



A Small Library With Big Goals - The Library For German Language And Literature, University Of Tartu

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Abstract:

I would like to speak about the Library of the Department for German Language and Literature at the University of Tartu. The University of Tartu is one of the oldest universities in the Nordic countries, founded in 1632. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the situation in our country was changing. We had to build up new society, a new educational system. The example of our library illustrates the developments in Estonia very well. In many areas we had to start from scratch. When learning foreign languages, it is natural that the dictionaries, lexicons and scientific literature are at students' disposal, but in Tartu it was not so. The first German Professor in Tartu – Claus Sommerhage - started establishing a library. Without intensive support of the German and Swiss funds our library would not exist today. Our library is getting better every day, the students and lecturers use it more and more often.

Keywords: Developing process; importance of financing, closeness to readers, supporting the study process, social gathering place

I would like to speak more profoundly about different qualitative and quantitative methods I use in my everyday work in the small library.

- The first and very important part of my work is dealing with different funds, supporting programmes and promoting cooperation with the university main library.
- The priority of our library is to be of high scientific quality. This is the direction, Claus Sommerhage gave to our library and we still hold on to it. It is sometimes difficult because of our insufficient financing, but we always choose books carefully, ask advice from our German patrons and friends, try to be informed of the newest scientific literature.
- One of the priorities of our library is its closeness to students and lecturers. We are informed of every need very quickly and for the students it is comfortable that everything about one subject (German language and literature) is concentrated at one place. Small libraries often have other advantages.
- Our library is a kind of a social gathering place for students who study the same subject, have the same problems and pleasures.
- The nice and comfortable interior (enough place for everybody, computers, open the whole day, exhibitions) plays an important role here.

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