

Memorial about Values and Identity of Ukrainian Catholic University

As many students and professors testify, an important factor why they connect part of their lives with the UCU is an internal atmosphere of the University. An inherent source creating this culture of hospitality, openness, transparency, non-bureaucracy and communication are the Christian values on which the University is formed. The UCU is a Catholic university and belongs to a large world's family of Catholic universities, among which there are a lot of leaders in higher education. According to its mission, the UCU as a higher educational establishment, created by the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, – Catholic Church of Kyiv's tradition, is called to nurture and develop the Ukrainian Eastern Christian culture.

At the UCU there are students who belong to various Christian churches, representatives of other religions and even non-believers. These are young people whose faith, according to St. Augustine, is looking for understanding, or who are still in a spiritual search. In any case, these are people who must not be indifferent to questions that religious experience and spiritual life puts before a person.

As a Catholic university, the UCU offers its students, regardless of their chosen specialty, the unique world-view of acquaintance with the world of Christianity, and, primarily, the world's Catholic tradition and Ukrainian Christian culture. The gist of this program can be described with the words "To know – to understand – to respect." This program distinguishes the UCU from other universities and is believed to be not only its calling but also a competitive advantage before the other educational establishments.

If a student is already a practicing Christian, he/she receives a chance for deeper evangelization and more conscious involvement in the Christian life. At least, studying at the UCU is an opportunity to get familiar with the Christian world-view and its main components, eradicate primitive clichés and stereotypes about the Church and nurture an understanding of Christian faith and respect for it.

With this aim the University introduced a number of practices, which are an integral part of its inner culture:

- everyone who joins his life with the UCU, by this testifies that he/she shares its mission;
- The UCU, as any other free university, cannot declare any social ideology or scientific theory as binding on all. This does not mean, however, that our university is a place for relativity. As a Catholic university, it firmly stands on the principles of the Christian faith and morality. In particular, in accordance with its proclaimed mission, the UCU is not a place for promoting atheistic views or any other ideology, incompatible with the Christian doctrine;
- The UCU provides a possibility of daily participation in the Liturgy and other holy services for those members of the University's community who are practicing Christians;
- classes and main events begin with a prayer. At this time, those members of the community, who do not practice any religious rites, can spend the time devoted to prayer, in silence, showing respect for the religious values of the believers from the UCU's community.
- believing students, professors, employees greet each other with the Christian greeting "Glory to Jesus Christ!" (or with any other forms of greeting according to the Christian holidays, for instance: "Christ is born!" "Christ is risen!");
- every Wednesday an all-University Liturgy takes place, to which all the members of the community are invited, regardless of their religious views;

- during the weekly all-University Liturgy, classes, examinations and other public events are not held, and such departments as the library, computer classes, etc. suspend their reception of visitors;
- participants of the English Summer School, regardless of their religious beliefs, must attend separate masses, in the frames of the program, in order to get familiar with the Christian liturgical culture and to study the English religious language;
- the residents of the Collegium, regardless of their religious beliefs, become participants of the two-year formational program, a part of which is an exchange of one's spiritual experience;
- a part of the curriculum of the non-theological disciplines is a number of courses for better learning the Christian tradition;
- the whole program of learning the Christian tradition aims at gaining certain academic knowledge (lectures, seminars, master-classes, conferences, summer schools, processing literature), spiritual experience (participation in masses, retreats, visits to monasteries), communication with extraordinary people, meeting interesting Christian environments, etc. Every student is called to use the time of their studies for participation in this program to the best of his/her ability, taking part in the events according to his/her beliefs;
- before the start of their studies at the UCU, the students take part in the orientation session, which will help them understand better the priorities and peculiarities of studies at the UCU;
- the UCU is an environment for the teamwork. We are called to bear burdens of each other, i.e. sensitively realize when our colleagues need help, and offer it to them;
- The UCU is also a zone of absolute ban on bribes. To not allow the smallest evidence of corruption is a moral duty of every member of the community and an object for special control on the part of the UCU's authorities;
- the norms of the academic research at the UCU are loyalty to the truth (intolerance to deceit and falsehood), academic freedom, academic honesty (prohibition of plagiarism and cheating);
- Every employee, lecturer and student of the UCU has the right to freely choose his/her civil and academic position. Hereby they must demonstrate sensitivity and solidarity with the community they belong to, understand and respect the official position of the University, its mission, the rules for realization of its identity, its reputation and interests. In case of a radical incompatibility of their position with the UCU mission and its requirements of the academic process, a person has the right to defend his/her position beyond the university's walls, without belonging to it;

The defining measure of a man's freedom is his God-given conscience, which he uses in his philosophical searches. On the one hand, it secures the right to doubt and error; and the UCU is a place of a friendly dialogue, which can bring to a consensus and allow its participants remain on their positions or correct one's errors. On the other hand, the primacy of conscience means that a person is ready to bear responsibility for his/her actions or expressions.

Christian identity is the heart of the Ukrainian Catholic University and, thanks to it, the UCU came into being, was formed and acquired those features, which make it advanced, respected and attractive institution today. True development of the UCU is inseparable from the growth of the UCU's community on the way of learning and appreciating the Christian world-view. We invite all people of good will respect the religious identity of the UCU and enrich it with their own spiritual gifts.