PECULIARITIES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OF MASTER PROGRAMS’ ACADEMICS

ABSTRACT
Professional development of legal scholars and teachers who teach disciplines at master programs of the US law schools is rather important as in the field of jurisprudence, new laws, acts and other documents rapidly emerge and disseminate. It leads to the necessity to adopt curricula to new realia, accordingly, prepare legal teachers to give a corresponding course at the university. American society provides a collaborative learning environment for further training of master programs’ legal teachers throughout the entire period of their pedagogical activity, creates opportunities for their continuous professional development, where academics are engaged in a challenging course of study, they pursue their ambitions and contribute to the community as talented scholars and leaders. In the United States, the problem of professional development of legal academics is solved mainly through organization of internships at law firms, short-term courses on the basis of large corporations or professional societies, and summer schools. Teachers of legal disciplines during their advanced training at a law firm or company get the opportunity to improve their level of theory, practical skills, face the problems of current legal proceedings, modern technologies, cybersecurity, and when returning to the workplace, the information and experience gained benefit the educational process at master programs for future lawyers. The USA professional societies also have a crucial impact on the development of American higher legal education. These are voluntary associations of legal professionals, including professors that encourage their members to participate in conferences, seminars, lectures on special issues, use specialized materials, and participate in professional development programs and summer schools. Therefore, US law schools have created a mechanism of professional development of master programs’ legal teachers at the federal and state levels that gives them the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and remain competitive throughout their career.

Keywords: professional development, master program, academic, legal teacher, US law school, curriculum.
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реалій, відповідно, готувати викладачів до читання нового курсу в університеті. Американське суспільство забезпечує середовище для подальшого навчання викладачів магістерських програм з права протягом усього періоду їхньої педагогічної діяльності, створює можливості для їх постійного професійного розвитку, що дозволяє їм не лише задовольняти власні амбіції, але й ставати кориснішими для громади в цілому. У США проблема підвищення кваліфікації викладачів юридичних шкіл вирішується головним чином шляхом організації стажування в юридичних фірмах, на короткострокових курсах на базі великих корпорацій чи професійних товариств та літніх школ. Викладачі юридичних дисциплін під час підвищення кваліфікації в юридичній фірмі чи компанії отримують можливість підшукати рівень теоретичних знань, практичних навичок, розглянуті проблеми судочинства та альтернативних способів вирішення спорів, навчатися застосовувати сучасні технології, обмінюватися інформацією та навчитися застосовувати спеціалізовані матеріали. Зрозуміло, що американські юридичні школи створили ефективний механізм підвищення кваліфікації викладачів магістерських програм на федеральному рівні та на рівні штатів, що дає їм можливість здобувати нові знання та залишатися конкурентоспроможними протягом усієї своєї кар’єри.

Ключові слова: підвищення кваліфікації, магістерська програма, професор, викладач юридичних дисциплін, юридична школа США, навчальна програма.

INTRODUCTION

No matter how good pre-service training for teachers is, it cannot be expected to prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face throughout their careers. Education systems therefore seek to provide teachers with opportunities for in-service professional development in order to maintain a high standard of teaching and to retain a high-quality teacher workforce (The Professional Development of Teachers, 2009).

The way scholars and teachers raise level of their proficiency in the US universities plays a significant role when educational work is evaluated. Professional development of legal scholars and teachers who teach at master programs of the US law schools is also very important. Thus, in the field of jurisprudence, the emergence and dissemination of new laws, acts and other documents lead to the necessity to update curricula almost every year or add new modules and, accordingly, prepare legal teachers to give a corresponding course at the university.

Taking into account these trends, it becomes obvious that a teacher of a legal discipline, who graduated from the law school many years ago, will encounter a difficulty to teach a new module within master program. Professional development allows a legal teacher to obtain an integral perception of his course and its place among other disciplines, treat a legal profession in a modern aspect; permits him to act as an experienced mentor and organize competitive interdisciplinary curricula. Moreover, further training enables a legal teacher of master program to become interchangeable with other peers. Thus, legal teachers should be responsible for their own advanced training to maintain a high level of theoretical knowledge, practical skills and quality of teaching in accordance with changing requirements.
THE AIM OF THE STUDY
The objective of the article is to describe the peculiarities of professional development of master programs’ academics at law schools of the USA and demonstrate that further training of master programs’ legal teachers is an integral part of their continuous professional development.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS
The quality of teaching has a crucial influence on teaching-learning process that is why a great number of scientists in our country and abroad analyze the problem of assessment of teachers’ professional activities at law schools. Native researchers focus their attention to various aspects of professional development, problems of personal development, cognitive abilities improvement, etc. Foreign investigators (N. Khei and K. Wilbur (2018), U. Teichler (2015), F. O. Larbi and M. A.Ashraf (2019), etc. analysed teacher performance assessment, evaluated its influence on teaching-learning environment, mobility of international academics and its advantages to university’s basic goal achievement of preparing future specialists.

Nevertheless, the problem of professional development of master programs’ academics at law schools of the USA has been less in the limelight in Ukrainian scientific and methodical publications, it justifies the importance of this issue. To identify the level of readiness of the current problem the method of analysis and synthesis of pedagogical methodological, social sources was used. The method of generalization was applied to conclude the article.

RESULTS
Evidently, American society provides a collaborative learning environment for further training of master programs’ legal teachers throughout the entire period of their pedagogical activity, creates opportunities for their continuous professional development, where academics are engaged in a challenging course of study, they pursue their ambitions and contribute to the community as talented scholars and leaders. Most of new legal knowledge is produced by governmental agencies, legislation bodies, globalization processes, and this affects the activities of governmental institutions, non-profit organizations, law firms and corporations, therefore they should play a leading role in organizing special courses for teachers of master programs at the US law schools. Currently, in the United States, the problem of professional development of legal academics is solved mainly through organization of internships at law firms, short-term courses on the basis of large corporations or professional societies, and summer schools. In addition, American premier law schools provide their scholars and teachers with paid annual sabbatical leave every 6 years so that they could promote themselves as scientists, visit foreign research centers, universities and generalize their experience. At the same time, universities bear all the costs of providing travel and accommodation for their employees abroad. As U. Teichler (2015) states, mobility of academics, persons active at higher education institutions and other research institutions is viewed as very important for academic progress in general, for international understanding, comparative analysis and as a counterbalance to parochial thinking in general (p. 7). This is a very effective method of professional development because it completely directs a legal teacher to research the issue that matches his academic interests and gives tangible results in the form of monographs, experiments, discoveries.

Moreover, leading law schools in the USA, on the basis of their faculties, organize online advanced training courses for law school teachers, what allows them effectively
combine professional activities with study. Exchange programs for legal teachers between universities and enterprises, internships, attraction of practicing lawyers to educational process in master programs at law schools are widely practiced in the USA.

Teachers of legal disciplines during their advanced training at a law firm or company get the opportunity to improve their level of theory, practical skills, face the problems of modern legal proceedings, modern technologies, cybersecurity, and when returning to the workplace, the information and experience gained benefit the educational process at master programs for future lawyers.

And what is more, the high level of theoretical preparation of legal teachers of master programs is often valuable and is used by law firms’ employees in solving emerging problems. At the same time, universities benefit from the fact that during the semester or throughout the academic year, lectures or seminars are taught by a specialist who obtained specific experience, knows features of a legal phenomenon, problems and requirements for training future lawyers.

The USA professional societies also have a crucial impact on the development of American higher legal education. These are voluntary associations of legal professionals, including professors, that encourage their members to participate in conferences, seminars, lectures on special issues, use specialized materials, participate in professional development programs and summer schools. Fellowship in legal professional associations and organizations promotes one’s credentials, qualifications, benefits personal and professional development. The following list of legal professional associations and organizations is a basic tool for people who pursue professional development or want to connect with legal professionals who share common interests (Legal Professional Associations&Organizations, 2019):

- American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) is a membership organization that provides leadership to advance science and its application to the legal system.
- American Association for Justice (AAJ) provides lawyers with the information and professional assistance needed to serve clients successfully and protect the democratic values inherent in the civil justice system.
- American Bar Association (ABA) is a membership organization for practicing attorneys, in-house lawyers, legal professionals, law students, and more.
- American Health Lawyers Association (AHLA) is the nation’s largest, nonpartisan educational organization devoted to legal issues in the health care field.
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) advances the quality of immigration and nationality law and practice and enhance the professional development of its members.
- Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) is the world’s largest organization dedicated to in-house counsel.
- Association of Eminent Domain Professionals (AEP) is an organization of professionals in a variety of disciplines specializing in the field of eminent domain.
- Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) is the undisputed leader in the business of law and law practice management.
- Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) provides valuable training and technical assistance to prosecutors in an effort to develop proactive and innovative prosecutorial practices.
- National Association for Legal Professionals (NALS) is a leader in the legal services industry.
National Association of Consumer Advocates (NACA) is a nationwide organization of more than 1,500 attorneys who represent and have represented hundreds of thousands of consumers.

National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) is the preeminent organization in the United States advancing the mission of the nation’s criminal defense lawyers.

National Association of Hearing Officials (NAHO) is a membership organization comprised of individuals involved in the process of administrative adjudication and others.

Professional societies in the USA have become a leading link in the provision of continuing education both for practicing lawyers and legal teachers. They cover not only purely legal or technical issues, but also the implementation of professional management functions. According to O. Skliarenko, these needs are clearly manifested in the work of lawyers serving such specialized businesses as IT technologies, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, tourism, etc. He states that from a once conservative adviser on the application of legislation, a lawyer has in a fairly short time turned into a consultant who knows and understands the specifics of his clients’ business and participates in making business decisions in certain specific situations (Kak za poslednie desiatiletie izmenilas professia turista v Ukraine?, 2013).

As American practice shows, the more decentralized the national higher education system is, the more legal teachers tend to voluntary cooperation. At the same time, there are no formal schemes, thus academic freedoms and university autonomy provide them with discretion and moral right to voluntary association and choice of methods of association, therefore, most of the legal teachers at US universities are members of the corresponding professional associations. United by professional interests, they exchange mutual ideas and opinions during personal meetings, and via professional journals. This helps control the development of university science, the quality of teaching, contribute to further skills development of legal teachers.

Professional associations are organizationally linked, and are semi-officially governed by the American Council on Education (ACE) (American Council on Education, 2020), the National Research Council (NRC) and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC, 2020). As a rule, these associations are nonprofit, financially independent organizations that corroborate legal academics, promoting interdisciplinary research, and connecting them with politicians and citizens. ACE has turned into an association of universities and colleges, a kind of an administrative unit that fulfills the functions of an association of associations. The programs for the annual meetings of these associations include issues such as violations in the field of university governance, development of the administrative university system, the state of individual student services, possible collaborative research projects, verification of mis- and disinformation, etc.

Some professional associations are composed almost entirely of university professors; others include representatives of other professions. For example, the American Bar Association focuses primarily on matters of professional practice but, at the same time, it reflects the long-term trend of organizing an association around a specific discipline that links higher education with other sectors of economy. In general, the influence of professional associations on the activities of higher legal education in the United States is extremely large. US government and legislative bodies at the national or state level apply for information to the associations of university leaders to found out the state and prospects of higher education.
CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, US law schools have created a mechanism of professional development of master programs’ legal teachers at the federal and state levels that gives them the opportunity to acquire new knowledge. Thus, in a rapidly developing world, under the conditions of current economic situation, legal teachers of master programs at US law schools are forced to make more and more efforts to maintain their competitiveness, gaining new knowledge and showing the ability to satisfy the ever-increasing demands of society.

A separate research can be devoted to investigation of professional development of master programs’ legal teachers at the national level at law schools of Ukraine.

REFERENCES