
Faculty of Social Sciences Celebrated Its 20th Anniversary

On October 27th, the whole faculty was celebrating. In the morning, its students met the current and past management of the faculty to remember the days when the faculty's institutes were being founded. In the afternoon, the programme continued in the Patriot Hall of the Karolinum building, where the Rector of Charles University, Professor Václav Hampl, among others, offered his congratulations.

Institute of International Studies

Among the officials who attended the informal meeting with students were Professor Jan Křen, one of the founders of the institute, Dr. Michal Kubát, Vice-Dean for postgraduate studies and other forms of education, Dr. Miroslav Kunštát, and Professor Jiří Pešek, who moderated the session. The purpose of the meeting was to remember the conditions in which the institute was born, and to discuss its future. "20 years ago, around the time you were born, there were many fields, disciplines and topics that were not pursued at all", said Professor Pešek. "Until the end of the communist regime, no school focused on history of different major regions of the world. So when the opportunities arose to launch new programmes and examine new topics, Professor Křen came up with the idea of territorial studies. He was convinced that if such a small society like Czechoslovakia wants to find its bearings in the world, it must know something about that world."



Institute of Economic Studies

The Institute invited students to a debate about why the IES does not have the best reputation (although it declares otherwise). Participants met the current Dean of the faculty, Dr. Jakub Končelík, and the Vice-Dean for research, Professor Jan Ámos Víšek, and discussed for example the effects of the division of the faculty into several buildings and the resulting lack of communication among students from different institutes. "These celebrations are also an opportunity for us to meet one another", said Dean Končelík. "The attempts to achieve a more friendly atmosphere have to come from the bottom up. That is nothing any Dean can dictate. That is the reason why we, for example, try to support and initiate students' sports activities."



Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism

Screenings took place in the Jinonice building's auditorium. Students could watch clips of students' works from twenty years ago and video presentations of the faculty's history. On November 1, the opening of the photography teacher Alena Lábová's Faculty (1970 – 2000) exhibition took place in the Hollar building. The photographs are placed in the front staircases of the building.



Institute of Sociological Studies

The ISS invited its students, teachers and fans to an informal meeting with graduates and current and former faculty. They shared their memories and also mentioned the consequences of the establishment of the Jinonice campus on the atmosphere at the faculty.



At noon, a small happening took place in front of the Jinonice building, during which participants released balloons with the faculty's 20th anniversary logo. (Photograph by Filip Láb)



Next on the list of celebrations was a ceremonial gathering at the Patriot Hall of Karolinum, at which the Rector of Charles University Professor Václav Hampl, and Deans emeritus of the faculty, Professors Miloslav Petrušek, Lubomír Mlčoch

and Jan Ámos Všíek spoke. The meeting was moderated by the television debate presenter and faculty member Václav Moravec, who later asked the audience for twenty seconds of silence to honour the memory of Čestmír Suchý, the Dean who had a defining role in building the Faculty of Social Sciences and who represented the young faculty with his undeniable moral credit.

In his opening remarks, Rector of Charles University Professor Václav Hampl remembered the historical context of the foundation of the faculty. "It was in June 1990, just a few months after the Velvet Revolution, and none of those who were starting the faculty – with good intentions but no experience with life in a free academic community – knew whether or how their plans will come to fruition. In this historical moment, significant for both the faculty and the university, the social sciences that had been destroyed by the totalitarian regime went through so much needed rebirth. A solid foundation was built for their constitution and unrestricted development, especially in the fields of sociology, political science, economy and the future international and communication studies."



In their respective talks, other speakers also shared their memories of events past. First to take the floor was the first post-Velvet Revolution Dean and a doyen of Czech sociology, Professor Miloslav Petrussek. Speaking about education in general, he said: "It is a fact that these days, there is something creeping into the life of not only academic communities, but the society as a whole, haughtily called expert knowledge, which often and unscrupulously breaches the ethics of science. On the other hand, the knowledge that arises from a formulation of a research question, not from a grant application or other kind of commission, is being caricatured as "pure" knowledge, which is – they say – to be replaced by productive knowledge, the kind of knowledge that has a market value and can be turned into technology or presented in the media."



Talks by other ex-Deans followed. At the end of the programme, 23 medals were given out to the people who dedicated their lives to the faculty. Professor Petrussek received a medal for an outstanding contribution to the faculty, and the following received a medal for "loyalty" to the faculty: Ing. Zuzana Beníšková, PhDr. Nora Dolanská, MBA, doc. PhDr. Jan Halada, CSc., prof. RNDr. Jiří Hlaváček, CSc., prof. PhDr. Hynek Jeřábek, CSc., prof. PhDr. Jan Jiráček, Ph.D., prof. PhDr. Jiří Kabele, Ph.D., prof. Ing. Karel Kouba, DrSc., doc. PhDr. Barbara Köpplová, CSc., doc. PhDr. Rudolf Kučera, CSc., doc. PhDr. Jan P. Kučera, PhDr. Alena Lábová, PhDr. Josef Maršík, CSc., prof. Dr. Miroslav Novák, doc. PhDr. Barbora Osvaldová, doc. PhDr. Běla Plechanová, CSc., prof. PhDr. Martin Potůček, M.Sc., CSc., doc. PhDr. Michal Šobr, CSc., PhDr. Ludmila Trunečková, Jolana Vincíková, Eva Votápková, Mgr. Dagmar Kulhánková, and prof. Ing. Luděk Urban, CSc.

At 4pm in the Patriot Hall of Karolinum, talks by Professors Michal Mejstřík, Jiří Kraus, Jiří Kabele, Dr. Bořivoj Hnízdo and Dr. Jiří Vykoukal followed.

[Photo gallery from the 20th anniversary of the Faculty of Social Sciences .](#)

(Lucie Kettnerová)

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