

ATTITUDE

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of the materials submitted for election and appointment to the academic position "Associate Professor" at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski " by professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Communication Situations Management), promulgated the Darzhaven Vestnik state gazette DV 93 / 26.11.2019

1. **General information about the participants in the competition.** There is only one participant in the competition - Assistant Professor Svetlana Ivanova Stankova, PhD, Lecturer in the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication. After reviewing the submission documents, I can conclude that all formal and substantive requirements for admission of the applicant have been met. Mrs. Stankova enters competition with one monograph containing current and relevant scientific issues, as well as studies and articles in academic publications, a total of 14 scientific author's scientific works. The applicant has provided a certificate of professional employment, which proves her long-standing practice of being a successful university teacher in various Bachelor's and Master's programs at FJMC. The necessary indicators on the references for the national minimum requirements for the academic position of associate professor have been filled in thoroughly and wholly. It should be noted that the numerical values for the respective indicators exceed the minimum required by the Law (under Art. 26 of the Law, professional direction 3.5. Public communications and information sciences) and the regulations of the Sofia University. This in itself is sufficient proof of the applicant's required scientific qualities. For example, in a group of indicators E related to citations, by influential scientists in the relevant field, Mrs. Stankova exceeds the required points (75 points proved in total, with 50 points needed), in which I see an argument for her authority on scientist and specialist. All documentation for participation provided to me is fair and meets all the requirements of the Law and the Rules of the Sofia University for its implementation.

2. **Description and evaluation of the applicant's scientific papers.** Mrs. Stankova has submitted for participation in the competition, as I noted, a total of 14 independent scientific works. The author's monograph "Refugee Movements to Bulgaria in the Period 2011-2015. Communication Situations and Media Practices " is an independently and full-fledged scientific effort dedicated to a very topical issue related to contemporary issues in the field of

communication situations and their impact in a social context. The author focuses her attention on several research fields - communication and communication process, migration and migration policies, communication situations and media practices. Communication is defined as a "process of social interaction through messaging," or as Charles Cooley would put it, a mechanism through which human relationships exist and develop. This approach of the author puts her research entirely in the context of the professional direction of the competition for which she is applying. Mrs. Stankova offers her own definition of a communication situation - for her it is "a social technology aimed at systematically imposing and maintaining the desired attitudes of the addressees through the use of various techniques". Communication as human interaction also means that the same message may have a different meaning depending on the communication situation in which the content is received. All these considerations are placed in the context of an actual social and political circumstance - the refugee movements towards Bulgaria at certain periods, which attracted the scientific attention of the candidate. For this reason, the monograph offers a case study method that seeks out media analyzes and reactions related to specific communication situations in this regard. The subject of in-depth analysis by the applicant is the different frameworks within which media representation places refugees, as well as the impact that this representation has on their perception in society in situation in Bulgaria. One of the basic ideas of the author is related to the ability to manage communication situations through thoughtful and adequate media practices, which gives a strong practical importance to the monographic work, thus describing a wide field for its application, as well as a marker of the candidate's achievements in the field of her scientific interest. There are several major and important focuses on the applicant's scientific investigation. In addition to the monograph, the applicant has also proposed several other scientific texts which, in my opinion, confirm his continued interest and competence in the scientific field of the announced competition. They concern the relationship and interconnection of media - politics and demonstrate concrete and factual knowledge of all situations in which this relationship manifests itself and which the candidate has selected for analysis. According to the author, media interpretation, the selection of words and phrases, form images, messages and suggestions that not only influence public opinion but also "construct reality". This statement is supported by a number of analyzes of the complex political and social conditions in Ukraine, Catalonia, the USA, etc., in which communication situations are formed by the media, which sometimes act manipulatively on their audiences. The author even reaches conclusions of a general philosophical character, e.g. for the increasingly common indifference to the distinction between falsehood and truth, often

caused by the media and their activities in areas important to society - political elections, self-determination actions, the choice of geopolitical orientation, etc. I also want to point out Mrs. Stankova's interesting and well-reasoned observation that the concept of fake news is becoming a common denominator by politicians and commentators of anything they disagree with. I can say that the candidate's research interests cover a very wide range of issues related to public communication, issues of media and power relations, professional ethics of journalists, public media mission to be a leader and corrective, influence and dominance of the PR strategies in political communication, etc., which gives extremely important scientific and practical relevance to the works submitted for participation in the competition and reinforces the impression of the candidate as thorough researcher and scholar.

3. Educational and research activities. The candidate has been teaching since 2007 - a part-time lecturer at FJMC. From 2018 she was appointed to the academic position of "Assistant Professor" as a core course in Bachelor's degree, which she teaches is "Building Communication Effects". As can be seen from its topic, it is directly related to the announced competition, which fact points to the already established qualities of the candidate as a lecturer. Mrs. Stankova also mentioned other courses she has taken - "Media in Politics", "The Image of the Enemy in the Media" and "Political Image", as well as those she has read in her Master's degree. This outlines the profile of an experienced lecturer with an already established style and a way to successfully work with students. As a proof of this, I can cite the fact that Mrs. Stankova was chosen as the scientific adviser of five bachelor's and one master's thesis, well defended at scientific jury. These facts indicate applicant's experience and established habits of working with students, graduates, PhD students in their research activities. The very topic of the courses led by Mrs. Stankova is focused on serious and key problems of modern communication knowledge, which is a sign of a sustainable and lasting interest in them. Therefore, the references to the candidate's workload show a tendency for a continuous increase in the number of students and their employment and a growing interest on the part of Mrs. Stankova, studied by the academic board. Which, in my opinion, is an indicator that the candidate is becoming more and more preferred as a researcher and lecturer in topics such as the influence and interconnection of media and politics, the study of communication situations, the digitalization of the media as a social phenomenon, etc. The activity of the applicant as a regular participant in conferences, seminars and other scientific forums is also impressive. At these important scientific gatherings, Mrs. Stankova demonstrated her competence as an established and sought-after researcher on topics on social networks, public communication practices, media influence, etc. Mrs. Stankova also finds

time to successfully combine her work as a university teacher, researcher, and research supervisor with additional activities as a team member in various communication and inquiry projects.

4. **Conclusion.** Mrs. Stankova's scientific and research qualities, which are clearly recognizable in the publications and other materials she submits to participate in the competition, make me accept unequivocally that she fulfills the high requirements for occupying an academic position of associate professor, as according to the Bulgarian Law, and also to the Rules of the Sofia University. In her scientific work, the applicant analyzes in depth and systematically important problems in communication knowledge, as she always offers her reasoned and original position. Also in her work as a long-time researcher, lecturer and even educator, Mrs. Stankova demonstrates qualities and skills that make her highly regarded as a specialist, both by her colleagues, as well as by students, masters and doctoral students before whom she succeeds to set up educational and scientific tasks that arouse interest with their relevance and practical importance. My conclusion from the examination of the applicant's documents and materials is entirely positive and I strongly **recommend that Svetlana Ivanova Stankova, PhD be elected** for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the professional field of announced competition - 3.5. Social Communications and Information Sciences (Communication Situations Management).

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