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**FEATURE**

**Teaching with Integrity: A Focus on Higher Education**

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*Abstract: Teaching in higher education includes lived experiences related to ethics and values. Though not widely written about, the theme of ethical practices is increasingly considered as critical in academia. Teachers, who are key gatekeepers of knowledge, are reminded about the inherent responsibility of carrying out their profession with integrity. In this paper, the distinct nature of teaching as an ethical profession is considered and some practical suggestions for enhancing ethical practices among teachers in institutions of higher education are outlined.*

Institutions of higher education share the responsibility, along with agencies such as family, schools, and church to promote individual and societal integrity and values. Particularly, this responsibility falls heavily on teachers, who are to model high ethical standards and behaviors. While there exists an abundance of literature on the didactics of teaching, not much has been written about the ethical responsibilities and practices within the teaching profession in general, and even less in relation to higher education (Anangisye, 2010; Macfarlane, 2004). In the light Campbell's (2003, p. 10) statement that teaching is "inherently a moral and ethical activity," it is imperative that the value bases of the teaching profession in higher education be made more explicit.

As media projects rampant corruption and unethical practices in social and professional organizations, the public is looking up to institutions of higher education to intensify the promotion of integrity and wholesome values among the educated citizens. The challenge is to identify explicit ways of promoting ethical values and integrity within academia.

Interestingly, experts are not sure whether ethics can be taught, as Weegar (2007) points out. At the same time, the approaches to the formation of personal ethical values are important to academia (Nevins, Bearden, & Money, 2007). Somehow, something seems not right with the way academia deals with the issues of integrity and ethics. For example, after the collapse of several well-

known companies such as Enron and Tyco in recent years, public attention has been given to institutions of higher education—places where the executives of these companies were educated (Weegar, 2007). Such is the case with malpractices reported in other professional areas as well. This increasing criticism of academia seems like a fair reaction as institutions of higher education have the moral responsibility to develop personal ethical values of its scholars. Those who are concerned need to take the necessary steps to fill the gaps.

This paper aims to reiterate the unique role of teaching as a moral profession and suggests three initiatives for improving the ethical practices that will promote integrity and professionalism in higher education. It is important that professionals in academia express their values and integrity both individually and collectively, as well as implicitly and explicitly. How does that take place? The place to begin searching for answers is the profession of teaching itself.

### **The Nature of Teaching**

Teaching is considered a profession that is endowed with a great deal of trust and high moral standards of behavior. In fact, there is an expectation of higher standards of ethical behavior among teachers. Such a calling of “higher” moral standards, as agreed by Campbell (2003), may point to a high level of moral standards in comparison with other professions as well as different standards. The very nature of their profession, where teachers are expected to “walk the talk,” necessitates that they conduct themselves morally in their professional sphere, and also in their personal sphere of influence. It is not an exaggeration to point out that as professionals, teachers are “engaged in one of the most ethically demanding jobs” (Clark, 2004, p. 80). While the implication of this statement may be more for teachers in schools, teachers in higher education are no exception to this trust.

A careful study of the literature would reveal that discussions on professional ethics of teaching have not been so profuse as compared to those in other professions, such as law and medicine. While there is much more to be known about ethics of teaching in general, even less is written about ethical practices related to teaching in higher education. One of the reasons for this dearth of information could be that only in recent years teaching in higher education is being professionalized with the inclusion of training and the establishment of professional standards (Ross, n.d.).

### **A Moral Profession**

The literature on teaching is, indeed, profuse with “professionalization literature” (Fenstermacher, 1990, p. 131). In their enthusiasm for promoting

teaching as a profession, experts have produced abundant information on the knowledge base of teaching. But something can be seen to be missing in these discussions—the moral base of teaching. Campbell (2003) calls it “ethical knowledge” (p. 2). Just like professions such as medicine and law, teaching is a skilled practice. However, when it is disconnected from its basic moral purpose, teaching loses its essential identity. Teaching is indeed a moral profession. Fenstermacher (1990) questions how we could ever think of it as being devoid of moral underpinnings. He describes such a state of teaching as follows: “Just as a physician who has no idea of why or to what end he or she practices medicine or a lawyer who lacks any sense of the rule of law in the just society, a teacher without moral purpose is aimless, as open to incivility and harm as to good” (p. 133). That is a sobering thought.

Even as teaching is considered a moral profession, we need to consider what makes it moral. Other professions would also claim the same status. What is distinct about teaching compared to these other moral professions such as medicine, and law, for example?

### **The Distinctiveness of Teaching**

It is interesting to compare the profession of teaching with selected professions such as medicine and law. Three distinct features can be identified in some of these non-teaching professions (Fenstermacher, 1990). These features are (1) mystification of knowledge, (2) social distance, and (3) reciprocity of effort. Each of these attributes is described and compared with these selected professions in the following paragraphs (Fenstermacher, 1990, pp. 136-137).

Taking the first attribute to compare—the mystification of knowledge—it is evident that physicians generally tend to “lock up” their knowledge. In fact, until more recently it was even not possible to obtain a diagnostic instruction from a physician. This attitude is still prevalent in many Third World countries. In these contexts, the main role of a physician is seen as making the patient well, not giving their knowledge to the patient. In comparison, teaching requires that the teacher share his/her knowledge with the learners—both knowledge per se as well as the knowledge of how to learn the subject. The hope is that eventually the learners know how to learn for themselves.

Keeping social distance, the second attribute, is definitely a preferred practice among both physicians and lawyers. For reasons of good professional practice, they are not to get too close to the broader lives of their clients. Teachers, on the other hand, cannot teach well and at the same time ignore the other dimensions of their students’ lives. Understanding the learners is an important pedagogical aspect of a teacher’s profession. If teachers followed the

same practice of social distance as lawyers and physicians, they would only jeopardize the effectiveness of their profession.

The third attribute has to do with reciprocity of effort. A physician and a lawyer take upon themselves the sole responsibility of their service. There is little one can do but trust in their judgment and skill. However, this is not so with teaching. Students need to put effort in order to learn. The teacher does certain things, but the students reciprocate by accomplishing the tasks assigned to them.

After considering these unique aspects of teaching, we are easily convinced that the models of medicine and law will not work for the model of teaching. A teacher's moral professionalism will not allow him/her to keep a distance from the student, or hide the needed knowledge, or place the student as a passive recipient of one's instruction. The moral nature of teaching should supersede the so-called concern with expertise in teaching.

### **Value Judgments**

Moral or value judgments derive from a caring heart; they are demonstrated through caring about others, showing empathy, and respecting others' rights in a given situation. In carrying out their special duties, teachers need to care about the well-being of others. For example, everyone is concerned about the education of the next generation. However, teachers are primarily given this trust by society to take care of this responsibility though others may still have a tangential concern for the same. Developing an eye for subtlety and detail allows for the formation of a set of clear moral values (Wagner, 1996).

Teachers make moral judgments continuously. Issues related to pedagogy such as fairness in treating students with diverse needs, and assessment are important considerations in making decisions. In fact, "moral judgments are becoming the cornerstone of high quality teaching and effective disposition" (Johnson, 2008, p. 429). This is just as true in higher education as in any other levels of teaching. There is a need to go beyond expertise in the subject matter and even pedagogical matters, and focus on what matters in life—values and integrity.

### **The Changing Roles of Teachers in Higher Education**

Teaching in higher education is becoming an increasingly complex occupation with the explosion of knowledge of this information age. As some of the main gatekeepers of knowledge, teachers have the responsibility not only to keep abreast with new information, but also to integrate it meaningfully in the learning environment of the students. Another factor that adds to the complexity of teaching in higher education is the interactive nature of the work of faculty.

While traditionally, faculty have been primarily focused on teaching, and less on research, an increasing blend of both these activities has been encouraged in recent decades (Whitchurch & Gordon, 2009). In addition to this trend are additional roles such as facilitating e-learning, community outreach, and leadership responsibilities that faculty are expected to carry out. Even as they may find themselves under increased workloads, faculty also face a great deal more “people” challenges than they did before (Whitchurch & Gordon, 2009).

This changing scenario necessitates the need for a clearer understanding of professional behaviors and practices in the human relationship aspect of higher education. While it is true that a great number of teachers do carry out their responsibilities with sincerity and integrity, there are cases of malpractices from time to time that relates to unethical practices such as seeking inappropriate favors and “life-less” teaching just to fulfill an obligation.

Teaching in higher education comes with a great deal of academic freedom for teachers—curriculum design, expression, research, teaching methods (Macfarlane, 2004, p. 3). Such privileges come with important responsibilities which include the practice of integrity and ethics in ones profession. Much has been written about academic freedom in higher education, however, relatively less is written about practicing the principles of values, as MacFarlane (2004) has noted. According to MacFarlane (2004), there are “ethical responsibilities that go to the heart of what it means to be teaching in a modern university” (p. 4). We cannot afford to ignore this aspect of teaching.

Two aspects of teaching are important to explore in order to further understand the changing roles of teachers in higher education—the profession of teaching and professionalism in teaching. The discussion below clarifies these two aspects of teaching in higher education.

### **The Profession of Teaching**

Historically, teaching has struggled to have society accept the teaching field as a profession. While other occupations such as medicine, engineering, law, and accounting are openly considered professions and are well paid, teaching has not been generally given a prestigious status (Danielson, 2007, p. 18). Whatever may be the myriad reasons for this view, lack of creativity where a teacher follows the “script” created by an expert, is part of it.

It is even more ironic that teaching in higher education has not been given the status of a distinct profession in its own right (Macfarlane, 2004). In relation to this issue, Hauerwas (as cited in Fenstermacher, 1990) makes an interesting comment:

It is interesting that many professors in universities no longer think of themselves as intellectuals. Rather they think of themselves as academics,

as people who have become technically proficient in a subject. . . . It is generally a compliment when we refer to someone as a “real academic,” for we usually mean such a person is a “professional.” By “professional,” however, we do not mean one who has committed his or her life to pursuing task for a good commonly held; rather we mean someone . . . whose expertise gives power over others. When teaching becomes solely a matter of expertise, the very nature of scholarship is perverted. (pp. 140-141)

Clarifying this identity crisis, Macfarlane (2004) postulates that teachers of higher education generally prefer identification in relation to their disciplines rather than their teaching vocation. This external point of reference of their discipline of expertise is of greater importance to them and they follow the ethics and values of their respective disciplines. To teach in higher education, the main criteria include the possession of a terminal degree (doctorate), but not necessarily teaching experience. The natural outcome is the phenomenon of the quick transformation of an expert learner into a novice teacher (Shulman, as cited in Macfarlane, 2004, p. 8). The ethics of teaching may be something entirely new to this novice teacher.

Though such negative perspectives toward teaching exist among some educators, Danielson (2007) supports the view that teaching is a respected profession. She cites the following evidence: Like all other professions, teaching has a body of knowledge that is shared by the professionals in the community. Teachers also apply their professional knowledge to make important decisions. Another attribute of teaching as a profession is that “both theory and practice of teaching inform each other” (p. 18). According to Danielson (2007), the most important characteristic of the teaching profession is that teachers practice highly ethical behavior.

### **Professionalism in Teaching**

Teaching in higher education is to be characterized by professionalism. The concept of professionalism is difficult to describe but it “permeates all aspects of a teacher’s work” (Danielson, 2007, p. 106). The qualities of professionalism include high ethical standards and integrity. Danielson (2007) identifies honesty as the hallmark of integrity. She elaborates by stating that professional teachers can be counted on for keeping their word, they uphold confidentiality, and they support the “best efforts of their colleagues. They have a very strong moral compass and are never led astray by the temptations of an easier approach or by convenience” (p.106).

Aspects of teaching in higher education include mastering skills of lecturing, stimulating student discussions, and assessing student learning, including their academic writing; however, the professional aspects of teaching goes beyond these skills (Macfarlane, 2004). These technical aspects of teaching

are only some of the attributes of the profession. As Knight (cited in Macfarlane, 2004) states, “there is more to teaching than the mastery of content knowledge and pedagogic techniques” (p. 21). Teaching in higher education should include reflective endeavors to get in touch with one’s own values as they relate to the profession. While other professions such as law, business, and medicine include these as part of their professional learning, most teachers in higher education do not necessary get the opportunity to consider specialized ethical issues in teaching per se prior to their entering teaching. This situation calls for an increased initiative to assist teachers in higher education with these issues. Before considering such initiatives, it is important to make a reality check on what educators think about ethics.

### **Educators’ Perceptions on Ethics**

It is not uncommon to see examples of unethical behavior of educators brought to public through the media. A sobering realization is brought home that these educators have been educated in colleges/universities or they themselves are faculty in higher education. The question that can be asked is, “Do these educators have an understanding of the principles of ethics in their profession?” In South Carolina (USA), Barrett, Headley, Stovall, and White (cited in Weegar, 2007, Ethical Perceptions of Educators section, para. 2) conducted a study on “teachers’ perceptions of the frequency and seriousness of different categories of teacher misconduct.” The questionnaire had items that showed misconduct in various categories and the respondents (235 of them) had to rate the degree of misconduct as they perceived it for the different items. The results showed three areas of misconduct: (a) student-teacher boundary violations, (b) carelessness in behavior, and (c) subjectivity in grading and instruction.

The major recommendation suggested by the South Carolina study was formulating a set of ethical principles for educators as reflected in the code of ethics for the American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Medical Association (AMA). The highlighted principles include “showing respect for others, delivering professional services, and helping others” (Barrett et al., cited in Weegar, 2007, Ethical Perceptions of Educators section, para. 3).

The above discussion of teachers’ perspectives on ethics has pointed to the need for a written code of ethics for teachers. Keeping this need in mind, and adding other suggestions, I am proposing initiatives that can be tried out within institutions of higher education, especially in an Adventist context, in order to enhance professional ethics in teaching. These initiatives entail not only responsibilities of teachers, but also institutional involvement.

### **Institutional Initiatives**

Institutions of higher education have an important responsibility to enhance ethical practices among its employees. Developing an ethics policy for workers

is one of the major steps in this line. Clearly delineating the ethical practices expected in the workplace will create “a culture of openness, trust, and integrity among employees” (Weeger, 2005, Code of Ethics section, para. 2). These written policies should be accessible and must be communicated in multiple ways, such as training sessions, emails, employee orientations, and the policy manual of the institution (Kranacher, as cited in Weeger, 2007).

Like other initiatives that work better with a “top-down” scheme, promotion of ethics ideally begins with the administration of the college or university. Couch and Dodd (2005) give several suggestions for the top-level planners:

1. Develop an institutional code of ethics that articulates core ethical principles.
2. Foster a campus climate that values diversity and ensures a supportive environment.
3. Provide leadership to nurture a learning environment.
4. Become informed about the social, political, and economic issues that have ethical implications for the profession. (p. 24)

Administrative leaders who value the courage to speak out the truth foster an institutional ethical leadership and inculcate a culture that is conducive for the practice of ethics. “Fairness and concern are two characteristics that employees expect of ethical leaders” (Weeger, 2007, Code of Ethics section, para. 4). According to Weeger (2007), management, through their own honesty and integrity in daily interactions set the tone for the employees to be ethical. She says that such ethical leaders who set high ethical standards produce high ethical practices in their employees—in our context—the faculty.

In the next and last section, let us consider some of the practical ways to promote ethics in higher education. The suggestions involve both corporate and individual responsibilities and initiatives.

### **Promoting Ethics**

From an analysis of the literature on ethical needs in teaching higher education, and from personal experiences in teaching at Adventist tertiary levels for over 25 years, three recommendations to promote ethical practices in Adventist institutions of higher education are derived and presented here: (1) Establishing a conducive workplace culture, (2) Engaging in professional development programs related to ethics, and (3) Formulating and disseminating a code of professional ethics for teachers of the specific institution. These recommendations are intended to create awareness and engage teachers in ethical issues, and thus improve integrity in their profession: The leadership of higher education institutions have a major role to play to promoting ethics and integrity through these suggested means.



### **Establishing a Conducive Workplace Culture**

The culture and climate of the workplace, no doubt, have a direct bearing on the way teachers are able to express their values and ethical beliefs. Human relationships are formed within a climate and are shaped by cultural issues. The main networks that have to do with the teacher in the institutional culture are of three dimensions: teacher-student, peer, and teacher-administrator relationships, as well as relationships between teachers and other instructional support personnel.

Teacher-student interactions happen inside and outside classrooms. As good teaching calls for the development of a personal interest in students, teachers need to “balance detached professionalism with personal friendship” (Northern Kentucky University, 2008, *The Relationship Between Student and Teacher Section*). Using interactive learning activities besides lectures, clearly describing the learning tasks and assignments, showing enthusiasm in the presentations, are ways of fostering positive attitudes among students. Involvement in service learning activities emerging from the learning outcomes in the classes is a powerful avenue to incorporate Christian attitudes in one’s profession—for both teachers and students.

Peer relationships are important in building a healthy institutional climate. Adopting peer or collaborative coaching as teachers become critical friends “who enhance one another’s teaching practice” (Silva & Contrera, 2011, p. 54) is one way to go. As part of collaborative coaching teachers observe each other’s classes and debrief. Another practice—learning from instructional rounds (City, 2011) through observations—is becoming increasingly common in schools. These are practices that can be adopted in higher education with good learning opportunities for participants. These types of coaching aim to foster mutually helpful and supportive relationships among the faculty. Professional jealousy and lethargy are minimized and a refreshing learning atmosphere permeates the institution. Students too will want to model such a relationship among them.

Building a conducive workplace climate calls for teachers’ responsibility towards the administration and vice versa. Administrators’ supportive behavior is characterized by mutual trust, open communication, and interest in personal welfare of teachers that results in teachers’ commitment to the institution (John & Taylor, 1999, p. 45).

Cultivating a favorable human relationship network in the institution in the three teacher dimensions described above will create a climate of trust and commitment that will enhance the ethical behavior of the faculty. In an Adventist institution of higher education, such a climate is definitely expected.

### **Engaging in Professional Development in Ethical Practices**

The extent to which ethics can be taught and its impact on transfer (practice of ethics in work places) is debatable. However, there is consensus among the academia that institutions of higher education need to address the topic of ethics, as Weegar (2007) points out. The main question is, what initiatives can ensure that faculty are aware of and skilful in the stipulated ethical codes of higher education? The following are suggested approaches through professional development: (1) Offering courses in workplace ethics which include practices in teaching, (2) Organizing seminars and workshops on ethics, (3) Promoting institutional-wide values-based initiatives (for example, orienting new faculty on institutional values and ethics, posting the mission statement in classrooms and faculty offices, involving faculty in strategic planning, encouraging integration of faith and learning in teaching).

Offering at least one course in ethics at the graduate level where educators are trained for teaching in higher education is essential. It is a generally accepted fact that responsibility can be expected only with knowledge and awareness. A course in ethics may or may not change a person's attitude and behavior but it is still a good step towards establishing accountability in ethical practices. Using moral dilemmas, in the form of case studies, is recommended by experts in such learning sessions (see Macfarlane, 2004). Case studies are as an effective means to highlight ethical aspects of various situations. Such a methodology can be applied in both pre-service and in-service training of teachers in ethics within higher education.

Faculty need to be encouraged to conduct and attend seminars and workshops that promote ethical practices with a focus on teaching. Attending sessions that highlight ethical practices in other professions is equally helpful as there are universal principles of ethical practices present in all professions. Most institutions of higher education support continuing education of its faculty who may select a conference or workshop of their choice. It is common to see faculty members referring to policies related to professional issues such as continuing education and service requests to seek professional benefits deriving from these policies. How often do faculty read through or discuss policies on ethical aspects of teaching? My guess is that it is not often enough. Organizing faculty forums and dialogues to discuss concerns and questions related to ethical issues related to their profession is a good option. It is also a helpful practice to orient new faculty members in the ethical practices of the institution.

Adventist education supports integration of faith and learning and higher education. Taylor (2001) points out the concept of IFL as "biblically defensible" (p. 405) and suggests the rationale for practicing it. Describing his experience of attempting IFL in a college set-up, Walthall (1993) identified certain initial

problems such as (1) the extent of the condensed volume of material to be covered within a specific schedule, (2) unavailability of literature on strategies for IFL in content matter of higher education and (3) the general expectation of students in viewing faith and academic life as dichotomous (Course Design and Content section, para. 3). The support and encouragement of the use of integration of faith and learning in content areas in Adventist higher education (Gaikwad, 2004) is very encouraging. Those who have attended International Faith and Learning Seminars which have been sponsored by the Institute of Christian Teaching since 1988 can attest to the value of such experiences. Training such as these both at the pre-service and in-service levels should have impact on educators as they uphold their values in a concerted manner.

### **Formulating and Disseminating a Code of Professional Ethics**

Ethical practices are at “the core of the teaching profession” (Smith & Goldblatt, n.d., p. 1). It is also known that generally teachers “have an understanding of the underlying ethical principles of their profession” (Barrett et al., at cited in Weegar, 2007, Ethical Perceptions of Educators, para. 3). Smith and Golblatt (n.d.) propose that creation and implementation of an agreed-upon set of ethical principles facilitate a collective understanding and vision to judge the actions of teachers by both the institution and the public.

Historically, the first written code of ethics for the profession of education was created in 1929 by the National Education Association in USA (Rich, 1984). According to Rich (1984), though the code of ethics was well disseminated, it was not implemented adequately. Only in the late 1960’s was the code of ethics officially adopted for practice by American Association of University Professors. The main statements were five in number—the professor’s role as a researcher, teacher, colleague, as a member of an institution, and as a member of the larger community (Sola, 1984, p. 26).

Since then, varied forms of codes of ethics have been formulated for different levels of schooling—elementary and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions. Thus codes of ethics of teaching are becoming more visible. It is heartening to see the formulation of sets of codes of ethics for teachers in higher education. One of the most frequently referred to code of ethics is authored by Murray, Gillese, Lennon, Mercer, and Robinson (2009) which was originally created in 1996 and abridged by the University of Toronto (n.d.).

Institutions of higher education need to adopt a code of ethics based on such standard codes and that also take into consideration the contextual and cultural values of the society, as well as their Christian philosophy. Murray et al., (as cited in University of Toronto, n.d.) have summarized the major ethical issues in higher education (see Table 1).

Table 1  
*Ethical Principles in University Teaching*

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**1. Content Competence**

A university teacher maintains a high level of subject matter knowledge and ensures that course content is current, accurate, representative, and appropriate to the position of the course within the student's program of studies.

**2. Pedagogical Competence**

A pedagogically competent teacher communicates the objectives of the course to students, is aware of alternative instructional methods or strategies, and selects methods of instruction that, according to research evidence (including personal or self-reflective research), are effective in helping students to achieve the course objectives.

**3. Dealing with Sensitive Topics**

Topics that students are likely to find sensitive or discomforting are dealt with in an open, honest, and positive way.

**4. Student Development**

The overriding responsibility of the teacher is to contribute to the intellectual development of the student, at least in the context of the teacher's own area of expertise, and to avoid actions such as exploitation and discrimination that detract from student development.

**5. Dual Relationships With Students**

To avoid conflict of interest, a teacher does not enter into dual-role relationships with students that are likely to detract from student development or lead to actual or perceived favoritism on the part of the teacher.

**6. Confidentiality**

Student grades, attendance records, and private communications are treated as confidential materials, and are released only with student consent, or for legitimate academic purposes, or if there are reasonable grounds for believing that releasing such information will be beneficial to the student or will prevent harm to others.

**7. Respect for Colleagues**

A university teacher respects the dignity of her or his colleagues and works cooperatively with colleagues in the interest of fostering student development.

**8. Valid Assessment of Students**

Given the importance of assessment of student performance in university teaching and in students' lives and careers, instructors are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure that assessment of students is valid, open, fair, and congruent with course objectives.

**9. Respect for the Institution**

In the interest of student development, a university teacher is aware of and respects the educational goals, policies, and standards of the institution in which he or she teaches.

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*Note:* Adapted from University of Toronto. (n.d.). *Ethical principles in university teaching*. Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation, Toronto, Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/gsta/training/ta-toolkit/ethical-principles.htm>

Adventist institutions of higher education continue to use the General Conference Code of Ethics for Seventh-day Adventist Educators, as approved in March 1997, and revised in May 1997. The introductory note and the six statements of principles are shown in Table 2. For a full document that spells out how these principles are applied in practice, see the Code of Ethics for Seventh-day Adventist Educators (2004).

The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has also created several “position statements” on important ethical issues (Carr & Winslow, 2007, p. 4). These statements are helpful to consider while dealing with specific issues related to the disciplines of teaching in higher education. While Adventist institutions of higher education may continue to use the code of ethics as shown in Table 2, incorporating additional guidelines specifically related to the cultural context and content areas of disciplines offered would be appropriate. More importantly, mechanisms must be in place to make the code of ethics visible and more accessible to teachers.

Table 2  
*Code of Ethics for Seventh-day Adventist Educators*

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We Seventh-day Adventist educators affirm and confess Jesus Christ, the Master teacher, as our mentor. Learning from Him we strive to disciple our students, modeling His ways with people. Because all truth is God’s truth, and because the knowledge of truth is the way to freedom (John 8:32), we pledge ourselves to search for it, to share it with those who seek, in harmony with the principles outlined below. We affirm that it is the ethical responsibility of Adventist educators:

1. To manifest our total commitment to God, to His Word, and to the beliefs and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
  2. To provide all students with equal opportunity for the harmonious development of their faculties and potentials.
  3. To establish, model, and safeguard the highest standards in professional competence and behavior.
  4. To foster an instructional environment in which the free exchange of ideas is prized.
  5. To maintain the highest norms of scholarship and integrity in research, production, and communication of findings.
  6. To be concerned with and involved in the life and conditions of the school and community in which we work and live.
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*Note:* Adapted from *Code of Ethics for Seventh-day Adventist Educators* (2004). Seventh-day Adventist Church, Inter-American Division website. Retrieved from [http://www.covenantforum.com/cgi-bin/discus/board-admin.cgi?action=quick&do=print&HTTP\\_REFERER=1535/1540&postindex=3785](http://www.covenantforum.com/cgi-bin/discus/board-admin.cgi?action=quick&do=print&HTTP_REFERER=1535/1540&postindex=3785)

The initiatives suggested here will become realities with the support of administrators of higher education. Building a caring workplace climate is paramount for promoting professionalism and ethics. Taking stock of the organizational climate from time to time and rectifying situations that need to be fixed is helpful. Administrators can also provide financial support and facilitate professional growth of teacher in enriching their experiences professional ethics. Establishing and disseminating the professional code of ethics for teachers is another important and helpful role of administrators in this connection.

### **Conclusion**

A great deal of literature on the technical aspects of pedagogy exists, however relatively less is documented about the practice of ethics, a core aspect of teaching. In the realms of higher education this issue is even less visible. Adventist institutions of higher education cannot remain complacent towards this issue. For in this age of increased unethical practices everywhere, institutions of higher education, through the precept and practices set by the faculty, can be a shining beacon. The emerging professionalization of higher education calls for definite steps to support the academia, especially the faculty, in both sensitizing and equipping them in ethics related to the profession of teaching. The three initiatives suggested are 1) building a healthy human relationship network in the workplace that includes all three dimensions—teacher-student, peer, and teacher-administrator; 2) engaging in professional development related to ethics; and 3) developing or adopting and institutionalizing a set of code of ethics. Taking such steps primarily rests in the hands of the leadership of higher education institutions. Even as unethical practices and corruptions continue to beset the workplaces at large, teachers in higher education need to sustain integrity within their teaching profession and uphold the tradition of both academic and ethical excellence.

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