



FEATURES OF THE SELECTION FOR THE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF INSTRUCTORS IN THE VOCATIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

Volodymyr Karpenko

Doctor of Philosophy, leading researcher of the scientific research department of problems of the development of military education and science of the National University of Defense of Ukraine, <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3699-353X>, e-mail: vskarpenko88@gmail.com

Abstract

Relevance: The issues of selection and training of instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education remain insufficiently developed. The introduction of a new model for training Ukrainian citizens and the establishment of corresponding structural units in higher education institutions and educational institutions with specific learning conditions further underscores the urgency of this matter.

Objective: To identify tasks aimed at improving the selection of instructors for professional activities in training military specialists within the system of professional military education.

Methods: To achieve the stated objective, methods of systemic and comparative analysis of scientific sources were employed to determine the specifics of training military specialists within the system of professional military education under conditions of martial law in the country. Methods of systematization and generalization were used to identify the main directions for implementing the task of selecting instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education, in the context of implementing the Concept of Transformation of the Military Education System.

Results: An analysis of scientific sources was conducted, highlighting the issue of selection and training of instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education as an insufficiently developed area. The specifics of modern training of military specialists were identified, taking into account the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation's army into Ukrainian territory. Relevant characteristics of military specialists who can be involved in the professional training of military personnel within the system of professional military education were proposed, in the context of three main stages of their selection for instructor positions. A conceptual vision and prospective directions for implementing the task of selecting instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education were outlined, enabling high-quality selection of instructional staff for training military personnel within the military education system.

Conclusions: It was established that to improve the selection of instructors for professional activities in training military specialists within the system of professional military education, the following measures are necessary: establish a career monitoring system for sergeants in higher military educational institutions of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education; develop methodological recommendations for the procedure of selecting and training instructors within the system of professional military education; apply a comprehensive approach to selecting sergeants as candidates for instructor roles; develop standard requirements for instructors and a methodology for their evaluation; provide for and organize annual external evaluations of instructors at higher military educational institutions of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education; ensure proper individual development of sergeants by offering choices for advanced training courses and preparing them through advanced-level training courses for sergeant-instructor duties; establish a model of an instructor-leader and provide motivational factors at their workplace to support career advancement prospects.

Keywords: *military education, higher military educational institutions, instructor, training of military specialists, professional military education.*

Introduction. The current stage of transformation in military education under the conditions of a state of war necessitates well-considered decisions, forward-looking plans, and the rigorous selection of military professionals for pedagogical and instructional roles within the system of professional military education. One of the key tools for the qualified training of military specialists in the Armed Forces of Ukraine is the need for reforms and improvements in the existing professional education system, taking into account the specifics of wartime conditions and the requirement to train military personnel in a short timeframe to fulfill their designated roles within the forces.

In countering the armed aggression of the Russian invasion on Ukrainian territory, the state leadership, Ukrainian military, and international partners are deeply concerned about the issue of training military specialists for Ukraine's defense forces. Currently, various measures are being implemented to enhance the effectiveness of mobilization in Ukraine, the training of military specialists, and the social protection of service members and their families. This is evidenced by a series of amendments to legislative drafts and internal regulatory documents of Ukraine's defense forces. However, critical challenges in training qualified military specialists persist, including not only their readiness to actively counter the aggressor and effectively coordinate between defense force units during active combat operations but also their ability to undergo high-quality training in a short period, retraining on new weaponry, and recognizing the need for changes in tactical approaches and the application of new forms of military operations. These challenges necessitate not only amendments to legislative acts and regulatory documents but also the establishment of a purposeful and comprehensive system for selecting academic and instructional staff in higher military educational institutions under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education. Additionally, an equally pressing issue arises regarding the level of training and combat experience

required for academic and instructional staff during the preparation of military personnel. This article places particular emphasis on the stages of selecting candidates for instructor positions in higher military educational institutions under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education, as an unresolved issue in the training of military specialists within the system of professional military education.

Sources. Ukrainian researchers continuously address issues related to the specifics of training military specialists (S. Biela, V. Heorhiev, A. Zelnytskyi, O. Mityahin, et al.); professionally oriented training of military specialists (V. Babak, S. Melnychenko, D. Olenev, I. Semenyako, V. Yahupov, et al.); ensuring the quality of military specialist training (O. Zabolotnyi, V. Oliferuk, V. Rakhmanov, et al.); and the development of necessary competencies for military specialists (M. Aristarkhova, D. Kyslenko, V. Svystun, R. Shostak, Y. Shchavinskyi, et al.). However, limited attention has been paid to the development of professional competence among academic staff in higher military educational institutions, with notable exceptions including A. Vitchenko, S. Illyushchenko, L. Oliinyk, et al. Furthermore, only a small number of studies focus on the specifics of training pedagogical and instructional staff for professional activities in military training units of higher education institutions and institutions of professional pre-higher military education (Pikus D., Bondarenko A., 2023, p. 213). Additionally, researchers have outlined a list of competencies required for instructors in training centers preparing intelligence officers for professional interaction (Pikus D., Bondarenko A., 2023, p. 217).

In their work, I. Zelenyi and A. Voronin (2022, p. 99) objectively highlight the necessity of intellectual development for officers and the key elements of self-development throughout a military career. Based on the authors' proposed elements of a concept for officers' personal self-development as researchers, this study attempts to examine these elements in the context of the selection and preparation of instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education.

Particularly relevant to this study is the work dedicated to improving the effectiveness of professional training for future officers in wartime conditions by Y. Chernovol and P. Slyvenko (2023, pp. 6–8). The authors analyzed foreign experiences in shaping the system of professional military education in certain NATO member states. An indisputable conclusion by Y. Chernovol and P. Slyvenko is that, in the context of modern warfare against the Russian Federation’s army, the development of officers’ professional competencies is of paramount importance. This study concurs with the authors’ view that the components of training should include: fostering flexible thinking; analyzing external and internal threats; predicting enemy actions; adapting responses to changing conditions; comprehensive oversight of subordinates’ actions and conditions; and skills in psychological support and motivation (Chernovol & Slyvenko, 2023, p. 10).

As evident from the analyzed scientific sources, the issues of selection and preparation of instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education remain insufficiently developed. Meanwhile, the introduction of a new model for training Ukrainian citizens and the establishment of relevant structural units in higher education institutions and institutions with specific training conditions (Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 734, June 21, 2024) only heightens the urgency of this matter.

Purpose of the Article. The purpose of this article is to identify tasks for improving the selection of instructors for professional activities in training military specialists within the system of professional military education.

Research Methods. To achieve the stated purpose, methods of systemic and comparative

analysis of scientific sources were employed to identify the specifics of training military specialists within the system of professional military education under wartime conditions. To determine the main directions for addressing the task of selecting instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education in the context of implementing the Concept of Transformation of the Military Education System, methods of systematization and generalization were used.

Results and Discussion. The education of officers and sergeants of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with the implementation of professional military education, has reached a new level, the results of which were already noticeable in the army by early 2021 (New Training Methodologies, 2021). However, the onset of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation into Ukrainian territory, aimed at seizing new territories and realizing its Soviet-era ambitions, has imposed new requirements on the training of military specialists for Ukraine’s defense forces.

Addressing the issue of transforming the state and quality of the military education system, Y. Prykhodko (2022, p. 179) emphasizes the need for changes to ensure high-quality training and professional development of military specialists. Overall, the training of military specialists should enhance their professionalism, competence, intellectual development, leadership qualities, and more. As one of the factors contributing to Ukraine’s success in defending its territories against the Russian Federation’s aggressive actions, education and combat training aligned with NATO standards (Figure 1) remain highly relevant for Ukraine’s defense forces.

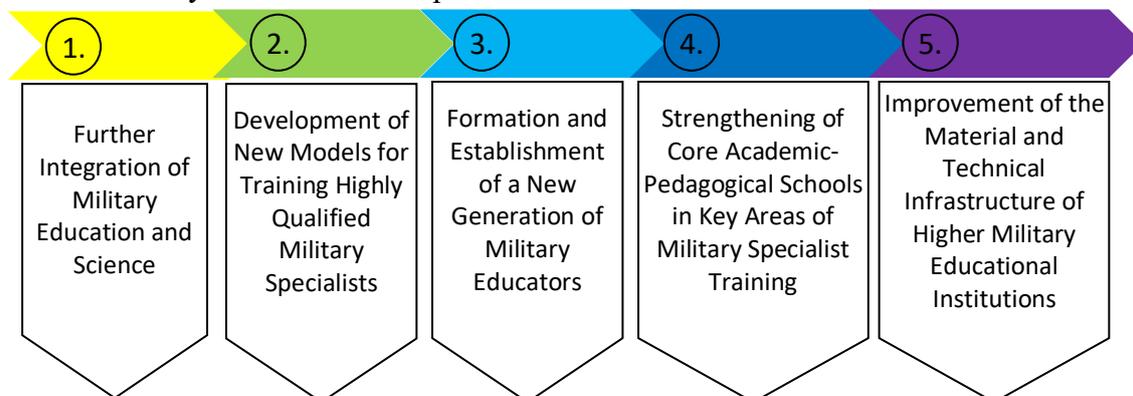


Figure 1. Five Key Directions for Improving the System of Higher Military Education
Source: Ukraine to NATO Journal. Official Website.

In this context, military education is regarded as an instrument for army reform, with five primary directions for its improvement identified (Main Directions for Effective Development, 2022). Currently, the preparation of military specialists is characterized not only by their readiness to perform designated tasks and the incorporation of combat experience from the period of 2022–2024. Additional features include:

- Constant dispersal of personnel due to missile strikes and the adversary's use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) at various ranges;
- Limitations in the use of the material and technical infrastructure of higher military educational institutions and training centers for specific branches (types) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter – AFU);
- An increase in the number of trainees due to the need for personnel mobilization and the creation of new military formations within Ukraine's defense forces;
- Reduced duration of training and practical preparation of personnel;
- Temporary detachment of academic and teaching staff to gain combat experience;
- The necessity to account for the use of modern and foreign weaponry;
- Consideration of changes in the adversary's warfare tactics, their new weaponry, and the potential use of weapons and military equipment from other countries, among other factors.

Despite challenges related to personnel mobilization for the AFU and the insufficient practical training of soldiers before their deployment to combat units, the need to continuously update military training programs raises significant concerns regarding the qualified preparation of academic, pedagogical, and instructor staff.

In his study, D. Pikus (2024, p. 328) established the need to train instructors through specialized programs, including the involvement of foreign specialists, which is deemed highly relevant for acquiring experience from international partners in the forms and methods of conducting training.

Scholars such as A. Derevianchuk and D. Chopa (2019, p. 153) emphasize the need to train military specialists using the case-study method.

A considerable number of scientific studies have addressed the necessity of incorporating experience from the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) and Joint Forces Operation (JFO), as well as the effectiveness of changes in the methodology for

training future AFU officers. For instance, O. Skriabin, O. Chernykh, and Yu. Chernykh (2021, p. 26) note that the level of training and practical competence of future officers has become more effective due to the teaching of professional disciplines by officers who directly participated in combat operations in the ATO/JFO zone in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

In light of the above, it is deemed necessary to define the specific characteristics of military specialists who can be involved in the professional training of servicemen within the system of professional military education. These characteristics can be divided into several stages:

Stage of Selection for Instructor Candidates

First, the professional level of the candidate must be assessed before their admission to instructor duties in higher military educational institutions under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, military training units of higher education institutions (hereinafter – MTU HEI), and institutions of professional pre-higher military education. For example, if a sergeant's last position in the troops was deputy platoon commander, such a serviceman may be involved in training squad commanders and deputy platoon commanders but not in roles exceeding the functional scope of their previous professional experience.

Second, combat experience gained by the serviceman since the onset of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine is critical. It should be noted that the serviceman must have combat experience relevant to the specialty they will teach. For instance, if a serviceman participated solely in a defensive operation on a specific section of the front, it would be inappropriate to involve them in teaching practical classes on the topic of "offensive operations."

Thirdly – completion of an advanced training course for the duties of a sergeant-instructor. This is currently a highly contentious issue due to the lack of a sufficient number of adequately trained instructors. However, the quality of trained military specialists, who have the opportunity to undergo training under the guidance of an instructor who has not received the appropriate level of professional education within the military education system but is already performing the duties of the position, should not be overlooked.

Stage of Individual Selection of Instructor Candidates

1. Possession of certificates confirming the level of individual training obtained through advanced qualification courses.

2. The serviceman's knowledge of extensive professional terminology and familiarity with the procedures for maintaining technical (official) documentation related to their prior professional activities.

3. The individual level of the serviceman's expertise in military affairs, particularly in the context of their future professional specialization.

4. Knowledge of the forms and methods of conducting classes within the system of professional military education.

5. Familiarity with abbreviations and the translation of military terminology from foreign languages.

Stage of Assuming the Instructor Position

1. Knowledge of military-professional and military-specialized competencies that trainees must acquire during their professional military education course in the instructor's area of teaching.

2. The ability to transfer combat experience during classes by conducting practical tasks (tactical exercises). For example, on any terrain, map, diagram, or photograph, the instructor can simulate a combat situation in which they personally participated, allowing trainees to make decisions based on the scenario. Subsequently, the instructor should guide the trainees by discussing the decision made in the actual combat situation and its consequences.

3. Engaging in communication with servicemen in the context of their professional specialization and collecting real combat situations from them orally. These situations should be developed into practical tasks (tactical exercises) for other servicemen. This approach enhances the instructor's awareness of the specifics of performing combat tasks in other units. Additionally, it allows other servicemen to assume the role of a unit commander in a simulated "combat" situation. This

form of information exchange can be described as the mutual transfer of combat experience. Discussing various types of combat tasks with the involvement of trainees provides greater insight into possible solutions and facilitates the dissemination of this experience. It is critical to note that training should not only highlight positive decisions. Many commanders of military units, in certain situations, are unaware of the potential consequences of "template" task execution. Therefore, it is more effective to focus on discussing decisions that led to negative outcomes in the execution of combat tasks.

4. Providing moral-psychological support and boosting the morale and motivation of trainees to learn and perform their designated tasks.

The ability to transfer combat experience, communicate effectively within the training unit, boost morale, and maintain the moral-psychological state of the unit embodies the qualities of a leader. In this regard, it is evident that an instructor in the system of professional military education must be prepared for successful performance and meet the criteria required of academic and pedagogical staff in the military education system, as outlined by V. Oliferuk (2019, p. 138). The author notes that the competence of an instructor in higher military educational institutions is defined as a complex interplay of relationships and elements that constitute benchmark criteria for professionalism. Furthermore, the scholar emphasizes the need to consider both theoretical and practical readiness for professional activities within the structure of an instructor's professional skills in the military education system (Oliferuk, 2019, pp. 142–144).

It is evident that the successful performance of instructors in the system of professional military education directly depends on key indicators of the serviceman's individual and professional development, their ability to conduct teaching activities, and their motivation for continuous improvement within the system of professional military education (see Figure 2).

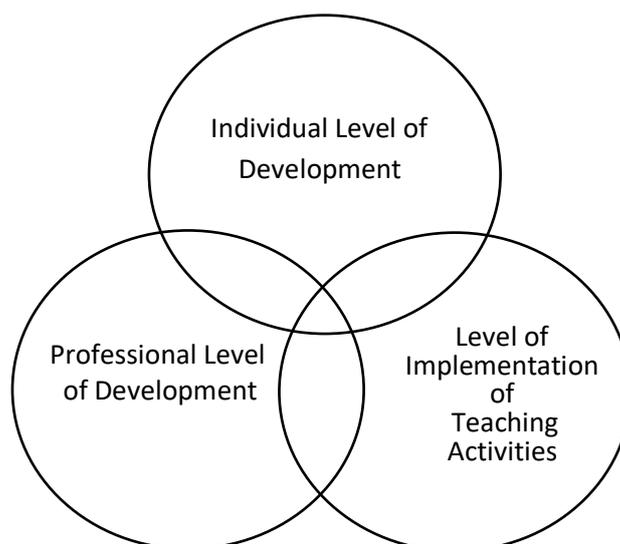


Figure 2. Key Indicators of Successful Performance of Instructors in the System of Professional Military Education

It is posited that the individual level of personality is a significant factor in the professional activities of instructors, irrespective of the level of educational activity. In this regard, all individual qualities of the instructional staff of higher military educational institutions under the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (MoD), military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education should be considered alongside the established indicators of the academic-pedagogical (pedagogical) staff.

Conclusions. Based on the above, it has been determined that to improve the selection of instructors for professional activities in training military specialists within the system of professional military education, a series of tasks must be implemented, namely: establishing a career monitoring system for sergeants in higher military educational institutions under the MoD, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education; developing methodological guidelines for the selection and preparation of instructors for professional activities within the system of professional military education; applying a comprehensive approach to the selection of sergeants as candidates for instructor roles;

developing standard requirements for instructors and a methodology for their evaluation; providing for and organizing annual external evaluations of instructors in higher military educational institutions under the MoD, military training units of higher education institutions, and institutions of professional pre-higher military education; ensuring proper individual development of sergeants by offering choices for professional development courses and preparing them through advanced training courses for the duties of a sergeant-instructor; establishing a model of an instructor-leader and providing motivational factors at their workplace to support career advancement prospects.

Among the prospects for further research, it is envisaged to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the level of professional competence of instructors within the system of professional military education, to determine the competence level of academic-pedagogical and pedagogical staff in structural units of higher education institutions and educational institutions with specific learning conditions to ensure high-quality basic general military training for Ukrainian citizens, and to identify the necessary conditions that will facilitate the comprehensive evaluation of instructors' professional competence.

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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВІДБОРУ ДО ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ІНСТРУКТОРІВ У СИСТЕМІ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ВІЙСЬКОВОЇ ОСВІТИ

Володимир Карпенко

доктор філософії, провідний науковий співробітник науково-дослідного управління проблем розвитку військової освіти та науки, Національного університету оборони України, <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3699-353X>, e-mail: vskarpenko88@gmail.com

Реферат:

Актуальність: питання відбору та підготовки до професійної діяльності інструкторів у системі професійної військової освіти залишаються не достатньо розробленими; при цьому, запровадження нової моделі підготовки громадян України та утворення відповідних структурних підрозділів у закладах вищої освіти та закладах освіти із специфічними умовами навчання тільки підвищує актуальність зазначеного питання.

Мета: визначити завдання для вдосконалення відбору інструкторів до професійної діяльності з підготовки військових фахівців у системі професійної військової освіти.

Методи: задля реалізації поставленої мети застосовано методи системного і порівняльного аналізу наукових джерел для визначення особливостей підготовки військових фахівців у системі професійної військової в мовах воєнного стану в державі; задля визначення основних напрямів реалізації завдання з відбору до професійної діяльності інструкторів у системі професійної військової освіти у контексті реалізації Концепції трансформації системи військової освіти використано методи систематизації та узагальнення.

Результати: проведено аналіз наукових джерел та виокремлено актуальне питання щодо відбору та підготовки до професійної діяльності інструкторів у системі професійної військової освіти як таке, що не достатньо розроблене; визначено особливості сучасної підготовки військових фахівців з урахуванням повномасштабного вторгнення армії російської федерації на території України; запропоновано відповідні характеристики військових фахівців, які можуть бути залучені до професійної підготовки військовослужбовців у системі професійної військової освіти у контексті трьох основних етапів відбору їх до діяльності на посадах інструкторів; розкрито концептуальне бачення та перспективні напрями реалізації завдання з відбору до професійної діяльності інструкторів у системі професійної військової освіти, що дасть змогу здійснювати якісний відбір інструкторського складу для підготовки військовослужбовців у системі військової освіти.

Висновки: встановлено, що для вдосконалення відбору інструкторів до професійної діяльності з підготовки військових фахівців у системі професійної військової освіти необхідно: налагодити систему моніторингу кар'єри сержантів вищими військовими навчальними закладами МОУ, військовими навчальними підрозділами закладів вищої освіти, закладами фахової передвищої військової освіти; розробити методичні рекомендації щодо порядку відбору та підготовки до професійної діяльності інструкторів у системі професійної військової освіти; застосувати комплексний підхід у відборі сержантів в кандидати на інструктора; розробити еталонні вимоги до інструкторів та методика їх оцінювання; передбачити та організувати щорічне зовнішнє оцінювання інструкторів вищих військових навчальних закладів МОУ, військових навчальних підрозділів закладів вищої освіти, закладів фахової передвищої військової освіти; забезпечити належним чином індивідуальний розвиток сержантів з вибором курсів підвищення кваліфікації та підготовки їх на курсі підвищеного рівня підготовки для виконання обов'язків сержанта-інструктора; сформулювати еталон інструктора-лідера та забезпечити їм на службовому місці мотиваційні чинники для перспектив у службовій кар'єрі).

Ключові слова: *військова освіта, вищі військові навчальні заклади, інструктор, підготовка військових фахівців, професійна військова освіта.*

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