

## *Social pedagogy as a study programme*

### Social pedagogy at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences at the Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Czech Republic

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#### **History**

Social Pedagogy began to be implemented as an academic discipline at Tomas Bata University in Zlín (TBU) in the 2003/2004 academic year as a bachelor's degree taken in part-time form. A year later, full-time students were also able to take part. In June 2006, the first students of the part-time course graduated from the university, and 2007 saw the first graduates of the full-time Social Pedagogy course. The follow-up master's course in Social Pedagogy was accredited for part-time study in 2005. The first bachelor's graduates were able to continue at master's level without interruption after completing entrance examinations. Accreditation for the full-time form of the follow-up master's degree in Social Pedagogy was acquired in 2006. Today, Social Pedagogy is accredited at bachelor's level until 2029 for both forms, and at master's level until 2024.

From its beginning, Social Pedagogy was a key academic field which was undertaken even prior to the establishment of the Faculty of Humanities (FH) at TBU in Zlín (the FH was established in 2007, with the academic discipline prior to this coming under the University Institute). The development of Social Pedagogy as an academic discipline, alongside the research and publication activities of Department of Pedagogical Sciences, which has secured teaching in the subject over the entire period, was allowed by establishment of the FH, where other pedagogical subjects are today secured (in addition to medical and language disciplines). Graduates can continue by taking a doctoral degree in Pedagogy.

With developments on the labour market and employer demands, the composition of part-time students has changed over the past seventeen years. During the initial years, many part-time students were employees of the Police of the Czech Republic. This was followed by a period in which most students were employed in the civil service. Today, these students continue to comprise a large proportion of numbers, although in recent years there have also been many students in the non-profit sector, in particular from social services.

#### **Subject focus and graduate profile**

Social Pedagogy in Zlín has always been focused more generally on the performance of the helping professions, giving graduates room for quite a broad career in social and educational areas. One unique feature of Social Pedagogy at Zlín is its close links to social work, which are seen in the subject curriculum (some courses focused on social work and social services). The content of the curriculum is in accordance with the Standards of Education in Social Pedagogy (which were created in co-operation with Jakub Hladík). The profile of a master's degree graduate is: students should know the history of social pedagogy and understand the terminology and theories of social pedagogy; they can link knowledge in pedagogy with other social science disciplines (especially philosophy /education/, cultural and social anthropology, sociology); they should know managerial procedures and techniques specific for educational and social institutions and organisations; they should have a good grasp of legislation related to the performance of social pedagogy in practice; they can plan, implement and evaluate research activities and project work focused on educational and social areas; they can plan, implement and evaluate preventive, educational and training activities; lead working teams; make use of specific communication techniques depending on the nature of the environment and type of receivers; make use of specialist social pedagogy terminology in communicating in English. Graduates

can find work in schools and educational facilities as child-care workers, assistant teachers and leisure time teachers; in leisure centres and in the education departments at councils and regional authorities. In the social field, graduates can find work in low-threshold facilities for children and young people, or low-threshold facilities for drug users; in retirement homes; refuges; social affairs departments in councils and regional authorities, and in child social and legal protection. Typical for the academic discipline is very low to zero graduate unemployment.

### **Research focus of workplace**

Research focuses mainly on two long-developed topics: Socio-cultural diversity in education, and Self-regulation of teaching and behaviour depending on social environment. We endeavour to focus our research activities so that they are in accordance with the implemented academic discipline and expand the social pedagogy knowledge base. We have been successful in acquiring and working on the Czech Science Foundation projects: *The dynamics of self-regulation in socially excluded pupils* (2017–2019, team leader: Karla Hrbáčková). This project focused on ascertaining what the structure of self-regulation mechanisms is for children excluded from the class group. It endeavoured to reveal how these mechanisms work depending on the process of social rejection, and find latent factors which weaken or boost self-regulation mechanisms for socially excluded pupils. *Understanding the Mechanism of self-regulation in children and minors in institutional care* (2013–2015, team leader: Soňa Vávrová). This project was focused on self-regulation amongst minors and young people living in so-called total institutions. The focus of concern was studying the determinants and conditions developing their self-regulation process. The project was based on the assumption that organisations set up by society to correct risky behaviour amongst children and young people by their nature are more likely to contribute to its conservation and reproduction. *Development Determinants of multicultural competence in students of helping professions* (2012–2014, team leader: Jakub Hladík). This project was focused on the issue of multicultural competence. Its objective was to explicitly define multicultural competence and its components, to create a tool to measure multicultural competence, identify the determinants of multicultural competence and on this basis to create a validated model of multicultural competence. Emphasis was placed on revealing the mutual relationships between components of the model. *Cognitive and non-cognitive determinants in development of self-regulated learning in students of helping professions* (2009–2011, team leader: Karla Hrbáčková). The objective of this project was to reveal the conditions for developing self-regulation of learning for students of the helping professions. Attention was focused on cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions of the self-regulation of student learning. A tool was created for measuring the level of self-regulation of student learning, which allowed for further research in the field. Workers of the Department of Pedagogical Sciences publish their articles in international and domestic academic journals and also publish monograph chapters in monographs.

### **Other activities related to development of the field**

2013 proved to be the most significant year. In that year, workers at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences were involved in setting up the Social Education journal (established in co-operation with Masaryk University's Faculty of Education, its Editor-in-Chief has been Jakub Hladík since 2016) and setting up the Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy (with Jakub Hladík as Chair of the Executive Board). The journal and association play an important role in the development of social pedagogy as an academic field. The Social Education journal creates a unique space for specialists in social pedagogy and the wider public to publish papers, leading to the development of social pedagogy and its firmer establishment within the system of pedagogic disciplines. The association is a discussion and working platform, which also advocates for legislative changes focused on including social educators amongst pedagogical workers. In promoting this objective, the association has recently issued a job description for social educator in elementary schools. In the past, the association has also issued the Standards of Education in Social Pedagogy for different types of study programmes. In addition to these activities, which workers at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences have played a large role in, a number of

workshops, conferences and meetings are set up during every academic year designed both for students and academic staff in the field of social pedagogy, and the general public.

### Figures working at the workplace

Prof. PhDr. Vlastimil Švec, CSc. founded the Social Pedagogy academic discipline at Tomas Bata University in Zlín. Under his management, the first accreditation materials were produced, and it was Prof. Švec who gave the field its more general character focused on the helping professions with firm connections to social work. His stress on the necessity of an interdisciplinary curriculum concept and ensuring there is a wide field of jobs available for graduates in both educational, and in particular social, fields, remains clear today within the discipline. Prof. Švec was the first FH dean and worked hard to secure the development of pedagogy and non-pedagogy field of study. His contribution can also be seen in our emphasis on high-quality publishing activities and undertaking research projects, which he encouraged amongst his younger colleagues. One renowned social pedagogue who worked at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences for a number of years was PhDr. Antonín Bůžek, Ph.D. He particularly enriched teaching and creative activities with the topics of children's rights and preventing risky behaviour. Like Prof. Švec, Dr. Bůžek spent many years in the Czech Pedagogical Society. Czech and foreign personalities in education and social pedagogy are, in addition to the issue of educating Romani, a topic investigated by doc. PhDr. Mgr. Jaroslav Balvín, CSc., who currently works at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences. Doc. Balvín played a significant role in popularising the educational studies of M. Dědič and in understanding the social pedagogical aspects in the works of P. Pitter, J. Korczak, A. S. Makarenko and L. N. Tolstoy.

### Conclusion

Social Pedagogy has a firm foothold at Zlín. It remains one of the key field of study for the faculty. Many academic staff who work at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences, which runs the social pedagogy, focus their pedagogical and research activities on developing social pedagogy and are active in the Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy, in editorial work at the Social Education journal, and in many other activities.

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Jakub Hladík works as an associate professor at the Department of Pedagogical Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Tomas Bata University in Zlín. He is interested in social pedagogy, self-regulation and multicultural education. In this research field, he has published articles in domestic and foreign journals. He has been a member of many research teams. He is the chairman of the Association of Educators in Social Pedagogy, Czech Republic, and he is the editor-in-chief of the journal Social Education.