

OPINION

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regarding materials submitted for participation in a competition
for the academic position of **"Professor"**
of **St. Sofia University Kliment Ohridski**

in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences

professional area 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in ... (Methodology of teaching a foreign language in a digital environment - English and Turkish), announced in the State Gazette, issue 88 of 18.10.2024.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order of the Rector of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski No. RD 38-664 dated 06.12.2024, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of **"Professor"** in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical Sciences, professional area 1.3. Pedagogy of teaching in ... (Methodology of teaching a foreign language in a digital environment - English and Turkish), announced in the State Gazette, issue 88 of 18.10.2024, announced for the needs of Faculty of Classical and New Philologies of SU St. Kliment Ohridski.

In the competition for "Professor", the only candidate is Professor Danail Kirilov Danov, PhD, a lecturer in the Department of Preschool and Media Pedagogy at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski.

The presented set of documents and materials on paper and electronic media is, in terms of volume and scientific issues, in full compliance with the profile of the competition, with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its Implementation, as well as with the Regulations for the Conditions and Procedure for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

For the current procedure, Professor Danail Kirilov Danov, PhD has applied a total of 3 monographs (two of which are co-authored) and 12 articles in the field of media literacy and digital learning with a focus on the theory and practice of foreign language teaching and

intercultural education, demonstrating diverse and rich research, teaching and practical experience. The scientific works selected for the current procedure cover only the period 2021-2024 and have been published in national and international refereed and indexed specialized publications. The presented research has not been used in previous procedures for scientific or academic growth. The number of citations (total 23), 6 of which in Scopus and WoS - indisputable evidence of the recognition of the candidate's research activity, is impressive. The accumulated rich theoretical and practical, scientific and teaching experience is also visible in the implementation of 3 international educational and applied scientific projects over the past three years, one of which is ongoing.

The report on compliance with the minimum national requirements for holding the position of "professor" shows a significantly higher number of scientometric points across the various groups of indicators, exceeding the required minimum.

2. General characteristics of the candidate work

Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, PhD is a graduate of the Faculty of Classical and New Philologies at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski with Majors in Turkology, English Philology, Social Studies and Media, holds a Master's degree in History, Politics and Social studies from prestigious universities in London and Prague, a Doctor's degree in Pedagogy (since 2011), and a Doctor's degree in Media Pedagogy and Media Literacy from Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (since 2019).

The candidate's professional biography is respectable. His work over two decades in high management positions in the BBC World Service, Radio Express, the Open Society Foundation, the Bulgarian National Radio, the Center for the Development of Communications and Human Resources in the field of strategic planning, the creation of communication strategies, media analysis and production activities, as well as human resources management cannot be left out of the opinion. His academic career is connected with the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts, initially as a guest lecturer, and later as a Chief assistant, Associate professor and currently a Professor in the Department of Preschool and Media Pedagogy. He is the author of 22 lecture courses for bachelors (7), masters (12) and doctoral students (3) in the field of media communication, history and theory of public relations, methodology of foreign language teaching in an intercultural environment, media pedagogy, digital media literacy, information and communication technologies and many others (both in Bulgarian and English), which is a definite basis for a high assessment of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activity.

There is more than sufficient classroom workload, corresponding to the requirements for holding the position of "Professor". Prof. Danail Danov, PhD is the scientific supervisor of 75 masters and 5 doctoral students, 4 of whom have already successfully defended their dissertations. He is a guest lecturer at prestigious educational national and international forums and educational institutions in Japan, Brazil, India, Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, etc.

The above is reason to assert that the candidate has the necessary experience to hold the academic position of "Professor".

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and applied work

In the candidate's scientific development over the last four years, two research areas stand out: media literacy and learning in a digital environment. The scientific publications of Prof. Danail Danov, PhD are evidence of diverse scientific interests, a profound creative and innovative approach and have undeniable theoretical and practical significance.

A central place in Prof. Danov's scientific work is occupied by the monograph ***Fundamentals of Media Pedagogy: A Guide to the World of Digital Culture and Its Tools***, Sofia University Publishing, Sofia, 2023, ISBN-978-054-07-5855, with a significant contribution to highlighting the overall importance of media literacy in the personal and educational development of adolescents.

Particularly valuable in a practical and applied aspect are the two collective monographs in which the candidate is a co-author: ***Empowering parents in the digital age***, Star Press, Athens, 2023, ISBN 978-618-84619-3-2, P. Celot (ed.) – a practical guide for parents, relevant to the realities of the 21st century, aimed at developing digital skills and competencies. Special attention also deserves the model for implementing a teaching methodology for training media literacy teachers, approbated in a wide European context, developed in the monograph ***Media Coach: How to Become a Successful Media Coach***, EAVI, Brussels, 2021, ISBN 978-2-9602904-0-0, P. Celot (ed.).

Four articles (No. 4, 5, 9 and 11) are devoted to the analysis of the state of media literacy in Bulgaria, the ways of its integration at different educational levels, the need for the development of media pedagogy, as well as the opportunities for the development of media literacy even in preschool age through the prism of modern linguodidactology. The expanded interpretation of *media literacy is supported* as: 1) a complex of skills and competence for using

digital media for different purposes and contexts; 2) an educational approach and 3) civic motivation.

Digital culture as a whole, digitalization and educational trends based on technological innovations, distance learning forms and the challenges of foreign language teaching in a digital environment are the focus of research attention in articles No. 6 and 10 of the presented list.

Particularly valuable and corresponding to my own scientific views are the articles dedicated to the challenges facing intercultural education in a digital environment, the role of the teacher in the implementation of integration educational models in a multicultural environment (No. 7, 8), in whose summaries the author's many years of practical experience is expressed.

For the last four years, Prof. Danov has participated as a lead researcher in the development of three international scientific projects, preparing training modules for teachers and pedagogical specialists for working in a digital environment.

Among the main distinguishing advantages of the impressive scientific work of Prof. Danail Danov, in terms of volume and quality, both as a whole and the one selected for the purposes of the competition, which have to be attributed to him, are: an innovative interdisciplinary approach, originality of scientific research, modern methodology, depth of scientific analysis, creativity in deriving new ideas and offering proven useful practices and working educational models.

The materials submitted for participation in the competition impress with the organic integrity of their educational qualifications, professional experience, and scientific achievements and present the candidate as a successful teacher and serious researcher in the preferred scientific fields.

No evidence of plagiarism was found.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no significant critical remarks regarding the documents provided and the scientific contributions formulated by the candidate.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials with which Prof. Danail Danov, PhD participates in this competition comply with all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the

Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the relevant regulations of the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski. The scientometric indicators are detailed and reliably notified in the attached reference. All submitted works are conscientiously and comprehensively annotated.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works, in which there are internationally recognized original scientific and applied contributions. The theoretical developments have practical applicability. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, PhD are indisputable.

After reviewing the presented scientific papers and the scientific contributions contained in them, I have every reason to highly evaluate the professional qualities of the candidate and, without a doubt, recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to elect Prof. Danail Kirilov Danov, PhD, as a "Professor" of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, scientific field 1. Pedagogical Sciences, PScs 1.3. Pedagogy of Teaching in ... (Methodology of Teaching a Foreign Language - English and Turkish).

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Opinion prepared by:

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