

ACADEMIC REVIEW

**From Prof. Dr. Galina Georgieva Kurteva,
Burgas Free University**

of the materials submitted for participation in a contest for the occupation of the academic position of 'professor' of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional track 3.7. Administration and Management (Business Communications and Personal Development Management).

In the contest for 'professor', announced in the State Newspaper, Issue. 30 from 15.04.2022 and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, there is only one candidate – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva, lecturer at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance - Sofia.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. 167/25.07.2022 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, I have been appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury of a contest for the academic position of 'professor' at VUZF in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional track 3.7. Administration and Management (Business Communications and Personal Development Management).

One candidate submitted documents to participate in the announced competition: Associate Professor Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva, lecturer at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance - Sofia.

The set of materials presented by Associate Professor Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva in an electronic version is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VUZF and includes the following documents:

- Autobiography;
- Basic habilitation thesis - monographs;
- A book based on a dissertation work;
- List of publications post holding the academic position "associate professor";
- Summaries in Bulgarian and English of the publications after holding the academic position of "associate professor";
- Separation protocols for the joint publications;
- Evidence of leading scientific projects and other research tasks;
- Reference to the original scientific contributions in the works;
- Reference for citations (without auto-citations);
- Other documentation, according to the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of VUZF.

The candidate Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva has over 70 academic and over 100 non-academic publications. She participated in the competition with 12 scientific works, out of which 2 monographs; a book published on the basis of a dissertation work for the award of the "Doctor", and 9 articles. Separation protocols certifying the authorship of the candidate in three of the articles are presented. All articles were published in the country, 4 in English, 5 in Bulgarian. I accept the submitted documents, as well as evidence of the publications with which the candidate participated in the competition, without any comments.

With regard to the minimum national requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Article 2b) and the Regulations for its Application (Article 1a, Paragraph 1) for holding the position of "Professor", the candidate Associate Professor Daniela Ilieva fully complies and the total number of points for the individual indicators (1345 points) significantly exceeds the required minimum (550 points)

2. Brief biographical data of the candidate

Assoc. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the European University Barcelona. In 2006 she obtained a master's degree in Marketing at UNSS - Sofia. In the period of 2011 - 2015 she studied in a doctoral program at the "Management" department, "Management and Administration" faculty of UNSS, majoring in "Social Management". Since 2016 she is an associate professor of Business Process Management and Business Communications at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, where she is a full-time lecturer. She is also a lecturer at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia and UNIBIT - University of Library Science and Information Technology, Sofia. She was also a lecturer at the University of Sheffield, International Faculty and at the University of National and World Economy, Sofia.

In the period of 2012 - 2021 she acquired additional qualification skills as a certified practitioner and master in Time Line Therapy and Hypnotherapy; she is a certified master and trainer in Neuro-Linguistic Programming, as well as a certified consultant in Business Etiquette and International Protocol, etc.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva accumulates her professional experience from her work as the executive director of the Law and Internet Foundation, as well as from her membership in the Bulgarian Association for People Management, European Association for International Education, International NLP Association, Time Line Therapy Association, American Board of NLP, American Board of Hypnotherapy, European Mentoring and Coaching Council.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva has participated in a number of international scientific and educational projects. Certificates for the candidate's participation in the implementation of 25 international projects of the Law and Internet Foundation are also presented.

She speaks English, Spanish, German, and Russian to varying degrees.

3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

The professional development of Assoc. Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva is related to teaching, research and applied science activities, which complement and develop each other.

Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity

Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ilieva has over 12 years of teaching experience. Currently, she is a teacher of Business Communications in IT projects (in Master's and Bachelor's programs); Basics of Management; IT project management; Business Ethics and Business Etiquette (in English) at VUZF. According to the presented reference, the lecture hours worked by the candidate at VUZF for the last five years are 1,350. Under her scientific supervision, four doctoral students successfully defended their dissertation work on the doctoral program "Finance, Insurance and Insurance" (item 3.8) at VUZF.

Since 2016 Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva is a part-time lecturer at the Computer Science Department at UNIBIT - Sofia and leads classes (lectures and exercises) in the disciplines of Management; Mediation and negotiation; Presentation skills; Human resources management. Since 2018 she is also a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Theology of the University of St. Kliment Ohridski" where she leads lecture courses on the discipline "Models for communication in a non-church environment" in the "Church Management" program.

I have no direct impressions of the teaching work of Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ilieva, but it is clear from the presented documents that her pedagogical activity includes participation in various forms of expanding and deepening the qualification, which is systematically upgraded with pedagogical training and competences acquired, establishing her as a lecturer with enduring interests and deep knowledge.

In summary, I emphasize that the teaching and educational activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva is unconditionally related to the subject of the competition, and the accumulated teaching experience is completely satisfactory for occupying the academic position of "professor" in professional direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Business Communications and Personal Development Management).

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activity, incl. scientific contributions

For her participation in the competition, Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ilieva participated with 2 monographs, 1 book and 9 articles. The research papers presented create an impression of depth of research and competent knowledge of the candidate in two areas: (1) business communications and (2) management of personal development. The author demonstrates good knowledge and skills for interpreting the theoretical statements in the researched areas, as well as for reasoned defense of her ideas and proposals.

Of particular interest is the author's monographic study of "Management of Personal Development", Ed. "Grigoriy Bogoslov", Sofia, 2022, ISBN 978-619-7622-28-7, focused on the development of the concept of personal development. The main emphasis is placed on self-knowledge and on the significant role of teachers, university professors and mentors in this process. In her research, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva distinguishes the numerous aspects of personal development and systematizes some organizational trends for the affirmation and progress of the personality in the professional career and in life in general.

The other monographic work with which the candidate participated in the competition is on the topic "Communication on time and in place", IC "Bozhidar Danev", Sofia, 2020, ISBN: 978-619-91527-1-3, It is dedicated to the idea of responsible communication. In it, Associate Professor Daniela Ilieva offers a conceptual framework of communication in a complex environment, presenting an interesting interweaving of classics and modernism, the old and the new in business and informal communication. Communication skills through taking responsibility in the communication process are presented as a prerequisite for the successful realization of

personal, academic, professional and strategic business goals. The author's approach to presenting the results in her monographic work is interesting, revealing the possibility of applying the various communication techniques for the self-improvement of the individual. Special attention is paid to NLP techniques, which enable quick achievement of desired results and desired change in any area of life. The monograph impresses with the systematized author tables and images that illustrate the analyses, conclusions and descriptions made in the chapters. The summaries and conclusions made in the monographic work would be useful for managers, entrepreneurs, consultants and researchers who are interested in various practical techniques and strategies for improving communication skills.

The results of the research of Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ilieva in the two monographs are proof of her ability to highlight and analyze in depth problems significant for science and society as a whole.

Of interest for scientific and business practice is also the candidate's book on the topic "Improving Presentation Skills", 2022, ISBN 978-619-7622-25-6, published on the basis of a protected dissertation work for awarding an educational and scientific degree " doctor". The book presents an author's methodology for improving individual presentation skills, which takes into account the manager's personal profile and time resources and is based on an individual approach in his subsequent training. The author competently adapted the process of training human resources to the process of improving presentation skills. Reasonable modification of the human resources training process can be defined as a contribution to business communication theory. In view of the fact that the presented process is adopted as the methodological basis of the developed methodology for improving individual presentation skills, its applied nature can also be assessed.

The issues of the monographs and the book of Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ilieva are developed, specified and deepened in the articles submitted to the competition. They present Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva as a good researcher who successfully develops current scientific and applied issues of personal development and problems of the educational system. Along with this, the ability of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva to inform the scientific community in an appropriate way about her research work should be positively noted. A large part of her publications are cited in the works of other researchers, which is a certificate of positive perception of theses and results of her scientific research.

It can be summarized that the volume, thematic orientation and scope of the scientific production of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva clearly outline her creative and professional development, corresponding to the professional direction in which the competition was announced. According to the presented documentation, I can **definitely highlight** the presence of a clear personal contribution of the candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva in the publications submitted for review, as well as the fact that the formulated contributions and obtained results are her personal merit.

4. Critical remarks and recommendations

In the peer-reviewed scientific production, I do not find any misstatements or serious omissions that would reduce its good quality. In her capacity as a future professor, I recommend Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva to make targeted efforts to realize publications in more authoritative foreign refereed and indexed editions, which would definitely ensure her greater recognition and popularity in the scientific space. Regarding her future teaching work, it is appropriate to develop and publish independent study materials (aids and textbooks), including based on the monographs presented in this competition.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Associate Professor Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the relevant Regulations of the University of Higher Education.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of her "doctor" degree and occupying the academic position "associate professor". The publications and research are competent, innovative and scientifically sound. The results achieved by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ilieva in the educational and research activities correspond to the Regulations of VUZF for the application of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

All this gives me the reason to give my positive assessment to the materials and scientific works presented by Associate Professor Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva in the competition for the academic position of "Professor".

I recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Academic Council for the election of Associate Professor Dr. Daniela Nikolaeva Ilieva to the academic position of 'Professor' at VUZF in professional direction 3.7. Administration and Management (Business Communications and Personal Development Management).

15.08. 2022 г.

Author:

(Prof. Dr. Galina Kurteva)