

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

PhD PROGRAMME

INFORMATION PACKAGE

SCIENTIFIC FIELD: 4. *NATURAL SCIENCES, MATHEMATICS AND INFORMATICS*

PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION: 4.4. *EARTH SCIENCES*

DEPARTMENT: GEOGRAPHY, ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK LEVEL: 8

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION: *RESEARCHER*

PERIOD OF STUDY: *3 /three / or 4 /four/ YEARS*

FORM OF EDUCATION: *FULL-TIME/
INDEPENDENT/PART-TIME /
DISTANCE*

QUALIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS

The qualification characteristics, curriculum and curricula of the scientific specialty "**Economic and Social Geography**" are in accordance with the Higher Education Act and the University Regulations. The doctoral program lasts three academic years for full-time and independent study and four for part-time study.

The scientific specialty "**Economic and Social Geography**" is from Professional Direction 4.4. "Earth Sciences", from Scientific Area 4. "Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics" and is administered by the Department of "Geography, Ecology and Environmental Protection", at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of Southwestern University "Neofit Rilski".

The training ends with the defense of a doctoral dissertation. Graduates receive the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in Economic and Social Geography.

Doctoral students from all regions of the country and from other countries are trained.

The training is conducted in Bulgarian.

Objectives of the doctoral program

The training in this doctoral program is aimed at the implementation of the following objectives:

1. Preparation of highly qualified personnel with acquired experience for carrying out scientific - research and teaching activities in the field of socio-economic geography.
2. Deepening of fundamental and professional competence for scientific research, practical-applied and teaching activities in the field of economic and social geography.
3. Creates opportunities for the formation of modern scientific-theoretical and practical-applied knowledge, skills and competencies for independent scientific research and teaching

activities, for teamwork, for the application of innovative and technological achievements in the field of economic and social geography.

4. Formation of methodological experience and skills for planning research activities, for analyzing scientific results, for preparing prescriptions to overcome identified problems, for substantiating recommendations related to the functioning of territorial socio-economic systems in geographical regions and spheres of socio-economic life, institutions, etc. of varying scale and scope.

5. Improves language training in the chosen foreign language in connection with its use in the doctoral student's professional activities.

General qualification and specialization

The doctoral program "**Economic and Social Geography**" is aimed at training specialists in a field with a wide field of expression and realization, which is constantly expanding due to the great dynamics of the time in which our country finds itself and not only. In addition to preparing specialists in the field of scientific research, training in this doctoral program is aimed at providing the labor market with specialists in the field of complex analyses of territorial resources (demographic resources, territorial organization of the settlement network, urbanized territories, the social sphere, territorial economic complexes, infrastructure, etc.). The performance of such analyses and their results are an integral part of the structure of various planning and strategic documents regulated by the Regional Development Act and the related regulations and programs, as well as the Local Self-Government and Local Administration Act. Because it is the local administration that is responsible for the preparation of such documents and the awarding of orders for their creation. The specialists who have graduated from this doctoral program are at the service of both the local administration at various levels of government and as consultants to non-governmental organizations, LAGs, non-profit associations, etc. on issues of territorial organization, planning and management, including in the development and implementation of projects.

Requirements for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"



The educational and scientific degree "Doctor" is acquired after:

- ✓ successful completion of all stages of the doctoral student's curriculum
- ✓ successful defense of the dissertation

Areas of professional realization

Graduates of the scientific specialty "Economic and Social Geography" and who have successfully defended the dissertation prepared during this period of training are prepared for independent scientific research and for innovative scientific and teaching activities in higher schools and colleges, in research institutions, in secondary schools, etc.

A graduate of the doctoral program can:

-  participate in various forms of continuing education (postdoctoral programs for improving professional qualifications and experience in the scientific specialty and in the professional field)
-  participate in habilitation procedures and procedures for increasing in degree in the higher education system (universities and colleges)

- ✚ to conduct scientific research in the field of socio-economic, regional development, to determine the main patterns and trends in regional, economic, social, demographic and territorial development and market economy
- ✚ to participate in the preparation of strategic documents in the field of economic, social and regional development, territorial planning, urbanization of various ATE and geographical regions in scope
- ✚ to participate in strategic management in the spirit of European standards for the implementation of issues of European regional, economic, social and demographic policy and integration, in the implementation of the policies and strategies of the European Union
- ✚ to form abilities and attitudes for teamwork in various national and international institutions and non-governmental organizations
- ✚ to define and analyze the main trends of globalization, regionalism, economic, social, demographic and territorial policy
- ✚ to lead or participate in the management of educational institutions.

A key prerequisite for achieving educational goals is the structure and content of the curriculum. It is developed in 6 semesters and includes mandatory and elective subjects.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

№	NAME OF ACTIVITIES	Form of preparation and implementation			Form of recognition
		CREDITS	SCHEDULE	lectures, seminars, laboratory exercises, independent preparation, consultations, participation, other exam,	current assessment, interview, certificate, report, protocol, certification, other
I.	EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY				
1.	Theory and Practice of Economic and Social Geography (according to the topic of the dissertation)	5.0	150	30 l, 20 s (50 / 100 ss)	exam
2.	Project Preparation and Management	3.0	90	30 / 60 ss	exam
3.	English	4.0	120	15 l, 25 s (40 / 80 ss)	exam
4.	Elective Course 1	4.0	120	20 l, 20 s (40 /80 ss)	exam
5.	Elective Course 2	4.0	120	20 l, 20 s (40 /80 ss)	exam
	TOTAL :	20	600		
II.	RESEARCH ACTIVITY				
1.	Defining the research problem and developing the concept.	8	240	self-study, consultation	interview
2.	Preparing and discussing a dissertation project	10	300	self-study, consultation	interview

3.	Researching literary sources on the topic of the dissertation.	8	240	self-study, consultation	interview
4.	Analysis of literary sources and writing a literature review.	8	240	self-study, consultation	interview
5.	Writing the theoretical chapter of the dissertation.	10	300	self-study, consultation	certified report
6.	Field research, searching and collecting data on the thematic focus of the dissertation.	8	240	self-study, consultation	certified report
7.	Providing the study with statistical information.	8	240	self-study, consultation	interview
8.	Processing and analyzing statistical information. Visualizing the results.	8	240	self-study, consultation	interview
9.	Writing the chapter/chapters of the dissertation related to the results of the conducted research.	9	270	self-study, consultation	certified report
10.	Preparing a report and participating in a scientific forum on geography.	15	450	self-study, consultation	certificate (minimum two)
11.	Preparation and publication of an article in a scientific journal on the thematic focus of the dissertation.	15	450	self-study, consultation	Publication (minimum two)
12.	Final processing and finalization of the dissertation work.	11	330	self-study, consultation	certified report
13.	Preparation, presentation and discussion of the dissertation work at the department council.	12	360	self-study, consultation	certified report
14.	Completion of the dissertation work. Preparation for approbation.	12	360	self-study, consultation	certified report
	TOTAL:	142	4260		
III.	PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY				
1.	Conducting practical exercises in subjects from the curriculum of the GRP or POGI specialty, Bachelor's degree.	5.0	150	self-study, consultation	protocol, report
2.	Consulting with Bachelor's degree students on subjects from the GRP or POGI specialty curriculum.	2.0	60	self-study,	report
3.	Checking tests, presentations, written works, etc.	3.0	90	self-study,	report
4.	Preparing reviews of theses.	3.0	90	self-study,	report
	TOTAL:	13	390		
IV.	OTHER				
1.	Participation in CS meetings.	1.0	30	participation	protocol,
2.	Participation in university committees.	1.0	30	participation	protocol,

3.	Participation in the work of departmental committees, workshops or other administrative activities.	3.0	90	participation	protocol,
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Contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Emilia Patarchanova, PhD

e-mail: emilia_patarchanova@swu.bg

contact phone number+359 885 938 005

ANNOTATION OF COURSES

Compulsory subjects

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

ECTS credits: 5

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological guidance: Department of Geography, Ecology and Environmental Protection

Faculty: Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emilia Patarchanova

e-mail: emilia_patarchanova@swu.bg

Annotation

The mandatory discipline “**Theory and Practice of Economic and Social Geography**” occupies an important place in the training of doctoral students in the doctoral program “Economic and Social Geography”. It seeks to ensure the acquisition of a basic theoretical minimum, which will be the basis for the formulation and development of the doctoral thesis in the dissertation works of doctoral students in the doctoral program “**Economic and Social Geography**”. The discipline aims to provide theoretical training on key topics in the field of economic and social geography; to enrich the conceptual apparatus in the relevant field of scientific knowledge; to form a scientific and cognitive basis on which doctoral students can independently build on their training; to plan independent scientific research; to form competencies for conducting research work and analyzing the results achieved. In terms of content, the emphasis is on scientific concepts and approaches, on theoretical and methodological problems of economic and social geography, on new economic geography, on regional geography and regions in the modern structure of the world, on regional integration.

PROJECT PREPARATION AND MANAGEMENT

ECTS credits: 3

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Lecturer: lecturer from Southwestern University

Annotation

The main goal is to prepare highly qualified specialists in the preparation and management of projects at the national and trans-European level, providing knowledge and skills for various types of projects and programs.

Specific objectives of the course: to provide basic knowledge and skills in project management by examining national and international instruments for supporting projects and programs with different focuses; to enrich knowledge about the essence and main characteristics of project management and project team management; to provide good practices for making strategic and tactical management decisions related to project management.

Doctoral students who study in this course will acquire, after completing it, the necessary competence to develop a project, design a project in various fields, to participate in the management of a given project and bring it to implementation. The acquired knowledge is of great importance, since the development of various types of economic directions will be carried out on a project-program basis. The offered course is in accordance with the mission and concept of the university for providing modern and up-to-date knowledge; the volume of the course is consistent with the intended credits, as well as the qualification characteristics of the specialty.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological guidance: Department of German and Romance Studies

Faculty: Faculty of Philology

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dafina Kostadinova

e-mail: dafinakostadinova@swu.bg

Annotation

The English language course is mandatory for all doctoral students in the first year of their studies, studying in various doctoral programs in all faculties of the South-West University "N. Rilski" according to the decision of the Academic Council Protocol No. 21 of 04.09.2013.

The course is held every year in the first month after the end of the summer semester and its duration varies, depending on the formation of groups by language proficiency levels. The level of competence is determined by an entrance test, on the

basis of which the participants are divided into four levels - beginners, false beginners, intermediate and advanced, who are trained at levels A1, A2, B1 and B2 respectively. In this way, four groups are formed. In the absence of absolute beginners, the groups are three - beginners, intermediate and advanced.

The duration of the course depends on the level of the group. Beginners (absolute and false) undergo a four-week training course with a total of 120 hours, intermediate - a three-week course with a total of 90 hours, and advanced - a two-week course with a total of 60 hours. The daily workload for all courses is 6 hours. A final exam is held in the last 2 hours of training.

The English language curriculum provides training at 4 main levels, corresponding to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages /CEFR/, which meet the needs of the four main groups.

All courses provide practical training for students in English, with the focus on mastering basic vocabulary and grammar at lower levels and improving and expanding knowledge and increasing the level of language proficiency at higher levels. The training is based on an integrative approach, in which the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for doctoral students is based on the development of the four main types of skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. In the advanced group, special attention is paid to the development of speaking and listening skills, the acquisition of basic principles of constructing an academic text in English, specialized academic terminology and phraseology, as well as the skills of preparing presentations in English.

The course in practical English for doctoral students necessarily contains the following modules: practical grammar, vocabulary, written exercises, reading and listening comprehension and conversation. Depending on the specific needs of students from different faculties and specialties, teachers may introduce specialized vocabulary for the field and exercises in specialized and general translation. For the purposes of training, established teaching aids from the field of university didactics are used, as well as materials developed by the lecturers to meet the specialized needs of the doctoral students.

Elective courses

APPLICATION OF GIS IN ECOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological guidance: Department of Geography, Ecology and Environmental Protection

Faculty: Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Stoyan Nedkov

E-mail: nedkov@swu.bg

Annotation

The course on the subject “**Application of GIS in Ecological and Geographical Research**” for the doctoral program “Economic and Social Geography” presents the general concepts for the development and implementation of GIS. The lecture course complements the knowledge from the basic course on GIS in fundamental theoretical areas of the bachelor's degree.

Course objective: The lecture course aims to provide specific knowledge about the application and increasing role of GIS in regional planning and management of various territorial units in the field of various geographical disciplines and in particular socio-economic geography. All knowledge is directly oriented towards systems for mapping, management, analysis and decision support in the management of geographical objects and territories that have a local or regional distribution.

Tasks: This course examines in depth the practical application of map projections in GIS, transformations from one projection to another, interpolation methods, generalization procedures, data classification methods in a digital environment, vector and raster analyses, methods for representing three-dimensional objects and surfaces. Of utmost importance for doctoral students is the performance of geographic analyses using GIS when examining various problems of economic life management in the country.

Expected results:

At the end of the semester, students should know: How to apply their knowledge of GIS for cartographic display and analysis of data from the field of their research; The final result of the theoretical and practical (exercises) knowledge of the students is their preparation for creating future GIS projects for managing a predetermined territory and its implementation. Students who have received good knowledge in this area will have the opportunity to find their place in the development and management of GIS at the regional level.

The discipline corresponds to all geographical disciplines.

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological guidance: Department of Geography, Ecology and Environmental Protection

Faculty: Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alexandra Ravnachka

E-mail: al_ravnachka@swu.bg

Annotation

The elective course “**Theory and Practice of Regional Development**” plays a fundamental role in building skills and forming competencies in doctoral students regarding the concept of regional self-government. This concept is fundamentally implemented in the essence of the structure and management of the European Union. During the course, doctoral students acquire theoretical and practical knowledge on issues of regional development, analyze regulatory documents, work with tools for assessment and analysis of the territory. The acquired knowledge is of a different nature - in the field of resource potential, socio-demographic, geo-urban, managerial, economic and those related to sustainable development and regional policies of the EU and Bulgaria. The acquired skills and competencies will increase the management potential of the doctoral students, will help to form them as comprehensive and complete future specialists on a number of issues related to regional analysis and development, regional policies and management within the territorial framework of Bulgaria and the European Union. The discipline fundamentally prepares doctoral students for the realities of the single European space.

RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological management: Department of Sociology

Faculty: Philosophy

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Petrana Stoikova

E-mail: petrana_stoikova@swu.bg

Annotation

The main goal of the course “**Research Methods in Social Sciences**” is to familiarize doctoral students with the overall research process. It includes theoretical and methodological requirements and the selection of specific studies, research limitations. Doctoral students are introduced to research design, types of research, research approaches, issues of reliability and validity of the information sought, etc. Special attention is paid to existing research methods and their advantages and limitations.

Doctoral students are introduced to the main research approaches necessary for developing and arguing their goals and scientific theses. The curriculum emphasizes the theoretical and applied dimensions of individual research techniques and approaches to writing their dissertations.

STATISTICAL METHODS IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Methodological management: Department of Informatics

Faculty: Natural and Mathematical Sciences
Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Karashtranova
E-mail: helen@swu.bg

Annotation

The discipline **“Information Technologies /IT/ and Quantitative Analysis in Pedagogical Research”** is aimed at familiarizing doctoral students with the basic statistical procedures and their application in scientific and research activities. Statistical methods are presented on the basis of models from specific pedagogical experiments. Familiarization with modern technologies for their application is also planned: MS EXCEL, SPSS and STATISTIKA.

Students should have a command of English at a higher than average level and have theoretical knowledge of information technologies and informatics.

The main goal is to provide students with theoretical knowledge of the basic statistical procedures, as well as the specifics of their use; to introduce students and give them knowledge about creating models for statistical processing of experimental data; to introduce students to modern IT for statistical data processing; to prepare students for their future research work.

METHODOLOGY OF PREPARATION AND WRITING OF A DISSERTATION

ECTS credits: 4

Form of knowledge assessment: exam

Lecturer: lecturer from Southwestern University

Annotation

The elective course **“Methodology of Preparation and Writing of a Dissertation”** occupies an important place in the preparation and development of the doctoral thesis of students in the doctoral program “Economic and Social Geography”. The course aims to familiarize doctoral students with the methodology of independent scientific research, to form competencies for planning and conducting research work and written presentation of the achieved results.

The emphasis is on the main stages of the development of the dissertation, observing the following logical scheme:

1. Justification of the relevance of the chosen topic;
2. Definition of goals and objectives of the study;
3. Determination of the object and subject of research;
4. Selection of methods (methodology) of the study;
5. Description of the research process;
6. Discussion of the research results;
7. Formulation of conclusions and inferences.

At the end of the course, doctoral students must develop skills in working with literary sources and preparing a bibliographic reference, as well as in designing and presenting the

dissertation in a completed form, in accordance with the regulatory requirements and traditions in Bulgarian geography.