

Dear students, colleges – academic community of the MTF STU – Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me on the occasion of the ceremonial opening of the academic year of 2011-2012 at the Faculty of Materials Science and Technology STU, to wish you all good health, good motivation and a lot of success in your studies or when performing important teaching and research missions and also during the fulfilment of tasks ensuring the correct ethos of our institution.

Let me especially welcome amongst us our first grade students on their first stage of study – the university from today will have more than one thousand students in eleven bachelor programs. I would like to emphasise that they decided to take difficult but pleasant study disciplines which are connected with machining and technological basic fundamentals. In truth I have to inform them that the successfulness of studying at this faculty after the first four semesters in history has never been higher than sixty percent. The main problem and reason for failing at our faculty are for sure not due to difficult subjects, e.g. mathematics, physics and informatics. It is especially due to the influences of an unknown and new environment, ignoring the need to change habits from highschool and possibilities to check knowledge by other ways. I may recommend, to regularly visit lessons and also voluntary lectures, to prepare continuously for seminars, laboratories – calculating or experimental exercises. It is too late to dampen the flame if it is already burning and to start to dampen the flame usually does not help at our faculty.

During September the reconstruction and modernisation of the entrance hall in Bottova Street, which has been without reconstruction for more than fifty-six years, will be finished. After nearly two years of reconstruction lecture hall 103 will be open for use and also the large lecture theatre of professor Adamka is only waiting for the installation of new seating which afterwards the faculty will have renewed and modernised the most important lecture rooms. It is necessary to add that the faculty, from its own sources, co-financed all items which were not possible to be financed by project 5.1.2- infrastructure of universities. From the mentioned project, there are investments concerning I.T. to an amount of more than two million euros which are not apparent to an outside observer (e.g. structural cabling in Bottova and Paulinska Street) but we as users of I.T appreciate it very positively in our everyday work.

What is in front of us in the following academic year? Let me tell you some thoughts, in the following days the academic society of Slovakia will be introduced to the suggestion of a new law concerning universities. The law has to be an important change in legislation, especially in the field of accreditation – cancellation of complex accreditation, paid accreditation- guarantee of study programs (the possibility to guarantee a study program for a stated period will also be possible e.g. by a visiting professor) and it has to cancel the division of tertiary education to universities and special tertiary schools. The green light will be in all directions and will also be given to private universities in Slovakia. I am glad that the employees of our faculty commented about the new version of this proposal. It is too early to discuss these changes before discussing the law in the National Board of the Slovak Republic, it is proposed to come into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2012.

Our university with its new management is also preparing several basic changes in the functioning of our institution – we are widely opening for professional cooperation with the Slovak Academy of Science and Comeinius University in Bratislava, especially during the preparation that guarantees large research centres of the Slovak Republic. We presume that the important changes at the university will be realised in cooperation and harmony with the new law of universities after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2012.

Were do we have too improve in the following period, to change the stiff conservative attitudes, to innovate? The most valuable research capital of every university institution are

the doctoral students, who according to the empiric relationships would have to create approximately ten percent of all students. We are continuously becoming closer to this figure but we can not effectively enlarge or improve this capital sufficiently. The management of the faculty decided some months ago about mixed dealing with motivational finances for doctoral students- this means that in addition to the right financial amount, they will be given some additional sources towards the best doctoral students from this fund , e.g. for the support of publications and nobilities of our doctoral students. The management of the faculty will strictly observe the spending of these sources and is expecting a significant growth of publications from doctoral students in cooperation with their supervisors.

In the sense of analysis offered to teachers of our faculty, on behalf of the MTF's fourth teachers conference ([http://www.mtf.stuba.sk/generate\\_page.php?page\\_id=7812](http://www.mtf.stuba.sk/generate_page.php?page_id=7812)) the management of the faculty will start the unification of evaluation of the effectiveness relating to teaching of each teacher of the faculty with an aim to approach standards at universities in developed states. The teaching profession is in the first stage mission, therefore teachers' efforts must be evident, not only to examine our students but firstly to teach them. Space has to be given to new innovative forms of teaching, e.g. project method, essential strengthening of including students in the teaching process and I could go on and on.

At present the faculty is not able to assure accreditation at our teaching study programs from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2012. In spite of this fact we want to use the remaining time to present the accreditation materials of these study programs to use for intensive searches for appropriate guarantors.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let me once more wish you good health, strong enthusiasm and a lot of success in our common efforts.