

2021 2030

FACULTY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES

Strategic Plan 2021–2030



Zdravotně
sociální fakulta
Faculty of Health
and Social Sciences

Jihočeská univerzita
v Českých Budějovicích
University of South Bohemia
in České Budějovice

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Presentation of the Strategic Plan of the USB Faculty of Health and Social Sciences in České Budějovice 2021–2030

The Faculty of Health and Social Sciences of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice entered the fourth decade of its existence in 2021. Over the past thirty years, the faculty has emerged as an important and dynamically developing institution, generating educational, scientific, and other creative activities in the areas of health and social and security. In doing so, the faculty has shown its strong position among the faculties of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (USB). The faculty is the only faculty in the Czech Republic that consistently endeavours to link the health and social areas. It is the only higher education institution in the South Bohemian Region that delivers higher education in non-medical health fields, and it is among the leading centres of the development of the study field of Nursing in the Czech Republic.

In terms of the number of students, it is the second largest faculty of the university. In 2018, the university received institutional accreditation for nine areas of education, including the area of education Healthcare fields and the area of education Social work. Degree programmes under these two areas are provided by the faculty.


The faculty has also had noteworthy success in scientific and other creative activities. The number and quality of publication outputs, as well as the number of accepted projects registered in CEP, are on a steady increase. The faculty is entitled to hold habilitation proceedings in the discipline of Nursing and Health and Social Care, and to conduct proceedings for the appointment of professors in Nursing.

The KONTAKT – Journal of nursing and social sciences related to health and illness, published by the faculty, is included in the global bibliographic and citation database, Scopus. The impacted Journal of Applied Biomedicine has been accepted into the international database, Medline.

The faculty has forged a number of permanent partnerships with foreign universities, and importantly, is constantly expanding the options of student and teacher mobilities to other European and non-European regions. Through numerous educational and preventive programmes for the public, the faculty consistently fulfils the so-called “third role” of higher education institutions, contributing to the life of the city and the region.

In the upcoming period, the faculty intends to build on its success and to further develop the positive trends of the faculty.

As part of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, the faculty shares, together with the other faculties, the university’s visions, missions, and values. The faculty wishes to become a sought-after institution, offering a friendly and motivating study and work environment; a faculty that is competitive at the national and



international levels; a faculty with an unmistakable identity that is beneficial to the city and the region; and an open academic institution supporting students and staff. In the faculty's conditions, these objectives involve the following in particular:

- A. To gain a leading position among faculties in the Czech Republic with the same focus, and to gain respect at the international level.
- B. To become a recognised educational and research institution with respected research teams, clearly defined research priorities, and interdisciplinary themes.
- C. To provide access to education to all applicants with the required study aptitudes, regardless of their health, social or other disadvantages.
- D. To offer high-quality higher education that relies on theoretical and practical foundations, based on the latest findings in the field.
- E. To act as an employer that offers a motivating work environment for all employees, with an emphasis on performance, creativity, and compliance with ethical and legal norms.
- F. To become a strategic partner within the structure of the educational system, research institutions, providers of health and social services, state administration and self-government authorities, non-profit and special-interest organisations.
- G. To actively participate in the life of the city and region to be beneficial to the public.
- H. To create an open academic community with space for broad pluralistic discussion under sound democratic rules.

The faculty's strategic plan for 2021–2030 has been prepared in line with the USB Strategic Plan for the same period.

The structure of the faculty's strategic plan for 2021–2030 is based on five strategic themes of the USB Strategic Plan: Education, Research, Internationalisation, Openness, and Management. These strategic themes are then assigned priority objectives (identical to those defined in the USB Strategic Plan), and are followed by sub-objectives that are primarily based on the university's objectives but adjusted to the conditions and environment of the faculty.

The faculty's strategic plan focuses on defining objectives, the fulfilment of which requires partial measures in the medium to long term. Since the faculty's strategic plan has been devised for a ten-year period, the priorities (as well as sub-objectives) are formulated rather generally, though with a specific idea of the paths leading to their gradual achievement. Accordingly, the faculty's Strategic Plan is followed by the annual implementation plans of the faculty's Strategic Plan, which both expound the sub-objectives into activities and measures for a given year and expand the list of objectives by less complex tasks with short-term implementation, which thus allow responding to the latest development.


1 EDUCATION

The Faculty of Health and Social Sciences of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice has long occupied the leading position among similarly-oriented faculties in the Czech Republic. As a part of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, the faculty offers an environment of a modern educational institution, which is the main centre of education, science, and research in the south of Bohemia. The faculty offers a wide range of attractive and promising degree programmes with high social relevance, as well as prestige in health, social and security sciences at all levels of studies (in both full-time and part-time forms). Degree programmes in the area of education Healthcare fields and Social work are delivered within the framework of the institutional accreditation, which was granted to USB in 2018. In these areas of education, the faculty wishes to develop the quality of the current degree programmes, and, subject to the current situation, to expand the offer with new degree programmes, levels of studies (consecutive master's programmes), or forms of study (part-time options). The faculty will strive to maintain and further improve the quality of education through continuous innovation, including the quality of infrastructure and facilities for students and educators. The faculty will continue the established trends towards the application of modern forms of instruction and interlinking instruction with research and practice, including international and cross-border cooperation. The COVID-19 pandemic (in 2020 and 2021) highlighted the need to develop flexible forms of education, both within degree programmes and lifelong learning programmes. The faculty wishes to remain a school with high standards of studies and instruction. At the same time, the faculty also wishes to remain an open and approachable institution, supporting academic as well as other staff, and offering modern information, advisory, and support services to prospective students, students and graduates. To maintain the quality of education at the faculty, it will be necessary to continue to concentrate on the offer of degree programmes and to address the profiles of individual degree programmes to make sure that graduates are prepared to face the rapidly changing demands of the sphere of application as well as the social demand. A clear trend in the upcoming years is flexibility of educational activities, with an emphasis on the interconnection between higher education studies and other forms of lifelong learning.

OBJECTIVES:

1.1 *Quality of education*

- Continuous evaluation of quality compliance of accredited degree programmes.
- Stabilisation of personnel for instruction, with respect to valid accreditations of degree programmes.

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- Obtaining full institutional accreditation in the areas of education Healthcare fields and Social work.
 - Programme accreditation in the area of education Security fields.
 - Preparation of accreditations/reaccreditation (formation of new degree programmes under institutional accreditation, an extension of selected degree programmes by the part-time form of study, by consecutive master's studies, creation of new modules in the context of the existing degree programmes, etc.).
 - Systemic support for guarantors of degree programmes.
 - Support for feedback mechanisms – development of student evaluation of instruction.
 - Bolstering the cooperative role of students in quality assurance for educational activities.
 - Development of the care provided to students who are at risk of dropping out.
 - Optimisation of measures directed at limiting the extension of the standard length of studies.
 - Individual approach to exceptionally talented students, development, and support of their research and scientific activities.
 - Systemic support for teachers.
 - Efficient organisation supporting the essence of educational activities.

1.2 Link to practice

- Interconnection of the theoretical and practical parts of studies.
- Engagement of experts from the sphere of application in instruction and personnel stabilisation in this respect.
- Personnel stabilisation in the case of the network of mentors and trainers at clinical facilities – personnel stabilisation.
- Deepening the cooperation with clinical facilities.
- Collaboration with other professional institutions.
- Development of professionally-focused bachelor's studies.
- Enhancing the relevance of the profile of graduates of degree programmes.

1.3 Modern educational infrastructure

- Development of information, advisory and support services, for prospective and current students.
- Building, modernisation, and innovation of premises/equipment for degree programmes.
- Digitalisation of study remits.
- Building modern facilities of fields of study connecting instruction and research.
- Providing support for students with special needs.
- Bolstering the implementation of new methods in instruction.

1.4 Efficiency and quality of doctoral studies

- Support for doctoral students in the successful and timely completion of doctoral studies.
- Provision of administrative support to doctoral students, supervisors, and guarantors of doctoral degree programmes.
- Harmonisation of criteria for research and publication activities of doctoral students in doctoral degree programmes.
- Increased involvement of doctoral students in grant and publication activities.
- Promotion of international mobilities of doctoral students.
- Improving the quality and success rate of doctoral studies.
- Thorough evaluation of the work of supervisors and doctoral studies boards.

1.5 Flexible forms of learning

- Development of distance forms of learning.
- Flexible organisation of studies.
- Improving the availability, relevance, and quality of educational and study materials that support the flexible forms of learning.
- Raising the quality of online courses in LMS Moodle and MS Teams.

1.6 Development and professionalisation of LLL

- Development of the organisation and system of LLL.
- Development of professionally-oriented LLL programmes for the professional public.
- Development of interest-based LLL programmes for the general public.
- Support for the University of the Third Age (U3A) and the Children's University (CU).
- Involvement of graduates in LLL programmes.
- Further education for students and employees.
- Improving the marketing of LLL – targeted promotion of LLL programmes executed at the faculty.
- Support for the cooperation on LLL programmes across USB.

1.7 Graduates

- Increasing the interaction with graduates – systematically providing graduates with information about developments at the faculty.
- Improving the engagement of graduates in the faculty's life (e.g. participants as well as lecturers of LLL).
- Support for activities of the faculty's Alumni Club.
- Development of information, advisory, and support services for graduates.

2 RESEARCH

The faculty focuses its research in the areas of health, social, and security sciences. Regarding scientific activities, the faculty is primarily a leader in healthcare fields among similarly-oriented faculties. The quality of scientific activities at the faculty can be seen in the increasing success in obtaining projects registered in CEP, and the ever-improving quantity and quality of publication outputs. High-quality science constitutes an inherent part of the activities of higher education institutions, and it is an essential prerequisite for maintaining the existing degree programmes and for accrediting new ones. The faculty will continue to emphasise the motivation of academic staff to deliver high-quality scientific results, and will provide support for them in submitting projects to various grant agencies - as well as promote the creation of interdisciplinary research teams. Great emphasis will be put on the incentive potential of the internal evaluation system of scientific results of the academic staff. As such, boosting research excellence will not be possible without the support and development of the research infrastructures, systemic support for doctoral studies and young researchers. The faculty intends to focus on bolstering the social relevance of its research topics, providing comprehensible presentation of important results to the general public, and on the implementation of such results in instruction. The faculty will promote the transferable competencies of researchers by linking the results of scientific work with practice.

Objectives:

2.1 *Research excellence*

- Bolstering the international status of research.
- Improving internal evaluation systems of academic staff (ASPE) in the area of science and research.
- Formation of interdisciplinary research teams.
- Bolstering the position of institute directors in managing, coordinating, and incentivising academic staff and doctoral students in the context of scientific and research activities.
- Intensifying the submission of high-quality project proposals to national and international grant agencies and increasing the success rate in obtaining grants.
- Evaluation and remuneration of teams and individuals for winning grant projects.
- Facilitation of publication activities of the faculty's staff, with an emphasis on high-quality international journals registered in the WoS and Scopus databases, and on high-quality scientific monographs.
- Rewarding the publication activities of staff according to newly set criteria; special rewards for excellent publication activities.
- Improving the quality of scientific journals published by the faculty.

2.2 Social relevance of research

- Support for projects responding to the needs of the region and society.
- Implementation of research results in the teaching process, i.e., linking research and development with the educational process at the faculty.
- Raising the awareness of experts and the general non-professional public regarding research activities executed at the faculty.

2.3 Support and development of research infrastructures

- System of reallocation of RVO funds in relation to internal research evaluation.
- Efficient utilisation of RVO funds: incentive support, support for internal research plans, support for excellent publications, promotion of excellent publication activities, publication of scientific journals, support for research activities of institutes, support for scientific activities of students, etc.
- Targeted support for academic staff, leading to increased success in obtaining projects from grant agencies (CSF, TA CR, AZVČR, departmental grants, international grants).
- Maximum support and service for teams preparing grant applications, support and stimulation for the preparation of grant applications.
- Improving the quality of service for grant executors, improved support system of project administration, support in the project economic management.
- Provision of financial support for implementing individual and multidisciplinary internal research projects.
- Provision of support for educational and consultancy activities in the application of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Organisation of methodologically and thematically-oriented scientific seminars.
- Identification of opportunities for applying for national and international grants.
- Development, modernisation, and renovation of research infrastructure –instrumentation, laboratories, etc.

2.4 Systemic support for young research staff

- Encouraging short-term and long-term scientific and research internships, particularly for young academic staff and doctoral students.
- Involving young academic staff and doctoral students in research activities of the individual institutes.
- Systemic support for the creation and preservation of jobs for young researchers, chiefly graduates of doctoral studies at the faculty.
- Development of doctoral studies.
- Support for student research projects.

2.5 Technology (knowledge) transfer

- Systemic support for cooperation with practice.
- Development of application potential.

3 INTERNATIONALISATION

Over the 30 years of its existence, the faculty has been engaged in the international space, both in Europe and globally. The faculty cooperates with dozens of higher education institutions, as well as other establishments all around the world. It is a member of a number of international organisations and networks.

Thus, the deepening of international cooperation in education, research, as well as the internal environment in order to become an internationally recognised faculty offering high-quality facilities for Czech and foreign students and academic staff is an important part of the faculty's activities. The faculty has already created conditions for raising the number of foreign mobilities of students and academic staff. For the upcoming period, it is the faculty's objective for the number of foreign mobilities (both incoming and outgoing) to continue to increase, since international activities enjoy great importance for increasing quality and international standards in education and research.

The implementation of the Erasmus+ programme and the involvement in the new European Union programming period 2021–2027 will be important instruments of international cooperation in the upcoming period. The actual objectives for the upcoming period will primarily include activities aimed at the development of global competencies of students and academic staff, the further internationalisation of degree programmes, and forming the faculty's international environment.


OBJECTIVES:

3.1 Development of global competencies of students and staff

- Support for language and intercultural preparation of students and staff of the faculty.
- Development of international mobilities of the faculty's students and staff.
- Support for internships of academic staff.
- Support for mobilities to non-European countries.
- Development of professional competencies of staff in the area of internationalisation.
- Facilitation of individual and collective memberships in international organisations.

3.2 Internationalisation of degree programmes

- Increase in the number of degree programmes offered in foreign languages.
- Increase the proportion of foreign students.

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- Expansion of the geographic area of mobilities.
 - Internationalisation of degree programmes accredited in Czech.
 - Establishment of partnerships with foreign (especially European) partners for individual degree programmes.
 - Systemic creation of the offer of courses for incoming students.
 - Formation of an international evaluation board (link to HR AWARD).

3.3 Simplification of the recognition procedure of foreign education

- Implementation of a recognition system of education and study results gained abroad.

3.4 Creating an international environment and promotion abroad

- Development of international marketing.
- Cooperation with selected portals and recruitment agencies.
- Expanding the portfolio and improving the quality of presentation tools in English.
- Support for the cooperation with foreign students, graduates, and academic staff in the promotion of the faculty.
- Development of services for foreign students and staff.
- Continuing the creation of a bilingual environment at the faculty (the orientation system, documents, promotional materials, website).

3.5 Strategic management of internationalisation

- Formation of an international evaluation board (link to HR AWARD).
- Assistance directed towards the University-wide Strategy of international cooperation in R&D and USB internationalisation (link to HR AWARD).

4 OPENNESS

Within a wide array of functioning partnerships, the faculty cooperates with a number of authorities, institutions and organisations at the regional and supra-regional levels. The faculty has a large network of clinical facilities in place, including the most significant providers of healthcare and social services in the South Bohemian Region; these clinical facilities also rank among the leading employers of graduates from the faculty. Another objective of the faculty is to further support the systemic cooperation with employers, in education and research alike. The faculty aims to establish and develop relationships with graduates, especially via the faculty's Alumni Club, which is a constituent part of the USB Alumni Club, with an emphasis on the provision of other services for the group in the area of lifelong learning, discounted services, and other benefits. The faculty's aim is to ensure that most graduates from the faculty perceive their membership in the Alumni Club to be both prestigious and self-enriching. The faculty intends to facilitate activities leading to boosting and promoting the faculty's reputation, forming new partnerships and reinforcing existing ones. Emphasis will be on high-quality marketing and attractive PR activities, targeted especially at prospective students. The faculty's presentation in the media conducted on a professional basis and the development of social networks will be integral parts of these activities.

The faculty is committed to supporting activities that are beneficial to the whole society, as well as available to the public, particularly in the area of healthy lifestyle and other educational, instructive and prevention programmes. The faculty will also be developing its consultancy activities aimed at the general public.

The faculty will apply its social responsibility on a systematic basis by bolstering its role in the dialogue around social issues in the health, social, and security areas, and when identifying solutions to current problems.

OBJECTIVES:

4.1 *Marketing*

- Fostering the reputation of the faculty and the university.
- Expanding marketing activities with regard to multimedia needs.
- Deepening the cooperation with primary and secondary schools.
- Development of the network of key partners.
- Boosting the faculty's image in the media.
- Support and development of social networks.
- Consistent application of the uniform visual style of the university and faculty.
- Enhancing the internal communication within the faculty and the university.

4.2 Public relations

- Increasing public awareness of the faculty's activities, and promoting a positive perception of its society-wide role.
- Popularisation of the scientific results and media presentation of the faculty's staff and students.
- Bolstering the cooperation with the main employers of the faculty's graduates.
- Improvement of feedback mechanisms from employers of graduates.
- Development of communication with graduates – informing graduates about the developments at the faculty on a systematic basis.
- Boosting the sense of belonging of the faculty's students and staff to the brand of the university and the faculty.
- Effective cooperation with the state administration and local government authorities.

4.2.1 Fundraising

- Improving the fundraising concept.
- Building strategic partnerships.
- Identifying opportunities for further fundraising development.

4.3 Social responsibility

- Development of principles of democracy and social responsibility in the younger generations.
- Boosting the faculty's active role in the dialogue about social and ethical issues in health, social, and security areas.
- Development of educational and prevention programmes for the public.
- Extending the faculty's counselling services in the framework of centres of Institute of Applied Health and Social Sciences – facility of practice.
- Raising awareness of the faculty as a relevant partner in solving problems of the city and the region.
- Implementation of measures promoting sustainable development (energy saving, waste management, environmental protection).
- Boosting the faculty's role in searching for solutions to current problems (e.g. diseases of civilization, pandemics, social exclusion, security).

5 MANAGEMENT

The present strategic plans leads the faculty into the fourth decade of its existence. With the view of its growth and development, the faculty is aware of the importance of progress in the area of management as well. Since its foundation, the faculty has undergone extensive development in terms of the number students, degree programmes, results of scientific and other creative activities, budgetary capacity, and the number of implemented investment projects, which, above all, included the remodelling and several stages of the completion of the faculty's building on J. Boreckého street, and particularly the construction and opening of the Simulation Centre (SLNO) on U Výstaviště street in 2020.

To facilitate the faculty's further development in the upcoming period, its financial stability must be secured, the proportion of external income must grow on a continuous basis, and internal mechanisms of distribution of funds need to be bolstered for the support of priority development areas.

The key challenge for the faculty is to continue to develop and professionalise the economic, personnel, as well as the investment management, and to create a favourable, motivating, and friendly study and work environment.

In the area of human resources, essential aspects include the improvement of professional and qualification growth of the faculty's academic staff, leading to the personnel stabilisation of individual institutes, securing further development of degree programmes and the generational continuity of academic staff.

In the area of infrastructure, the faculty will focus on optimising the use of its premises and investments in the completion of structures, extensions, and reconstruction of existing buildings. In terms of faculty governance, it is also essential to renew instrumentation and technology. Information technology is another fundamental part of management, in addition to its bolstering in view of the increasing needs and demands of the online environment.

OBJECTIVES:

5.1 Transformation of the environment, and setting processes in relation to the institution's strategic management

- Securing financial stability.
- Increasing the proportion of external income.
- Automation/digitalisation of activities and operational remits.
- Data-based decision-making.
- Efficient management of activities in funding and management.

- Monitoring the range and quality of educational and creative activities – in relation to the academic staff performance evaluation.
- Bolstering internal mechanisms of distribution of funds supporting the priority development areas.
- Improving mechanisms for the remuneration of academic staff.
- Creating a favourable and friendly study and work environment, reducing the administrative burden.

5.2 Human resources

- Remuneration of academic staff according to their current results and long-term contributions to the quality of the faculty's activities (educational, creative, and the third role).
- Creation of an attractive environment for existing and potential employees coming from the Czech Republic and abroad (incentive tools, salary conditions, care for employees, benefits, etc.).
- Improvement of professional and qualification growth of the faculty's academic staff and consistent interconnectedness between their scientific and teaching activities.
- Promotion of the scientific potential and publication activities of individual employees with the aim of maintaining the accreditation of degree programmes.
- Support for further training of academic and non-academic staff.
- Personnel stabilisation in the individual institutes ensuring the maintenance and the potential expansion of the current accreditations.
- Reinforcing permanent employees in individual degree programmes.
- Ensuring the generational continuity of academic staff and gradual replacements at the level of medium management.
- Support for young and new employees.
- Support for employees – parents and a fair gender policy.

5.3 Infrastructure development and upgrade

- Completion of the Vltava complex – Stage IV.
- Renovation of the Summer Training Base Hradce.
- Extension of SLNO.
- Optimised use of buildings.
- Preparation of a concept and potentially the establishment of the faculty's health-care facility.
- Technological development, upgrade of IT and ICT.
- Support for a barrier-free faculty.

FACULTY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCES – Strategic Plan 2021–2030

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Scientific Board of the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences on October 12, 2021
Approved by Academic Senate of FHSS USB on October 25, 2021

Published by: Faculty of Health and Social Sciences of University of South Bohemia
Address: J. Boreckého 1167/27, České Budějovice
Editor: Mgr. et Mgr. Ondřej Doskočil, Th.D.
Photos: Libor Sváček
Release: December 2021
www.zsf.jcu.cz



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