

**PEHPP 2019****Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives****EXPERIENCE IN PROJECT TRAINING IN RECREATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHY AND TOURISM**

N. G. Dmitruk (a)\*, A. A. Stepanova (b)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, Veliky Novgorod, Russia, n\_g\_dmitruk@mail.ru

(b) Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, Veliky Novgorod, Russia, lesacre@list.ru

*Abstract*

The article presents original approach to modeling the educational process of students in the field of study “Geography” according to the profile “Recreational Geography and Tourism” using project-oriented training. The authors discuss their work on a system of training courses containing progressively developing line of student projects that become more complex while mastering educational material. The article reveals the requirements for training specialists working in the field of recreation and tourism in the context of project training, specifies the features of the formation of the necessary competencies in the systematic implementation of educational projects. The authors demonstrate the possibilities of using the project approach in training, as an effective way to prepare students for future professional activities. The basis for the use of this approach in the study of recreational geography and tourism is the postulate that project training adequately reproduces the workflow technologies of future young specialists in the field of recreation and tourism. The article presents the conditions of organization and the structural blocks underlying the project-oriented training, the stages of project implementation are considered in detail: pre-project research, project development, testing and implementation. The authors discuss methods of testing the results of project work, criteria for the effectiveness of training, and expert opinions on the degree of formation of a number of professional competencies. The authors reveal the structure and content of educational elements - special and specialized disciplines, provide methods for organizing work with students, and discuss the results of students' project activities.

2357-1330 © 2020 Published by European Publisher.

**Keywords:** Project-oriented training, recreational geography and tourism, tourism product.

## 1. Introduction

The tourist and recreational field of activity, which has been actively developed over the past century and defined as a phenomenon, is constantly growing and increasing in production and consumption. Tourism and recreation are entrenched in public consciousness as an integral part of the life of most people of various ages, social status, educational level and income. The need for the services of specialized organizations in this field is formed and evolves along with other basic needs of a modern person, which creates a differentiated demand for a tourist and recreational product. This demand is also influenced by internal and external factors, general trends in the development of public relations, the market, the impact of regional politics and fashion. In turn, manufacturers must offer a wide range of tourism products that can satisfy a wide variety of needs, respond flexibly to the changing taste of the buyer, adapt to changing conditions and anticipate the main trends in this industry.

All this requires constant replenishment of the staff of the tourism industry, attracting new creatively minded and active organizers of tourist and recreational activities. Moreover, tourism is one of the most labor-intensive sectors of the economy, where human resources are replaced with great difficulty by capital. The training of qualified specialists capable of developing the tourism services market, making innovative proposals, developing original products is the most important task of higher professional education in the field of tourism. For several years, Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University (NovSU) has been training students majoring in “Recreational Geography and Tourism”.

## 2. Problem Statement

The modern educational process at the university prepares the graduate not only to live in conditions of fast information flows and sudden changes in technology, but allows him to master competencies, i.e. ability to adapt to new market conditions and be a sought-after specialist. At the same time, the society makes important demands on social activity and the ability of a young specialist to independently create and implement commercial projects. Therefore, the graduate must:

- possess a wide range of knowledge in the field of study and related fields;
- be able to create original intelligent designs based on knowledge gained;
- be able to develop their own viable projects;
- predict the likely results of project implementation;
- plan the promotion of the project, its commercial component, the prospects for implementation and realization, the viability and relevance of the project for a long time.

Therefore, student training is based on technology that allows graduates to meet the requirements of modern society and the demands of the labor market. One such technology is project training. In recreational geography and tourism, project training adequately reproduces the technology of the working process of future young specialists in the field of tourism, where skills in project activities are demanded in the development of excursion programs, tourist routes, and packages for servicing visitors. Thus, the learning process based on the project approach is a prototype of the future professional activities of students.

In literature, a lot of attention is paid to the problem of implementing project training. Scholars consider the history and current status of the issue (Ivanova & Pastukhova, 2018; Polat, 2010), the methodological foundations of the implementation of the project approach (Dmitruk & Nizovtsev, 2008; Gugkaeva, 2013; Zeer, Lebedeva, & Zinnatova, 2016), experience and application practices of project training in Russia and abroad (Kazun & Pastukhova, 2018; Mozgalyova & Zamyatina, 2012; Penkovskikh, 2010; Trishchenko, 2018; Tyutin, 2016). At the same time, publications devoted to the implementation of project training experience in the process of training specialists in the field of tourism are practically absent.

### **3. Research Questions**

The analysis of the theoretical literature and active forms of teaching students the field of recreational activities and tourism in a number of universities in the country allowed us to conclude that it is possible to use the project approach as an effective way to prepare students for future professional activities. As a result, the following questions were formulated:

- What are the elements of the system of specialized courses (modules) providing comprehensive training for students to work in the field of recreation and tourism;
- how does the material studied in the traditional form correlate with the material studied in the process of independent development of projects;
- what material is advisable to study in the design process and what can serve as sources of information;
- what conditions are necessary for the successful work of students on projects.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study was the development, implementation and testing of a system of teaching special disciplines, built in a logical order and in accordance with the main stages of project implementation: pre-project research, project development, testing and implementation.

### **5. Research Methods**

The methodological basis for the research, development and implementation of a project-oriented model of teaching was the process approach, which promotes the continuity of management of the educational system and the project approach, improves the quality of specialized training, and ensures changes to the existing system of education. Among the research methods we used comparative analysis, synthesis and generalization, observation, questioning, analysis of the results of students' creative activities - projects, creative works (developed excursions, tour packages, developed advertising layouts, models, etc.).

## 6. Findings

Project training was based on the following structural blocks:

- information block - collecting necessary information for the project;
- structural block - requirements for the project, determining the structure of the project, elements, and the order of elements in the project;
- analytical unit - input analysis and final analysis (“mistake analysis”);
- environmental block - assessment of project viability, commercial component, marketing and management as the conditions for successful implementation of the project.

When implementing project training, we tried to meet the following conditions:

- freedom of choice - themes, project execution time, selection of information, design options and presentation of the project, etc.;
- maximum independent work - independent development of the project with the advice of a teacher after an introductory briefing;
- free communication - development of a group, intergroup or individual project with its presentation and defense, attracting consultants, visitors from outside.

In the first year, students received general knowledge and skills in the field of communication, organization of research, basic cartographic and topographic training, orientation skills in space, fieldwork. This is necessary not only to prepare for the development of comprehensive programs, but also for the organization of camping trips, the development of eco-paths, implementation of scientific and educational tours.

Starting from the second year, special modules have been introduced that form competencies in the field of outbound, inbound and domestic touring. As part of the module “Recreational Geography and Tourism”, students studied the basics of tourism geography, the main trends in the functioning of the tourist market, got acquainted in detail with the activities of tour operators and travel agents, learned to work with documents in the form of a business game, draw up applications, letters of guarantee and contracts.

An important element of training within the framework of this module is the formation of skills for conducting pre-project studies. We pay much attention to the study and assessment of the natural and cultural-historical resources of the area, the design of cycles of recreational activities and the features of the functioning of tourist and recreational systems. The result of this work is the assessment and mapping of the tourist and recreational potential of the region, which serves as the basis for future projects. In addition, one of the practical tasks of the module was aimed at studying the recreational needs of the population through sociological research methods. The work was carried out at a problem level, when students are given the task to independently formulate a goal, set tasks, develop a questionnaire (questionnaire, test, questions for an interview), conduct a study, interpret and present its results in various forms, draw conclusions.

In the third year, in the modules “Design and Research in Tourism” and “Technique and Tactics of Tourism”, students developed projects based on local history material and tested them. Both of these steps are required to obtain certification for the modules. Work is organized individually, in a group, and in mini-groups. The discipline "Design and Research in Tourism" is the largest in terms of volume and number of credits among the profile modules. It is structured in such a way that each topic consistently allows you to collect the necessary materials for the development of the final regional project. First, we consider common problems and trends in the development of modern tourism. In the form of a discussion game, the strengths and weaknesses of the tourist and recreational potential of the region were discussed, then students presented conclusions in the form of an essay. To complete the assignment, the results of studies conducted in the previous module were used. Next, we studied in detail the functioning of the transport, accommodation, food, entertainment and tour operator / travel sectors of the tourism industry. In addition to theoretical aspects, global and Russian experience, we discussed the development features of these sectors in the region. The data obtained made it possible to assess the imbalances in the provision of districts of the Novgorod region with individual tourist and recreational services, to form an idea of the possibilities for implementing certain projects in the region.

When studying the second part of the module, students got acquainted with the structure and technique of creating a tourist product, its life cycle, and methods of introducing it to the market. The students considered the mechanism of functioning and segmentation of the tourist market, establishing a balance between supply and demand, methods of influencing this process, pricing principles, the ratio of resources spent (land, labor, capital) in the production of tourism products, and the choice of technology. This became a theoretical basis for the final topic “Tourism and recreational design”, in which, using the knowledge gained, students were asked to develop, justify and submit a project for the region, to develop a scheme for its promotion on the market. This task was carried out at the research level. The choice of topics, forms, development and implementation of all stages of the project was an independent work of students. The role of the teacher came down to counseling and evaluation. The project was defended in the form of a presentation with a subsequent response to questions from the audience. The result was a multi-day tour or weekend itinerary, ecological trail, event, excursion, local tourist and recreation system, as well as any other project aimed at developing tourism in the Novgorod region and attracting tourists to the region.

In parallel with the development of projects for the region in order to reduce imbalances in the tourist and recreational development of areas, students studied the basics of excursion activities. The objectives of this section of the module is the formation of competencies in the development and conduct of excursions. The results imply testing within the framework of the module; therefore, the space of the city and / or the nearest suburbs becomes the territorial basis for excursion design. The work was carried out in mini-groups of 2-3 people. An individual form was possible (at the request of the student).

In the theoretical part, students got acquainted with the types of excursions, the requirements for them, the techniques for developing and maintaining various types of excursions, and the experience of excursion activities. Further, they were invited to independently choose the theme of the tour, set goals and objectives, determine the segment of consumers, develop a route and the text of the tour, submit a package of documents. Certification for this assignment consisted of three consecutive parts: classroom (providing

documents), field (conducting tours on location), virtual (posting advertising and a report in a social network).

To obtain admission to the tour, the group had to provide a package of materials. A field tour is carried out at the final stage of the module study. The group representing the project acts as tour guides, the rest of the students are tourists. After the completion of each tour, the group discusses the results, analyses its strengths and weaknesses. To increase objectivity, third-party students are invited to the second stage, whose opinion is taken into account when rating the excursion. At the third stage, the project is corrected (if necessary) and prepared for implementation. To do this, the group "POTOPAYEM" was set up in the social network "VKontakte", where students place developed advertising for their excursion projects and publish photo materials. The quality of advertising messages, their attractiveness and accessibility also affect the final grade. The success of students at NovSU in mastering the basics of tourist and recreational design is confirmed by positive feedback from outside students, successful participation in the World Skills Russia Championship of Professional Excellence, victories and awards in national tourism project contests.

All the described tasks for tourist and recreational design are mandatory for all students majoring in "Recreational Geography and Tourism". In the fourth year, at the end of training, work in this area is carried out at a deeper and more professional level by individual students who have chosen issues of tourist and recreational research and design as the topics of their graduation paper, and contacted specialized organizations for industrial and / or undergraduate practice. At this stage, partial or full implementation of the project results is possible. Thus, the consistent and phased formation of competencies in the field of tourist and recreational design is confirmed by the positive and successful experience in the implementation of project training for NovSU students in the field of "Recreational Geography and Tourism". One hundred and eighty five students participated in the study of disciplines designed in line with the project-oriented model of instruction. Analysis of student survey data and quality assessment of created projects by teachers, outside experts, and employers revealed certain results regarding the development of students' abilities. Students obtained similar results in the process of self-assessment of their abilities. In particular, students demonstrate at a high level the ability to plan work, design original tourist routes, programs, develop and conduct excursions. Most students are able to correctly determine working methods, find and combine information, predict, analyze and evaluate the results of the project, present and defend the project. According to the results of the study, all students to one degree or another over the years of training have developed the ability to work out and implement projects in practice. Employers also confirm these data after students undergo practical training. Questionnaire survey of production managers showed a lack of complaints on the training of specialists. A survey of practice leaders (specialists of employers acting as experts) revealed that with a ten-point scale for assessing the formation of a particular ability, no student received a grade lower than 6 points. About 27% of the indicators are at the level of 7 points, 45% at the level of 8 points, 19% at the level of 9 points, 7% received a maximum of 10 points.

## **7. Conclusion**

As a result of the study on the introduction of a project-oriented approach into the practice of training geography students in the profile "Recreational Geography and Tourism", the following conclusions can be drawn:

- the implementation of the project approach promotes the training of geography students in the field of recreational activities and tourism;
- as projects progress, students demonstrate a conscious assimilation of the material, a high degree of independence in educational activities;
- at the initial stage of project development, students master the theoretical material before starting work on the project; in advanced courses students are guided by the research topic and brief instructions; when performing similar projects (for example, developing a tourist product, tourist description of the region) students are completely independent. The increase in knowledge comes from independent activity;
- teaching tourist profile modules on the basis of geographical knowledge in the context of project-oriented training creates opportunities for specialists who can think comprehensively, on a large scale and geographically in order to achieve uniformity in the development of tourism throughout the region, use interesting and sometimes little-known objects for a wide range of consumers, and avoid "assembly-line" effects.

## References

- Dmitruk, N. G., & Nizovtsev, V. A. (2008). The project method is a promising educational technology in a rural school. *Actual problems of developing the innovative potential of a rural school in Russia: Sat. articles of researchers of higher schools and scientific institutions*. Materials of the All-Russian Scientific and Practical Conference "Development of the innovative potential of secondary schools: opportunities and prospects. Integrated rural educational systems as promising models for the revival and development of rural society in Russia." Moscow: Research Center for the Problems of Quality of Training of Specialists.
- Gugkaeva, I. T. (2013). Project method as a pedagogical technology. *Professional Education*, 2, 144-146.
- Ivanova, S. B., & Pastukhova, L. S. (2018). Possibilities of using the project method in education and work with youth at the present stage. *Education and Science*, 20(6), 29-49. <https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2018-6-29-49>
- Kazun, A. P., & Pastukhova, L. S. (2018). Practices of the application of the project teaching method: experience of different countries. *Education and Science*, 20(2), 32-59. <https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2018-2-32-59>
- Mozgalyova, P. I., & Zamyatina, O. M. (2012). Design work technology in the elite training system of a technical specialist in TPU. *Scientific Review: Humanitarian Research*, 4, 6-13.
- Penkovskikh, V. A. (2010). Project method in domestic and foreign pedagogical theory and practice. *Education Issues*, 4, 307-318. Retrieved from <https://vo.hse.ru/2010--4/98012837.html>
- Polat, E. S. (2010). *Project Method: History and Theory of the Question. Modern Pedagogical and Information Technologies in the Education System*. Moscow: Academy.
- Trishchenko, D. A. (2018). Experience in project training: an attempt to analyze achievements and problems objectively. *Education and Science*, 20(4), 132-152. <https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2018-4-132-152>
- Tyutin, D. V. (2016). Application of the process approach in organizing the practice of students of secondary vocational education. *Modern Problems of Science and Education*, 6, 359. Retrieved from <https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=27695183>
- Zeer, E. F., Lebedeva, E. V., & Zinnatova, M. V. (2016). Methodological foundations for the implementation of process and design approaches in vocational education. *Education and Science*, 7, 40-56. <https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2016-7-40-56>