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History of Science Master's Program — transfer and adaptation: The Lithuanian case

THE POST-SOVIET SITUATION provided all three Baltic States with an opportunity to propose and implement new study programs more in line with Western approaches, both in terms of program content as in methodological approaches.

In the case of Lithuania, we succeeded to transfer a History of Science Master's degree program to the Kaunas Technology University from Brooklyn's Technological University (USA), and starting with the fall semester of 1999, it has been preparing students in this new field. There were some local adjustments to include some "Philosophy of science", but we feel that our program has incorporated some original features that may be of interests to a wider academic public.

Our program incorporates three truly original courses, perhaps unique in Europe. First, in our attempt to tie history of science to the humanities, we introduced a course called "The humanities foundation in science and technology". Second, in our attempt to place an emphasis on the diffusion of science and technology transfer to other countries, both historical and contemporary, we introduced a course called "Technology and science transfer to other societies". This course deals not only with a country to country technology transfer, but with two other types of transfer - from idea or small scale laboratory to industrial practice, or from one application or field to another. And finally, today, technology forecasting has become vital to understand the rapid developments in high technology areas that will be key to economic growth and development. Our course, "Technology forecasting", attempts to draw attention to this important topic.

These three courses we feel compliment harmoniously the traditional history of science program. The last two courses, "Technology transfer" and "Technology forecasting", can be viewed as an outgrowth of history of technology, or rather, as an example of what can be called applied history of science and history of technology. In our presentation we will cover different aspects of introducing such a program in an otherwise difficult educational environment.

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