



"Even if you're on the right track,
you'll get run over if you just sit there."

– Will Rogers

Dear colleagues,

The eleventh issue of our bulletin marks the first year of The HSE Look's publication. One year ago, in April 2013 we launched this little but important project and today we are proud to have some devoted readers and those among them who actively participate in creating our materials. Our goal was and remained to explain how administrative procedures and academic environment is organised at the HSE. We also speak to our international professors and publish the interviews so that personal HSE experiences could be shared. As an every one-year-old we need constant support and guidance which in our case is your opinion and reflections on what we do. Please go to ifaculty.hse.ru/the_hse_look and say what you think. We will be most grateful for your ideas and feedback.

Speaking about gratitude, we express our deepest appreciation of all the international faculty, who showed interest in what we do and spent their precious time talking to us. We are equally grateful to all the colleagues who helped us in many different ways working on our bulletin. And, of course, special thanks go to the "Okna Rosta" team for their guidance and support.

We devote this Birthday issue to tenure track system at the HSE. We asked Vice Rector Konstantin Sonin and Martin Gilman, Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies, to spread the light on how this system functions at the HSE. In our material about the XV April International Conference we speak to several international participants and ask them about their impressions. In the conclusion, we introduce our colleagues – the Centre for Institutional Research and their English infographics newsletter That's So HSE. We highly recommend having a look at this curious edition.

Yulia Grinkevich
Director of Internationalization

Tracking the Track

The tenure track system, well-known in western universities, is not ingrained in the Russian academic world yet. The Higher School of Economics, however, was one of the first Russian universities that adopted this practice. As the university is just beginning this long and ambitious path to international recognition, recently adopted innovations such as the tenure track system, have not yet been fully tested in practice.

For this article we talked to the university officials directly involved in introducing the tenure track system at the HSE. Vice Rector Konstantin Sonin supervises the university's activities related to the international recruitment of teaching and research staff. We talked to Prof. Sonin about the idea of the tenure track as such and why the HSE decided to adopt the system. The Director of the Centre for Advanced Studies, Martin Gilman coordinates HSE's international recruitment in general as well as review procedures that are a part of international hires' contracts. Dr. Gilman explains how the review procedures are implemented at our university.

Konstantin Sonin:
**"Only tenured professors
can be true stakeholders
of their university"**

Why was the tenure track system adopted in our university?

The main idea behind the tenure track system is that only tenured professors can be true stakeholders of their university. When new scholars are hired at the university, a person with a temporary contract will not be motivated to welcome strong academic newcomers to the team as they will be their potential competitors. Those who have lifetime contracts don't worry about things like that. This is why it is so important to offer scholars lifetime appointments and the tenure track is the way to achieve such an appointment. But in order to get tenure a person has to demonstrate significant professional achievements after six or eight years. What is also important to mention here is that a professor that doesn't manage to pass the final review will have to leave the university quite soon – this system is called "up-or-out".

Is Russian academia familiar with this system?

Things are organised differently in Russian universities, but selection mechanisms always exist in strong institutions. Everybody understands that if a laboratory or a faculty wants to preserve their leading positions, they have to constantly hire new academics that possess great potential and offer long or lifetime appointments to the best of them. These selection mechanisms are an essential part of university life, especially today in our globalised world. Science changes very quickly today, so the university constantly has to hire new people and track their progress.

Are other Russian universities introducing this system too? Is the HSE a pioneer in this sense?

When looking at big state universities the HSE is undoubtedly a pioneer. But every university that wants to be competitive has to have some kind of selection system. In many British universities for instance the system is different: junior professors are given lifetime appointments immediately, but if they don't publish they just don't get a higher position. Some Russian universities also use this system.

Is the tenure track system adopted at the HSE different from the system found in North America?

This is a question of a university's strategy. For example, at the Department of Economics at Harvard a tenured position is granted to only one person out of five. They prefer to hire senior and already established professors from other prominent universities. At the Department of Economics at MIT, an equally strong institution, the majority of people hired stay in their tenured positions. So, we need to compare the criteria at different universities. The current criteria applied at HSE's Faculty of Economics and at ICEF correspond to those of an American university with a position of between 50 and 100 in the ratings.

Does every HSE professor have access to the tenure track system or is it only for internationally recruited scholars?

International tenured positions can be obtained by any academic. The key point is that this scholar is very active in doing research and they must publish in prestigious international peer-reviewed journals.

Martin Gilman: "HSE has implemented a tenure-track system found at many major universities"

What are the steps on the tenure track at the HSE?

As you know, we hire assistant professors from the international job market on a type of "publish or perish" contract, beginning with an initial three-year contract leading to an interim review. If all goes well, it is followed by another three-year contract which leads to a major, or tenure review. This is very closely modeled on

the American university or the British university system. Different universities have modified this system. For instance, I understand that the London School of Economics has a more informal interim review (without external reviewers) and a longer period to the final review. So it can vary.

What does a person need to do to get tenure?

To get tenure one has to publish academically important research in good peer-reviewed journals and good international university presses. The HSE does not use quantitative targets for this assessment. Rather it relies heavily upon the assessments by the external reviewers. The purpose of the three-year review is to assess if the person is really on track for tenure. It doesn't mean you have to publish all this within these three years; that would be rather ambitious. But the external reviewers (who are tenured faculty at major international research universities) have to be convinced that you could be considered to be on track. The main criterion is publication of world-class, original research, but not exclusively publication. We ask the department heads how the person has contributed to the life of the department as a colleague and a teacher. Certainly at the time of the tenure review, the reviewers want to look beyond publication per se and see what has been the value-added of the contribution of this person to their discipline and to the academic knowledge. That's the main approach to tenure at the HSE and I think it broadly similar to what is practiced at other major international research universities.

Do criteria differ for people coming from different departments?

It's quite clear that in social sciences or economics peer-reviewed articles are critical. If you look at history or philosophy, for example, books and monographs published by major university presses probably become more important. If you have a book in philosophy published by Oxford University Press, it may well have more of an impact than a number of good journal articles. Perhaps these criteria vary in part because in economics, for example, there is a clear hierarchy of journals. In other disciplines it's much more diffuse and maybe not as clearly differentiated in terms of hierarchy, so books in certain areas become quite important.

Who makes the decision on whether a person passes the review or not?

The interim review relies heavily on the opinion of external reviewers. There are two of them. One is proposed by the candidate, and another one is a reviewer selected by the committee. In this sense we are probably closer to a British system than the American one. The American system tends to rely more on quantitative targets, whereas ours is more subjective and is heavily weighted towards the opinion of the reviewers, rather than objective criteria such as the number of publications. That is

true even at the time of the major review for tenure, where there are four external reviewers. We rely very much on their views. And if the reviewers disagree, then there has to be consultations to reach a consensus among them.

Who participates in the review procedures apart from the external experts?

The committee is very limited to basically the dean of the department, sometimes the vice dean for research, international tenured faculty in that department, if any, as well as the first deputy rector and the vice rectors for international recruitment and for research. The decisions of the committee essentially confirm the consensus of the external reviewers.

Is it possible for academics to shorten the track and apply for an earlier review date?

Yes, it is. One of the international academics who recently completed the interim review had an unusually impressive publication record, so it was decided that this person could request the major review in advance. So this professor has requested to bring forward the date by two years.

How many international faculty are on the track now?

Many of the tenure-track faculty that we hired completed their three-year reviews. Of this group of more than 30, there were only two who were not successful; in which case their contracts were extended for an extra year so they could find another job. Thus, although it is not automatic that tenure-track faculty are extended beyond the interim review, most of them have been found to be on track for their tenure reviews. And because the recruitment process started within the relatively recent past we don't have many examples for people who have gone through tenure review. We have got three academics who are up to tenure review this year and we have two colleagues who have received tenure already. We consider these results to be encouraging for the future.

Impressions From the XV April Conference

From April 1-4 2014 the Higher School of Economics held its annual April International Academic Conference on Economic and Social Development. Launched in 2000 as a specialised professional meeting and scholarly platform in economics, over the 15 years of its existence the conference has become the most significant academic event at the university and one of the key regional scientific forums in this field.

Over 1,800 participants registered to attend this year's conference and a total of 624 papers were presented with international participants presenting 20 percent of the reports. There were numerous participants from Germany, Italy, USA, Ukraine, Finland, and France. Researchers from the HSE accounted for less than half of all the reports in the conference programme with the remaining part consisting of Russian researchers from other universities.

The programme of the conference was traditionally built around common scientific ideas and therefore plenary sessions, meetings and round-table discussions were thematically united by specific interdisciplinary topics. Several topics that were determined for the 2014 Conference included: "Governance: Models, Problems, Challenges", "Cultural Evolution and Modernisation", "Inequality and Economic Growth", and "Varieties of Capitalism". The University invited leading international scientists as key speakers on these selected topics.

Amid the wide range of reports and discussions that took place during the Conference the participants had a chance to hear the words of such prominent scholars as Dr. Peter A. Hall (Krupp Foundation Professor of European Studies at Harvard University), one of the authors of the concept of varieties of capitalism; Dr. Paul D. Reynolds and Dr. Tomasz Mickiewicz (Aston University, Birmingham) who presented the results of their most recent studies on business and entrepreneurship; Dr. Marek Dabrowski (CASE-Centre for Social and Economic Research Fellow, Warsaw), a renowned economist that studies monetary and fiscal policies as well as political economies in transition among other issues; Dr. Richard Edgar Pipes, one of the most distinguished historians of Russian and Soviet history, who in addition to his academic achievements was an adviser to several US presidential administrations.

One of this year's participants, Dr. Ronald Inglehart, a Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan and the Head of the Laboratory of Comparative Social Research at the HSE in St. Petersburg, has been studying cultural change and its consequences for more than 20 years. He says, "I gave a presentation entitled, "Cultural Change and the Decline of Violence: Economic Development and the Long Peace". We've had surveys from 1981 to the present, and we find a declining willingness to fight in nearly all countries. We have conducted long-term surveys in 49 countries, and 46 of them show growing public attitudes that are less willing to fight for their country, including in Russia. And I think this is part of a long peace. The culture that is developing is considerably less war-like. We can see clearly that attitudes are changing. What's causing it is much more complicated, and we've been discussing that".

In addition to the traditional plenary sessions and meetings, a series of special seminars organised by HSE's international laboratories and their foreign partners were introduced at this year's Conference.

It is also worth mentioning a series of seminars targeted at graduate students, such as the EACES-HSE PhD seminar that has been in operation for three years now in conjunction with the European Association for Comparative Economic Studies, and the HSE PhD seminar in Finance organised by specialists at the HSE Department of Finance in cooperation with a number of overseas colleagues.

HSE's international faculty took an active part in the Conference chairing the meetings, presenting their papers and being discussants of the work presented by their colleagues. We asked Dr. Irina Nikiforova, an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Sociology at HSE's campus in St. Petersburg, about her impressions of the event. She was happy about the organisation of the sessions and the fact that many top academics came to the conference. "Many top US researchers don't attend conferences or attend only selected conferences," she explained. "They do not always see the value in participating in conferences while Russian researchers see it as an achievement. For me personally, it was an honour to present with some of Russia's most prominent scholars. The sessions were very well selected and the conference totally met my expectations. It provided a forum for communicating research on socioeconomic issues – the purpose that was not clear to me at the start."

Dr. Renira Gambarato, an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Media and Communications, participated at the April Conference for the first time. She stated that, "the main benefit I see from conferences in general and from this conference in particular is networking. This is even more important than feedback on the topic that I'm presenting. What I'm looking for is a dialogue with

other people and that's very important for me. After all, I ended up working at the HSE as a result of networking at a conference. So, this is the great benefit of going to conferences".

Another aspect of the April Conference is its role as a venue for an annual award ceremony honouring national achievements in applied economy that is aimed at encouraging research in Russia. One more award that is now traditionally given at the Conference is Yegor Gaidar Award for young Russian researchers in economics to support their integration into the world's scientific community.

"The Annual HSE April Conference is probably the largest academic gathering of its kind in Eastern Europe. It provides an excellent platform for academic debate, professional networking, and public education," says Dr. Marek Dabrowski, a regular guest since 2001 and one of its more prominent attendees. Dr. Dabrowski continued by stating that, "the HSE belongs to the elite group of academic centres in Russia and Eastern Europe that are able to teach modern economics and conduct research at an international standard and level. This is a huge intellectual asset that should be protected and further developed".

For more information about the Conference go to <http://conf.hse.ru/en/2014/>

Check out

[*Top 15 Most Interesting Reports of the HSE's XV April Conference*](#)

The article is based on interviews and other materials contributed by the HSE News Service.

That's So HSE

If you haven't had a chance yet to read the English version of That's So HSE newsletter, published by HSE's Centre for Institutional Research, we will be happy to be the first to recommend it to you. The Centre for Institutional Research is a department for internal surveys, that provides information on current trends in the life of our university. The Centre strives to provoke open discussion on issues related to the problems of education and university development. It not only maintains the system of internal monitoring studies but also attracts students to work with the survey data and use it in their papers.

Every issue of the newsletter presents the results of surveys conducted at the university in form of infographics. So far there have been seven issues of the newsletter published in English. The latest one was devoted to our alumni: it gives information on alumni employment and their ties to Alma Mater. Topics of other back issues vary from annual faculty monitoring to summer activities of our students, faculty and administrators. As the saying goes "Better to see once than to hear 100 times", and we are sure that this eye-catching newsletter with a lot of colourful pictures will immediately attract your attention, once you spot it among other printed bulletins. Not to miss the next issue subscribe to That's So HSE at cim.hse.ru/infnewsletter_eng

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