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Professional and institutional morality: building ethics programmes on the dual loyalty of academic professionals

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Most professionals have the arduous task of managing their own dual loyalty: in one contextual relationship, they are members of a profession while simultaneously they are employed as members of a locally established organisation. This sense of a dual loyalty has to be taken into account when professional bureaucracies develop ethics programmes. This article focuses on universities. Accounting for the dual loyalty of academic professionals, it is the objective of the study to contribute to the most appropriate ethics programmes in such an academic context. Based on a review of the literature, we identify which ethical issues commonly emerge in educational and research activities. Then we offer a conceptual analysis of the conditions required for each different strategy of ethics management. We argue that none of the four theoretically derived strategies is applicable solely on its own. For universities it is most promising to design ethics programmes based on the guiding values of the academic community, including integrity measures for universities and corrective measures for students. The argument developed in this article is assumed to be widely applicable in assessing the appropriateness of ethics management strategies in other professional settings.

Keywords: compliance strategy; ethics programme; institutional ethics; integrity strategy; professional ethics; university; dual loyalty; formal ethics codes

Introduction

Around the globe, in all kinds of sectors, there is an increased awareness of ethics (Pelletier and Bligh 2006). Ethical issues do not just become prominent in large-scale organisations or when scandals are exposed, they arise daily in every type of business condition where decisions are being made for and within organisations. As a consequence, many organisations attempt to offer ethical-behaviour guidance to their employees. Such attempts can be named institutional ethics programmes – this term is used as a synonym for organisational ethics programmes – only when the programmes contain a coherent set of actions in a specific organisation that stimulates morally responsible behaviour on the part of the employees.

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Comprehensive ethics programmes generally include (McDonald and Nijhof 1999; Weaver, Trevino, and Cochran 1999): formal ethics codes; ethics committees (responsible for the development of ethics policies; evaluation of the company and/or an employee's actions); ethics communication systems (reporting abuses or offering guidance); ethics officers or ombudsperson (coordinating policies, providing ethics education and investigating allegations); ethics training programmes and disciplinary processes to address unethical behaviour. By implementing a comprehensive ethics programme, the ethics policies are aiming to affect the daily decision-making processes and work practices of organisations at all levels (Sims 1991). A key characteristic of institutional ethics is that it is initiated by the employer, not the employee. The assumption is that ethics policies should be implemented by the institution.

Among professionals, there is another mode common in terms of guidance to ethical behaviour. Aside from the institutional approach to stimulating ethical behaviour, it is the culture of a particular profession that typically affects ethical behaviour in the workplace. Professional ethics involve the professional's role and conduct in society, based on their own set of moral values. Professional ethics serves two functions (Brien 1998). Firstly, professional ethics bind the professional community and the professional culture, thereby embedding ethics policies. Secondly, professional ethics form the basis for trust between the profession and society as a whole. For some professions – like medicine and law – all members of the community have to undergo extensive training to earn a license. If one does not act according to the ethical code of behaviour of the profession, then one can be expelled from the professional 'guild' (Gardner 2007). Therefore, professional ethics start with the professional community, not the employer, because ethics are set by the standards of each occupational group.

Professionals operating in professional bureaucracies perceive themselves not only as members of a profession but also as members of an organisation. For this reason, there might be a constant friction between institutional ethics and professional ethics. This dual loyalty of professionals is potentially conflicting (von Weltzien Hoivik 2002). As employees, professionals need to comply with the preset values of an organisation (Tenbrunsel, Smith-Crowe, and Umphress 2003, 297). As professionals, they also have to comply with the norms and values of the occupational group. Furthermore, professionals are endowed with specialised knowledge, which is not identical to any of the other members of the organisation. On account of this unique knowledge base, professionals tend to be relatively powerful and autonomous (Brien 1998, 391). Hence, professionals will need to be enabled to act autonomously, since they tend to be the best qualified to make well-founded decisions, appropriate for a specific situation. However, they do not always get the power to do so from the institution. This typical tension between institutional and professional ethics is a crucial theme for instance in the health-care sector when hospitals progressively move in the direction of 'social enterprises', which may result in many disagreements between management and the medical staff (Grol 2001; Relman 1988). It is the objective of this article to discuss which strategy is most appropriate for designing ethics programmes in a university setting.

As professionals operating in a university environment, faculty typically have some discretion to independently determine what to do (McCabe, Butterfield, and

Trevino 2003). Therefore, universities are not the only party to monitor the actions of their professionals, and it becomes difficult for universities and immediate stakeholders to reveal the scope of unethical behaviour. In this respect, it is significant to note that acts of moral failure, taking place at universities, are in jeopardy of being protected under the umbrella of academic freedom. Hence, ethical issues inside universities are difficult to detect. In an academic setting, manifestation of moral failure may not be consistently apparent to others, and unethical behaviour may not be repeated often enough to be considered an issue. Moral failures may transpire at times and places when few people are nearby to witness them or such acts may be merely tolerated, ignored or dismissed as the characteristic behaviour of a particularly difficult faculty member (Bruhn et al. 2002, 477). A real-life student complaint: a colleague/educational-programme director requires all students wishing to write a Master's thesis in his/her discipline to write it only on issues that he/she is researching, and also forces the students to write it in a publishable form, enhancing thereby his/her own publication record (often even as the first author) yet limiting the variety of choice for the students in that Master's programme. Is this merely a difficult person for students to deal with? Or would students, colleagues or others in the institution/department need to use their voice in efforts to open up more chances for students with own thesis proposals, falling legitimately within the discipline but not necessarily fitting this director's own research priorities?

Moral values of the academic community

Universities play a critical role in shaping the moral behaviour of future generations (Kelley, Agle, and Demott 2005; Weber 2006). According to Bruhn et al. (2002), it would be reasonable to set high moral standards for academics, as these professionals are in a prime position to influence young minds. In spite of this critical role, there are several studies that show that many universities are confronted with 'activities' which can be defined as unethical (Birch and Elliot 1999; Dotterweich and Garrison 1998; Haggerty 2004; Howe and Moses 1999; Robie and Kidwell 2003; Sponholz 2000).

One part of the extant literature concerning the subject of university ethics focuses on issues not belonging to the key responsibilities of university employees, like copying for private purposes and the existence of 'moonlighting' or side jobs. These ethical issues are included in our overview, but are not its primary focus. The target of this study is ethical issues related to the two main duties of the academic staff at the university, specifically the core processes of education and research. For this reason, all other activities of the universities, mostly in the areas of support-staff positions, such as administration services and human resource management, are not addressed in this article.

In order to attain an overview of the ethical issues in education and research, it is essential to define the moral values that can be expected of academic staff. In general it can be said that the primary concern of academics must be to further develop the interests for which the profession has been created, namely the acquisition and extension of knowledge. This general statement is related to different moral values in codes of conduct for teaching and research by academic professionals. The prime sources used in this article included publications of vocational organisations like

the Center for Academic Integrity (1999), the code of ethics of the Association of American Educators, Statement on Professional Ethics of the American Association of University Academics and the Dutch Code of Conduct for Scholarly Activities of the VSNU (2004). In our study, we compared the content of these statements and moral codes. We included all values mentioned in at least two documents. Furthermore, it appeared that after analysing the first four codes, the other codes did not add any new value, indicating we had reached the point of theoretical saturation (Eisenhardt 1989). This resulted in the following eight moral values relevant for academic university staff:

- (1) *Objectivity*. Acting without bias: not led by personal interest, preference or sympathy. Academic professionals must manage facts or conditions which have to be perceived without distortion by personal feelings, prejudices, sympathy, preference or interpretations.
- (2) *Accuracy/thoroughness*. Freedom from mistakes or error and marked by full detail which is carried through to completion. Academic professionals act accurately when they show dedication and the necessary care when they practise their profession.
- (3) *Independence*. When presenting opinions as correct and relevant, academics must be independent, only allowing themselves to be influenced by the judgement of others in as far as that judgement has academic authority.
- (4) *Courage*. The willingness to take action against the wrongdoing of others, despite fear, loyalty, compassion or peer pressure.
- (5) *Credibility*. Only to take actions which support the image of ethical behaviour towards colleagues, students and other concerned parties. Credibility corresponds to the extent to which an academic professional is perceived by people in their environment to further develop the interests for which the profession has been created, namely the acquisition and extension of knowledge.
- (6) *Reliability*. The degree to which something or somebody can be trusted and is reliable. Academic professionals act reliably when they practise their profession in such a manner as to not betray the expectations of others. Reliability relates to the behaviour of academics and to their written work.
- (7) *Respect for others*. As characterised by academic professionals who show respect by taking student's ideas seriously, providing full and honest feedback about their work, valuing their aspirations and goals, and recognising them as individuals.
- (8) *Transparency*. The degree of visibility or accessibility of information. Actions are verifiable when others can check whether the actions meet certain relevant standards.

Various other lists have been compiled to sketch the ethical and/or unethical behaviours of academic staff (Birch and Elliot 1999; Dotterweich and Garrison 1998; Haggerty 2004; Howe and Moses 1999; Keith-Spiegel, Tabachnick, and Allen 1993; KNAW, VSNU and NOW 2001; Lewellyn 1996; Payne 2000; Robie and Kidwell 2003; Sponholz 2000; Tabachnick, Keith-Spiegel, and Pope 1991). These lists enumerate the ethical issues generally surfacing in universities. We compiled these

Table 1. Ethical issues in relation to university education.

Value	Ethical items
Objectivity	1. Giving lower grades or easy grades respectively to students who strongly oppose your view or to avoid negative evaluations from students
	2. Grading and teaching on criteria not delineated in the course syllabus
	3. Using a grading procedure that does not measure what students have learned
	4. Allowing how much a student is liked to influence what grade the student gets
	5. Refusing to write a letter of recommendation for a particular student because the teacher does not like that student
	6. Lowering course demands for student athletes, minority students or students who have too many work or family demands
	7. Inadequately supervising teaching assistants
	8. Choosing a particular textbook for a class primarily because the publisher would pay a 'bonus' to do it
	9. Not providing alternative teaching and testing procedures for students who have learning disabilities
Accuracy/ Thoroughness	10. Criticising all theoretical orientations except those you personally prefer in your undergraduate teaching and failure to present views that differ from your own
	11. Teaching content in a non-objective or incomplete manner
	12. Repeatedly using an outdated textbook for use in teaching an undergraduate courses
	13. Failing to keep up-to-date on recent research and scientific findings in one's field of academic/professional expertise
	14. Teaching material that teachers haven't really mastered or know very little about
	15. Failing to provide negative comments on a paper or exam when these comments reflect your honest assessment of the undergraduate student's performance
Independency	16. Giving easy courses or relaxing rules to ensure popularity with students
	17. Accepting a student's expensive gift or taking advantage of an undergraduate student's offer such as wholesale prices at parents' store
Courage	18. Ignoring evidence of cheating
	19. Ignoring a colleague's unethical behaviour
	20. Failure to challenge remarks by students or colleagues that are racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to particular groups of people
Credibility	21. Reluctance to help a student file an ethics complaint against another instructor when you believe that the complaint might be justified
	22. Making deliberate or repeated sexual comments, gestures or physical contacts towards a student that are unwanted by the student
	23. Dating a student
	24. Becoming sexually involved with an undergraduate student in one of your classes
	25. Telling a student 'I'm sexually attracted to you'
	26. Teaching a class in ethics while engaging in unethical behaviour in one's personal life

(continued)

Table 1. Continued.

Value	Ethical items
Reliability	27. Intentionally leaving out very important information or including false information that decreases a student's chances when writing a letter of recommendation
	28. Sharing with colleagues confidential disclosures told to you by a student
	29. Accepting undeserved authorship on a student's published paper
	30. Failing to acknowledge significant student participation in research or publication
	31. Assigning unpaid students to carry out work for academics that has little educational value for the students
	32. Using films to fill class time when teaching courses without regard for their educational value
	33. Failing to maintain regularly scheduled office hours
	34. Once tenured, only doing the minimum amount of work to get by
	35. Teaching under influence of alcohol or recreational drugs
	36. Using one's role to influence students to support causes in which you have an interest
	Respect for others
38. Ridiculing a student in a faculty-only discussion	
39. Teaching that homosexuality is a mental sickness or that certain races are intellectually inferior	
Transparency	40. Privately tutoring students in the department for a fee
	41. Using university supplies and equipment for personal use

lists into an overview, pointing out the distinct ethical issues; we next classified these issues with respect to the above mentioned moral values (Tables 1 and 2).

Key question and approach

We have designed this study to answer the following key question: which method or combination of methods is most appropriate for designing ethics programmes in an academic setting? This study serves as an explorative investigation into most appropriate ways to manage the dual loyalty of the professional staff in universities. Our study is primarily based on theories, concepts and ideas relevant to managing organisational integrity. Building upon the dominant work of Paine (1994), we distinguish between compliance-based vs. integrity-based ethics programmes, and describe the various conditions necessary in order to effectively apply these strategies in the setting of universities. Furthermore, we have evaluated to what extent these conditions are met in relation to both the measures which can be taken by universities (institutional ethics programmes) and the measures which can be taken by (the occupational group of) academic staff (professional ethics programmes).

Compliance and integrity-based ethics strategies

In various segments of behavioural studies, theorists use one basic distinction: coercive systems rely on punishment to achieve compliance to attain certain

Table 2. Ethical issues in relation to university research.

Value	Ethical items
Objectivity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpreting research results and research conclusions very inaccurately or intentionally erroneously 2. Universalising some sectional interests and treating these as if they were everyone's interests 3. Failing to credit associates and/or co-authors 4. Adding names of co-authors that did not contribute to a project 5. Presenting yourself as co-author without a contribution to the plan or execution of the report, or the interpretation and the description of the methods and findings
Accuracy/ Thoroughness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Working inaccurately by doing or permitting research or omit activities by which inaccuracies come to light 7. Treating results inconsistently in statistical terms 8. Tending towards assumptions and language that have gender biases 9. Ignoring contrary data 10. Ignoring or minimising social, historical and linguistic contexts of research
Independency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Minimising the investments of other stakeholders while privileging capital and managerial investments (conflict of interest: e.g. industry–university)
Courage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Denying knowledge of dishonest research practices by a colleague 13. Neglecting written codes of conduct with regard to data of test subjects
Reliability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Retrieving subsidies or assignments by misleading (simulating expertise, awareness of misrepresentation of earlier gained results, raising false expectations) 15. Violating promises and confidentiality 16. Using the same data for several papers 17. Submitting to more than one journal at a time
Respect for others Transparency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Performing research that causes serious or lasting harm to participants 19. Plagiarising other persons' results or publications, without including text references or explicit reference to the work of others 20. Copying test drafts of software without permission 21. Manipulating data 22. Showing selective results, especially omitting undesirable outcomes 23. Snubbing colleagues and subordinates in order to influence research results 24. Reproducing results and research reports from others intentionally erroneously 25. Playing into the hands of incorrect interpretations of research results by the media because of inaccurate behaviour 26. Presenting fictitious data as results of observations or experiments 27. Selective reporting of data 28. Counterfeiting data which are retrieved from literature research, observation or experiments 29. Masking the ambiguity and contradictions of organisational life 30. Allowing value-laden self-interest and politics to remain hidden 31. Subordinating social life in work settings to technological rationality

standards, and enabling systems rely on identification and commitment to shared values (Adler and Borys 1996; Nijhof, Fisscher, and Looise 2000). Similarly, ethics programmes can be characterised by their control orientation. In an influential article, Paine (1994) underlines the different behavioural influences of compliance-based and integrity-based ethics programmes. Compliance-based programmes embody a coercive orientation with measures designed to prevent, detect and punish violations of preset standards of behaviour, especially in the area of law and organisational norms. Ethics programmes, incorporating an enabling orientation, encourage the ethical aspirations of autonomous individuals based on their understanding of what is the right way to act in a specific situation (Trevino, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006). These programmes are labelled integrity-based or values-based ethics programmes. The compliance strategy and the integrity strategy have several features in common: codes of conduct, training, reporting and investigating potential misconduct, auditing and controlling: to ensure that laws and organisational standards are being met (Paine 1994, 111). One primary difference between the two strategies is in the basic assumptions about the behaviour of human beings (Adler and Borys 1996). The compliance strategy assumes obedience: that the professional will adhere to preset ethical standards when the consequences of non-compliant behaviour are painful enough, whereas the integrity strategy assumes adherence to collective values when human beings identify and understand the importance of upholding certain shared values in their work. As a result, the integrity strategy stimulates situation-specific considerations of what is the right way to act, while the compliance strategy stimulates uniform standards of behaviour, which is then applied in all situations.

According to Paine (1994), the integrity strategy of ethics is more effective because it is broader, deeper and more demanding than the compliance strategy. Moreover, an empirical study by Weaver and Trevino (1999) shows that the distinctive strategies result in different influences on ethical behaviour, with the integrity strategy causing a stronger and more wide-range impact. However, the quantity of empirical studies that discuss the effectiveness of these different strategies has been modest (Trevino, Weaver, and Reynolds 2006), partly because the different strategies need not be mutually exclusive, and it is therefore difficult to distinguish between their distinct outcomes. Furthermore, effectiveness is a social construct that has different meanings in different settings. For instance, in some cases like alcohol abuse during working hours and financial fraud, effective ethics programmes should result in a company-wide prevention of these behaviours. However, in other cases, like showing respect and saving energy, effective ethics programmes should result in an understanding of what these ethical aspirations suggest, and how to apply them in various settings. These dissimilar objectives of ethics programmes complicate studies intending to evaluate their effectiveness.

Accordingly, we have picked a different approach in this article. It is our claim that the compliance and integrity strategy needs to meet certain conditions in order to be able to generate a desirable effect. Current literature suggests that definite features provide a common thread to the efforts through which some level of success has been achieved (Paine 1994) or that other factors are influencing these strategies (Ethics Resource Center 2005; Weaver, Trevino, and Cochran 1999), but no analysis exists to date concerning the specific conditions that have to be

met in order to be effective. With these conditions, we refer to the situational characteristics in place that enable a compliance or integrity strategy to affect ethical behaviour.

Conditions for applying ethics strategies

The compliance strategy is based on preventing, detecting and sanctioning violations of preset ethical standards. Because this strategy is based on monitoring boundaries, it is crucial for it to incorporate generic norms differentiating between right and wrong behaviour (Adler and Borys 1996). As a consequence, the compliance strategy is especially relevant to 'black and white' issues, when it is clear what is the right way to act, like most cases of employee theft and sexual harassment. Generally, there are specific reasons why people engage in this type of behaviour. Sometimes these reasons point to deliberate violations in order to achieve personal gain. However, Ashforth and Anand (2003) point to unconscious reasons, based on social processes like rationalisation, socialisation and institutionalisation, which result in the normalisation of unethical behaviour. Even so, for both deliberate and normalised unethical behaviour, the compliance strategy offers guidance to establish and communicate clear norms about the right way to act. Next to guidelines, in coercive behavioural systems the enactment of these guidelines needs to be monitored and when violations occur, there should be an authority to enforce meaningful sanctions (Graafland, Ven van de, and Stoffele 2003; Paine 1994; Weaver and Trevino 1999). Hence, to the extent that it is impossible to monitor behaviour – note that autonomous professionals are difficult both to monitor and to sanction – the compliance strategy towards ethics programmes turns out to be limited. Hence, in sum, theory proposes that ethics programmes, based on the compliance strategy, can be exclusively influential when it is possible to:

- (1) establish and communicate concrete and unambiguous ethical norms;
- (2) monitor the behaviour of the members of an organisation and
- (3) sanction members that do not comply with the prescribed ethical norms.

In addition to the compliance strategy, organisations may promote ethical behaviour based on an integrity strategy. This strategy relies on the sense of responsibility and integrity of the individuals themselves, and does not rely on compliance to given rules (Weaver and Trevino 1999). Therefore, a general condition for this strategy is that employees and especially managers are prepared to fulfil tasks in a reliable, accurate and responsible way, taking all relevant interests into account (Graafland, Ven van de, and Stoffele 2003, 47). More specifically, Paine (1994, 112) characterises several hallmarks of an effective integrity strategy. Next to the effectiveness factors, which are germane for every change programme, like the commitment of company leaders and clear communication of objectives, she also stresses the importance of integration of the espoused values into the normal decision-making process, and the significance of the extent to which the organisation's systems and structures support and reinforce its core values. In other words, these hallmarks refer to the condition of the presence of guiding values, which make sense to the members of the target group of an ethics programme. Insofar as the guiding values of an integrity strategy do not make sense – for example, by reason of

incompatible mental frameworks based on cultural differences or non-facilitative organisational structures and conditions – employees will not identify with the guiding values; and therefore, the integrity strategy cannot be effective (Clegg, Kornberger, and Rhodes 2007; Nijhof, Fisscher, and Looise 2000). Furthermore, the integrity strategy is not so much centred on providing absolute answers, but on asking the right question: what is the right way to act? The integrity strategy furnishes employees with key organisational values as well as the ability and occasions to discuss these ideas, based on a concrete organisational event (Weaver and Trevino 1999). Accordingly, the integrity strategy is not meant for ‘black and white’ situations, but for the grey area where different values are at stake, and employees must judge what is the best way to act. This requires much on the part of participants: to balance and apply different values in concrete settings (Brien 1998). Therefore, the level of skills of the employees involved also puts forward an important precondition for the integrity strategy. A third condition relates to the requirement of mechanisms for justification and transparency. Decision makers can only make balanced decisions when they are well informed about the actual situation. This requires transparency about the actual situation; transparency puts forward an agenda to allow for further debate and justification, for example, through the processes of peer reviews or consultations. This is an important aspect of the integrity strategy because only ongoing provocation and peer-to-peer dialogue can correct professionals from moral blindness (Karssing 2006) in situations in which conflicting values or viewpoints go unnoticed. A responsible professional should be aware of the scope of possible values and be able to defend his/her choice to other professionals as well as outsiders. This is why mechanisms for transparency and justification are such important elements in ethics programmes based on an integrity strategy (Trevino and Nelson 2007; Wartick and Wood 1999). Put differently, modern theory proposes that ethics programmes which are based on an integrity strategy can only be exclusively influential when it is possible to:

- (1) set and communicate guiding values that make sense to the members of an organisation;
- (2) make sure that decision makers at all levels of the organisation have the skills needed to make ethically sound decisions on a day-to-day basis and
- (3) create mechanisms for transparency and justification.

Figure 1 summarises the reviewed conditions for both integrity and compliance strategies.

Applying ethics strategies in universities

In this paragraph we will apply the model of the conditions for the compliance and integrity strategies to the academic setting of universities. In order to analyse to what extent the different ethics strategies can be effective, we will reflect upon the possibilities for meeting the conditions by either the university (institutional ethics programmes) or the occupational group (professional ethics programmes). The main reasoning behind this analysis is that all conditions must be met in order for the strategy to be effective. Put differently, if one of the conditions cannot be met, theory

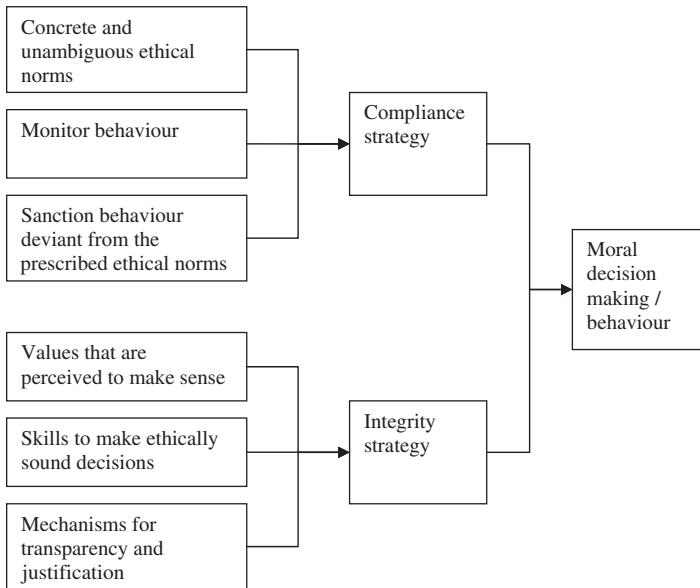


Figure 1. Conditions for the compliance and integrity strategy.

proposes that its associated ethics strategy cannot be very influential on the moral behaviour of the people involved.

Compliance strategy for institutional ethics programmes

First, we will analyse the appropriateness of implementing institutional ethics using the compliance strategy within an academic setting (see approach I in Table 3). Guidelines and procedures can be enforced by universities, for example, by using codes of conduct, guidelines and procedures where the institution has the formal power to enforce them. However, professionals often have a planned programme consisting of what they would call professional activities. For the professional, the process of defining, implementing and learning a standard code of ethics is likely to be perceived as yet another consequence of the constant bureaucracy faced in universities (Clark 2003) with the risk that it will be seen as a fruitless effort. Furthermore, when a professional meets the specific conditions, it may have the effect of ‘de-professionalising’ the profession since one of the primary functions of a profession is its ability to regulate itself due to the sector-specific dilemmas of its constituents. Organisational regulations may substitute for professional values, i.e. specific values inherent to a profession – and place it in the hands of the institution (Brien 1998, 393). It is doubtful whether this substitution is a good development because it assumes that the institution is better qualified than the individual professional to determine the right way to act. In many situations, professionals have to deal with complex issues, balancing the interests and values of many parties involved. This is not something that can be captured in concrete institutional guidelines; the tacit knowledge and experience of professionals are needed to make a balanced judgement and manage dilemmas. Furthermore,

Table 3. Advantages and disadvantages of four approaches to promoting ethics in universities.

	Institutional ethics	Professional ethics
Compliance strategy	<p>I</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Institution has formal power to enforce behavioural rules – Academic professionals are monitored by students <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Perceived as another consequence of the ongoing bureaucracy in universities – Using regulation can ‘de-professionalise’ the profession – Academics often deal with complex situations that cannot be captured in concrete guidelines – Supervision is difficult – Compliance strategy can overemphasize the threat of detection and sanctioning 	<p>III</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proven to be effective in other professions <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Monitoring professionals by peers and third parties – No authority to sanction non-compliant behaviour of colleagues
Integrity strategy	<p>II</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enables institutions to differentiate them from others – Attracts employees who identify themselves with the endorsed values – Trainings can be made obligatory <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transparency is possible, but requires courage – Neglecting the problem of dual loyalty – Application of training by professionals is not guaranteed 	<p>IV</p> <p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fits with self-governance – More or less coherent set of guiding values – Training can be facilitated in a life-long learning process – Some mechanisms for transparency and justification are applied <p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training is not customary at conferences or other meetings of professionals – Information and communication systems are yet to be used for stimulating moral debate between professionals

supervision of the behaviour of academic professionals by the institution is difficult considering that professionals tend to work quite autonomously and are highly specialised in a certain area of knowledge, which is not the case with every member of the organisation; non-compliant behaviour will often not be detected. On account of their highly specialised knowledge, academic professionals are powerful and seemingly difficult to monitor. However, this is not the case for teaching professionals within the university because they are monitored by the students. Students typically communicate to the relevant committee, when the signals of non-compliant behaviour by teachers become apparent. This committee tends to have the authority to enforce meaningful sanctions like requiring corrective actions vis-a-vis the teachers involved. Hence, for a part of the ethical issues at universities – especially in relation to the rights of students – the conditions for a compliance strategy implemented by the institution are met. However, for many other issues that academic professionals face a formal ethics programme does not suffice.

Integrity strategy for institutional ethics programmes

The question arises whether it is possible to organise, as a university, institutional ethics using the integrity strategy (approach II). The condition of defining and communicating meaningful core values to academic professionals can be accomplished if these core values are dictated formally by the institution, but there is a fair chance that professionals will react negatively, especially if these values are set without any involvement of the academic professionals themselves (Paine 1994). Of course, this can be prevented by organising a university-wide discussion about the core values and desired identity of the organisation. The crucial question is if the university, as an institution, plays a role in setting these values or, alternatively, should the debate about core values be left to its autonomous and highly diverse professional community? In our opinion, universities should at least respect the values set by the professional community, however, they can also contribute additional values or emphasise certain values: in order to differentiate one university from others, thereby attracting employees who identify themselves with the espoused values of the university. One of the risks of such an approach is that it tends to neglect the problem of the dual loyalty of professionals within an academic setting. The universities then may approach its professionals primarily as organisational members and not as professionals. In those instances, a professional's academic freedom could become an issue. In order to improve the skills necessary to make balanced decisions, universities can offer training for professionals. In such training, academics may learn how to apply the core values of the institution and/or professional community in various situations. One potential problem that arises in this approach is that when the professionals have been through the training, this does not necessarily mean that they will apply the imposed values, especially considering the autonomous character of professionals, their own responsibilities, and their claim to academic freedom. Consequently, there is no guarantee that the core values will be reflected in the university's critical activities. Therefore, the third condition of an integrity strategy becomes relevant: the need to create mechanisms for transparency and justification. Universities can contribute significantly to creating such transparency, for example, by making use of a second non-active teacher in a classroom or by

being open about the evaluations of students and reviews of articles. It is ultimately a matter of courage and/or ethical ambition whether universities are prepared to engage in such high levels of transparency.

Compliance strategy for professional ethics programmes

Is it possible to promote high ethics of academic professionals using the compliance strategy (see approach III in Table 3). Through this strategy professional ethics programmes are implementable, albeit only in homogeneous professions with a strong tradition and shared common interest in a collective responsibility (Gardner 2007). For example, lawyers and surgeons have shown that a strict compliance strategy, enforced by an associative organisation, strongly affects the behaviour of its members. In an academic university setting, this combination is difficult to realise, partly – as we have seen before – because it is difficult to prescribe concrete guidelines for the complex, diverse and content-filled work of university academics. In addition, according to Brien (1998, 393), professions often display a noticeable reluctance to report ethical violations on the part of their members and to discipline them. When this occurs, the reputation and accountability of the profession is diminished. Within an academic setting, it is not customary to report the non-compliant behaviour of colleagues. In addition, even when non-compliant behaviour is detected, the academic community lacks the authority to impose sanctions. Therefore, the compliance strategy seems unsuitable for professional ethics programmes within universities.

Integrity strategy for professional ethics programmes

Is it possible to organise professional ethics using the integrity strategy? (see approach IV within Table 3). By way of this strategy, professionals are more likely to be motivated to behave in accordance with their shared values (Paine 1994). Professionals in a university tend to function best when they are motivated to perform education and research to the best of their abilities, which is a seemingly self-developed moral capacity. The coherence of moral values stated in the different codes of conduct (see the second paragraph on moral values of the academic community) clearly indicates that the first condition – referring to defining and communicating core values and explicating what it means to be a ‘good professional’ – can be achieved for professionals working at universities. The second condition, which discusses the skills needed to make ethically sound decisions, is more problematic. Professional ethics assume active human beings, who are building moral competence in a lifelong process (von Weltzien Hoivik 2002). This opinion corresponds with efforts to train new researchers and teachers to manage dilemmas, and for them to continue this training with regular meetings. This condition can succeed given that academics meet with each other regularly, for example, at international conferences. Presently, however, training sessions are frequently limited and conferences rarely pay explicit attention to the dilemmas of academic professionals. Hence there are ample additional opportunities for employing the integrity strategy among university professionals. The third condition that needs to be considered is whether mechanisms for transparency and justification can be

achieved. Partly, these mechanisms are already established in practice. For example, the double-blind peer review applied in most international journals is a good example of how, in a joint effort, professionals uphold core values like objectivity and reliability of research outcomes. Also, the quality assurance system (as part of the Bologna declaration on higher education) offers an excellent example of how ethics-managing mechanisms are applied in education. This assurance is evaluated for all bachelors and master's programmes in an accreditation process by independent academics, who are working in the same field.

Mechanisms for transparency and justification can also be enforced through cooperation with similar yet distant others professionals (e.g. in adjacent departments, those who service the same educational programme). For example, university academics may be asked to work together in setting grades for completed master theses: ensuring the application of similar reasoning in their legitimation and assessment. Also, overviews of the results of the double-blind review procedures can stimulate a continuing dialogue and thus increase the accuracy and reliability of research activities. At present, this kind of information is often maintained within the safe sphere of a handful of involved colleagues. Hence for the third condition of transparency and justification, it is possible to meet this requirement as an occupational or departmental group, but certain opportunities are not yet widely established in daily academic practice. For example, a university department chair who is not open or transparent about the teaching income that members of his group amass (through the internal, university financial-administrative appropriation system): holding the financial cards of the department – and all the rest that follows from it, like teaching loads – close to his chest. In such a small professional community, it may require a lot of personal courage to challenge that power, and the relevant question is to what extent the institution is the appropriate agent to amend the situation to (evolving) human proportions.

The discussed advantages and disadvantages of the four approaches to highly ethical behaviour among university professionals are summed up in Table 3. The fourth approach *seems* to be the best approach for academic university professionals. However, some of the advantages of the other approaches are not part of this fourth approach. Through the second approach universities may differentiate themselves from other universities. For instance, the decision to use a second teacher in all classroom situations is extremely unlikely (approach IV), but it could be imposed university-wide (approach II). In this way, a non-hierarchical, peer-to-peer judgement can be realised with the support of the institution. Approach IV requires discussions among professionals; given that the participation in this moral debate is non-obligatory, it remains uncertain if all professionals will join. Institutional ethics permits these discussions to be made obligatory, which will get all professionals involved and probably better committed. Ultimately, the right of students to report unethical behaviour is not covered in approach IV. Therefore, the first approach is of use as well, given that students can monitor and report cases of abuse when a student's rights are violated.

All in all, none of the single approaches is sufficient on its own. The ideal way of organising ethics in an academic university setting is, as a consequence, by using the integrity strategy by the academic community (approach IV), enriched by the strengths of the integrity strategy by the university (approach II), and inviting the

judgemental power of students, which is embedded in the compliance strategy by the university (approach I). This leaves the third approach unsuitable for university settings.

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

Academic professionals in university bureaucracies regard themselves as both members of a profession and members of an organisation. This duality can lead to friction between institutional and professional ethics and serves therefore as a potential source of stress and conflict. This dual loyalty of professionals is, at the same time, a chance for stimulating responsible work behaviours, which are based on different loyalties. Based on the conditions for both a compliance and the integrity strategy, this article has discussed what measures can be taken by either the institution or the occupational group to optimise or promote more ethical behaviour within universities. By applying these conditions to the setting of universities, we have indicated that the best way of organising ethics is by building upon the integrity strategy of the academic community. However, there is no ethics programme that can prevent all unfortunate incidents. Therefore the integrity strategy, based on professionally developed ethics, better incorporates the advantages of the integrity strategy based on institutional ethics, and adds the judgemental power of students. In this way the ethics programmes, based on an integrity strategy on the part of the academic community, acquires some kind of a backup system. When rumours occur, procedures for reporting misconduct and initiating audits might help, but the most important aspect of such a backup system is an organisational culture where people are committed to act according to sound and shared ethical values, and where they are motivated to engage in dialogue – whether they were asked to or not – about difficult issues as well as the content and limitations of their responsibilities (Karssing 2006).

This conceptual analysis puts forward an important research agenda to test the theoretical assumption about the necessity to have all conditions in place in order for an ethics strategy to be effective. In most cases this will require a complex research design because of the many influences on moral decision-making and moral behaviour. However, longitudinal empirical research especially seems promising because it can highlight the effect of changing only one condition. At the same time, this research can contribute to the body of knowledge about what kind of measures should be taken to ensure that high-level ethics conditions are being met in the future.

Empirical research will be important to measure to what extent the conditions for the integrity and compliance strategy are met, and to what extent this has an influence on the moral decision-making of the people involved. For example, training sessions for all employees can improve the skills of employees to make balanced decisions. Or, when the guiding values make no sense to employees, this might be on account of the current systems and routines that stress other – and possibly opposing – values (Larssæther and Nijhof 2005). Changing these systems and routines, like those related to human resources, might result in better understanding or approval of the guiding values of an ethics programme. Changing the content of these ethics programmes might be another adequate measure.

Finally, the reasons for non-compliant behaviour in an academic setting are not discussed in this study; and it is recommended to further examine the causes of non-compliant behaviour in universities. Such studies can best be carried out from inside universities, for example, by conducting confidential surveys, interviews or group sessions with employees. See, for instance, Stormer and Devine's (2008, 129) contribution on 'Facades of Conformity (FOC) in Academia'

Putting aside the costs of lack of transparency to the psychological health of the individual and the organisation, how does the use of FOC affect society when professionals entrusted with upholding the public good are faced with situations that are blatantly problematic, either ethically or legally?

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