

Community-based training of psychologists: the case of the Faculty of Education and Psychology of the Catholic University of Portugal

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Summary

Training psychology (at undergraduate and postgraduate levels), researching and serving the community are some of the aims of the Faculty of Education and Psychology of the Portuguese Catholic University (FEP-UCP). Underlying these, is a conception of the human being as an individual in permanent development, embedded in communities and in social groups that mold him but that he also has influence over, acting therefore as a producer of his own existence. Under FEP-UCP principles it is considered that this conception of the human being must be conveyed since the beginning of psychology students' training. In this sense they are invited to participate, along with their graduation studies, in a Community Service Program (SC-UCP), allowing them to cooperate in local institutions (e.g., schools, hospitals, communitarian associations, prisons) and to attend a training and supervision program (Veríssimo, Carvalho, Negrão, Gonçalves & Trigo, 2007). It is also considered that training future psychologists requires an effort to research and produce knowledge on Psychology main scientific areas: clinical and health, justice, education and organizational. Furthermore, particular attention is given to the most significant psychosocial problems in Portuguese context, underlying the need to contribute to a deeper study and knowledge of both conceptual and interventional approaches. In this sense, among other FEP-UCP initiatives, in 2007 was created the University Psychology Clinic (CUP-UCP), a context not only for training and researching, but also where teachers and students provide service to the surrounding community. The investment in voluntary social work and in service to the community, particularly through the SC-UCP and the CUP-UCP constitute strong evidence of the community-based principles underlying FEP-UCP main activities, while representing the ethical concerns in the training of future psychologists.

Community Service Program

Students are invited to, along with their graduation studies, cooperate in local institutions, such as:

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Communitarian associations
- Prisons

Students also attend a training and supervision program.

(Veríssimo, Carvalho, Negrão, Gonçalves & Trigo, 2007)



Research Seminar

Training future psychologists requires an effort to research and produce knowledge on Psychology main scientific areas:

- Clinical and health
- Justice
- Education
- Organizational

In the last year of graduate studies in Psychology, students are invited to participate, as junior research assistants, in teachers' research projects.

University Psychology Clinic

In 2007 was created the University Psychology Clinic, a context:

- for training and researching
- where teachers and students provide service to the surrounding community

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