

ISSN: 2357-1330

https://dx.doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2018.12.02.36

# 18<sup>th</sup> PCSF 2018 Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

# ACADEMIC RIGHTS OF STUDENTS ALONG THE EDUCATIONAL TRAJECTORY OF THE FUTURE

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#### Abstract

The article analyzes approaches, views and problems of reforming the Russian education in the form of modernization of the strategy for training specialists for the labor market. An approach to the realization of students' academic rights is proposed, based on the individualization of instruction, the design of individual educational trajectories. The proposed approach was developed from the standpoint of the humanistic educational paradigm, the principles of democratization. It is aimed at educating a competitive personality in the age of digitalization, informatization of modern economies. It is based on the concept of subjectivity of the educational process as an integral stance, dictated by international and national legal acts, federal legislation and strategic documents for the development of domestic education (Federal Law No. 273-FZ of December 29, 2012 on Education in the Russian Federation, the State Program of the Russian Federation "Development of Education for 2025" of December 26, 2017 No. 1642). The study allowed the authors to conclude that Russian education needs to be improved and reconstructed to meet the new demands of subject-subject relations at the educational space, where the academic rights of students are fundamental, and implementation opens up new opportunities for the humanitarian educational paradigm. The purpose of the article is to propose possible ways of solving State problems of the development of the institution of academic rights of students of higher educational institutions in the educational space of the Russian Federation as a component of a single European educational space.

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**Keywords:** Academic rights of students; educational trajectory; humanitarian educational paradigm; individualization; innovative model of teaching; university student.



### 1. Introduction

Modern society is characterized by imperative changes associated with globalization, the expansion of international academic mobility, the introduction of values of humanism and democracy (Luksha, 2016; Aladyshkin, Kulik, Michurin, & Anosova, 2017; Timermanis, Ivanov, Zamorev, & Smaragdina, 2017). First of all, the changes occur in the political, economic and social spheres. Humanization of social phenomena affects, among other things, education, which, as noted by many authors (Sen'ko, 2014; Suchkova, 2015; Dumnova, 2018), is experiencing a period of paradigm shift: the humanitarian paradigm of education is replacing the old concepts that treated the student as an object of pedagogical activities, to which the teaching process is directed. A new humanitarian educational paradigm projects a holistic "I" in a person who actively interacts with the world and is capable of independent activity, including the process of obtaining education.

The Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation", the Concept of the Federal Targeted Program for the Development of Education for 2016-2020 put forward new guidelines for the development of the educational system of the Russian Federation, set new educational tasks and methods to solve them (Federal Law, 2012; The Concept of the Federal Targeted Program for the Development of Education for 2016-2020, 2014).

First, the system of educational institutions has changed. In particular, new types of universities were formed in the higher education system - Federal universities, national research universities, which received a large amount of rights and freedoms in the field of the formation of educational programs and their implementation of the educational process (Shugrina, 2014), and a number of universities, received the status of Core universities and Innovation centers. A network of private higher institutions is developing, new organizational and legal forms of state institutions of higher education are being actively introduced, which are given greater economic and educational freedoms: for example, autonomous educational institutions that have the right to establish new standards not only for students, but also for employees (differential pay rolls, an effective contract, incentive systems in the form of grants and contests, which allow to more actively realize the creative potential of the teacher).

Secondly, the current economic realities dictate the need for specialists of a new type, capable of withstanding competition in the labor market, to be mobile, communicative, willing to take responsibility and take the initiative, make decisions independently – to have professional knowledge and skills is just not enough. Hence, a person viewed as an object of influence on the part of the state cannot withstand today's changes and thus, becomes unviable. Academic revolution, affecting modern universities, is needed not only as a means of improving the present, but also as a potential opportunity to build the future. Universities are involved in the implementation of a number of interesting projects and programs, new areas of activity, which was not available in the Soviet system of higher education. High academic mobility of students and teachers, flexibility, the diversity of educational programs, their practical orientation becomes the imperative of the time, a necessary condition for the proper quality of higher education. Mobility, multilevel and flexible training give the student of modern university a real opportunity to get a job along with a diploma and continuously develop in the future.

An important direction in reforming Russian education is the strengthening of the humanitarian vector of its development, and a new educational approach to the realization of the academic rights of

students, based on the development of the student's subjective position in realizing of their rights, is a necessary condition for the realization of the humanitarian educational paradigm.

The law "On Education in the Russian Federation" provides students with a large amount of academic rights, including the right to choose the level, type, timing, methods and technologies of teaching, mastering the educational disciplines on an individual educational trajectory, according to their inclinations and needs (Federal Law, 2012).

Developed in the pedagogical science (Suchkova, 2015; Aleksandrov & Shul'man, 2018) and the actively introduced in higher education is the systematic-activity approach. It implies a transition from the model of reproductive knowledge to practice-oriented teaching based on the principles of logical thinking and larger volume of practical preparation, starting from the first year; the formation of soft skills among graduates in Bachelor's programs (GEF 3 ++) - "soft" competencies, expressed in universal skills to substantiate one's own opinion about the processes occurring in the world, to build cause-effect relations and to navigate oneself in the constantly changing labor market.

In the context of the global development of the society of new industrialism, developed foreign countries set the overall integrating tasks for their educational systems: continuity, cultural and scientific integration, use of the latest audio-visualization technologies, competitiveness of the educational product, profitability, efficiency, higher ratings in the world rating agencies.

The humanitarian educational paradigm puts forward the principle of individualization of the learning process, according to which the student is the main subject of the educational space. Such a person is creative, purposeful in choosing their profession and future career and makes a choice in favor of an innovative educational environment.

In this article, we consider a burning question: what approach should there be in realization of the academic rights of students in the modern-day society from the standpoint of current tendencies in the development of higher education, introduction of the humanitarian educational paradigm and the principles of individualization of education?

#### 2. Problem Statement

Foreign authors note: the Bachelor system is now going through some challenges even in Western countries (Aleksandrov & Shul'man, 2018; Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013; Hatch & Cunliffe, 2012).

In this regard, the idea of reforming university-level education is being actively discussed in domestic and foreign science (Bronner, 2013; Crow & Dabars, 2015; Jacobs, 2013; Rozovsky, 2014). This problem has been raised by foreign authors who then ignited the discussion in the Russian science. The mass nature of higher education, on the one hand, has led to an increase in the number of universities, and on the other, to a drop in their educational prestige, and as a result, increased competition between universities for talented students and the financing of scientific research. Therefore, in modern conditions, educational institutions seek to rethink their development strategies and their traditional functions.

Today, the social environment that dictates, among other things, the technology of change, has a great impact on the transformation of universities within the Bologna process (in particular, the employers in the higher education system of the Russian Federation have the right to participate in the formation of goals and content and also participate in the implementation of the educational process in order to meet

labor market demands where educational standards are linked to the professional standards). In such conditions, universities with a more flexible approach to teaching are better adapted to the future.

Analysis of the reform of universities in modern conditions shows two opposite tendencies: some universities go into virtual space and are actively globalizing; others, on the contrary, are proposing exclusive educational programs.

Many European countries, facing a significant reduction in budgetary financing, are increasingly turning to the model of a "small university" that is easier to adapt to the changes that are taking place (especially those that do not have a "brand" name). Researchers (Burukina & Karaulova, 2017) note that small institutions of higher education have recently become even more popular than mega-universities, and the reasons for this are: students are taught in relatively small groups, have direct contact with the teacher (in "small" universities, the teacher is more often assessed by the quality of teaching, rather than by research and publishing activity - it is more student-centered), direct cooperation with teachers in the preparation of studies and their presentation, greater freedom in the choice of courses, fewer bureaucratic problems and, most importantly, the feeling that each student "matters" (Burukina & Karaulova, 2017).

In the works of Western authors, there are many options for the future development of higher education. Almost all of them are based on individualization, including in the form of online learning (for example, Massive Open Online Courses, where lectures of the best teachers are available to students all over the world) (Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013). This opens wide access to studying in the world's leading educational institutions, which previously was available only to elite groups of the population. Students independently choose and master online courses, including ones that are affordable or free, combining their development with personal consultations with teachers. The virtual reality and immersion of youth in it allows solving the problem of interpersonal communication through videoconferences, which for modern students are not something extraordinary. The use of modern digital and Internet technologies leads to the fact that even students who study at the university by a traditional form are increasingly engaged individually and share information with each other online. The view of a modern student is not to stay passive but to be responsible for the preparation and development of one's own skills, to understand that it is necessary to independently build a career and\or their own business, but it will be difficult to accomplish without participation or creation of innovative teams.

Individualization is an important contemporary trend in education, an urgent need for its development, allows us to build a new model of higher education in the educational space of the Russian Federation, which corresponds to the principles of the Bologna process and the humanitarian educational paradigm.

At the same time, educational organizations in Russia and a number of other countries with strict state regulation of the educational system are required to implement basic educational programs in accordance with the requirements of Federal educational standards. The procedure for state accreditation is mandatory and determines the compliance of the content and quality of teaching in educational organizations of the Russian Federation with the requirements of the standards. This situation creates barriers to the introduction of free education technologies in the Russian universities. It is possible to lift those, in our opinion, within the framework of the redistributed requirements because there should be control in the Russian system over students activities, the targeted development of students as subjects who

can freely choose curricula and teaching technologies, courses, teachers, build an individual trajectory of learning and career trajectory.

The educational standards for higher education of the new generation of the Russian Federation (GEF 3 ++) have a high degree of variability and provide universities with the right to independently formulate the content of basic educational programs, taking into account the demands of the regional labor market; individual universities have the right to develop and implement their own educational standards. Given the established traditions and mentality of the Russian educational system, which has been developing for a long time in the conditions of strict regulation of the content and technologies of higher education, this situation will lead to quite predictable difficulties in the individualization of education, the development of academic mobility, related to the transfer of students from one educational organization to another, mastering part of the educational program in another institution (the official endorsement of the transcript by a new university). We believe that this is the main problem of the realization of the right of students in view of the academic mobility in the system of higher education of the Russian Federation. The remaining phenomena are quite manageable and can be solved through the administrative potential of the university.

One of the key challenges of the Russian higher education system today is the lack of a clear understanding by the student of their future educational space, their learning goals and the practical implementation of the acquired skills. At the forefront, Russian students are most often focused on receiving a "diploma of education" rather than education itself, which raises a lot of questions, in particular: whether it is necessary to train specialists who can hardly imagine the scope of their future activities and are not ready to try themselves as employees (future professionals) during their studying stage?

Most students have rather high expectations about future professional activities (career ambitions, revaluation of wages and their own skills). As a result - disappointment in the received education, criticism of the educational sphere, unpreparedness to move up the career ladder having faced the first problems.

Thus, one of the acute problems of the development of the common educational space of the Bologna Process countries and Russia in particular is the resolution of the contradiction between two opposing approaches to the development of higher education:

- 1. A formal-legal approach that presupposes a fairly rigid regulation of higher education by the state as its customer and source of funding. This approach is typical for countries mainly with state funding of higher education, including Russia.
- 2. Individualization of higher education, providing students with broad academic rights and freedoms as an educational trajectory of the future.

Both these approaches have the right to exist. And the right to choose an educational trajectory is one of the manifestations of the academic freedom of the learner. But which approach has the future? We raise this problem in this article.

#### 3. Research Questions

We assumed that the resolution of the contradiction formulated in the previous section should be in favor of individualization of higher education. Only in this case is it possible to further develop a single European educational space and educational space of the CIS as a stimulus for the development of man, society and the culture of the future.

Ways of individualization of higher education, including through the introduction of new technologies, active teaching methods, and individual educational trajectories are described in sufficient detail in the scientific literature. We set the task to understand how these methods affect the educational system of the Russian Federation, the personality of the modern Russian student and teacher, and the realization of the academic rights of students.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyze the influence of individualization on the educational system of the Russian Federation, on the personality of the modern Russian student and teacher, on the realization of the academic rights of students; to suggest possible ways of solving state challenges of the development of the institute of academic rights of students in higher educational institutions in the educational space of the Russian Federation as a component of a single European educational space and the common educational space of the CIS countries.

#### 5. Research Methods

To solve the problem, we used the following methods: analysis of Russian and foreign scientific and methodological literature, the regulatory framework of higher education; analysis of the program for the development of the Sochi State University - the core university of the Krasnodar region; a survey of students of Sochi State University using the technique "Teacher by the eyes of a student"; an analysis of the results of the testing conducted by the Federal Service for Supervision of Teachers of Russian Universities of the knowledge of the content of the basic subjects, with the use of specially developed evaluation methods with the involvement of experts and expert organizations and questionnaires to students about the quality of teaching; an analysis of the results of the Federal Internet-based exam conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation for bachelor graduates.

The methodological base of the research was the principles of independent evaluation of the quality of the educational space, which from September 1, 2019 will become mandatory for educational organizations implementing higher education programs. The objects of independent evaluation are: (1) the subject of the educational process (student); (2) an educational institution offering a set of educational programs in accordance with the requirements of Federal state educational standards.

Assessing the individual approach to the teaching process, we took into account two main factors: the student's satisfaction with the educational environment and the competitiveness of the higher educational system in the changing educational space.

Evaluating the degree of individualization of education, we used the following criteria: (1) the level of practical training of students and depth of their theoretical base; (2) the student's self-sufficiency in the understanding of their choice of profession, their attitude to competitiveness; (3) value orientations in their choice of the educational trajectory.

Assessing teachers as subjects of individualization of higher education, the key criteria were: scientific and general cultural erudition; the ability to scale new ideas, approaches, to form interests; constant improvement of professional qualities; tolerance, respect, openness to cooperation.

## 6. Findings

Sochi State University (SSU) is relatively young among other Russian universities. It dates back to 1989, and this is, on the one hand, a minus (lack of deep "centuries-old" traditions, no rigid vector of its development in the past), and on the other - a big plus. The university was built practically from scratch, scientific and pedagogical staff from various universities and institutes from all over the country were invited, which enabled the top management to build a young and creative team, ready to act as one and move forward in the conditions of the "restructuring" of the education system.

In 2017, the university was given the status of a regional "Core university", which made significant changes in the style of work and direction of activities and gave impetus to the development of innovations in the region in several key areas. First, it is the development of academic mobility - for example, the partner in the "elite" bachelor program is the International School of Hospitality and Management "VATEL", which allows students to study both in Russia and abroad and ultimately receive two bachelor's degrees in "International Hotel Technologies". This integrates Sochi University into the international educational space.

As part of the program of digitalization of education, Sochi State University encourages integration of students into the online space and promotes digital courses, use of educational and methodical complexes of leading universities in Russia and other countries, which makes the educational process individual for each student, which is a prerequisite for the modernization of education. In addition, university develops online courses for other universities in Russia and abroad.

Sochi State University, in accordance with the classification of universities (Volkov & Livanov, 2012), is a Comprehensive University, which actively strives to develop, create an innovative environment and expand its "living space".

Sochi State University follows almost all new trends in education, being a platform for testing and implementation of such projects as World Skills Russia, My Country Is My Russia and many others. In 2018, the University received a Certificate of conferring the status of a specialized competence center accredited to the standards of World Skills and was granted a regional status in the competence of "Cookery".

The project activity forms are developing, the blocks of disciplines are included in the University's educational programs, aimed at preparing students to create and implement their own projects.

The university continues to strive to involve young and active scientific and pedagogical specialists, who, for example, took part in the forum "Russia is a country of opportunities".

The University has recently become a real attractor of not only scientific, but also social activities. It is home to the largest volunteer training center in the south of Russia. Volunteer students accompany, participate, become co-organizers of projects on a permanent basis (the university is the key organizer of volunteer support of all mega-projects that take place in the region, including the Olympic and Paralympic Games of 2014, the Confederations Cup-2017 and the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Volunteering gives a

powerful start in the career development of students, forms soft skills competencies that are important for the future profession, allowing them to build friendship which later may become a platform for future career and successful professional activity.

In line with modern-day conditions, the University puts out new demands for the teaching staff because a new generation of students appreciates new qualities in the scientific and pedagogical environment.

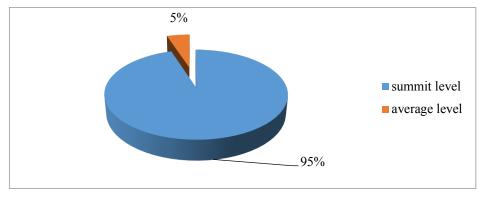
Based on the results of an annual student survey "Teacher by the eyes of students", the most valuable qualities of the teacher for students are: professional competence; general erudition, reading capacity; ability to present complex material in an understandable way; culture of speech; elocution; ability to evoke interest in the subject; candor; objectivity of assessments.

The level of professionalism of the faculty was determined by the above mentioned criteria: the highest - 75-100%, average - 50-74%, below average - less than 49%, low - less than 25%. The results of the survey are shown in Figure 01.

Polling (Figure 1) showed that students assessed most of the teaching staff as specialists with the highest level of professionalism. Indicators "below average" and "low" - are absent.

Thus, it can be concluded that the student community values the faculty members, above all, for their personal qualities; the personality of the teacher continues to be a decisive factor in the teaching process.

The same trend are reflected by the results of the project implemented at the University in 2017 on the initiative of the Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science (hereinafter - Rosobrnadzor). The pilot study was aimed at testing the technology for assessing the level of proficiency of the teaching staff about the content of educational programs in the disciplines they teach. The study was conducted in the form of testing teachers about the knowledge of the content of the subjects that they teaching, using specially developed evaluation methods with the involvement of experts and expert organizations, and also in the form of a survey of students of how satisfied they are with the quality of teaching.



**Figure 01**. Results of the questionnaire "Teacher by the eyes of students" (2018)

About 200 teachers from 19 universities participated in the project of Federal Service for Supervision in Education and Science, including: Far Eastern Federal University, Penza State University, Tula State University, Sochi State University, and others.

Sochi State University facilitated the assessment in three basic disciplines of three areas of knowledge: 40.03.01 Jurisprudence (Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, and Civil Law), 38.03.01 Economics (Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Econometrics); 44.03.01 Pedagogical Education (Theory of Education, Theory of Learning).

The results of the testing in "Jurisprudence" show that the teachers of Sochi State University received a rating of 2 out of 8; in "Economy" - a rating of 5 out of 9, in "Pedagogical Education" - a rating of 2 out of 5.

The average test scores of teachers by the areas of knowledge Figure 2.

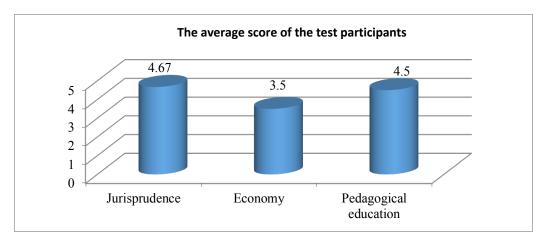


Figure 02. The average score of the test participants

The results of the project at Sochi State University showed that teachers who received high scores in testing had high rates with students in the category of quality of teaching of the basic disciplines, which shows correspondence of students' expectations and the level of professional training of teachers.

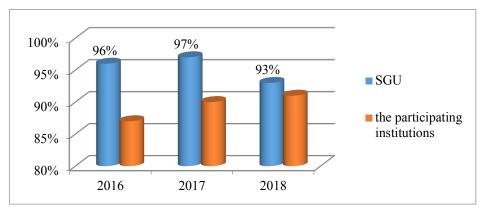
The individualization of the learning process in the educational system, including the sphere of higher education, is aimed at explaining to the students their role in the cognitive process. This is the focus of a variety of pedagogical technologies: "flipped learning" (Yurlovskaya, 2014), the classroom system, interactive voting system (Grushenko, 2015), "learning through action", etc. The teachers of Sochi State University use innovative techniques "Aquarium", "brainstorming", role playing, cooperative learning in small groups, etc.), which increase the interaction effect in the student groups and hone professional skills in the process of mastering theoretical and practical material.

The effect of the systematic application of these technologies is demonstrated by the results of the Internet testing in the field of education (hereinafter referred to as "FEPO") – assessment of knowledge and competencies and an independent evaluation of the quality of education. This project contains five Federal projects on a single technological basis with an application of student-oriented technology: personal account of the student, teacher, organizer, and the student's e-portfolio are created. This portal provides the student with the opportunity to work independently with a simulator, receive information about international student Internet Olympiads, and the teaching professionals have an informational resource to diagnose the readiness of learners to mastering material, to organize on-line monitoring in various forms, including, final exams (Federal Internet exam for graduates of bachelor's degree).

FEPO aims at an independent evaluation of four levels of results of a student's learning: the first level demonstrates what elementary knowledge; skills were acquired by the learner while mastering the first block of general humanities, natural science and general professional disciplines. This allows the teacher to get an objective assessment of the basic level; the second level reveals how students interpret information and develop practical-oriented tasks to form professional competencies; the third level demonstrates the mastery of scientific and educational methods for resolving practice-oriented situations; the fourth level - the research level - the level of manifestation of the developed general cultural and professional competencies that meet the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standard, in dealing with non-standard professional situations.

The results of the FEPO of students of Russian universities over the past three years show an increase in the proportion of students who have reached the second level of training (2016 - 85%, 2017 - 90%, 2018 - 91%) of the total number of those who passed independent testing, which leads to a positive conclusion of the quality of students' training and the possibility of developing individual programs.

As a result, over the past three years, the distribution of test results of students of Sochi State University (Figure 3) shows an increase in the proportion of students who have reached the second level of training, out of the total number of those who took the independent testing, which allows us to conclude that there is positive dynamics in the quality of training of SSU students and there is an opportunity for further development of individual programs. On top of that, the results of student testing at SSU, in general, are higher than the results of students from other Russian universities.



**Figure 03.** Results of students' participation in the project of the Research Institute "Monitoring of the Quality of Education" (Yoshkar-Ola)

The research practice demonstrates a growing interest of universities towards the implementation of the project of an independent assessment of the knowledge and quality of students' training of various educational programs.

Sochi State University has been participating in FEPO for several years, and has a practice of considering the results of individual testing of a student as his midterm assessment. This, undoubtedly, raises the student's interest in attending the said assessment in the form of an independent assessment of knowledge.

Also, successful was the experience in conducting student's assessment by "external faculty", which showed an objective level of mastering of knowledge.

### 7. Conclusion

The conducted research allowed stating that the realization of the academic rights of students in a higher educational institution from the standpoint of the individualization of instruction as the principle of the humanitarian educational paradigm requires the creation of the following conditions: (1) stimulation of personal and professional development of students; (2) formation of individual educational trajectories in the conditions of a flexible higher education system. Some mechanisms for implementing these conditions are presented in the "Recommendations for the educational institutions of higher education on individual curricula of students who have a high level of preparation for mastering the programs of higher education - bachelor programs, specialty programs and master's programs" (letter of the Department of Public Policy in Higher Education, dated 09.07.2018 No. 05-7709); (3) ensuring dynamic response of universities to changes in the labor market in the way of offering educational programs, updating content and implementation technologies; (3) better involvement and responsibility of students and teachers for the implementation of their own academic rights, freedoms and duties; (4) ensuring the focus of the educational environment on the needs and personal-professional orientations of students; (5) formation of motivated and accountable behavior of the student, capable of self-regulation, self-management and independent choice; (6) ensuring effective educational and cognitive activity of students through a combination of individual learning, working in small groups and large groups, in the global digital space; (7) encouraging teachers to be "more than formally" involved in the life of the university, to stimulate their willingness to work in new realities. These conditions can serve as a basis for the development of the model of higher education of the future.

It is obvious that the higher education system of the future will increasingly develop the technology of combining individual and collective work, that is, a mixed teaching, the application of distance learning and communication with the teacher-instructor, the professor. Mixed or hybrid training allows building an individual educational trajectory, helps move away from the traditional system of work in the classroom. This technology does not mean that the student does not absorb educational standards, since he cannot move to a new level of his program, until he has worked through the designated amount of information and got a passing grade.

The advantages of individualization of higher education are:

First, the individual form of teaching helps the learner to reveal himself in professional training, to choose the necessary training programs. With this approach, education is consistent with the trends in the development of society, the principles of humanization of digitalization, ecologization, profiling, democratization and other factors in the development of the modern educational process.

Secondly, the education system in Russia has long been inconsistent with the needs of society; the graduate is poorly oriented and not competitive in the labor market, because he does not know how to choose an individual educational trajectory. The introduction of the principle of individualization will change the situation for the better.

Thirdly, the key demand of the modern-day educational space is in the combination of technologies, approaches and methods that help the student to acquire professional self-realization from the first stages in the university, gives an opportunity to choose the necessary courses for his qualification.

Yes, the described approach, based on the principle of individualization, is narrower than the traditional classical education system, but technological progress, the emergence of new professions and qualifications call for constant professional growth and entrepreneurial initiative.

# Acknowledgments

Our research was performed on the state order assigned to the Sochi State University 'The Study of Regulation of Student Academic Rights: Challenges and Development Vectors' (Project № 7.12684.2018/12.1).

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