts in the form of advice and information support.

Eventually, to the question «Should the curator keep in touch, interact with the parents of students? In what cases?» about 30 percent of first-year students claim that they are adults and are able to solve their own problems, while the rest believe that the curator should communicate with parents only as a last resort, when students have very serious problems with studying or attendance. In the second year, the number of respondents who believe that the curator does not need to communicate with the parents is indicated by 40 to 50 percent. About 70 percent of sophomores rated their supervisor's work as satisfactory or good, the rest of the rating refers to the options «excellent» and «bad».

After analyzing the responses of the students who participated in the survey and, accordingly, the activities of the curators, it is possible to draw some conclusions.

Let us start with the analysis of the implementation of the curator's functions, namely: informing students about all events taking place in the higher education institution and in the world; organizing extracurricular employment of the academic group and creating a favorable psychological microclimate; solving current problems, i.e. academic debts,

absenteeism for disrespectful reasons, absences for valid reasons (illness, etc.) and as a result, gaps in knowledge; ensuring that the student group complies with the internal regulations of the educational institution.

It also seems appropriate to highlight the main steps inherent in the work. These steps primarily comprise the essential functions: control over the implementation of the educational process, evaluation and recommendations for its development; analysis and assessment of the students' development prospects; assistance in setting goals and developing ways to achieve them; psychological support; assistance in acquiring useful organizational and communication skills; assistance in choosing a student's professional trajectory. In the process of curatorial work, educational as well as social and psychological tasks are solved [12].

According to O.V. Grishaev, M.V. Shcherbakova [6], A.Ya. Shaipova [14] and Yu.I. Shenknecht [15], the content of the curator's activity at the university is determined by these functions, they emphasize a number of responsibilities, and these functions imply the necessity to be involved in the events of the group's life from within.

It is necessary to state that the above-mentioned activities, which are part of the responsibilities of the curator of the group, may not be performed or are performed formally, for the «tick», reluctantly, without desire and without «soul». Very often, there happens that a student, unable to adapt to a new life situation and a new format of training, loses interest in the learning process itself, and in life goals. Due to the scale of the educational institution and the number of students (often many thousands of students), the management of the higher educational institution and the educational department, in particular, assign the task of identifying such students to the curators of the groups and the teachers or professors working with these groups. Subsequently, the following algorithm of actions works: a memo is submitted to the dean of the faculty and at the same time the parents or legal representatives of the student are informed about the classes missed without a valid reason. It should be recognized that it is very difficult for the deputy dean for educational work at the faculty to single out such students from more than 1000 students without being informed by a curator. Many curators do not interfere in such a situation. The prob-

lem is considered by them as a personal choice of each student as an adult independent personality. The student is fully responsible for the actions and decides whether to continue the studies at this university or choose a different path in life [9].

From all the above arguments, the question logically follows: when does the curator need to interfere in the student's life? Mart states that passionate teachers know that it is their role to encourage students for an active learning and concern themselves with promoting students' intellectual and moral development [18].

As practical experience shows, immediate intervention is necessary in cases when a student has missed a lot of classes without a good reason, does not contact his classmates, or the monitor of the group. The curator at best can call the student on the mobile phone, but very often the number is unavailable or the phone is turned off, the student does not respond to messages in messengers and social networks. And the curator of the group usually stops here the attempts to find this student. The curators do not consider it necessary to share information with the parents of students. According to some curators, the student is responsible for himself, while other curators are afraid of a negative reaction from parents. This can serve as an excuse for the actions or, to be more precise, inaction of the curators. However, there is every reason to argue that communication with parents or official representatives of the student is the most effective way to restore the connection of the educational institution with the student, and, moreover, in the shortest possible time. Though, the circumstances may develop in such a way that there will not be enough time for the student to return into the educational process and pass all the current control tasks, laboratory and course work [10].

Some curators justify their inaction by saying that they do not have a professional psychological education. And the student who has not adapted to the new realities receives apparent evidence of his «uselessness» to the educational institution, group, classmates and parents. This situation is aggravated by the obvious complexity of the university program for yesterday's pupil, and a person decides to stop studying. Most students need personal, confidential conversations with adults who understand the situation «from the inside» and can help with some practical advice. In such cases, the help of

the curator can undoubtedly save the student from being expelled [19].

Conclusion. Competent implementation of the educational function of the curator, psychological and moral guidance of students, conscientious performance of their direct duties by the curator, allow the curator not only to monitor the implementation

of the educational process, but also to detect the reasons for its non-performance, motivating and hindering factors, as well as problems of concern to students. This is the only way to establish a trusting relationship in the «curator-student» paradigm, which, of course, affects the effectiveness of the learning process in a higher education institution.

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**Сведения об авторах:**

**Никишова Алла Васильевна**, заведующий кафедрой межкультурных коммуникаций и технического перевода Белорусского государственного технологического университета, кандидат филологических наук, доцент

**Кривоносова Елена Валерьевна**, старший преподаватель кафедры межкультурных коммуникаций и технического перевода Белорусского государственного технологического университета  
E-mail: [ekrivosova@tut.by](mailto:ekrivosova@tut.by)

**Рыбакова Светлана Михайловна**, старший преподаватель кафедры межкультурных коммуникаций и технического перевода Белорусского государственного технологического университета

220004, г. Минск, ул. Свердлова, 13а, тел. +375 29 778-72-26; +375 17 282-20-82