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THE UTILITY OF RESPECTING THE ETHICAL CODE IN STUDENT-TEACHER UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

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Abstract

An ethical code for students is necessary to define separation of what is right and wrong, being essential in functioning of didactic and medical activity. The opening to the subject taught to students will reflect in their formation, increased relational credibility and maximization of each one's potential.

The ethical code was elaborated with the purpose to complete law in a subtle way that involves responsibility and produces trust and proud of being part of an academic structure.

Professional activity should be performed according to certain values and principles. This way, the teacher will be impartial and objective in relation to students, a model of moral and professional integrity and his activity ensures him independence and professional freedom, recognizing that by this position he has a huge moral, social and professional responsibility, has an activity for the public interest, keeping confidential the professional details.

The role of a teacher is to respect general laws and the specific legislation for his field of activity, promoting the interest of the main beneficiary of his activity, the student, whose personal autonomy is respected and whom he pays respect and tolerance.

Keywords: ethical code, integrity, professional responsibility

Introduction

Why is it necessary an ethical code for students?

Students reflect as a distribution the polymorphism of general population they come from; nowadays, due to great population mobility, new ethical problems appear, connected to massive diversity of the structure of provenience of students who, located in a space and a new socio-human and relational context (which includes collegial, didactic, medical relations etc.) have supplementary different reactions to change. Therefore, an ethical code for students to define separation of what is right and wrong is essential in non-conflictual functioning of didactic and medical activity, protecting the students' interests and the didactic personnel's also, and collaterals. This ethical code should be concordant to the actual legislation, but also with specific normative of university life, should promote creativity, initiative, competency, organizational culture and moral integrity (Carta UMF Iași, 2016).

The finality of applying this code will be reflected in students, obtaining an opening to the subject taught more than just getting standard information, which contributes to forming students, a better feedback to teachers, increased relational credibility and maximizing each one's potential, independently of its initial level of knowledge.

One difficulty in practical applying of ethical code is represented by the fact that often ethical normative are considered „optional”, although both students and teachers and auxiliary personnel of university have consented to respect them. Moreover, some claim that only law should establish compartments, and ethical codes cannot substitute laws. In essence, ethical code that establishes student-teacher relations was elaborated with the purpose to complete law in a subtle way that involves responsibility and implied factors, producing trust, attachment and not at last, the proud of being part of an academic structure, everything with the purpose of supplementary protection both of students and teachers of non-collegial, lack of honesty, perverse, opportunistic, criminal or inhuman attitudes (Socaciu et al., 2018). And even popular wisdom says that „What you don't like don't do to others”, this could be the motto or the absolute resume of a detailed ethical code that would explain its signification for those with less flexible imagination.

The factors involved in structuring the ethical code should have an approach at least bidirectional: from the student and from the teacher, everything in a mobile context, temporally and spatially dominant, of defining our daily existence.

For developing didactic university activity, the representation of the own person should involve assertiveness in all situations both in university and extra-university environment.

Purpose

The purpose is discipline in maintaining an educational standard, but also in what it involves maintaining a proper climate for collaboration and developing the scientific and didactic activity (Carta UMF Iași, 2016; UMF Iași- Cercetare, 2019; Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

Methods and results to achieve

Obviously, legislation offers numerous rights to everyone, without distinctive barriers (a fact that some take a maximal advantage of, juggling with its flexibilities and ambiguities), but did not allow elaboration of an ethical code broader than legal restrictions imposed by these rights, fact that confirms the existence of barriers generated by a law of conserving the amount of rights, on the principle „ones' rights are others' restrictions” and reflect a certain global conservation of the relation rights versus restrictions. An edifying example is planning exams during session any day, except some days with religious importance for some students and having the exam in days with religious significance for others on the reason (never verbally expressed, but practically used) that others are more permissive.

Academic liberty is mentioned in ethical codes, but sometimes it has only theoretical nuances, from informing all members of academic community about existent or potential problems; often we assist to a fracture in communication in all senses: vertical hierarchical-ascendant and descendant, but also horizontal, in the teacher-student relation (Leabu, 2015; Harris, 2016). Without a proper communication it cannot be an authentic academic liberty, even if all the specific rights are respected: politic, religious, for everyone, and the „actors” involved will rhetorically ask themselves in a classical Romanian style: „who am I going to vote with?” So, academic liberty can exist only with an open, honest, assertive, timely, multidirectional communication, disobedient to interests out of the university space (Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

Academic integrity is built with everybody's efforts. But people are different, so the ethical code states, in details with specifications, the circumstances that are breaking this element, from the financial ones to the personal ones. These details are useful, because life in general is generating relational situations extremely varied, and, in the case of lack of precise

normative, the opportunists will take advantage, resting at the border of law for a professional purpose, but doing a huge disservice to the university.

In turn, the students should have integrity during evaluation activities (subjected nowadays to the technological invasion with a major advantage for those who have and manipulate the necessary techniques), in daily activities, reported to the teachers and auxiliary personnel, but also to the university infrastructure, and not at last, to themselves. An integral professional or scholar life has roots in education, received in the first years of life, which is not controlled by school, but by family, and psychiatrists say that human being is slightly changeable as comportment when legislation, including ethical code, will have to constrain comportment for the common sake (Socaciu et al., 2018).

Conflict of interests in any relations is strictly regulated by ethical code, on terms of teachers, family, colleagues, subordination, examination in contests or student competition or filling positions; sometimes these conflicts of interests are hidden, this is why transparency in examination and, moreover, promoting objective appreciation, for example in universities by adopting examination with multiple choice test. Often these examination are simple, and, as medical faculty studies the human, a very complex being, even only in physical perspective, not only in the psychical one, then we have to admit that these methods do not offer a broad, clear and comprehensive image as oral examination (with the compulsory condition of absolute honesty of the examiner). Conflicts of interest and law regulation define numerous incompatibilities or interdictions for occupying university positions (Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

In case of student-teacher relation, conflict of interests is reported not only to relatives, but also to social relations; the last is often indemonstrable, even if they are well known.

Personal autonomy is promoted by ethical code as a defining element of professional evolution of a student, but the concept has to be promoted in hierarchical, disciplinary relations for the evolution of teachers as professionals. Promotion should be based on a broader communication of future intentions, so that in case of a greater mobility of personnel, there will be no discontinuities in didactic activity (Carta UMF Iași, 2016; Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

Justice and fairness are other principles promoted by ethical code, reported to honest sharing of risks, opportunities, benefits and loss, as we could say at first sight- like in theoretical communism. They include indiscrimination on criteria concerning age, sex, nationality, ethnicity, citizenship, political affinities, religion, and financial status (Carta UMF Iași, 2016; Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019). They are useful, but from a neutral perspective, one can notice, for example, allocation of separate positions to admission based on criteria then indiscrimination, mentioned anteriorly, reason for imposing a periodical revision with a reevaluation of applicability normative of these codes and congruence to law, for maintaining credibility and not causing fariseism.

Recognition of personal achievements and of community assures credibility and visibility for the institution. Obviously, evaluation criteria are standardized, as is the case of evaluating knowledge in students. Moreover, the merits of students reflect not only the personal activity, but also the activity of some teachers that guided and trained them, because they added value to student activity.

Three main elements are inseparable from ethical perspective: honesty, respect and discipline (Leabu, 2015).

From the students' point of view, respect and discipline involve: not to copy or to use inspirational materials during examination, not to lie, not to steal, not to use illegal substances, to respect regulations of the university, to avoid confusion. Respect should be

addressed to teachers, to colleagues, auxiliary personnel and to patients. Moreover, it should be extended to everyday life, apart from teaching activity.

Respect is manifested in keeping the infrastructure in proper condition, as the property of university, hospital, respect for colleagues 'property and the respect shown attracts respect.

The manner of showing and receiving respect is the easiest way of establishing relations of type „I am OK- you are OK” (Harris, 2016).

From the point of view of teachers, respect and discipline involve: time for didactic activity, teaching plans, not to plagiarize, to mention all references when are used, to gain the students 'confidence, which will offer a credible image, the fundament for a long time win-win relation, to allow free exchange of ideas, freedom of speech, paying attention to differences of culture, social status, sex, religion, age, race. Teacher has to exercise his professional competences within these limits and examinations should be fair and objective.

Finally, respect has as a basis the congruence of what teacher says and does. Discipline involves patience, adapting to each one's personality, to cognitive capacity and knowledge of every student, and from practical point of view, teachers prepare and organize ideas for every presentation/lecture depending on the auditorium (preparation, year, course, number, location, infrastructure, time for presentation etc.), pay attention to what and how they transmit information, which leads to an increased productivity, having as a consequence the approval of the auditorium and inducing the application of obtained knowledge (Carta UMF Iași, 2016; Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

Teachers should have an equal manner of treating students, although is recommended that examination should be performed on different basis, according to students' particularities.

Professional activity should be performed according to certain values and principles. This way, the teacher will be impartial and objective in relation to students, a model of moral and professional integrity. The activity performed in academic field ensures him independence and professional freedom, recognizing that by this position he has a huge moral, social and professional responsibility, has an activity for the public interest, keeping confidential the professional details.

The role of a teacher is to respect general laws and the specific legislation for his field of activity, promoting the interest of the main beneficiary of his activity, the student, whose personal autonomy is respected and whom he pays respect and tolerance (Carta UMF Iași, 2016).

The teacher manifests a certain degree of self-requirement in exercising the profession, being always self-driven, responsible for his training that should always be at the highest degree. Mentoring activity implies honesty, intellectual rightness, rejection of inadequate teaching conducts, but also permanent involvement in increasing quality of teaching and university prestige, also of the specialty or field of activity.

Conclusion

The ethical code that states the relation between students and teachers is very useful and completes the university regulation and law. Ethical code is the base for healthy principles of relations, as a final point being the benefit for all the involved factors, just as healthy as the periodical revision and completion, reported to evolution of nowadays society (Carta UMF Iași, 2016; Codul de etică UMF Iași, 2019).

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