

# The Strategy of Integration for the Navigation Specialization Students on Maritime Market

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## Abstract

*The current situation of young graduates of specialization Sailing, to engage aboard commercial ships is difficult. Romanian students in this specialization, which must carry out internship craft, not easy to find places to practice on board merchant vessels. Equally difficult is the situation of young officers who seek jobs in the shipping companies. In this paper is an analysis of the situation of the two categories of young people who are disadvantaged. For they have used a number of strategies to integrate them into the sea.*

**Key words:** *cadet, deck officer, integration, shipping.*

**JEL classification:** I2, M5

## 1. Introduction

As I anticipate in the paper work published in 2006 "New Management for Maritime Companies" came hard times of crisis and for seafarers, not only for the shipping companies, (Iordanoaia, 2006). I also predicted a number of difficulties regarding the "How could an addicted video-game student turn into a marine officer", (Iordanoaia, 2009). At present the graduates of Navigation specialization who practice their craft carried aboard of the commercial ships is particularly difficult. This situation has several causes, which occurred more time. Among the most significant negative influence on the embarkation situation of the deck cadets include:

**A).The serious economic crisis of 2008-2012.** It has affected the shipping industry worldwide. The fall in demand has reduced the number of vessels required for transport. Hence resulted in a large number of unemployed among sailors and officers.

**b).Removing programs for cadets.** The shipping companies have canceled programs for cadets on board of the ships. In other situations have reduced the number of cadets, citizens of Europe, and brought on board of the ships cadets from Southeast Asian countries, who accepted much smaller boarding daytime.

**c).A low level of preparedness of students.** This situation has many causes, is complex and they cannot change in a short period of time. Among the negative aspects affecting the level of preparedness of students, during the Faculty studies can enumerate, (Iordanoaia, 2009):

-They come from schools that are unrelated to the marina, because the marine high schools were closed in Romania. During high school did not teach specialized subjects of the ships, not any specific notions of the ships in the time of high school. These could ease their ease learning the concepts of specialized disciplines during Faculty time.

-Admission to the Faculty of Navigation is done only on the basis of high school graduation and obtaining Baccalaureate Diploma. Entrance exam held only for government-funded places, a test type "grid" in mathematics. The placements financed from the state budget are a small number that do not cover the demand for these places, and in each academic year is a great competition for these places, (CMU, 2016).

-The Education Law was amended and now allows unauthorized absence from courses, seminars and laboratories, universities leaving the possibility to provide its regulations, this situation, (NEL, 2011). Maritime University leadership to enable students through the "Rules for students' professional activity", to attend courses, seminars and laboratories only 80% of the hours set out in the curriculum, (CMU, 2014). But students have more absences from classes and seminars than the rules allow, something better

are the laboratories where to participate, to fulfill its duties to carry out projects, otherwise not receive the exam.

-Specialty practice was reduced to 15 days, over a period of three weeks. It takes place at the end of the first academic year at the nautical base. At the nautical base, they do practice on board of the boats and yachts and learn the basics of seamanship. In the second year students attend at the IMO courses for getting sailor and helmsman certificate of capacity. After completion of the second academic year, can embark to commercial ships for internships. In the fourth year, in the first academic semester, they were the official practice period. I.e. in a period between 1.10-28.02, approx. 5 months, can be embarked aboard for internships. In total by the end of four years of undergraduate studies, students should perform and practice 12 months embarked.

-Students are not accustomed to working in teams, even if the hours of navigation simulator which requires teamwork, and students are obliged to constitute teams watch. These are similar to the work on board of the ship, on the navigation deck.

-Program of the courses and for study is light, does not involve any special problems. The schedule of classes take place from Monday to Friday, usually from 08.00 until 16.30, with a timetable divided into two weeks, then repeats the entire semester. Some courses are scheduled after 16.00 till 20.00. In general, time after 16.00 till 20.00, is used to organize IMO courses, (IMO, 2010). Because some courses during the week takes place in the halls of the Nautical Base, is wasting time moving students from headquarters or from home, up there. University solved this situation, organizing transport students with a coach, a schedule that allows students to be on time to class. The analysis follows the following schedule shown in Table. 1.

Table no. 1. Schedule of students from Navigation specialization

YEAR OF STUDY	SEMESTER	THE NUMBER OF SESSIONS PER WEEK	COURSES, SEMINARS AND LABORATORIES	
			TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS IN 7 WEEKS	TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS PER SEMESTER
I	I	I=11	11x7=77	168
		II=13	13x7=91	
	II	I=16	16x7=112	203
		II=13	13x7=91	
II	I	I=12	12x7=84	203
		II=17	17x7=119	
	II	I=16	16x7=112	210
		II=14	14x7=98	
III	I	I=17	17x7=119	224
		II=15	15x7=105	
	II	I=17	17x7=119	210
		II=13	13x7=91	
IV	I	I= -	-	-
		II= -	-	
	II	I=17	17x7=119	203
		II=12	12x7=84	

Source: (author study), (CMU, 2015).

In the fourth year, in the time of the first semester, the students have allocated the time for embarked practice. For know the students time for the individual study, I used the following formula (1):

$$T_S = (T_T - T_C - T_P - T_L - T_D) : 5, \text{ where:} \quad (1)$$

- $T_S$  = time of study/day (in minutes),

- $T_T$  = total time of the academic year, from Monday to Friday, from 08.00-20.00 hours, which is calculated by the formula:

$$T_T = 28 \text{ weeks} \times 5 \text{ days/week} \times 12 \text{ hours/day} \times 60 \text{ minutes} = 100,800 \text{ minutes}, \quad (2)$$

- $T_C$  = total time of sessions a week (courses, seminars and laboratories),

- $T_P$  = time for breaks between courses,

- $T_L$  = free time for lunch,

- $T_D$  = travel time from home (students hostel),

-5 = number of days of courses in a week.

Performing calculations of time for the students are spent on courses, seminars and laboratories, I obtained a series of values that are listed in the Table no. 2.

I have considered the following values:

- A course meeting, seminar or laboratory has 90 minutes.
- Pause between meetings is 15 minutes, considering a break for each session.
- Moving to faculty is 30 minutes/day (round trip).
- Free time for lunch is 30 minutes/day.

Table no. 2. Situation of the time study allocated for the students from Navigation specialization (minutes).

TOTAL TIME/ YEAR OF STUDY	TIME SPENT FOR COURSES, SEMINARS AND LABORATORIES			TIME FOR BREAKS, TRAVEL AND LEISURE			REMAINING TIME FOR STUDY/DAY
	SEMESTER I	SEMESTER II	TOTAL OF YEAR	SEMESTER I	SEMESTER II	TOTAL OF YEAR	
<b>I</b> <b>100,800</b>	15.120	18.270	<b>33.390</b>	168x15 168X30 168X30	203x15 203x30 203x30	<b>27,825</b>	<b>39,585 : 140</b> <b>= 282</b>
<b>II</b> <b>100,800</b>	18.270	18.900	<b>37.170</b>	203x15 203x30 203x30	210x15 210x30 210x30	<b>30,975</b>	<b>32,655 : 140</b> <b>= 233</b>
<b>III</b> <b>100,800</b>	20.160	18.900	<b>39.060</b>	224x15 224x30 224x60	210x15 210x30 210x30	<b>32,550</b>	<b>29,190 : 140</b> <b>= 208</b>
<b>IV</b> <b>50,400</b>	-	18.270	<b>18.270</b>	-	203x15 203x30 203x30	<b>15,225</b>	<b>16,905 : 70</b> <b>= 241</b>

Source: (author study).

The free time for individual study is derived from the total annual (2 semesters, 28 weeks, from Monday to Friday, from 08.00-20.00, which is 100,800 minutes of it were low total time allocated courses, the total pause, the total time for lunch, the total time for transport was and split to a number of 140 days of the academic year. the Table no. 2, show the following:

-Students in the first year were available, on average approx. 4 hours and 42 minutes/day for individual study.

-Students in the second year were available, on average approx. 3 hours and 53 minutes/day for individual study.

-Students in the third year they have available, on average approx. 3 hours and 28 minutes/day for individual study.

-IV year students have available, on average approx. 4 hours and 1 minute/day for individual study.

From these calculations results a particular situation! Students today have very little time to study during the day, all subjects that are taught. From previous studies, comparing the situations recorded before 1990, that now students have less time to study individually, have a larger number of subjects allocated to the program of education and many opportunities for leisure, as are clubs, bars, shopping site, partying with friends and colleagues, computer games, communication chatting, watching social networks (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). All this leads to the reduction of real time allocated to individual study.

**D).The situation of poor exam results.** During the examination sessions students have only 2-3 days allocated for training between exams. It makes the students learn just for the exam, save a huge amount of information, but they forget the long-term 90% of what they have learned, (Tabachiu et.al, 1997). Analyzing results from teaching, the marks situation and the large number of repeaters promote a situation arises that you consider "critical", the level of preparedness of students. Here are a series of issues related to the possibility of having very poor results, to engage in the shipping companies. I.e. those who average under note 7, are less likely to be accepted in some companies of maritime navigation.

**e).Poor motivation for career.** Some experts believed that off before 1990, they came to the merchant navy, who were adventurous, who wanted to see the world, to visit foreign countries, to escape a stressful situation somewhat socialist society and an authoritarian, undemocratic. After 1990 there was a new motivation, training in the context of capitalist society and market economy in Romania, which is to win big money in service at sea. The two features have spent a long time on the basis of motivation for careers by commercial officer. Currently there is a poor motivation of those who wish to go to sea. From surveys conducted among students from the first year up to the fourth year, revealed a series of issues related to motivation for proceed on sea, presented in Table no. 3.

Most answers were grouped the criterion 1, and the fewest criterion 5. The analysis of responses there is a fairly low motivation based on little information about what awaits them aboard ships. When asked "why they want to go to sea?", answers are equally relevant. I.e. they have very few answers to give reasons for the decision to come to Navigation Faculty, proceed to sea. In conclusion I can say that the level of motivation, of the students of Navigation specialization is reduced.

*Table no. 3. Motivational issues for choice the maritime career and boarding officer on ships.*

No	FROM WHOM THEY LEARNED ABOUT MARITIME UNIVERSITY	WHY THEY WILL BECOME OFFICERS AND/OR SAIL	WHAT THEY KNOW ABOUT LIFE AND ACTIVITY ON SEA
1.	-From one friend.	-Because they want to make a university perspective.	-They do not know much.
2.	-From a relative.	-They want to go to sea a few years and then working to dry.	-They know it's a hard life, but beautiful.
3.	-From the CMU web site.	-They want to earn big money.	-They know it's hard at first, but then it will be easier.
4.	-From an acquaintance.	-They want to see the world, to visit ports.	-
5.	-In the High School.	-They want to make a career at sea.	-

*Source: (author study).*

## **2. The current situation of cadets and graduates officer embarkation**

During 01.10.2015-31.03.2016, the project "Internships for students' integration into the labor market", no. of financing agreement POSDRU/161/2.1/G/138049, financed by the "Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013", implemented by the Institute for Human Resources Development in the South East region, based on a cooperation protocol signed with the Maritime University, was formed a local partnership to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices related to "transition from school to work for students of Constanta Maritime University".

Objects of the Protocol were:

-Providing free and each, under the law, the data and information required by each party to the other, necessary for achieving their objectives.

-Organizing theoretical and practical training of students at the training center established by the project beneficiary during the program agreed.

-The organization of visits and information from several partner companies to inform students on the conditions relating to receipt of shipping companies, employment and boarding the ships.

Results conducting activities within the Protocol, between Constanta Maritime University and the Institute for Human Resources Development, are:

-In the period of 7-18.12.2015 were visited for information and documentation from a total of 10 companies with crewing activity and services agency, in Constanta ("Maersk", "CMA-CGM", "Dohle Manning Agency", "XT Ship Management", "Barklav", "Rickmers Group", "Sagau Shipping & Services", "Bright Maritime Services", "Cardinal Shipping Services" and "Lion Shipping & Chartering"). These companies send a large number of cadets for practice on board, around 360-390 cadets/year, this number that represents approx. 70% of the annual number average of the Romanian cadets marched higher. Situation of the cadets and graduates of the Navigation specialization, who went to sea in 2015 is relatively low, approx. 556 persons (RNA, 2015).

-These visits have scored a total of 31 fourth-year students from the Faculty of Navigation and Naval Transport, which is in practice during its semester.

-During these visits, representatives of companies made presentations of the shipping companies they represent, informed on the work with cadets and graduates, selection and employment procedures.

-They were presented a number of aspects of shipboard activities, by cadets and young officer's graduates, situations they have faced, ship-owners expectations related to the activity of cadets and young officers later.

Following the presentations revealed a series of issues related to students and graduates from CMU, Table no. 4.

The main conclusions emerging from the discussions and visits at the crewing companies have the following aspects:

- A low level of theoretical knowledge at the cadets and graduates.
- Some cadets there is no proper attitude on board, indiscipline and lack of involvement in activities, lack of own initiatives.
- Stability in the maritime companies reduced their hosts for internships craft.

Table no. 4. Situations reported by the shipping companies' representatives

No	SITUATIONS SPENT AT THE CREWING COMPANIES	SITUATIONS ON BOARD OF THE MARITIME SHIPS
1.	-It records a large number of students at the premises of companies, but the degree of rejection is high at the specialized tests and English.	-A number of cadets not withstand and they ask for landing ships before the end of the contracts. This situation leads to job losses for the Romanian cadets, for practice in these companies, and the owners will bring cadets from other countries, particularly from the Philippines and India.
2.	-Students who pass these tests are called for interviews. -Interviews shall be conducted live on Skype with representatives of shipping companies, from corporate headquarters abroad. This leads to a high degree of rejection. -Some companies are conducted interviews at headquarters in Constanta, there are led by the Romanian officers who have higher degree of tolerance and permissiveness.	-Some cadets do not have the right attitude on board, not wanting to prepare, will not participate in all activities and enter into direct conflict with chiefs (Master, Captain, deck officers). This conflict leads to the rejection Romanian cadets from foreign shipping companies.
3.	-Cadets have difficulty expressing themselves freely in English, do not have evolved a specialized dictionary.	-Romanian cadets have difficulty in adapting to the life and activities on board. Adapts hard, are not used to communicate with the crew members, are reluctant to befriend strangers, especially with sailors from Asia (Philippines, Vietnam, China).
4.	-Another situation is that after obtaining the IMO Certificate for the officer on deck, do not return to the companies where they performed embarked practice. -This leads to some deductions of ship-owners, in the future they will not take more Romanian cadets for the embarked practice.	-A particularly serious, said the company is related to the fact that a student was tested anti-doping when arrival at the ship and after a positive result, he was sent home.

Source: (author study).

### 3. Perspectives and strategies for incorporation the cadets on sea market

The situation embarkation students for internships mandatory on board of the ships, came to the attention of several maritime institutions in Romania. Free Union of Seafarers from Romania launched a debate "Project to help the cadets for the mandatory internships". This document was released because management Free Union of Seafarers consider that "sea crew and students of the maritime universities and colleges is the main source of financing of the Romanian Naval Authority, Romanian Maritime Training Center "Ceronav", Constanta Maritime University, the Naval Academy "Mircea cel Batran", the Crewing Agencies, Free Union of Seafarers" and starting from that "fewer younger students can fulfill their internship in order to promote the position of officer, all entities above should aim as a priority, aid to this segment", (FUS, 2016). Syndicate leadership also considers that "bear in mind that the European Union leadership urged European ship-owners to register their at least 40% of transport capacity in Europe, which continue to receive European funding in various forms". European Union demand management also focuses on "increasing European seafarers, especially officers. In this context, the Romanian officers have an opportunity to handle the job on European ships, in terms of education and high quality training".

FUS leadership held a series of discussions internationally with its partners to dialogue, and from these discussions revealed that "there is the possibility definite takeover of Romanian cadets in terms of burden sharing and possible financing expenses derived from it". Following debates and governmental sector, the proposal must support changes to reach the final shape to come into this program. Free Union of Seafarers is only an initiator of discussions at sectoral maritime community who care equally about cadet's practice on board of the ships.

### 4. Conclusions

Following the analysis performed yielded a number of conclusions:

**A).For the Maritime University.** The current situation requires the following solutions:

-Reduce the number of meetings (lectures, seminars and laboratories), by amending and adapting curricula. Too many sessions /week, leading to reduced time-study students. Reduced time study is not completed with free time from the weekend, when rule-school students have concerns. Emphasis should be placed on organizing individual study sessions in specially equipped rooms for individual study.

-Focusing on education per student to help him to learn, be career oriented, to give up many of its activities which are not important for its preparation, which reduce individual time trial.

-Increasing the quality of Maritime higher education, given the fact that students come to Faculty with a reduced baggage expertise.

-Organizing a larger number of students meeting with representatives of the shipping companies in order for them to present real situations from ships and to help them navigate and choice the career.

-Organizing meetings psychological counseling and guidance with the help of psychologists, to specialists in human resources domain.

-The organization of visits to ships which arriving in the port of Constanta. These visits can be organized with the help of representatives of the shipping companies.

-Continuation of the scholarship program for students "Erasmus ++" to stimulate students leaving practice voyages aboard ships.

**b).For the shipping companies.** Shipping companies and maritime companies for recruiting seafarers should consider the following issues:

-To introduce special programs for Romanian cadets. This situation is manageable, but if these companies do not take action, the crisis of highly qualified seafarers, as Masters and chief engineers, will lead to big problems in the near future. If will not invest in the students practice and not promotion of young officers, will not have where to choose prospective Masters and chief engineers.

-It must seek solutions to keeping cadets after graduation and them obtain the certificate of marine deck officer, to return to the company and work there for a long time.

-Must take measures to reduce the number of stress factors on ships. This can be done by re-organization of the board, the redistribution of tasks, to create the best working and living conditions on board.

If these aspects will be taken into account by managers from the maritime field, it will solve the problem of the current situation of the Romanian cadets.

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