

OFFICIAL BULLETIN

no. 1 November 30th 2020 AD

Dear readers!

We are giving you (or rather, your mailboxes) the first issue of the official bulletin of Liberal Arts and Sciences program at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. We want to inform you about the events related to the functioning of the program and give a voice to its lecturers and students. We also seek to share with you knowledge about the idea of liberal arts. We wish you happy reading!

Staff of Centre for Liberal Arts and Sciences

OPINIONS

This is not about us

Prof. Kazimierz Ilski

Professor Kazimierz Ilski is a former dean of the Faculty of History. He belongs to the group of people responsible for establishing the LAS program in Poznań. He teaches the class "Traditions of artes liberales". We asked him for a few sentences of reflection related to his subject and the program as such.



What exactly are Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS)?

The name is English, but in the name of the class "Traditions of artes liberales" - we hear Latin.

Next to the first, easy answer that LAS is a program which in its first recruitment at AMU attracted a group of well-motivated students, it should be noted that it is also a concept of education and upbringing, which the Greeks described with the word *paideia*.

It is by no means an anachronistic return to the form of a Greek Academy or Lyceum. However, certain principles determining the shaping of the mental model are worth recalling and, in a modernized shape, worth following. It is about educating a free man and shaping a community of free people - the university as a "community of doubt". After all, bringing together the free citizens of the world doesn't seek to emphasize the ignorance of each other. The goal is to cross the boundaries of what has already been established in an open discussion or to correct what has been established defectively, without being servile to fashions and weathered methodologies.

The point is to ask, in the community of professors and students, every possible question as long as it meets the criteria of logic, so that the thesis can be verified by an antithesis. The freedom of learning includes opening new fields while respecting tradition, accumulation of knowledge in vertical (generational) and horizontal structures, by constant contact with friends from other universities in the East and West. Freedom is not a privilege to waste time, nor is it a privilege to concentrate narcissistically on oneself, on one's beautiful, trained body and skills described by the particular disciplines of science in the name of career, profit, or short-term popularity. *Paideia* is still about the "good life" and awakening the desire to discover the unchanging and harmonious world order.

We started - naturally - from colloquial language

Prof. Krzysztof Skibski

Prof. Krzysztof Skibski is vice-dean for student affairs and education at the Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology. As a member of Liberal Arts and Sciences team, he teaches the class "Polish as the Language of Science". We asked him for a few sentences of reflection related to his subject.

Perhaps it is the circumstances of the first classes with the Liberal arts and sciences group that have a specific impact on the growth of our cognitive enthusiasm. We are aware from the very beginning that the multifactorial nature of the experienced hic et nunc cannot be closed by a scheme.

We initiated joint work, interpreting the world in relation to various disciplines, specialized languages, but also - our individualities. That is why we started our classes on language (science) from colloquial language, from looking at words that seemingly do not surprise us, from reflecting on a language that "perhaps could somehow be overcome" (as Piotr Sommer wrote in a sonnet). We took poetry to reflect on the mechanisms of conceptualization. This is the way we would like to continue this adventure - being aware of the various forms of mediation (even if it is already obvious to us - resulting from remote), discussing, getting to know the texts of culture and looking at the language with which we talk (write) about all these discoveries.



If we manage to create a few extensive, problematized footnotes to everyday life (while maintaining forms appropriate for scientific works), then we will probably also discover many things in ourselves. We started and, having wiped the screens of our computers, we work together slowly and quite fast at the same time.

NEWS

Scientific Council for Liberal Arts and Sciences program comes into being

The new law on higher education in Poland requires that there is a Scientific Council for each field of study, dealing with legal, content and organizational issues. Our program is no exception in this regard.



Therefore, on September 20th this year, prof. Rafał Witkowski, director of the Centre for Liberal Arts and Sciences and vice-rector of our university, handed over appointments to the council to five scientists from our university. They are representatives of various fields who conduct classes within the direction. When the enrollment process ended, two representatives of the student body joined them. We present the full composition of the council:

Chairman of the council:

Prof. AMU dr hab. Łukasz Różycki - historian

Council members

Prof. dr hab. Kazimierz Iłski - historian
Prof. AMU dr hab. Karol Bartkiewicz - mathematician
Prof. AMU dr hab. Jakub Rybka - biotechnologist
Prof. AMU dr hab. Tomasz Pędrziński - physicist
Prof. AMU dr hab. Rafał Witkowski - historian

Representatives of students:

Izabela Dziedzic
Maksymilian Chwałkowski

Academic year 2020/21 begins

With masks on and keeping social distance, with an audience following the event mainly on the Internet, on October 1st at the auditorium of Henryk Wieniawski we opened another academic year in the history of our university.

The celebration was particular for one more reason. Prof. Andrzej Lesicki, rector of Adam Mickiewicz University officially stepped off the office. He handed over the emblems of power to his successor, prof. Bogumiła Kaniewska. She is the first woman to hold this office. In her inaugural speech, the rector discussed the crisis of meaning that the idea of the university is experiencing today. I believe in university. I believe in a university that has never been and never will be a corporation, a point factory. We can't rule it technocratically or authoritatively. The university is a beautiful community of wise and responsible people who pursue common goals. She emphasised the issue of the involvement of the university in the matters



outside of it. During the ceremony, prof. Andrzej Kostrzewski from the Faculty of Geography received from the rector the medal *Palmae Universitatis Studiorum Posnaniensis*. Afterwards, the matriculation of first-year students took place. Prof. Piotr Śliwiński gave a very timely lecture titled *Hope in Literature*. The ceremony ended with the traditional anthem *Gaudeamus*.

Centre for Liberal Arts and Sciences opens up

On September 21st prof. Bogumiła Kaniewska, the rector of AMU, established the Centre for Liberal Arts and Sciences.



The task of the Centre is to coordinate activities related to the program, its promotion and setting further development directions.

One of its first initiatives will be to create a publishing series devoted to the idea of Liberal arts. Vice-rector of AMU, prof. Rafał Witkowski became the director of the Centre, and Wojciech Nadobnik, MA became its secretary.

The Centre is in Collegium Historicum Novum, room 3.26. As soon as the pandemic restrictions go away - we invite you!

EPICUR: multilingualism

On October 14th, the EPICUR European University consortium members met at the University of Amsterdam. The main topic was the issue of multilingualism.



The gathered guests discussed how to make students, scientists and employees of universities affiliated to EPICUR efficiently use two or three national languages of the consortium countries. Prof. Bogumiła Kaniewska, the rector of AMU, represented our university in the meeting.

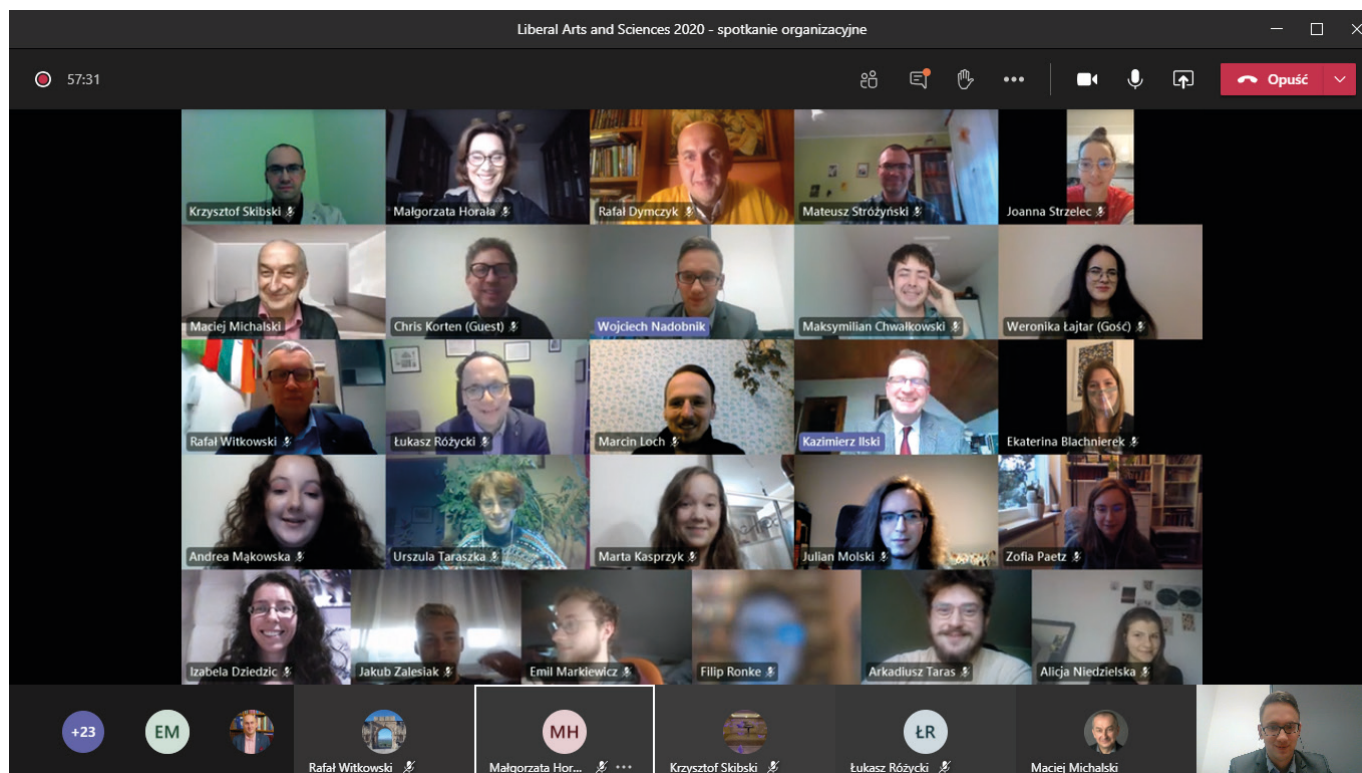
Improvement of language skills would make it easier to achieve goals of EPICUR: communication, joint research projects and mobility. It was in the context of mobility that the question of the Liberal Arts and Sciences program emerged in the panel section. In the future, some of the LAS students will surely be willing to spend a semester or two at another EPICUR university. Therefore, it is in their best interest to learn the language of the host country ahead.

The first twenty like that. Students of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Here they are! Despite the pandemic and the related difficulties, twenty students decided to accept the challenge and start an adventure with our program.

Interestingly, apart from freshly graduated high school graduates, many of them have already graduated from different fields of study, such as chemistry, physics, sociology or music studies. We solemnly welcomed our students at the meeting which took place (unfortunately - remotely) on October 16. Director of the Liberal Arts and Sciences Center, Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University, prof. Rafał Witkowski congratulated the students on their acceptance to the

faculty. In his speech, he expressed the conviction that this meeting had - and in many respects - historical importance. Prof. Łukasz Różycki from the Faculty of History, the tutor of the first year, and professors teaching classes in the first semester were also present. They took the opportunity to say hello to the students. Despite the physical distance, the meeting had an atmosphere of optimism and curiosity. We even managed to take a souvenir group photo! Congratulations to the students (and envy!). We also wish that their intellectual adventure could move from the Internet to its place as soon as possible - to the building of Collegium Historicum Novum.



VOICES OF LAS

We've asked our students to tell us about hopes and motivations, which led them to enroll in the Liberal Arts and Sciences program. Here is what two of them, Julia Kręgielska and Zofia Paetz had to say. QR code of our YouTube channel:

