

THE ISSUE OF ACADEMIC VIRTUE IN STUDYING THE SUBJECT «PHYSIOLOGY» IN THE DISTANCE LEARNING CONDITIONS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING MEDICAL STUDENTS

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*I hope
I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough
to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles —
the character of an honest man
George Washington*

Academic virtue as a principle of fundamental values promotes personal and professional formation of the educational process participants. Development of the latest technologies including distance learning opens new opportunities to improve the educational process, and at the same time, creates preconditions of eventual variants to violate academic virtue by learners. Mutual aid, support and teaching students according to the principles of academic virtue promote formation of a future profession of a doctor and a worthy member of the society.

Objective of the research – to analyze problematic issues of academic virtue during distance learning of Physiology by English speaking students.

Conclusions. Keeping to the principles of academic virtue, creating the atmosphere of justice, mutual respect and mutual trust both in the student environment and in «teacher-student» relations, improves the quality of mastering knowledge and skills in Physiology and increases the level of training of future medical specialists.

Key words:
*physiology, academic
virtue, distance learning,
medical students.*

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ПИТАННЯ АКАДЕМІЧНОЇ ДОБРОЧЕСНОСТІ ПРИ ВИВЧЕННІ ДИСЦИПЛІНИ «ФІЗІОЛОГІЯ» В УМОВАХ ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛОМОВНИХ СТУДЕНТІВ-МЕДИКІВ

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*Я сподіваюсь, що завжди матиму достатньо твердості і доброчесності,
щоб відстояти те, що я вважаю найбажанішим зі всіх звань —
репутацію чесної людини
Дж. Вашингтон*

Академічна доброчесність, як принцип фундаментальних цінностей, сприяє особистісному та професійному становленню учасників освітнього процесу. Розвиток новітніх технологій, у т.ч. дистанційного навчання, відкриває нові можливості покращення освітнього процесу, водночас створюючи передумови еventуальних варіантів порушень академічної доброчесності здобувачами освіти. Взаємодопомога, підтримка та навчання студентів за принципами академічної доброчесності сприяє становленню майбутньої професії лікаря та гідного члена соціуму.

Мета роботи – проаналізувати проблемні питання академічної доброчесності під час дистанційного вивчення фізіології англomовними студентами.

Висновки. Дотримання принципів академічної доброчесності, створення атмосфери справедливості, взаємоповаги та взаємодовіри як у студентському середовищі, так і у взаємовідносинах «викладач-студент» покращує якість засвоєння знань та вмінь із фізіології і підвищує рівень підготовки майбутніх фахівців-медиків.

Ключові слова:
*фізіологія, академічна
доброчесність, дис-
танційне навчання,
студенти-медики.*

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Introduction

Academic virtue is a compulsory principle of the fundamental values of personal and professional development of every teacher and every student. Honesty in teaching and learning as a personal characteristic is an acquired but not an inborn feature, therefore, it needs

to be developed, inculcated and practiced every day [1]. A teacher can show students only by his/her example that this feature is important and compulsory for their further development and acquisition of professional knowledge, skills and abilities. «Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both», Eleanor Roosevelt said [2].

Therefore, if we touch upon keeping the standards of academic virtue by students, the teacher first of all needs to start with himself. «Academic virtue is a way to change the world. But change the University first, and then – the world», Jungsup Kim said, a participant of the Academic Virtue International Center Conference. Therefore, to achieve global changes in any business, it is necessary to start first of all with yourself, and to raise a decent citizen and a just person in oneself and in student environment.

Objective

To analyze problematic issues of academic virtue during distance learning of Physiology by English speaking students.

Main part

Higher educational institutions must be a place where young people can develop not only professional assets, but also dignity, the desire for an intellectual life, form understanding of the ways which ensure further successful professional growth and ability to build honest relations with colleagues, and for medical students – with patients. To convey the concept of academic virtue to students is essential. Moreover, it is necessary to continuously explain why keeping to its principles is so important. In this respect students should see examples of their teachers who are liable to show what should be done to achieve success in their future profession [3].

With the development of the latest technologies, various computer applications, under conditions of pandemic COVID-19, distance learning has become an integral part of the educational process and opened new opportunities for both teachers and students. At the same time, introduction of this form of education provoked new issues associated with certain disadvantages. Thus, more opportunities for various manipulations appeared for students allowing them to get a positive mark with the least amount of time and effort. The majority of students, at least once in their lives turn to academic fraud or cheating. It may be writing off their notes or textbooks, using various technical aids while writing different reports or projects, purchasing of academic texts on websites or from other people etc. It should be noted that this problem is not exclusively Ukrainian one. It is an international tendency. Professor Donald L. McCabe from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, a founder of the Academic Virtue Center, established that more than 75% of college students at least once turn to cheating during their studies. In this context, the results obtained by the project *Who's Who Among High School Students* are rather significant. They demonstrated that 80% students with a high level of progress were cabbaging. The most striking thing is that all of them admitted that writing off is a common thing. Moreover, more than half of the respondents do not consider writing off as violation of the rules at all. New technologies simplified possibilities to cheating. The Educational Testing System (ETS) admits that one of the websites suggesting free course projects

for students was visited 80000 times in just one day [4]. Such a mass character is evidence of complete or poor awareness of students with the academic virtue code. It is confirmed by the research of the Academic Virtue Center. It demonstrates that popularization of the standards and rules of the current codes of honor can significantly influence on students' behavior, their beliefs and attitude to learning. Altogether – teachers, students and interested graduates – are responsible for not standing by. To increase the awareness level of students concerning academic virtue principles must be one of the priorities in the work of the teaching team.

The main reason why students take steps contradicting academic virtue is their formal attitude to assessment, Serhii Horbachov, an educational ombudsman thinks. Knowledge is not considered valuable compared to the results. Sometimes this position is supported by parents who «demand» positive marks from their children at any cost. Therefore, a teacher must not only teach but motivate a student to choose an honest way.

A set of measures to prevent any manifestations of academic dishonesty must be implemented on all the levels of management in the sphere of education and science [5]. The main definitions, principles and provisions to prevent manifestations of academic dishonesty are clearly written and regulated by the Laws of Ukraine as well as by scientific-educational institutions (by various statutes, codes, regulations etc.).

Acquaintance of students with academic virtue principles should be initiated at the very first class on Physiology. First of all, students should realize they will be perceived as worthy colleagues in case they study and work in the environment with high moral-ethical values [6]. Therefore, English speaking students should get acquainted with the legal framework that all the participants of the educational process should be guided by. The Syllabus on Physiology can be an excellent example which regulates students' work in mastering the subject. It should be noted that a teacher by his/her own experience can demonstrate how to keep to academic virtue rules. For example, indicating the sources under the figures, tables and references in lecture presentations on Physiology.

Professional development of students depends not only on an objective assessment of their knowledge and skills but also mutual respect and trust, justification and proof of one's point of view and work over correction of errors. The International Center of Academic Integrity (ICAI) defines five fundamental values of academic virtue [2]. They include fairness, honesty, respect, trust and responsibility. Using these virtues motivates students not only for educational process, but increases their professional level and trains worthy members of a professional group and society.

Distance learning allows application of various methods of assessment of students' knowledge and skills, and requires from students to realize avoidance to use additional materials during writing tests, answering questions, writing papers or projects. Of course, first of all a student is looking for an easier way to get better mark, trying to show oneself from better side, even if he/she has not learnt something. Therefore, proper

motivation and friendly discussion will help establish a «teacher-student» contact.

While working with English speaking students in distance learning conditions in Physiology it was noticed that some students do not switch on their cameras and answers using the words and phrases from the educational material posted on the Internet. Teacher's support and transformed questions and tasks enable a student to realize that information in the textbooks and additional sources requires transformation in answers to the topic. A positive effect was demonstrated by the use of transformed tests different from the instruction in the base given to students before, but without changing their content. It activates the use of one's own knowledge, since it makes the search in the available base of tests impossible.

It was interesting to know, when a teacher explained academic virtue principles to the students, some of them even did not understand what kind of concept it is. They unexpectedly realized for themselves that they were doing wrong. Naturally, the lack of time to prepare a lot of material, simultaneous preparing to classes on different subjects, lack of interest in writing projects – all these prompted students to find other methods of easier getting a desirable mark [7]. Nevertheless, by conducting educational conversations and keeping to the academic virtue principles in our own work we have shown that no need to look for easy ways to get positive grades, but one should work persistently to receive respect from the team in which you study or work.

Transformations in education all over the world in order to keep to academic virtue principles require rebuilding of the higher school, introducing new norms of behavior and control with the formation of a habit to prevent the theft of intellectual property [8]. Learning European practice is rather relevant in this situation, since European higher education is several steps ahead of us in this matter. Only systemic and successive, continuous work in this direction will lead to desirable changes of academic culture forming new generations of citizens sharing these ideals [9].

We believe that the topic presented in this article is rather relevant in current realities of distance learning and requires conducting a survey to find objective cause-and-effect relationships in students' behavior during online classes.

Conclusion

Keeping to the principles of academic virtue, creating the atmosphere of justice, mutual respect and mutual trust both in the student environment and in «teacher-student» relations, improves the quality of mastering knowledge and skills in Physiology and increases the level of training of future medical specialists.

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