

Faculty of Forestry at Poznań University of Life Sciences - its structure, staff and management

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ARTICLE

Abstract

The study presents the structure, organization, resources and main activities (in various fields) of the Faculty of Forestry at Poznań University of Life Sciences. All the resources and activities have been described in the context of the requirements and needs of the educational process, assuming that they are significant contributors to the efficiency of that process.

Keywords: forestry, faculty of forestry, organization, structure

Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono strukturę, organizację i działania (na różnych poziomach) Wydziału Leśnego Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczego w Poznaniu. Zasoby i działania przedstawiono w kontekście wymagań i potrzeb procesu dydaktycznego przy założeniu, że są one ważnym elementem wpływającym na efektywność tego procesu.


Celem strategicznym Wydziału Leśnego UP w Poznaniu jest kształcenie studentów, które wyposażą ich w umiejętności, które pozwolą im zdobywanie pracy na konkurencyjnym rynku pracy.

Wydział dzieli się na dziesięć Katedr: Ekonomiki Leśnictwa, Inżynierii Leśnej, Entomologii Leśnej, Przyrodniczych Podstaw Leśnictwa, Fitopatologii Leśnej, Techniki Leśnej, Użytkowania Lasu, Urządzania Lasu, Łowiectwa i Ochrony Lasu oraz Hodowli Lasu.

Większość Katedr znajduje się w czterech budynkach w kampusie Collegium Cieszkowskich na Sołacz, które są otoczone Ogrodem Dendrologicznym. Budynek Wydziału jest wyposażony w sieć komputerową z zapewnieniem dostępu do zasobów sieci lokalnej i internetu.

Kształcenia studentów na Wydziale Leśnictwa jest prowadzone nie tylko w oparciu o własną bazę dydaktyczną na terenie kampusu Cieszkowski. Studenci korzystają również z bogatego wyposażenia (sale wykładowe i sale lekcyjne), które są zarządzane przez Uniwersytet Przyrodniczy. Wszystkie sale wykładowe wyposażone są w sprzęt audiowizualny. Ćwiczenia laboratoryjne i seminaria odbywają się w salach ćwiczeniowych i laboratoriach.

Na Wydziale działa „Koło Leśników”, w którym obecnie działa dziesięć sekcji: botaniki leśnej, entomologiczna, geomatyczna, łowiecka, strzelecka, kynologii łowieckiej, ornitologiczna, teriologiczna, fotograficzna i przyrodnicza. W ramach działań Koła Leśników studenci realizować mogą swoje zainteresowania naukowe, prowadząc badania, w tym badania terenowe, publikować wyniki tych badań i przedstawiać je na konferencjach krajowych i międzynarodowych. Na corocznych przeglądach Studenckich Kół Naukowych z różnych wydziałów UP, studenci leśnictwa utrzymują wiodącą pozycję. Poza tym na Wydziale aktywnie działa kilka innych organizacji, z których na szczególne podkreślenie zasługuje Zespół Muzyki Myśliwskiej „Venator” - wielokrotny mistrz Polski, zdobywca prestiżowych nagród.



Warunki pracy, jakie są przygotowane dla studentów Wydziału Leśnego (infrastruktura, zespół pracowników naukowych, dostęp do najnowszych osiągnięć nauki, techniki i kultury) i ich wszechstronne wykształcenie dają nadzieję, że po ukończeniu studiów będą oni osiągnąć sukces na rynku pracy i to nie tylko w branży leśnej.

Introduction

The mission of the Poznań University of Life Sciences (PULS), an internationally recognized university center for research and teaching, is to serve society through the implementation of quality education and multidisciplinary research in the field of environmental sciences, with particular respect for the principles of sustainable development. This particularly implies the following:

1. education of students, while maintaining standards and quality assurance, in order to equip them with necessary skills and to prepare them to compete in the contemporary labor market and the functioning in the knowledgebased society,
2. conducting research and development activities and provision of research services, dissemination and multiplication of scientific achievements,
3. education and promotion of scientific staff,
4. training to acquire and supplement knowledge, supplying various opportunities to continue education (postgraduate studies, courses, etc.).

The strategic goal of the PULS, including the Faculty of Forestry, in the scope of education is training students in a way that guarantees graduates to be equipped with skills and competencies in accordance with the highest European standards and to be fully prepared to carry out professional careers in a competitive labor market, both domestic and foreign. Although the Poznań University of Life Sciences has a quality assurance system for education, the University's strategic goal is to further develop and improve that system, including in its framework both the experience of the accreditation and activities of other academic centers as well as teams of experts within the recognized national and international organizations.

Resources and organization

The Faculty is divided into the ten departments:

- Forest Economics,
- Forest Engineering,
- Forest Entomology,
- Forest Management,
- Forest Natural Foundations,
- Forest Pathology,
- Forest Technology,
- Forest Utilization,
- Game Management and Forest Protection,
- Silviculture.

Four of them are further divided into sub-departments. There are three sub-departments in the Department of Silviculture (Sub-department of Ecological Foundations of Silviculture, Sub-department of Selection, Seed Production and Forest Nursery Management, Sub-department of Silvicultural Techniques) and 2 in the following Departments: Forest Management (Sub-department of Dendrometry and Forest Productivity, Sub-department of Forest Management), Forest Natural Foundations (Sub-department of Dendrology and Forest Phytosociology, Sub-department of Forest Sites), Game Management and Forest Protection (Sub-department of Forest Protection, Sub-department of Game Management).

Faculty of Forestry at PULS has the right to award doctoral (PhD) and postdoctoral (habilitation) degrees in the field of forest sciences, discipline of forestry and the academic title of professor of forest sciences.

The most important changes which took place at the Faculty of Forestry in recent years include:

1. developing the Faculty in renovated buildings on the Cieszkowski campus of PULS (at Sołacz),
2. preparation and improvement of degree programs according to the rules of the Bologna process, and currently - working on adaptation of the curricula to the provisions of the new Polish Act on Higher Education of 2011,
3. starting education in English; the first step was the establishment of 3-semester stationary MSc program. The MSc program in Forestry is geared for students who have completed their undergraduate studies in Forestry and have obtained the degree of BSc in Forestry or in related sciences.

Faculty of Forestry staff are academic teachers who are engaged in teaching primarily in the scope of forestry and research related to the teaching process. Currently the Department employs (as of 15 December 2011) 78 full time faculty, including 17 with the academic title of professor and 12 with the academic degree of doctor habilitated, and 49 with PhD degree. Among the employees of the Faculty, academics for whom the university is the main place of work, the vast majority of the employment relationship is provided by virtue of nomination. Besides academic teachers, the Faculty employs 33 engineering-technical and 5 administrative staff workers. Administrative staff support the Dean's office and provide services to students. The current state of staff provides a high level of realization of the teaching process in forestry.

In the human resources policy, particular emphasis is put on the following issues:

1. introducing mechanisms for development and promotion of staff,
2. creating conditions for staff to do intensive self-education and networking with professionals of other disciplines,
3. supporting people applying for different grants and performing research to the implement solutions into the economic practice,
4. strengthening links between academic staff and the practice and adapting research problems into the teaching process.
5. help in development of young academic staff.

Faculty of Forestry conducts studies at all levels of education (studies of I, II and III degree; full-time and part-time). The percentage of doctoral students in reference to the total number of students is as the average in PULS.

Offering high-quality teaching services requires such a number of academic staff which allows easy access to a person engaged in educational activities. Teacher's availability can be measured by a number of students per one teacher. For forestry, this relationship oscillates around 1:20 in relation to teachers representing a minimum academic staff complement. The current regulations require that this ratio is not lower than 1:60.

The number of students in laboratory groups is from 15 to 30, depending on the type of class.

Infrastructure

Most Departments are located in four buildings on Cieszkowski campus in Sołacz and surrounded by Dendrology Garden. The Faculty building is equipped with a computer network providing access to local network resources and Internet resources.

Education of students at the Faculty of Forestry is conducted not only on the basis of own teaching facilities in a building located on the Cieszkowski campus. There are also other rooms available (auditorium hall, lecture halls and classrooms), which are administered by the University.

All lecture rooms are equipped with audiovisual devices. Laboratory exercises and seminars are held in auditorium halls and laboratories. Those include, among others:

1. 1 computer lab - with 8 networked computers with access to the server and the Internet, equipped with office, statistical and specialized software,
2. computer lab for State Forests Informatics System - with 16 networked computers and 16 complete sets used by State Forests administration (field computer, printer, docking station) having access to the main server of State Forests,
3. GIS computer lab - consisting of 16 networked computers with access to the server and the Internet, equipped with various geomatics software, used mainly for teaching on GIS, remote sensing and digital image processing,
4. zoological and game management lab - designed to study forest zoology and game management, with dry exhibits of various invertebrates, skeletons of birds and mammals, wet exhibits of various invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, a collection of skulls and feces of mammals, etc.,
5. phytopathology lab - equipped with 18 optical microscopes and collections of fungi,
6. rich collection of exhibits of wood samples from World trees (over 5000 samples),
7. GIS and remote sensing lab - 16 computer stations with specialized software with the access to specialized equipment,
8. entomology lab - collections of insects and their feeding grounds,
9. a few classrooms with 20-40 seats.

The Faculty also owns didactic facilities in two Forest Experimental Stations (FES) in Murowana Goślina and Siemianice. In FES Murowana Goślina there is a dormitory with 75 beds in double and triple rooms, lecture auditorium with 100 seats, and two general-purpose teaching rooms. There are also other didactic objects, such as the arboretum and alpinarium. In FES Siemianice there are two dormitories with 75 beds and 60 beds in double and triple rooms, lecture auditorium with 100 seats and two general-purpose teaching rooms. There are also other didactic objects, such as the arboretum, forest education center with forest classroom and forest nursery.

Foreign languages teaching is conducted in laboratories of Center of Foreign Languages where students are provided with necessary audio-visual equipment.

Sports activities are carried out in the sports complex on the Sołacz campus. Students can take advantage of sports halls, tennis halls and open sports fields.

Students can use on-site book and journal collections held in various units of the Faculty. Above all, however, students can take advantage of the Main Library and the libraries operating in various faculties of the University. PULS library works in the network of Poznań Libraries Foundation and their resources include over 720,000 volumes - books, periodicals and special collections (dissertations, master theses, cartographic collections, norms and standards, microfiche). The library is computerized, with several stations working in a local area network. Readers can use 20 computer stations for searching Polish and foreign computer database directories and bibliographic databases on biological sciences, agriculture, nutrition, biotechnology, ecology, etc., and Internet resources. The most important convenience is on-campus access to the major full-text bibliography databases containing the most important scientific journals. Reading rooms, information center and a room with directory and textbook rental options are equipped with modern computers and xerographic devices, which facilitates the use of library collections and bibliographic databases.

ICT is applied in the teaching process of many subjects (information technology, informatics in forestry, statistics, forest productivity, dendrometry, GIS, remote sensing, and others). Teaching with the use of novel information technologies is enabled by the technical infrastructure, supported by the University Computer Center. Classroom equipment allows to use most of the available types of teaching materials (multimedia presentations, training films, transparencies, simulation computer programs, etc.).

In order to facilitate teaching and learning, Faculty staff develop scripts and academic textbooks. A lot of information is published in teaching materials continuously developed and presented to students, in many cases through an electronic platform. Individual units of the Faculty provide their own specialized collections of books, containing a total of several thousand books and journals in forestry and related fields. In the departments, there are also numerous support materials in the form of herbaria, collections of fungi, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, wood samples and others. They constitute an important source of information to help students gain the detailed knowledge of plants and animals. A lot of current information, essential to maintain effective teaching relations, is provided on the teacher-student line with the use of email and Faculty web site (<http://wles.up.poznan.pl>).

Activities of students

Student Government is an organization of all the students of the Poznań University of Life Sciences. Its main field of activity is to represent and protect student's rights in educational, social and living issues. Elected annually in a democratic way, Government representatives form collective bodies through which they represent the students in contacts with the university authorities, participate in the work of the University Senate and Faculty Board. Furthermore, the PULS Student Government organizes recreational and cultural events (including University Days Agronalia), national and international conferences of young foresters and foresters competitions, etc. The Student Government also represents students in contacts with other Faculties of Forestry in Poland and abroad.

At the Department there is also active Foresters Scientific Association „Koło Leśników”, with currently operating ten sections: Forest Botany, Entomology, Geomatics, Game Management, Shooting, Hunting Cynology, Ornithology, Theriology, Photography and Nature. In the frame of the Association students realize their scientific interests, conduct research (including field investigations), publish results and present them at national and international conferences. At the annual reviews of Student Scientific Associations from various university faculties, forestry students gain leading positions. Besides, there are other organizations actively working at the Faculty, such as: Youth Branch of the Association of Foresters and Wood Technologists and Hunting Music Group „Venator” - multiple Polish champion and winner of prestigious awards.

Summary

The paper presents the structure, organization, resources and the main activities (at various levels) of the Faculty of Forestry in Poznań University of Life Sciences. Resources and activities are presented in the context of the requirements and needs of the teaching process with the assumption that they are an important element influencing the efficiency of that process.

The strategic objective of the Faculty of Forestry Agricultural University is education of students in order to equip them with the skills that will allow them to carry out careers in a competitive job market. Realization of this objective is subordinated to the organization and all the resources of the Department.

Most Departments are located in four buildings in Cieszkowski campus in Sołacz and surrounded by Dendrology Garden. The Faculty building is equipped with a computer network providing access to local network resources and the global Internet network.

Education of students at the Faculty Forestry is conducted not only on the basis of own teaching facilities in a building located on the Cieszkowski campus. There are also other rooms available (auditorium hall, lecture halls and classrooms), which are administered by the University. All lecture rooms are equipped with audiovisual devices. Laboratory exercises and seminars are held in auditorium halls and laboratories.

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Conditions for work that students are provided at the Faculty (infrastructure, academic staff, access to the latest achievements of science, technology and culture) and their versatile activities could make us suppose that after graduation they will reach success on labor market, but reality shows that it need not necessarily be true in case of forestry field and its surroundings.

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