MODERN TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Abstract. In the article, an analysis and general characterization of modern trends in the development of higher education in the USA have been carried out. Particular attention is paid to the transformational processes that have taken place in the US higher education system over the past decades. The aim of the study is to identify the main trends and challenges faced by higher education institutions amid rapid social, economic, and technological changes.

It has been identified that higher education in the USA is characterized by a high degree of decentralization and diversification of educational programs. Meanwhile, state regulation has been strengthened lately to ensure the principles of equality and access to higher education and guarantee the quality of educational activities.

It has been researched that the educational process is organized considering the principle of academic freedom, a high level of technical support and compliance with the requirements of the modern society. The impact of digital technologies on the interactivity of the educational process in American higher education institutions
has been examined. It has been found that there has been a growing demand for online education in the USA in recent years. Distance education, which became widespread during the pandemic, has influenced the development of a variety of online courses. Internationalization of US higher education is another modern trend aimed at spreading the economic, political and cultural influence of the United States of America in the world.

Attention has been focused on the introduction of innovative teaching methods, such as adaptive learning and the use of artificial intelligence. The necessity of adapting higher education institutions to new challenges through the implementation of innovative approaches and the development of strategies aimed at enhancing accessibility, quality, and sustainable development of education has been emphasized. It has been substantiated that modern trends in the development of US higher education can be integrated into the higher education system of Ukraine.

The conclusion has been drawn that the educational system of higher education in the USA must meet the new demands of society.

**Keywords:** the US higher education, higher education institutions, modern trends, transformational processes, digital technologies, educational innovations.

Мукан Наталія Василівна доктор педагогічних наук, професор, професор кафедри педагогіки та інноваційної освіти Інституту права, психології та інноваційної освіти, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери 12, м. Львів, 79000, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4396-3408

Столярчук Леся Богданівна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери 12, м. Львів, 79000, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1540-8204

Марціхів Христина Романівна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери 12, м. Львів, 79000, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4637-6604

**СУЧАСНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ РОЗВИТКУ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ США**

Анотація. У статті проаналізовано та здійснена загальна характеристика сучасних тенденцій розвитку вищої освіти у США. Особлива увага звернена на трансформаційні процеси, які відбуваються у системі вищої освіти США впродовж останніх десятиріч.

Метою дослідження є визначення основних тенденцій та викликів, з якими стикаються вищі навчальні заклади в умовах швидких соціальних, економічних та технологічних змін.
Зазначено, що вища освіта США характеризується високим ступенем децентралізації та диверсифікації освітніх програм. Водночас, останнім часом посилено державне регулювання щодо забезпечення принципів рівності та доступу до вищої освіти та гарантування належної якості освітньої діяльності.

Досліджено, що навчальний процес організовано з урахуванням принципу академічної свободи, високого рівня технічного забезпечення та відповідності вимогам сучасного суспільства. Досліджено вплив цифрових технологій на інтерактивність навчального процесу в американських закладах вищої освіти. Було виявлено, що в останні роки в США зростає попит на онлайн-навчання. Дистанційна освіта, яка набула поширення під час пандемії, вплинула на розвиток різноманітних онлайн-курсів. Інтернаціоналізація вищої освіти США є ще одним сучасним трендом, який націлений на поширення економічного, політичного та культурного впливу Сполучених Штатів Америки у світі.

Акцентовано увагу на впровадженні інноваційних методів навчання, таких як адаптивне навчання та використання штучного інтелекту. Наголошено на необхідності адаптації вищих навчальних закладів до нових викликів шляхом впровадження інноваційних підходів та розробки стратегій, спрямованих на підвищення доступності, якості та сталого розвитку освіти. Досліджено, що сучасні тенденції розвитку вищої освіти США можуть втілитися у систему вищої освіти України.

Зроблено висновок, що освітня система вищої освіти США повинна відповідати новим вимогам суспільства.

Ключові слова: вища освіта США, заклади вищої освіти, сучасні тенденції, трансформаційні процеси, цифрові технології, освітні інновації.

Problem statement. Higher education in the USA is one of the best in the modern world, both in terms of quantitative indicators (number of students, higher education institutions, funding volumes, etc.) and in terms of qualitative assessments (leadership of leading universities in international rankings). A modern higher school in the USA is a reflection of the latest world trends. Its goal is to be at the forefront of world science and world higher education. High-quality higher education is one of the main factors of professional and personal success for the USA, because having a higher education degree provides ample opportunities to realize one's own potential in the labor market. Education for Americans is a solid foundation for future economic prosperity. Employers believe that university graduates with higher education have the necessary competencies and values for managerial and technical positions compared to high school graduates. As a result, graduates of institutions of higher education receive a higher reward in the labor market, have better opportunities for employment.
It is necessary to emphasize that modern trends in higher education in the USA face several challenges. The first one is connected with the issue of accessibility and inequality in education, as not all students have equal opportunities to enter prestigious universities. The second one is based on the fact that the fast-changing job market requires constant updates to curricula, which do not always keep up with employer needs. The third one consists in traditional teaching methods that are increasingly giving way to online education, which has its advantages and disadvantages. The fourth one is the integration of technology into the educational process that requires significant investment, which not all institutions can afford. The last one is that the competition among universities for students is growing, forcing them to find new ways to attract applicants.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Ukrainian and foreign researchers make a significant contribution to studying modern trends in the development of higher education in the USA. Among Ukrainian scholars, Professor Natalia Shulha stands out researching the impact of globalization on academic programs and the internationalization of universities. She also analyzes issues of accessibility to education for different social groups.

Among foreign researchers, American scientist Clark Kerr is considered a pioneer in studying university systems and the influence of technology on the educational process. His works help understand how changes in funding and management affect the quality of education. European researcher Simon Marginson, a professor at the University of London, focuses on inequality in access to higher education and the rising cost of education in the USA. His research also covers the competitiveness of American universities on the global stage. Jane Knight, a Canadian professor, is known for her research in the field of international student mobility and academic exchange. She studies how cooperation between universities in different countries affects the quality of education and cultural exchange. Indian scientist Pawaz Ferdinand focuses on the impact of online education on traditional teaching methods in American universities. His research helps understand how digital technologies can change approaches to teaching and learning in higher education institutions in the USA.

These researchers, both domestic and foreign, significantly contribute to understanding the modern trends and challenges facing the higher education system in the USA, helping to develop strategies for further development and improvement of this field.

The aim of the article is to analyze the current state of higher education in the United States and identify the main reform trends, as well as justify the possibilities of implementing progressive ideas of the US experience in the domestic educational space.

Research results. Higher education in the USA has more than 4,000 institutions of higher education, offers multi-level educational programs with a large number of specializations in a certain specialty. The structure of higher education in
the USA is characterized by diversity, a clear hierarchy depending on the volume of scientific research, the level of educational courses and academic degrees awarded. There is no clear definition of the term "higher education institution" in the country. Such institutions include all educational establishments that provide postsecondary educational training. In the vast majority, such institutions are called colleges. Moreover, colleges can be both an independent educational institution (with a two- or four-year term of study) that grants a degree no higher than a bachelor's one, and a structural unit of a university that trains specialists in a certain field of knowledge [1, p. 237]. It should be noted that it is not legally regulated in the USA which higher education establishment should be designated as a "university" and which should be called a "college".

Higher education in the USA is characterized by a high degree of decentralization and diversification of educational programs. In the United States of America, issues of higher education belong to the states, so the federal government does not have the authority to determine the policies and university curricula. The US institutions of higher education, both private and public, are given complete freedom in choosing educational programs and sources of funding, including tuition fees, support of various funds, profits from scientific activities, etc. Each state has its own system of higher education institutions, which differ significantly from each other both in terms of its objectives and the quality of education. The variety of educational establishments enables the student to choose the college or university that best meets personal needs in the academic, cultural, and territorial context. Within the state, students have the right to freely transfer from one institution of higher education to another, provided that their academic status matches. Students from other states can study at institutions of higher education, but they have to pay higher tuition fees. The large number of higher education establishments in the USA encourage a high level of competitiveness, so they are forced to constantly introduce innovations, offer new educational programs, and ensure high standards of education in order to attract capable and talented students. In addition, the wide autonomy of higher educational institutions led to the absence of uniform criteria for students’ admission. Each of the higher education institutions chooses enrollment criteria at its own discretion.

However, federal regulation has been strengthened recently, which has been reflected in amending the legislation on higher education, strengthening the federal funding system, developing legal and organizational guarantees to ensure the principles of equality and access to higher education, and the significant expansion of the powers of the US Department of Education. The next leading trend is increased attention to the education system on the part of the US higher authorities, namely, education is a mandatory issue of the presidential administration's concern. The main elements of state policy in the field of higher education are financial control, provision of state guarantees of equal rights in the system of higher education, its accessibility, the system for evaluating learning outcomes and the quality of educational activities.
It is worth noting that the university education system has an individual orientation, which is ensured by the students’ personal choice of study courses in terms of the main specialty (Major) and the second specialty (Minor). It is aimed at efficient formation of a well-qualified professional, the development of the creative potential of an individual, and a sense of self-confidence. Disciplines, the study of which is necessary to get a degree, are classified in US universities as follows: Core courses, mandatory for everyone; Major courses; disciplines of additional specialization (Minor courses) combined with the main specialty; Elective courses.

In US higher education, the latest educational technologies are actively implemented, modern technical means and innovative methods of obtaining information are used. Almost all teachers use different channels of communication with students: e-mails; messengers; social networks; own web pages that contain detailed information about the teacher and the courses he or she teaches, various educational materials to assist students. So, the educational process is organized taking into account the principle of academic freedom, a high level of technical support and compliance with the requirements of the modern information society.

There has been a tendency in the USA recently to increase the share of professionally-oriented programs, which is mostly inherent in Master’s training. The increase in the number of graduates of professionally-oriented programs led, accordingly, to a decrease in the number of graduates of classical programs, especially in humanitarian and scientific and technical fields. The significant reduction of scientific and technical programs has especially affected training specialists in such areas as mathematics and statistics, physical sciences and technologies. Such a decrease is explained by a number of reasons: low quality of secondary education, especially in mathematics and applied sciences; instability of federal government policies; narrowness and length of scientific staff’s training.

The trend of a sharp increase in the number of students studying programs in the field of computer and information sciences requires special attention. In recent years, the graduation of specialists at the bachelor's, master's and doctor's level according to the specified programs has increased 20 times. These indicators are the highest for the entire period of the US higher education development. At the same time, the desire of higher education to meet the requirements of the modern economy leads to a decrease in the quality and volume of theoretical knowledge, to an acute need for specialists in scientific, technical and humanitarian direction [2].

The problems faced by American educators are common for the whole world, the difficulties associated with the development of strategies in such areas as increasing the effectiveness and quality of education, creating a system of criteria for evaluating students’ performance and the work of higher education institutions; regulating tuition fees to create more favorable opportunities for student enrollment; implementing programs to help students achieve success; improving the credit system to promote student mobility; standardizing educational courses and curricula, etc.
It has been discovered that American national initiatives have begun to focus on the need to implement a nationwide reform that goes beyond the application of individual programs or innovations in order to change the basic structures and processes of higher education. Higher education reform is crucial for all types of higher education institutions, but most of the educators’ efforts have been applied to transforming the community college as the most widespread and popular educational institution. Higher education reform is a movement aimed at streamlining students' studies in higher education institutions, providing them with structured program choices, necessary support, and clear learning goals that basically help most students achieve the ultimate outcome of higher education. The reform recognizes that the current community college model lacks a clear plan for student success, leading to students' misunderstandings about the timing of their studies, the amount of knowledge required, and an excessive number of credits.

A model "Guided Pathways" (2015) is thought to be the effective reform of higher education in the USA which combines three elements: orientation to measurable student success; creation of a base of necessary evidence; a focused and coherent set of program components, built on the development of simplified, well-organized and understandable stages of college education. In this model, everything is logically sequential, since first the process of admission to higher education institutions is organized, which involves assisting students in choosing a study program, then attention is directed to the diagnosis and elimination of academic deficiencies that prevent students from achieving success in the chosen program. The next step is to support students throughout their studies at higher education institutions with the aim of completing the program and successfully transitioning to further education or employment. Such a reform focuses the educators’ attention on the need to monitor students’ progress, support, assess, provide feedback, and discuss the performance [3].

It is important to specify that the current trend of reforming higher education in the USA is demonstrated by the creation of a new program "Essential Education" (2019). The key ideas of the transformation are: the creation of an educational paradigm that combines three components - learning, teaching and research; combining the affordability of admission for students to institutions of higher education with its completion and achievement of individual educational and career goals; implementing legislation to eliminate tuition fees for low-income students; development of guidelines necessary for success; a change in the mission of community colleges regarding the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree; development of professionally oriented programs; ensuring a smooth transition from high school to college; recognition of the value of students' experience and characteristics; the use of technologies in the educational process; involvement of all participants in the educational process in the creation of a single work strategy; using the received data to improve the management process [3].
Meanwhile, the USA provides conditions not only for obtaining post-secondary education by its own citizens, but also for foreign students. Internationalization of US higher education is considered to be one of the modern trends. In 2022, 948,519 students from various countries entered higher education institutions in the USA [4]. The USA is a country of great opportunities, so some foreign students not only get a quality education in this country, but also strive for further employment. University education is most attractive to foreign students who are engaged in natural sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics. An additional factor that attracts the flow of foreign students to the USA is the relatively uncomplicated process of obtaining a student visa. In this way, the US government encourages capable foreign citizens to study and, in the future, to work in the country. The activities of US higher education institutions are characterized by significant commercialization, so they are interested in recruiting foreign students. Also, important factors of obtaining education abroad for students of developing countries are changes in the educational level, prospective level of personal income, the possibility of further employment in the USA, which together looks like an attractive prospect [5, p. 163]. U.S.-educated graduates find it easier to get a job than those who studied abroad. This is due to the fact that American employers are more aware of the skills acquired in American educational institutions, and they are able to interview candidates on the spot.

The most popular universities in the USA for foreign students are New York University, Northeastern University (Boston), Columbia University, University of Southern Carolina and Arizona State University [6]. In fact, the US higher education institution is the leader in the world in the number of foreign students, which makes it possible to spread the economic, political and cultural influence of the United States of America to various countries and regions of the world.

The modern system of higher education in the United States of America is characterized by a large number of higher education institutions where approximately 20 million students study [7]. There is a trend towards openness of higher education in the USA. The demographic diversity of higher education is also increasing. Along with the dominance of the female student contingent in relation to the male (56 and 44 percent, respectively), it is worth noting the development of racial and national diversity. Thus, during 1990 - 2017, the representation of students of Spanish origin increased four and a half times (from 0.7 to 3.2 million), the number of African Americans doubled (from 1.1 to 2.2 million) [7]. In general, the problem of racial and national diversity has traditionally been one of the most acute and even painful in American society.

In addition, an increase in the number of students with disabilities (from 9 to 12 percent) can be attributed to the current trends in the development of the American higher education system. The main directions in the field of higher education were the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, the protection of the rights of the disabled and the elderly, the protection of the rights of
women against discrimination based on gender, pregnancy and maternity, against sexual harassment and violence in higher education, the protection of the rights of religious minorities, as well as sexual minorities and transgender people [8]. Besides, over the last five years the share of those who studied over the age of 30 has slightly decreased (from 24 to 20 percent) and, on the contrary, the share of those who started studying before the age of 20 has increased (from 37 to 41 percent). Therefore, the trend of "rejuvenation" of the student contingent can be observed.

The beginning of the 20s of the 21st century brought new changes not only to the educational system, but also to the global economy. The Covid-19 pandemic forced to switch to a distance form of education and rethink the traditional form of organizing the educational process as a whole. According to the annual report of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), during the period of the beginning of the pandemic, enrollment in undergraduate programs in the United States decreased by 4%, while from 2009 to 2020, the total number of students decreased by 9% [9].

With the advent of the pandemic, many institutions were not prepared to implement effective online education due to the insufficient level of digital technology support, thus, causing even greater imbalance and inequality in the education system. However, US institutions of higher education have quite successfully coped with the challenges of distance education due to the experience of implementing open education tools. Today, distance and online courses constitute nearly half of American college and university curricula. Distance education has become the most popular form of education in the USA long before quarantine restrictions, as it is characterized by relatively low cost, wide availability and comfort of the educational environment - students can study at any time, read materials at their own pace, focus their efforts on one of the topics, interact with teachers and other students from the whole world [10, p. 46]. But to complete their studies successfully, students must have a high level of motivation, as well as good time management skills.

Notably, during the period of distance education because of the pandemic, teachers and students acquired new skills that can be applied for offline teaching and learning as an additional resource. In this regard, it is promising to develop completely remote courses that can be learned at home, for example, accounting, foreign languages, management, programming, and others. Such courses do not require professionally equipped laboratories, material and technical support or special practice bases. So, the direction of digitization, the development of mass online courses, can be singled out as another trend in higher education in the USA and the rest of the world.

The pandemic affected not only the format of education, but also changed the students’ plans for studying, as the number of applicants decreased sharply due to a number of reasons, namely the fear of contracting the coronavirus, the inability to pay for education and financial difficulties caused by the reduction of job places and the inability to combine work and study, and also uncertainty in the productive
process of learning and institutional changes in the content and format of learning [11]. It is generally understood that the Covid-19 pandemic has changed access to higher education and the labor market, enrollment and training. However, security requirements adapted higher education to the distance learning format, innovative software was actively used, and state-of-the-art educational technologies were introduced.

Another relevant challenge in today's educational system is the application of universal chatbots that use artificial intelligence (AI) to generate text after the user enters a query. OpenAI was the first to present such a development. The chatbot uses GPT-4, a large language model that uses deep learning to generate human-like text. Later, the Google corporation also presented the affordable artificial intelligence Bard. This chatbot helps you get clear answers to your questions.

Recently, the issue of using artificial intelligence in the educational process has been actively discussed. The application of AI in the educational process of the university has a number of advantages, namely, it can help students learn the material better, get a more personalized learning experience and prepare for their future careers. Firat noted that teachers and students can more effectively use these technologies to help and improve their own learning and development, knowing how Chat GPT can support the independent students’ learning [12]. Using the Chat GPT tool completely changed the perception of AI capabilities. Understanding and responding to native language input is one of Chat GPT's primary tasks. Native language processing is used by Chat GPT to verify user input and provide appropriate responses [13, c. 436]. This enables users to communicate in Chat GPT in a way that is close to natural, similar to face-to-face communication.

However, there are some challenges to consider when using AI in education. The educational community expresses concern about the risks of issuing papers formulated by AI instead of their own, i.e., failure to observe academic integrity. This applies to both students and scientists. Researchers E. Hill-Yardin, M. Hutchinson, R. Laycock, S. Spencer characterized the scientific text formulated by AI as "floor, dry and formulaic". The use of GPT Chat is not recommended for writing academic papers, based on the fact that it is not known what sources are used to formulate the text [14].

Scientific and technological progress is constantly moving forward, so we cannot reject new technological assets, our task is to learn how to use them correctly and effectively. In particular, supporters of the use of AI suggest introducing guidelines for adapting Chat GPT into the educational process and changing the policy of academic integrity. Currently, there are no specific steps to implement Chat GPT in the educational process, as it is still undiscovered how exactly AI can be implemented and at the same time ensure academic integrity. For example, M. King suggests using a variety of assessment methods that go beyond traditional essay writing – oral presentations, group projects, and hands-on activities that require students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a more interactive and
engaging way. Instructors can also use plagiarism detection software to identify plagiarized or unoriginal content in submitted papers. By applying a variety of assessment methods and using technology to monitor plagiarism, teachers can ensure academic integrity [15]. Science is constantly moving forward, society must adapt to new technologies and use them for the benefit of development.

The higher school of the USA is a well-formed, sustainable structure with a wide network of educational institutions of various levels, effectively fulfilling its leading tasks of providing education to various categories of the population and meeting the needs of the labor market for specialists of various qualifications.

Education in the USA is considered to be a component of human capital and an indicator of national power. A democratic state is interested in attracting young people to study in institutions of higher education, because it is the youth who are usually the driving force that seeks change for the better, the force that has the potential for development and learning. Education is one of the most effective means of improving the quality of life, an efficient tool for combating economic problems and the social issue of poverty. Well-educated citizens are good employees for various sectors of the economy, which means they work to improve the standard of living of the population and the prosperity of the state.

**Conclusions.** It is significant to state that education is considered to be an integral aspect in career building and achieving success in life. Higher education acquisition is thought to be an important component of improving the economic situation of the country. Constant state monitoring of new trends, their implementing into the educational process is needed to ensure a high level of education and professionalism of graduates. Creating conditions for learning and development will encourage students to acquire knowledge and further implement professional potential in a democratic society. Having analyzed the main trends of the modern system of higher education in the USA it is necessary to highlight the following: internationalization – the involvement of foreign students that helps increase the prestige of the educational institution; implementation of open education tools that allows you to master courses remotely, at a convenient time and in a safe place; implementation of AI in the educational process. All the aforementioned trends should be taken into account in the reform aimed at changing the system of higher education in Ukraine. Therefore, thorough analysis of US higher education and current changes taking place in it will significantly contribute to the adaptation of the domestic higher education system to new conditions, creating new educational trends.

**References:**


Література: