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## ***Formación de los directivos académicos en gestión y gobernabilidad de la institución universitaria*** ***Training of academic directives in management and governance of the university institution.***

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**Resumen:** La formación de directivos universitarios es una necesidad cada vez más creciente en nuestras instituciones; constituye un aspecto medular, ya que mayoritariamente los directivos asumen cargos sin tener la capacitación acorde al cargo que desempeñan. Es por ello que con el presente artículo se pretende argumentar la importancia y necesidad de la formación de los directivos en temáticas como la gobernabilidad y la gestión de las instituciones universitarias. Lo cual fue posible por el uso de métodos teóricos, empíricos y la experiencia de los autores en la temática.

**Palabras clave:** Directivos Académicos; Gestión; Gobernabilidad; Instituciones universitarias.

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**Abstract:** The training of university directives is an increasingly growing need in our institutions; it is a key aspect, since most of the directives assume positions without having the training according to the position they hold. That is why this article aims to argue the importance and necessity of training managers in topics such as governance and management of university institutions. This was possible through the use of theoretical and empirical methods and the authors' experience in the subject.

**Keywords:** Academic Directives; Management; Governance; University Institutions.

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## **Introduction**

The basic requirements for directing and governing a university institutional organization are complex; therefore, Corahua and García (2022) state that the maximum expected achievement is that academic directives have a positive impact on the work of management and governance deployed in the university collective and its social environment, enhancing the development of the university institution and therefore the formation of future competent professionals committed to the development of their society. Therefore, it is

important to address its work to fulfill with responsibility and social commitment the task it develops. This article is conceived with the purpose of arguing the importance and necessity of the training of directives, which is done from the theoretical references and the experience of the authors.

University management is worked by different authors, however it is Galarza (2007), cited by Guzmán, Y. (2017, p.16), who approaches it in a more comprehensive way, defining it as:

'a process that favors as much as possible the balanced functioning of the University with its environment, the vertical and horizontal integration of all its processes (teaching-learning, scientific research, university extension, as well as those related to the management itself), so that they operate and develop in a coherent and articulated manner, anticipating changes and also favoring the effective insertion of people in them, to achieve results that favorably impact the individual, the collective, the institutional and social, always under the influence of certain historical-social conditions.

From this point of view, the need for university directives to be trained and updated in the context in which they develop is evident.

## **Development**

### **Training of university directives**

From the experience of the authors in the management of university processes and the theoretical review of materials in this regard, it is necessary to reflect on the need for their training in this regard and how increasingly, the level of demand for the training of those responsible for university management becomes more indispensable.

According to criteria of Rodriguez et.al (2016, pp.286), until almost into the 21st century, the purposes of higher institutions did not require their academic positions, only to be a highly qualified teacher. However, higher-level education, within the social and political context in which it currently develops, makes necessary the training of directors for the pursuit of university excellence.

Returning to Troitiño's criteria (2021), the training of managers is seen as a permanent process, it is also a process expressed in competencies for an improvement in the order of successful professional and personal performance.

The directive has been required skills, abilities and/or attitudes, a talent for good work. Mentado and Rodriguez (2013), however, consider that the diversity of tasks to be carried out and their complexity urgently require specific and targeted training.



**Figure 1: Relationships in the training of directives**

Figure 1 establishes the relationships in the training of university directives, highlighting the necessary link with the processes they lead, with the environment, with the university they represent and with the current regulations governing university management and governance, all based on technical, human and conceptual skills, necessary and essential in any professional, especially when he/she is a manager.

The training of directives, according to Chumacero and Carrión (2021), in many areas of society, especially in the field of education, requires the leading role of a leader capable of taking on challenges to achieve quality education. From a global approach, according to Gaete, et al. (2020), they base its importance in the formative process, determining it as an opportunity to propose projects in convulsive environments, based on a set of policies corresponding to hierarchical performance and considering the situation that the world is going through as a result of the vertiginous and continuous changes.

One of the major limitations of the preparation of personnel in higher education institutions, revealed in recent years in international analyses, documents and reports presented by

UNESCO is that they are more concerned with personnel linked to academic activities and less with service personnel and managers. These personnel need constant improvement due to the fact that management processes are changing very rapidly, influenced by changes in society.

## **1.2 Management and Governance Distinctions**

Therefore, their preparation in the integral management of processes and governance is vital, given their intention to adhere to renewal, continuous change and response to the demands of the national and international environment.

Prioritizing leadership, encouraging good performance, teamwork, are part of this formative process, committed to institutional success, where university management plays a key factor.

When reference is made to university management as: administration, government, governance, governability, it is necessary to have the following appreciations:

Martinez (2000, pp.11-13) when referring to management as 'government' and as 'administration, indicates, that three conventional conceptualizations can be identified:

- 1 When they refer to the collection, arrangement, allocation and use of the resources necessary for the fulfillment of the organizational purposes. These have the classic administrative functions of planning, organization, execution and control.
- 2 When the dimensions linked to government are incorporated, we have 'governance'. Here, management is understood as the deployment of capacities such as: the definition of the mission and institutional design, the establishment of the strategic orientation, the determination of operational objectives and academic offerings, the dictation of policies that regulate its functioning, the nature and attributes of the recipients of its services, the definition of quality standards for its activities, the establishment of criteria for the acquisition of resources and their allocation among the various functions, and the monitoring and evaluation of the execution of the actions that derive from the above definitions and mandates.
- 3 When the idea of 'governance' is introduced, the concept of governance expands to the capacity to make decisions effective, preserving the institutional unity, its symbolic contents and its projection in time.

Governance' is understood as management that transcends formally established bodies and assigned functions, i.e., directing attention to the decision-making and implementation processes over which government structures have an impact, to the responses and consequences of institutional policies, and to the levels of legitimacy and consensus achieved.

Its purpose is to identify the factors that intervene to explain the capacities of institutional orientation and leadership, as well as the predispositions to perceive, attend to and channel the growing complexity in which the university institution debates. It includes the capacity to establish credible commitments, to generate confidence in the policies adopted and to reduce the uncertainty derived from the opportunistic behaviors of the actors.

Martínez (2000) indicates that: The problematic of 'governance' in the university institution will be expressed in:

- a) Reconciliation between external demands and internal processes.
- b) The integration of teaching, research and extension.
- c) Convergence between undergraduate and graduate studies.
- d) The productive coexistence of actors with differentiated interests, aspirations and orientations.
- e) Articulation between the functions that operate with knowledge and those that provide support to substantive tasks.
- f) A balanced relationship with the state, the market and other social actors.

The criterion of 'governance' responds to the fact that management should aim at building institutional identity, preserving its legitimacy, ensuring the quality of the activities carried out and their products, efficiency in the use of resources and protecting institutional sustainability.

According to Martínez (2000), it is understood that "governance" is not necessarily associated with the formal way in which government functions are carried out.

Thus, for example, if the university statute confers on the university governing bodies functions of policy formulation, regulation, and management, with a predominance of operational issues, generally of little importance for strategic orientation and institutional construction, then the university renounces its capacity to act in accordance with an

institutional mission or project through passivity; Thus, management is reduced to its narrowest sense, limited to the administrative and to the execution of actions and commitments, without exercising the power of orientation, with its gaze directed exclusively towards the interior of the organization, turning its back on the outside, without consensus on the future and without a strategic deployment, forgetting its institutional identity and its projection in time. Here, the capacity of institutional government expressed by 'governance' suffers.

Martínez (2000, pp.45-48), makes an extensive analysis on university management; in the first place, he analyzes the manifestations of management that express "governability", indicates the levels on which they are developed and proposes a list of questions that measure the degree reached by such governability. Secondly, it analyzes the requirements by capacities that governance must fulfill, taking into account the demands that the institutional management provides and supports them

Manifestations in which governance is expressed:

University management must constantly confront and resolve tensions in the following areas:

- The permanence of its mission and functions with the demands of adaptation and accommodation to the circumstantial and contingent.
- The unity of purpose that should guide the institution in the face of the diversity of contributions expected from its constituent parts.
- The pyramidal structure of any hierarchical organization with the specialization of the division of labor and its functional contributions in academic matters (line authority versus functional responsibility).
- The long-term vision of the university versus short-term constraints.
- External demands for service, quality, legitimacy and support versus internal demands for participation, technical efficiency and programming of activities.
- The technical-operational aspects versus the socio-emotional requirements of the members of the university.
- The use of formal incentives and sanctions and their complementation with symbolic and informal rewards and sanctions.

- The behaviors subject to norms and rules of a general nature versus the need to give flexible and adequate responses to each situation.

In order to determine the degree to which this governance is achieved, several questions must be stated:

- How do the formal governing bodies design and implement institutional policies and decisions?
- Who are the actors that effectively participate in and influence these policies and decisions?
- How extensive and intense is this participation?
- How are the relationships between these actors and the formal mechanisms constructed?
- What efforts are made to build consensus, and what are the results?
- How precisely have the governing bodies defined the institution's vision and mission?
- To what extent are the institutional objectives sufficiently precise to allow the definition of priorities and the allocation of resources accordingly?
- How sufficient is the information available to the governing bodies to make systematic assessments of their context of action, to identify the forces at work in the world of knowledge creation and transfer, to understand the economic, political, cultural, social, etc., trends that affect or will affect the life of the university?
- To what extent do the governing bodies have and exercise capacity for planning, monitoring and evaluating institutional activities?"

The requirements of governance demand an institutional leadership that has:

- The overall vision of the institution, its trajectory and the desired attributes of the institution.
- An integral conception of the role of the institution in its environment and with respect to its activities and disciplines.
- The ability to translate that vision and conception into a formulation of the mission that is communicable and understandable to the members of the university community and to those who are in relationship with it.

Estas exigencias son resumidas como inclusión, planeamiento, comunicación y liderazgo. That governance must be constantly nurtured and for that it must be supported by:

Analytical skills, in particular for the formulation of diagnoses, problem identification, long and medium term vision, understanding of the relationship between university activities and other areas of social action, evaluation of its achievements, among others.

- Ability to develop policies with scope for different types of activities and different institutional areas and to allocate resources in a coherent manner with the defined priorities.
- Ability to provide dynamism and leadership for the promotion of innovative behaviors and institutional orientation, attending to the aspirations and interests of those involved in the life of the organization.
- Ability to recognize the diversity of the university institution and the heterogeneity of situations it must face, identifying the specificity of the relevant areas for its actions and formulating differentiated strategies for them.
- Ability to formulate plans and programs, with explicit goals, sequences in the actions and forecasts for follow-up and evaluation, with units for the formulation of plans and programs, as well as for the follow-up and evaluation of management, with adequate information systems and with participation in the elaboration of decisions on resources and in the processes of budgetary negotiation.
- Capacities for dialogue with the various relevant stakeholders.
- Ability to promote participation, consultation and activation of different relevant audiences around the life and needs of the institution.

The product of these capabilities is the development of a vision that guides institutional actions and reaffirms the sense of belonging to the university community, seeking the systematic growth of capabilities to provide quality education and make significant contributions to the environment through research, technology transfer and extension work.

Referring to management and governance processes, Marchesi (2010, pp.24), in the framework of the V Latin American Education Forum 2010, says: "The commitment to an educating society requires planning, initiative, coordination and innovation within the framework of effective management. There is no doubt that the governance of public institutions constitutes an indispensable requirement to advance in this type of project."

Ruiz (2018, p.299), referring to management mechanisms for governance, within the propositional recommendations to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the

knowledge society and development of higher education, proposes designing an integrated information system.

This system guarantees to higher education the quality of the processes of training-research-administration-administration-management and decision-making; facilitating planning, organization, direction and control based on documentary evidence and not on intuition, improvisation, empirical; which has an impact on administrative transparency, responsible accountability and the preservation of evidence of its activities and integrity of documents over the time required. Ruiz, M. (2018, p.299).

Therefore, implementing and maintaining management systems for continuous improvement and quality of university management is an urgent need in order to achieve standards of quality and excellence.

Within the management mechanisms, in order to achieve 'governance', it is necessary to design an integrated information system. This system allows higher education to focus on the quality of university processes and on the training of managers based on these references.

In 'governance', management transcends formally established bodies and assigned functions, i.e., it directs attention to the decision-making and implementation processes over which government structures have an impact, to the responses and consequences of institutional policies, and to the levels of legitimacy and consensus achieved.

The purpose of 'governance' is: to identify the factors that intervene to explain the capacities of institutional orientation and leadership, as well as the predispositions to perceive, attend to and channel the growing complexity in which the university institution debates.

The problem of 'governability' in the university institution will be expressed in: the reconciliation between external demands and internal processes; the integration of teaching-research-extension; the productive coexistence of actors with differentiated interests, aspirations and orientations; the articulation between the functions that operate with knowledge and those that provide support to the substantive tasks; the balance in the relations with: the state, the market, the internal and external social actors.

-Governance' is manifested when: university management must permanently confront and resolve tensions in the following areas: mission; unity of purpose; long-term vision; with

the functional contributions of the line authorities; with efficiency in meeting external demands and internal requirements; technical-operational aspects in the face of the socio-emotional requirements of its members; use of incentives and sanctions; behavior subject to norms and rules of a general nature in the face of the need to provide flexible and adequate responses to each situation. Governance' translates into the way in which these tensions are overcome, preserving institutional unity and fidelity to the adopted project.

To determine the degree to which this 'governance' is achieved, several premises must be established:

- The formal governing bodies that design and implement institutional policies and decisions;
- The actors who actually participate in and influence these policies and decisions;
- The relationships between these actors and the formal mechanisms;
- The efforts made to build consensus and results;
- The definition of the institutional vision and mission; the institutional objectives are sufficiently precise to allow the definition of priorities and the allocation of resources accordingly;
- the information available to the governing bodies is sufficient to make systematic assessments of their context of action, to identify the forces at work in the transfer of knowledge, to understand the economic, political, cultural, social, and other trends that affect or will affect the life of the university;
- the governing bodies have the capacity to monitor and evaluate institutional activities.

The requirements of 'governance' are inclusiveness, planning, communication and leadership. That is, it is required that the institutional leadership has: the overall vision of the institution, its trajectory and the desired attributes for it; an integral conception of the role of the institution in its environment and with respect to the activities and disciplines; the ability to translate that vision and conception into a formulation of the mission that is communicable and understandable to the members of the university community and to those who are in relation to it.

'Governance' must be constantly nurtured and to this end must be supported by:

- analytical capabilities to formulate diagnoses, identify problems, with a long and medium-term vision;
- the ability to formulate policies with scope for different types of activities and different institutional spheres;
- the ability to allocate resources in a manner consistent with the priorities defined;
- the ability to provide dynamism and leadership for the promotion of innovative behaviors and institutional orientation, attending to the aspirations and interests of those involved in the life of the organization;
- capacities to recognize the diversity of the university institution and the heterogeneity of situations it must face, identifying the specificity of the relevant areas for its actions and formulating differentiated strategies for them;
- Capacities to formulate plans and programs; capacities for dialogue with the various relevant actors; capacities for the promotion of participation, consultation and activation of different relevant audiences around the life and needs of the institution.

The product of these capabilities will allow the elaboration of a vision that guides institutional actions and reaffirms the sense of belonging to the university community; therefore, associating it to the competencies is a core aspect in the holistic vision of the process..

### **1.3 Perspectives on governance and associated competencies**

The definition of 'competence' is considered to be provided by García, et al (2013):

"integration of the degree of preparation, training and development of the individual as a result of their learning, where training is based on basic principles, knowing, knowing how to do, knowing how to be, knowing how to share or live in academic, labor and social collective putting into play knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, skills and experiences in different contexts."

Taking into account the considerations exposed by García; Ortiz and González (2013); García, García and González (2013); Galarza, and Almuiñas, (2018); Ascón, et.al. (2019); based on the formation of General Management Competencies (CGD) in Higher Education established from the analysis carried out by the Tuning Latin America Project; it is stated

that within the formative 'competencies' necessary for academic managers, the following distinctive elements are inferred: leadership; negotiation and conflict resolution; organizing and planning time; relevant, effective and timely communication; vision and strategic thinking; teamwork; creativity; decision-making; trust and credibility with the people they interact with; knowledge of the institution and its organization; accompaniment and evaluation of institutional activities.

For being more generic and integrated to the management and governance of directives; demonstrating its usefulness and necessity in practice, in the directive performance and in the role assumed in the processes they lead. From this perspective, a profile of desirable competencies is proposed for the academic directives of the university institution, personally, institutionally and professionally:

**Personal** (related to personal balance and development that will provide credibility and confidence)):

- Life testimony: principles, values, integrity, self-control.
- University commitment: predisposition to service.
- Interpersonal relations: leadership, community service, meeting management, trust in delegating responsibilities, solidarity, reciprocal help, human relations.
- Communication: relevant, effective and timely.
- Resilience: resilience to emerge from adversity, adapting, recovering.
- Management of: stress, time, information, processes.

**Institutional (related to management and university governance):**

- Institutional and organizational knowledge: structure, culture, situations, critical periods.
- Building institutional identity.
- Vision and conceptual and strategic analytical thinking.
- Confronting and resolving tensions in the following areas: mission; unity of purpose; long-term vision; external demands and internal requirements; technical-operational aspects, socio-emotional requirements of its members; use of incentives and sanctions; behaviors subject to norms and rules in the face of the need to provide flexible and adequate responses.

- Efficiency in the use of resources.
- Ensuring the quality of activities, products and services.
- Continuous improvement of proactive and constant evaluation of management processes.
- Change management: organizational innovation, new ideas, creativity, adoption of new approaches and methodologies.
- Synergistic work: articulating synergies among all sectors and actors of the university and with other institutions.
- Teamwork, integration and co-responsibility.
- Conflict management: reconciliation between external demands and internal processes, negotiation.
- Integration: teaching, research, extension, internationalization.
- Relationships: state, market, social actors.
- Protection of institutional sustainability.
- Management: financial, resources, projects, risks.

**Professionals (referring to the efficiency and effectiveness of their decisions):**

- Decision making: assessing advantages and disadvantages, making coherent choices.
- Planning and organization: scheduling optimal action plans, internal organization and use of resources according to the needs of the university.
- University staff development: taking charge of the development of staff skills and attitudes.
- Systemic vision: ability to break down problems and solutions into essential elements and synthesize them to find suitable solutions.
- Result orientation: orienting activities towards the achievement of objectives focused on the interest of the members of the institution.
- Monitoring and evaluation: identify actions and difficulties, activate the appropriate corrective interventions.

Therefore, the training of university directors in management and governance is essential if the desired quality standards are to be achieved; they must be highly qualified to competently assume the position in the educational institution. They are in charge of leading

strategic processes, guiding the formative, research and extension processes and, consequently, representing the university community inside and outside of the living context.

## Conclusions

A detailed analysis of governance and the need to train directives in their domain to manage the university processes they lead with the quality and competencies demanded by the national and international context is carried out, as well as a preliminary proposal of desirable competencies for academic directives in university institutions, outlining their need and importance from the personal, institutional and professional point of view.

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