

Essay on the topic
“How can students enhance their influence on increasing the effective contribution of their universities to society?”

How can I, a student, enhance my influence on increasing the effective contribution of my university to social processes? It is an interesting, ambiguous, responsible and difficult at the same time task for me.

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Ukraine's entry into the European space implies the need for domestic universities to master a new interaction with the external environment. Therefore, the global experience in the management of higher education institutions confirms the crucial importance of developing, modelling and implementing a university development strategy in order to overcome the problems of adaptation to the changing external environment, ensuring its competitiveness, successful functioning and further development. Our higher education institution is no exception, where the Development Strategy of Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical for 2021-2025 has been implemented. After all, without establishing goals, principles, tasks and mechanisms of the development of higher education institutions, it is impossible to implement (carry out) purposeful and systematic activities of the university.

As it was repeatedly stated, Ukrainian education, being under the influence of the Soviet heritage, needs systematic and consistent modernization with the aim of all-round development of a person within the limits of modern society. One of the most urgent tasks in modern Ukrainian society is the search for ways, models and mechanisms to restore a unified Ukrainian society divided by the war.

Therefore, higher education in modern European society has an extremely important mission – to form a responsible and self-sufficient individual who possesses critical thinking, takes an active part in the country's social processes, and also has protective immunity against numerous social crises. After all, the personal level of intelligence today is measured not so much by the amount of acquired knowledge, but by the level of constructiveness of behavioral strategies manifested in conflict situations of various nature.

In my opinion, university should become a carrier of high spirituality, a preacher of humanistic values, rehabilitating people's consciousness after a terrible, unjustified, unprovoked war and suffering of people, especially children. Scientific-

pedagogical and student teams of universities have proven that their greatest value is not walls or equipment, but powerful intellectual capital, people's trust in each other, as well as active participation in the life of the country.

University should train not just social personalities who will have certain practical skills and abilities, but, first of all, spiritually developed personalities who will be fully aware that human life is the highest value regardless of skin color, gender or ideological considerations.

In addition, education helps students acquire professional skills and knowledge in social and psychological spheres that will allow them to make grounded decisions in various life situations, work in the field of social and labor relations, participate in local and global labor markets, use technical tools for satisfaction of basic needs, as well as improve quality of their life and lives of other people. As noted in Education. URL: <https://www.coe.int/uk/web/compass/education>, education should contribute to the development of individuals who can act with greater independence, sound judgment, critical thinking and personal responsibility. The goal of education should be to develop all aspects of human potential: these include memory, thinking, aesthetic taste, spiritual values, physical capabilities and communication skills; a healthy lifestyle, including sports and proper rest, respect for one's own culture; possession of ethical and moral standards; the ability to speak and defend oneself, vitality.

Therefore, in order to carry out high-quality communication within the society in conditions of conflict, citizens need to have a high level of intellectual culture. A person operating with thorough knowledge multiplied by a personal thirst for justice must understand that the use of aggression in any form is a sign of barbarism. If this or that member of society is not able to calm his own emotions, he is a priori doomed to defeat in the confrontation with his ego.

Students are a force that can bring positive changes to a higher education institution and increase its effectiveness. As students, we have a unique opportunity to influence our university, change it for the better, and create an educational environment that meets our needs and expectations. However, achieving these goals requires a thoughtful (wise) approach, joint work and self-confidence.

First of all, students can start by understanding the importance of their role in university life. We are not just consumers of education, but active participants of the educational process. It is important to believe in your ability to change things for the better and give voice to your ideas.

Student organizations are an important tool for creating a platform for discussing issues and initiatives. Establishment of a student council or association will

help students to unite, express their opinions and suggestions, as well as communicate with the university administration. Organized meetings, forums and other events will allow students to actively influence decision-making and contribute to the implementation of changes.

Collaboration with faculty and administration is another aspect to enhance influence on university effectiveness. It is important to strive for open communication and collaboration. Joint projects, participation in working groups, clubs, cooperation in solving problems and conflict situations are ways by which students can influence the development of the university. It is important to establish a dialogue and jointly seek solutions that will satisfy the interests of all parties.

It is also necessary to widely use international cooperation, which has been and remains one of the priorities of the development of our university, is an integral part of the life of the university and is developing within the framework of the unified process of integration of higher education of Ukraine into the world system of higher education. The main achievements of the faculty and student staff of the Faculty of International Cooperation in recent years are the revival of cooperation with international educational institutions, the organization of internships, professional development, participation in various international projects, the use of international experience in scientific, educational, methodological and cultural-educational work.

In addition, we can use modern technology to enhance our influence. Creating student platforms and groups on social networks will allow us to share ideas, mobilize more people and organize actions and events. We can run online petitions, highlight issues through blogs, vlogs and media. Information is power, and we can use it to bring attention to important issues.

It is also important to develop leadership skills among students. Organizing trainings, seminars and mentoring programs can help students develop effective leadership, communication, project management and collaboration skills.

An important aspect, in my opinion, is that students can actively cooperate with local authorities, public organizations and the business environment, defending the interests of the student community. This may include joint work on projects of social importance, lobbying for student rights, and improving learning and living conditions.

All of these ways show that students have a strong potential to influence the performance of their universities. Through the creation of student organizations, the use of student representatives, research and presentation of ideas, involvement of other students, cooperation with teachers and administration, students can become real

“changemakers”. It takes effort, confidence and ability to collaborate, but the end result is an improved university environment for all students.

However, our community work, among other activities, is extremely important in shaping us as professionals, especially the acquisition of social skills for working with children. We need to raise children who will develop the country's economy, while realizing their talents and potential. Now every change in the school curriculum must pass through the filter of relevance in the 21st century. The activities of the Academy of gifted children “Wunderkind”, which operates at our faculty, are a promising direction for the involvement of students and teachers in public work. Faculty members are actively involved in educational activities with displaced children who attend the Academy. Thousands of families with children were forced to leave their homes, a large part of such families found refuge within the walls of our university. It is valuable that students, together with faculty mentors, are actively involved in various creative projects that contribute to the development of children's abilities and talents. Future teachers provide psychological and pedagogical support for preparing children for school by conducting individual and group classes, selecting the content, forms and methods of learning according to the potential capabilities of each child. We are glad that we have the opportunity to join the world of childhood, help the child believe in himself, reveal his creative potential and hidden talents. These children experienced psycho-traumatic events, the horrors of war, had a difficult emotional and psychological state, the consequences of which will be reflected in their mental health, behavior, and ability to build constructive social relationships for a long time. Many babies need special care and professionals' help. That is why they are given help, a friendly, comfortable atmosphere is created, teachers conduct trainings, exercises for mental relaxation, yoga classes, and of course great attention is paid to those activities that are close and interesting to children: children sculpt, draw, construct and, of course, play.

Volunteer educators, teaching staff, and faculty students offer their services for working with children. Teachers work with preschoolers, using author's methods, innovative technologies, methods of diagnosis and development of creative potential of gifted children.

In addition, student volunteers of the faculty take an active part in the volunteer activities of our city, where they had the opportunity to help displaced children in the children's center “Together” from UNICEF and shared their knowledge gained within the university walls.

Therefore, I see the main way to enhance the efficiency of the university in terms of contribution to social processes in conscientious, responsible attitude of students to study, in purposeful, persistent acquisition of abilities for the chosen specialty, in interaction with various public and social structures and organizations, readiness for integration with European values.

Changes at the university do not happen overnight, but our active participation and continued emphasis on the needs of the student community will help move it forward. It must be remembered that our influence is not limited to our years of study. We are building a foundation for future students.

In conclusion, I am sure that students are an important part of any university. Our youth, energy and innovation matter and can help create a student experience that is memorable and rewarding for all. Our association, possession of knowledge and arguments, patience and perseverance, cooperation and communication with the administration and teachers – these are the key components that will help us change our university for the better.

Only forward – to victory, progress, peace, prosperity of Ukraine, to the happiness of future generations, family comfort and well-being in every family, bright future and happiness of children!

I hereby certify that the above mentioned essay is entirely my own work, and I acknowledge any references to other work that I have made. Signed electronically

