

STUDY ON THE METHODS OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR ADMISSION IN THE UASVM

Roxana MIHALACHE¹

e-mail: roxxanac@yahoo.com

Abstract

This article takes into account the history of criminal procedure, trying to highlight the moments which determined major changes in the development of this science. It also analyses how the modern criminal trial has been shaped, as a mix between the adversarial and the inquisitorial system. The article also tries to offer an image of the particularities of the two major systems in criminal procedure, namely the common-law system and the continental, Romano-Germanic law system. As the latest decades have brought in an unprecedented emphasis on human rights, this paper refers to the effect that this situation has on the dynamic development of the criminal trial. Also, the article shortly analyses the situation of Romanian Criminal Procedure, especially in regard to determining the major influences which shaped the present-day Romanian criminal trial.

Key words: recruitment and selection of candidates, quality of school education units

The recruitment and selection of candidates for admission to UASVM Iasi is one of the key components of human resources management besides teacher recruitment and selection, training and improvement of both students and teachers, and improvement of the evaluation methods (Ciurea, 2005, p. 909).

Regarding the admission of candidates it is known that the performance that students have during the university training and later, during their professional activity, depend on the "quality" of the human factor of the high school graduates who apply for admission.

The recruitment of candidates for admission has a complex character. It aims to ensure the "mass" of candidates i.e. the greatest number of candidates for admission to facilitate the selection process, but also to "attract genuinely suitable candidates" (Tyson, 2006, 143). It is also important to increase the geographical area for recruiting the candidates, the quality of school education units from where you make the selection. Not least, there counts the advertising methods designed to arouse the interest of high school graduates for the existing specializations within the institution.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

To collect the data necessary for the study there were primarily used the official documents of UASVM. They refer to the competition criteria and methods to promote the admission, the admission

evaluation reports, institutional self-evaluation reports.

The methods used were SWOT analysis for the institution, analyses regarding the promotion methods and materials and the results of admission, questionnaires given to college freshmen on the effects of different methods of attracting the candidates.

We took into account the data from different periods 2000-2014 to see the elements of evolution of the recruitment process of candidates for admission.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The recruitment and the selection of candidates for admission is held every year. It begins in the first semester of the year (January to April) and is done for the next academic year that begins in autumn.

3.1. SWOT analysis of UASVM regarding the candidates' admission

We present below, using the SWOT analysis, the internal and the external factors that influence this process and leave a mark on the strategy implemented by the University. The data are presented in Table 1.

¹ University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Iași

Table 1
SWOT analysis of UASVM regarding the candidates' admission

Strengths	Weaknesses
The University has a broad array of specializations There is a modern base of teaching materials There is a campus that has accommodation for most students, canteen and sports halls, club, internet etc The teaching staff is competent, and highly specialized. There is a strong material base for practical training of students.	Not all the specializations have the material base completed The number of scholarships is limited and their amount is insufficient The accommodation needs improvements, and the spaces are sometimes overcrowded
Opportunities	Threats
The presence of Romania in EU determines the need for a greater number of specialists in agricultural sector There is an important number of programs that support specialists that decide to live in rural areas The allocation of funds for development of agriculture and the countryside for the period 2015-2020.	Declining birth rate nationwide in the last 15 years Exodus of young people in the Western countries A drastic reduction of agricultural high schools and classes with agricultural specialization Reduced attractiveness of youth for the activities in agriculture

UASVM has a total of 14 specializations varied as field of activity providing a wide range of opportunities for future specialists in rural areas. Add to this the numerous specializations of master and doctorate.

The opportunities that the economic climate offers, determined by the funds allocated by EU to agriculture, is an important stimulant for starting businesses in rural areas or to practice various professions in this space.

There are several weaknesses with prospects of being attenuate or removed, but most important there are some threats regarding the reduction of the number of candidates for admission, which are largely related to declining birth rates and the exodus of young high school graduates to labour markets which are materially more attractive.

3.2. The offer of university regarding the specializations and admission seats

In order to understand the evolution and the future of the economic and social life of a nation one should understand world tendencies; at the same time, the national education system should impose the necessary feedback adaptable to the educational perception of each nation (Antonesei L., 2000). That is why, planning the student necessary for UASVM Iasi is based on the following: the possibility of finding jobs after graduation; the capacity of student training

represented by the teaching spaces (classrooms and workshops, laboratories for practical work, their practical training bases); increasing the quality of teachers. Offer of tuition is sent to the ministry which analyzes and sets the enrolment quotas for the following academic cycle, spread across specializations and forms of education (full-time and distance education).

In the 2000-2014 period, the offer of seats on admission to the university registered an upward trend. The seats financed from the budget of schooling increased from 154 seats in 2000/2001 academic year to 183 seats after 1 year, in 2001/2002. Subsequently these figures had in general a constant character (309 in 2014/2015).

Since the 2002/2003 academic year there were introduced seats with fee, but the number of those occupied was relatively low. Please note that starting with 2008 there were distributed seats for distance learning for some specializations (economic engineering, agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry).

3.3. Recruiting candidates for admission

Due to the specific activity of higher education in which students represent the object of work of the teachers, recruiting candidates for admission shows distinct features on the area of recruitment, methods and periods of time when performing.

University's main recruitment methods were:

- sending teams to promote the university offer
- compiling and disseminating posters
- producing and distributing films to promote the university image
- compiling and disseminating of leaflets;
- sending ads to radio, television and Internet;
- providing days of "open doors" for future high school graduates;
- posting at the university headquarters the information necessary for admission.

a. Sending the teams in schools to promote the university offer

These teams were made up of teachers with communication skills consisting of 2-4 people representing the university's departments.

The target group represented a significant number of schools in the villages of Moldova usually located in the university's area of influence.

The task of team members consisted in discussions with the pupils from the final high school year before the baccalaureate exam, where there were presented the strengths of various professions in various specializations, their beauty, the facilities provided by the university etc. At some discussions pupils of 11th grade were present,

in the perspectives of making them aware of the agricultural professions.

On this occasion they responded to questions asked by students for one of the specializations offered by the University. The number of teams has been generally constant (11-12) settling a tradition on routes and localities to promote the offer. Emphasis was placed on high schools of Iasi and the major cities of Iasi County (Pascani, Targu Frumos, Podu Iloaiei, Miroslava) finding that the largest share of candidates came from high schools of these localities.

b. Compiling and disseminating posters

These posters are meant to be displayed in public places with access from those interested and in high schools where there was no promotion through direct discussions with high school students.

A poster also included the following sections:

- Identification of university (address, phone, fax)
- A statement that in some years was as follows: ... "important choices in life are those that totally change you -and one of them is the choice of being a student ..."
- "who we are". It shows the date the institution was founded, the types of faculties and specializations, elements of prestige and international recognition.
- Offer of specializations and the number of seats (with or without fee, and the fees).
- Selection criteria (exam or no exam and the percentage of various marks in determining the final standings)
- types of qualifications that can be obtained and their international recognition.
- The various didactic or social facilities (accommodation and meals in the campus canteen, modern sports base, scholarships from budget funds and own grants, ways of making internships in the country and abroad, Wi-Fi in library and in campus, a modern didactic base and elite teaching staff, the possibility of preparing for Master and PhD).
- periods of enrolment and admission
- Documents required for enrolment and related fees
- Possible careers to be applied after graduation such as: companies in agriculture and food processing, consultant in agriculture and rural development, school and university education, agricultural research etc.

c. Producing and distributing videos to promote the university image

The impact of image on potential candidates for admission is well-known, especially on those

that have not decided on their future careers. The university conducted several promotional films where elements of professional and social interest were highlighted. These films were shown in high schools by promoting teams. For reasons of pupils' time and the large number of schools where the university promotion was done, these videos were not presented in all schools.

Making CDs with these promotion videos to be given to high school students would have a greater impact than their selective presentation.

d. Compiling and disseminating leaflets

This method has the advantage that it is less costly than the previous methods and also can be replicated in a large number of specimens that can be accessed by a large number of prospective candidates for admission. It was the most common form of university promotion in 15 years. These brochures contain detailed information about the specializations within the university and the conditions of admission.

e. Transmitting advertisements in the press, radio, television, Internet.

It is a form of promotion that has relatively high costs (except Internet) and has been used in a lesser extent. It was however done every year, especially around periods of enrolment.

f. Making open door days for prospective students

It is a promotion method that was applied recently in the last 2-3 years. It requires a complex organizational process that involves a high logistical support by providing transport for pupils outside Iasi.

But it is highly efficient because prospective candidate can get direct information about the visual and auditory teaching spaces and the university campus.

Surveys have shown that the impressions from these visits were decisive in the choice of academic specialization.

g. Displaying the information necessary for university enrolment at the headquarters

This information is displayed when starts the preparation process for the next academic year. On the notice board of each faculty there is a separate section on admission and in the central hall a general poster displays information about all specializations of the university and those on the enrolment.

3.4. Entrance examination/enrolment results

We present the situation at the Faculty of Agriculture for some years in the 2000-2014 period. The data are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

The number of seats and applicants

Nr.	Specification	Years			
		2000/2001	2001/2002	2009/2010	2014/2015
1.	Budgeted seats	154	183	311	309
2.	Number of schools visited	-	94	184	220
3.	Total of applicants	269	423	447	612
4.	Number of applicants per seat	1.74	2.31	1.43	1.98

In the first part of Table 2 we show the situation on admission in two consecutive years, 2000 and 2001. In 2000, the university promotion was reduced, only displaying the number of seats on a poster within the university and in the second year (2001) it was used a combination of methods, among which we mention the formation of a team of promotion and presentation of the offer in high schools in Moldova. The data contained in the table show an increase by 57.2% of the number of applicants only in a year, mostly due to the effect of changing the promotion method. Taking into consideration the increase of number of funded seats by 18.8% , there were 2.31 applicants/ seat in 2001 (in comparison to 2000,1.74 applicants/ seat).

At the beginning, the promotional methods were less (travel in schools, leaflets) after 2010 the methods varied, appearing new methods (broadcast films, open day, internet). It was also expanded the geographical area of high schools where direct promotion was made.

Since 2009, in the whole country the number of candidates for admission decreased due to the process of lowering the birth rate since 1991. This situation, coupled with the fact that the number of seats financed from the budget increased, not diminished, in general, competition remained at relatively high levels, enabling better selection compared to the period 1990-2000 when the competition was reduced.

Thus, after a relative decrease in the number of candidates per seat registered in 2009-2011, an increase occurs as an effect of the diversification of policies promoting the university offer. The result was the entrance exam for the academic year 2014 / 2015, when there were 1.98/seat, something remarkable given the fact that many colleges in Iasi or in the country were unable to cover the seats allocated from the budget.

Of the four existing specializations at the Faculty of Agriculture, the biggest competition was recorded in Economic engineering in agriculture - 2.6 candidates per seat. Competition and other specializations proved relatively high. Biology candidates- 2.0, Agriculture - 1.83 candidates and TPPA - 1.75 candidates.

We believe that to attract more candidates to the entrance examination and to improve the selection process it is needed to increase the

geographical area, on the one hand, and a wide range of content promotion methods, on the other hand.

3.5. Student opinions on some matters affecting the entrance examination

To identify the means to improve the image promotion of the Faculty of Agronomy for applicants, a study was made based on questionnaire handed in to students specialized in Technology of processing agricultural products. Questionnaires were completed by 40 freshmen student belonging to this specialization and aims entrance examination in the summer of 2015.

The questionnaire included 11 questions whose content covers: direct contact with a means of promotion; promotional methods to which they had access and which they consider most useful for the candidate; if the information provided was satisfactory; it is useful first to receive information about future career; if other universities had promotion actions and their appreciation; admission methods agreed and if they considered the correct choice of profession; intentions to exploit the diploma after graduation.

a. If in high school you were presented a direct promotion on the offer of the university

The answers to this question show that 64.2% of a total student received a direct means of promoting the study offer. This brings out an important point, namely that the university has significant reserves to increase the number of candidates by enlarging the geographical coverage of high school subjects, and finding ways to promote university offer to reach a larger number of students. The visit of the representative of the university in one day at a high school does not allow contact with all students, potential candidates, because, among other things, the school schedule, cannot be stopped during the teaching process and bringing students to school in their free time for promotion is difficult to accomplish.

b. Methods of promotion to which students had access

Data from the questionnaire showed that 42.8% of students have benefited from a direct meeting with a representative of the university. They had access to information contained in leaflets distributed at the meeting.

Among the methods used to promote the university first agreed by the student stood promotional picture of university life, with direct explanations received during viewing.

Very few, 5.2% participated in the action "Open Day" and only those in Iasi, which requires additional organizational effort taking into consideration that this method is so effective, as demonstrated in some universities in Western Europe.

It is significant that almost 60% of students said they had obtained information about the university and offer studies on the Internet, something which should be exploited in the future by enriching the format and content promotion offers through this modern informing potential candidates.

About half of the students said they had obtained information from friends, former or current student of the university. It is an interesting aspect to be thought of by the management of the institution in order to find means of stimulating current students to "recruit" future students. It is a marketing method used in the trade and that can be adapted and used in the field of higher education institutions since the phenomenon of declining birth rates and thus reducing the number of graduates of undergraduate education continues.

c. When the university offer should be made

In the opinion of 45% of the students, it is better that the study offer of the University to be made at the beginning of 11th grade of high school, considering that when they make their options for future professional careers some extra information is welcomed especially for the undecided candidates. Some of the students (28.6%) said that this promotion should be made at the beginning of 12th grade, benefiting from greater information "freshness". The rest of the students said that the information must reach the university at the beginning of high school (18.6%) or in middle school (7.8%).

d. Competition of other universities

When asked if other universities have promoted educational offer 70.8% of current students stated that they have benefited from promotion from other universities. Students appreciated the quality of the methods used by UASVM, the educational offer.

e. Methods for admission

Among the methods for admission to the questionnaire offered, half of the students felt that it is good the admission system based on qualifications, based on certain criteria (different grades). Almost half 46.8% appreciated that the contest should be given, with written tests to ensure fairness between candidates. Only 3.2% felt that at admission to the portfolio should be added

and a motivation letter, as practice found in many universities in the world.

There were other questions that have targeted other issues in the first year of study (communication with administration staff, contact with the future profession, professional options after completing studies) that do not have direct implications for this study.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Recruitment and selection of candidates for admission to universities in Romania is one of the major concerns. The cause is the decrease in the number of candidate in recent years driven mainly by decreasing birth rate and the financial issues.

2. In order to increase the number of applicants, in recent years UASVM has diversified the range of methods to promote educational opportunities through visits to high schools to make contact with prospective candidates, handing out leaflets with information about the specializations, presentation of films, information in the media, organizing open days etc.

3. The effect of introducing these methods resulted in the years an increasing number applicants with beneficial effects on their selection.

4. Investigations based on questionnaires among college freshmen shows that there are some deficiencies in the use of methods of promoting university offer targeting, among others, the recruitment geographic area, volume and quality of information transmitted by various means.

5. In terms of increased competition between universities to attract the candidates' admission, given the reduction in the overall number of potential candidates, the results of this study may provide useful elements in improving future strategies and policies to attract a large number of candidates to attend college.

REFERENCES

- Antonesei, L& colab., 2000** – *University management. From the leadership vision to the mission of success*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi.
- Ciurea, I.V., Mihalache, R., 2004** - *SWOT analysis of certain aspects of human resources management within U.S.A.M.V. Iași*, in Scientific works, Zootehnie Series, vol. 48, pp. 909-916.
- Ciurea, I.V., Brezuleanu, S., Ungureanu, G., 2005** - *Management*, "Ion Ionescu de la Brad" Publishing House, Iasi.
- Tyson, S., 2006** - *Essentials of Human Resource Management*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, UK.
- Mihalache, R., 2015** - *Motivation vs. need of ESP of engineering students*, The Journal of International Social Research, Vol. 8, Issue 36, pp. 968-979