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INTERDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION IDEA IN EDUCATION OF MANAGERS

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The development of industry, economic growth, and intensification of investment and innovation processes - all these issues can be solved effectively only by competent managers understanding modern market relations and business process management. This is a guarantee of the country's competitiveness and its economic security. Therefore, one of the priorities of the state policy of Belarus is education of managers. This involves updating the content and methods of education of managers. The paper is devoted to the idea of integration of all disciplines established by the curriculum in education of managers to develop required competencies at the University.

Keywords: education of managers, interdisciplinary integration, competences of managers.

There exist a lot of interpretations of the term “competence”. Firstly it was proposed by N. Homsy in 1957 for transformation grammar and language teaching theory [2]. Experts in a business sphere gave a great number of definitions of the term “competence” [1; 3; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 10; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17]. The author sticks to the following interpretation of the term: professional competence of managers is an integral characteristic of business and personal qualities that reflect the level of knowledge, skills, experience, and abilities which are sufficient for the decision of theoretical and practical problems in professional activity [6].

The development of competences is not localized within a single discipline. Simultaneously, all disciplines planned in a curriculum get involved in this process [18]. All the competences are classified in 3 groups (Figure 1): academic, personal - social and professional competences [6].

The development of professional competences of managers, that are necessary for solving business, scientific and applied problems for sustainable development of a country, requires innovative approaches for education of managers [17], approaches, which help graduates to be “knowledgeable across disciplines” with the ability to “examine critically, synthesise and evaluate knowledge across a broad range of disciplines” (the Attributes of the Melbourne Graduate 2009). Therefore, interdisciplinary integration [11] in managers’ education can be an important methodological condition for developing competencies established by the University curriculum.

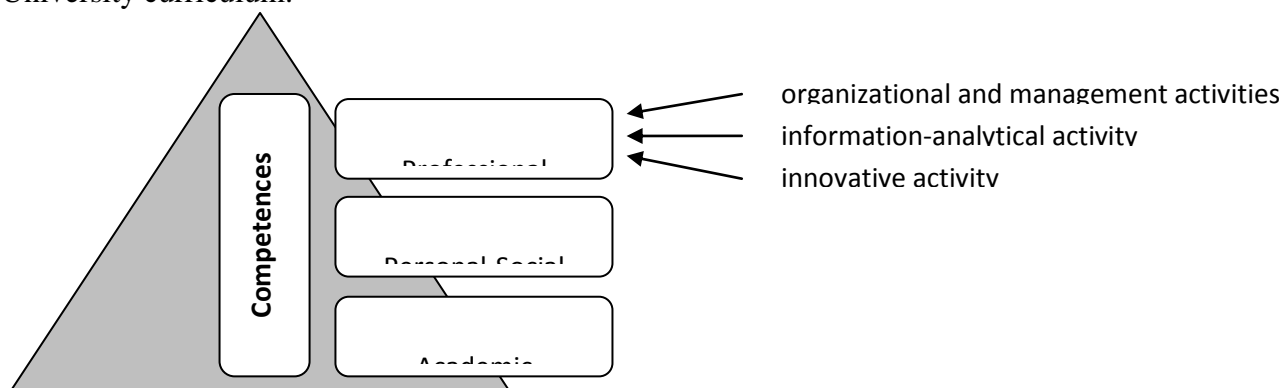


Figure 1. Three groups of competences

These competences are generated by interdisciplinary professional activities tasks for future managers when they study at the University (Figure 2).

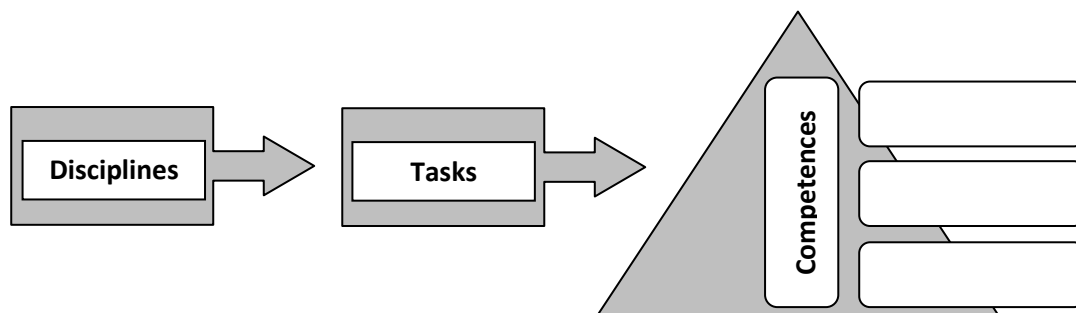


Figure 2. The connection between disciplines, tasks and competences

The correspondence of competences to tasks can be presented in a table.

	Professional tasks	Competences							Disciplines involved in developing and improving competences
1.									

- Every interdisciplinary professional task can be applied for the development and improvement of various competences.
- A competence can be developed and improved in the process of any task solution.
- A competence can be developed and improved in learning various disciplines. There are a lot of benefits from interdisciplinary technique.
- Integration of all disciplines helps students to form system thinking, integral vision of scientific, social and professional problems, and scientific world outlook.
- Thanks to interdisciplinary integration students are enriched by lifelong learning habits and developed universal competences.
- Interdisciplinary technique improves team – work skills and enhances communication skills (Jones 2009).
- Integration of all disciplines allows students to participate as active creators and competent decision – makers.

Interdisciplinary ideas should be shared with all professors and lectures of the faculty so that they can have the occasion to contribute their knowledge and skills to offer students the opportunity to see connections and relevance between disciplines and understand a variety of perspectives for their competency after the graduation of the University.

The introduction of the interdisciplinary integration idea in the development of managers' competences is considered as the prerequisite for the modernization of the education of managers in order to increase competitiveness of the country. This idea means the integration of all disciplines pointed in a curriculum for the development and improvement of universal interdisciplinary and professional managers' competences that are necessary for solving business, scientific and applied problems.

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