

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BELF AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS: INCORPORATING ESP IN THE CORE CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION – CHALLENGES, ISSUES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract: *The need for ESP is vital in equipping non-native English speakers from all fields to be competitive in the workplace, outside the academic context, regardless of where they see themselves in the future, and where they will pursue their professional ambitions; they now need to demonstrate their English proficiency in their chosen professional endeavors. As such, there is a need to incorporate ESP in the core curriculum for every Faculty in addition to the core courses of the particular field of study. However, before this can be realized, there are other issues that need to be addressed, such as the class load, the number of semesters it will be offered, and the level it will be taught at, among others. Furthermore, there are questions concerning the competencies the students will have been equipped with by the end of the course, as well as the expectations concerning the final aims and outcomes. In line with this, an important issue that needs to be addressed is that of the choice of materials to be used in the realization of the syllabus, all with the aim to best meet the learners' needs. This paper will take a closer look at all these issues, as well as possible solutions to alleviate and overcome them. In this context, it will look at and discuss the results from a survey that was conducted among students, freshmen, from the Faculty of Economics in Skopje, N. Macedonia, who had taken the elective course Business English in the fall term of 2022/2023.*

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