

Nurturing Ethical Leaders: The Case of the Ethical Leader Rearing Program at the Catholic University of Korea

Hyung-Jin “Michael” Park¹⁾ · Sangkil Moon²⁾ · Ki-Chan Kim³⁾ ·
Yong-Cheol Kim⁴⁾ · Sung-Jin Kim⁵⁾

While unethical behavior may create a serious organizational crisis, establishing ethical business practices can enhance the organization’s competitive advantage. Organizations, therefore, strive to recruit people who are not only competent but also ethical and socially responsible. As a result, the need for teaching ethics at universities has been given a top priority. The importance of rearing ethical leaders leads to questions about how to best accomplish this goal.

Based on the six factors — Weber’s (2006) five elements and the benefits for the students who are enrolled in an ethics education program — to develop ethics programs effectively in an academic environment, we investigate how the Catholic University of Korea develops, introduces, and implements its university-wide ethics education program.

This study may provide guidance to other universities seeking to develop and implement an ethics education program.

Key words: Ethical leader; Effective ethics education program; Case study

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1) Associate Professor of Marketing, College of Business and Global Affairs, University of Tennessee at Martin, TN 38238, E-mail: mpark@utm.edu

2) Cullen Endowed Professor of Marketing, The Belk College of Business, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, NC 28223, E-mail: smoon13@unc.edu

3) Professor of Marketing, Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, E-mail: kckim@catholic.ac.kr

4) Associate Professor of Marketing, Catholic University of Korea, Seoul, E-mail: ychulkim@catholic.ac.kr

5) Graduate Student, Seoul National University, Seoul, E-mail: nostalpro@snu.ac.kr

I . Introduction

A prominent concern in business is to perform ethically and responsibly (Schlegelmilch & Öberseder, 2010; Sims, 2002). Doing business ethically and responsibly may provide a competitive advantage by building a strong ethical reputation (Azmi, 2006; Madhani, 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2002; Su, 2014), while unethical behavior may create serious organizational crises.

There have been numerous cases in which companies' reputations have been hurt or destroyed by unethical behaviors, which have sometimes even led to bankruptcy. In 1992, when the unethical behavior of William Aramony, the CEO of United Way, the biggest charity organization in the U.S., was exposed, the organization's public image was damaged, and its charity collection declined (Hartley, 2004). When Enron, the largest energy company in the U.S., went bankrupt in 2001, one of the primary causes was the unethical behavior of Board Chairman Kenneth L. Lay and CEO Jeffrey Skilling (Henderson, Oakes, & Smith, 2009). Other cases of unethical behaviors include the accounting fraud of Bernard Ebbers, CEO of the telecommunication company WorldCom (Carson, 2003), and the securities fraud of Takafumi Horie, the founder of the Japanese firm Livedoor (Tsalikis & Seaton, 2008).

On the other hand, an organizational commitment to ethics is positively related to financial performance (Verschoor, 1998). Dobni, Ritchie, and Zerbe (2000) find a positive relationship between a strong ethical culture and the organization's productivity. Corporate social responsibility is recognized as one of the important factors that enhance a company's competitiveness (Park, 2007; Porter & Kramer, 2002). Carrying out its social responsibilities may promote a company's image, establish a good reputation among its customers, and improve employee morale, which will ultimately enhance the company's competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2002).

Organizations, therefore, want to hire people who are not only competent but also ethical and socially responsible. Sims (2002) states that in order to be a good employee at large American firms, one must have a thorough understanding of business ethics, as well as the willpower to carry out ethical actions. Berenbeim (1999) emphasizes the ability to make ethical decisions as one of the important factors necessary in educating leaders. Finn, Chonko, and Hunt (1988) show that ethical leaders reduce the possibility of employees' unethical behaviors.

Given the importance of rearing ethical leaders, there are questions about how to

best accomplish this goal. Although Gordon and Howell (1959) states that “business education must be concerned not only with competence but also with responsibility, not only with skills but also have an obligation to do what they can to develop a ‘sense of social responsibility’ and a high standard of business ethics in their graduates”, there are few universities where ethics education is carried out systematically (Park, 2007). Bok (1988) writes in his annual report to the Harvard University Board of Directors that colleges are not satisfactorily fulfilling their responsibility to instill ethical consciousness in their students and argues that colleges should aid in developing students’ ethical sensibilities. Burke, Polimeni, and Slavin (2007) note unethical conduct has reached crisis on today’s college campuses (Floyd, Xu, Atkins, & Caldwell, 2013).

The importance of teaching ethics in higher education has been discussed for years (Sims, 2002). Weber (2006) points out that colleges are not adequately responding to the call for ethics education. To respond to this crucial challenge, Weber (2006) reviewed the previous literature on the effectiveness of ethics initiatives in academic institutions and suggested five elements to develop ethics programs effectively in an academic environment: (1) leadership’s commitment to ethics, (2) a centralized office, (3) a code of ethics, (4) ethics courses, and (5) assessment. In addition to Weber’s (2006) five factors, we may consider another key factor in implementing ethics education programs in universities. It is the benefits for the students who are enrolled in an ethics education program. With these benefits, universities may recruit more students participating in the programs.

[Figure 1] Six factors to make ethics education effective in universities.



We investigate how the Catholic University of Korea (CUK) develops, introduces, and implements its own ethics program—the Ethical Leader Rearing Program (ELP), a university-wide ethics education program. The ELP is not a compulsory program, but many benefits are given to the students who complete the ELP—scholarships, preference in selection for exchange students and overseas culture explorations, preference in job recommendations, the ELP certificates at the commencement, and the ELP performance records in transcripts.

II. The Catholic University of Korea’s Ethics Leader Program

The Catholic University of Korea (CUK) implements a university-wide ethics program to raise ethical business members and leaders named the Ethics Leader Program (ELP). In this section, we analyze the process of the ELP using the six factors.

1. Leadership’s Commitment to Ethics in the ELP

The leadership of senior managers is an important factor in determining the success of a program in any organization. Thus, in a university, president, vice presidents, and deans must be committed to making ethics education programs successful. In order to build an ethics education program, a task force team needs to be created, and the participating faculty and staff on the team need to be fully supported by the university administration. It is also important that the team manager’s goals for the ethics education program be expressed in a mission statement. As Procario-Foley and Bean (2002) argue, a mission statement is one of the strongest indexes of an ethical organizational culture.

Dr. Yeong-Sik Pahk, who became the 5th president of the CUK in January 2009, believed that universities should lead in the restoration of human values by implementing education that teaches respect for others. Accordingly, he emphasized that the university’s biggest task in the 21st century is to develop leaders with holistic cultivation who will take care of their neighbors and regional society. In his Message from the President, Pahk said, “The CUK will present to the world not just competent but also ethical and trustworthy leaders with genuine concern for humanity upon graduation” (www.catholic.ac.kr, 2012). The ELP program of the CUK reflects such commitment by

President Pahk, who has been trying to develop students at the university who are not only professionally competent but also ethically responsible.

(1) Mission Statement of the CUK

The founding ideology of the CUK is that it is a “University of Human Respect,” and its educational mission is based on “Truth, Love, and Service Rooted in the Catholic Spirit.” (www.catholic.ac.kr, 2012). It seems that the university’s founding ideology is being actualized in the ELP program.

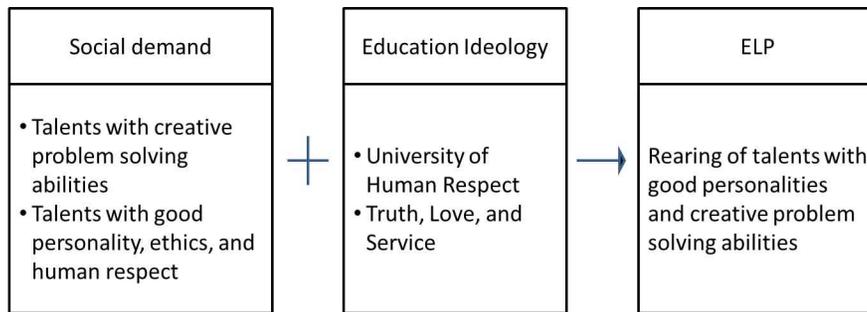
(2) Setting Up the Education Process Research Committee

In 2006, the CUK set up the Education Process Research Committee in order to maximize the educational capacity that distinguishes the CUK from other schools and clarifies the educational goals and characteristics of general and specific courses. The committee carried out research to establish an educational procedure that could respond to the demands of society and realize the educational ideology of the university. The committee obtained the following results (Committee for ELP Improvement, 2010). First, when they analyzed the responsibility that today’s society placed on universities, they found that society pursued two essentially objectives: (1) development of students’ talents and creative problem-solving abilities, and (2) development of ethical qualities such as an upright character, morality, and respect for other people. In order to lead in the current information-based society, where cutting-edge technologies are rapidly growing and international competition is becoming more intense, society needs citizens who can select necessary information from various sources, convert such information into creative ideas to solve challenging problems. They also learned that, in the current world, where the lack of morality among the learned is found in all parts of society, and where the value of life and moral codes are often overlooked, it is important to educate students who respect human life and have the power of execution to care for others to serve society (Committee for ELP Improvement, 2010).

Based on this understanding, the CUK strived to establish an education process that could actualize the university’s founding ideology—a University of Human Respect—and its educational ideology—Truth, Love, and Service—to meet the demands of society. These findings led to the creation of the ELP, which was designed to develop

individuals who have both human respect and creative problem-solving abilities. The ELP is a program that grows leaders who “directly face our society’s problems, manage conflicts between various groups through understanding and regard for others, and realize world peace and universal truth by having a sound vision about the future and solving problems so that each and every participant can work at their full capabilities” (Committee for ELP Improvement, 2010) (refer to Figure 2).

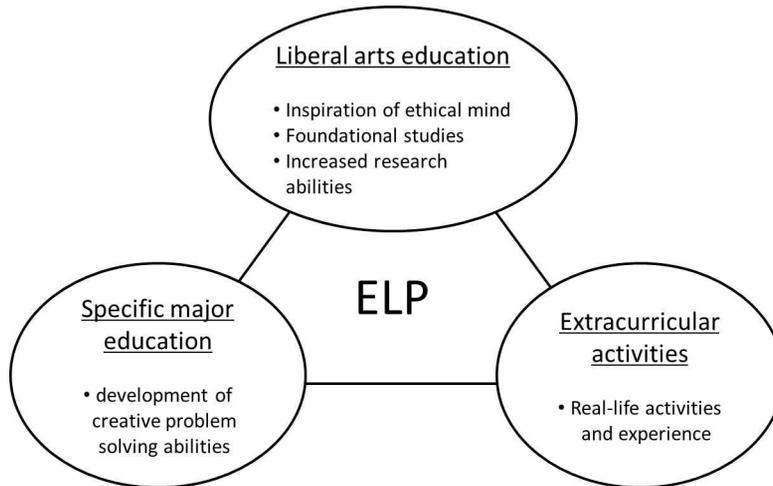
[Figure 2] The goal of the ELP



(3) Organizing a Committee for Preparation for the ELP

The Committee for Preparation for the ELP was organized in 2007. It began with analyzing problems in the existing education process. As a result, it discovered that the current process, which was composed of the 6-credit-hour ethics courses for human respect, the 6-credit-hour education in creative problem solving as a basic ability, and the ethics education in individual major program, was not organized systematically. The committee also found that the students’ extracurricular activities were managed separately from curricular activities. For the most part, the extracurricular activities relied on each student’s voluntary participation, and, accordingly, were being carried out only sporadically and randomly without any organic systemization. The committee, therefore, reached a conclusion that (1) liberal arts education, (2) specific-major education, and (3) extracurricular activities should be managed from a comprehensive perspective (Committee for ELP Improvement 2010) (refer to Figure 3). This conclusion played a major role in introducing the ELP in the first semester of 2008 as the University’s special program.

[Figure 3] The ELP’s three components



(4) The ELP’s Mission Statement

The ELP has a mission statement of its own. In the CUK University Catalog, the ELP is introduced as “a program that aims at raising leaders equipped with both ethical personalities internalized with respect for life and humans and creative problem solving capacities necessary in educated specialists” (CUK’s university catalog, 2012).

2. Centralized Office for the ELP

Guelcher and Cahalane (1999) state that for an ethics program to succeed it is important that a single department oversee and manage all the activities associated with the program. They argue that an ethics program should have a central department conveying clear and well-articulated messages about ethics.

(1) Committee for the ELP Improvement

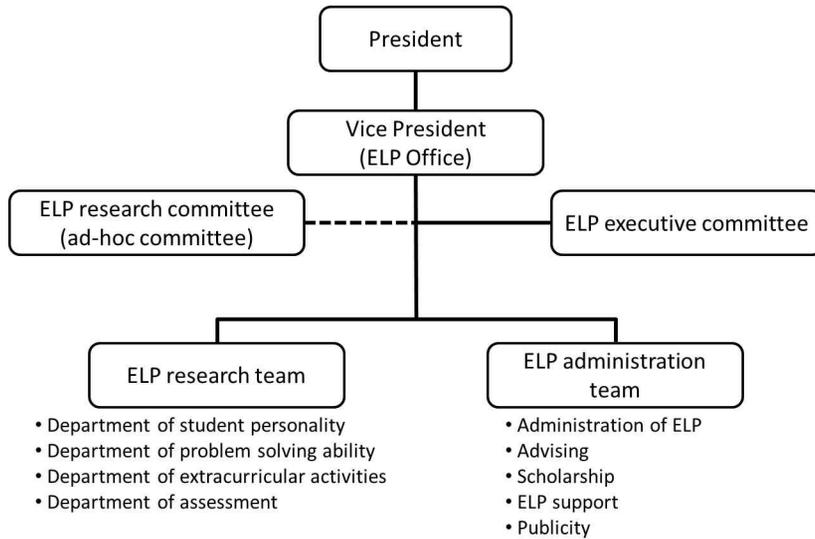
Although the ELP was intended to be an educational model for other universities, a host of problems occurred, while the program was implemented. The problems are (1) the planning and implementing of the program had not been coordinated because different departments had not been cooperated, (2) the university’s support was not

enough, (3) the program was not good enough for the participants to develop ethical leadership and (4) there had not been an assessment measure. To cope with the situation, in the summer of 2009, three semesters after the beginning of the ELP, the Committee for the ELP Improvement was organized. The Committee held ten meetings from July to December in 2009 and visited other universities to benchmark their programs. As a result, the committee recommended the following improvements (Committee for ELP Improvement, 2010). First, it was suggested that an independent executive department of the ELP should be established that could comprehensively manage the ELP's research, management, and support. Second, it was pointed out that the university's executive support and financial resources dedicated to the program were inadequate for the actual management of the ELP. Third, it was noted that the ELP's extracurricular activities were simply experiential learning, which meant that a new form of extracurricular activities were needed that could increase students' proactive and self-motivated studying abilities and their understanding of and regard for others. Fourth, it was suggested that an active adviser program be established to turn the ELP into a lifetime education program. Finally, it suggested that there should be an evaluation standard that could be used to measure how much real effect the program have.

(2) The ELP Office and Related Departments

For activation and constant improvement of the ELP, the CUK now has an independent ELP office, which is equipped with management, research, and executive support. The organizational structure of the office is shown in Fig. 4. In particular, to manage efficiently and systematically the credit courses related to community service as components of the ELP, the CUK plans to establish a "Community Service Center" within the university. The Center provides the participating students with experience in helping needy neighbors and encourage them to open their minds toward neighbors and the world at large, which is the first stage in the development of a real ethical outlook.

[Figure 4] Organization structure of the ELP undergraduate office



3. Code of Ethics of the ELP

Codes of ethics have been suggested as a means to encourage higher ethical standards (Berkman, 1977; Boling, 1978; Woelfel, 1986). McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (1996) find that a code of ethics systemizes students' ethical reasoning and that the students in an institution with a code of ethics are less likely to lie compared with those in an institution without a code of ethics. They argue that a code of ethics plays an important role in creating and maintaining an ethical environment in a university. Likewise, Mizutani, Chairman of the Japan Society for Business Ethics, states that in order for ethical management to stabilize into behavioral guidelines within an organization, a documented code of ethics is a prerequisite (水谷, 2003).

4. Ethics Courses in the ELP

Trevino and McCabe (1994) argue that, in a business school environment stand-alone ethics courses should be prominent in the early stages of the curriculum and that ethics instruction should be gradually integrated into later business courses. Sims (2002) also argues that ethics education should go beyond simply creating some ethics

courses and that it can be only successful when ethics is comprehensively absorbed into the overall curriculum.

(1) The ELP's Requirements

The ELP comprises 25 credit hours of academic courses (University General Education Core: 16 hours; Core Ethics Course: 3 hours; Personality: 3 hours; Problem Solving: 3 hours) and required extracurricular courses (completion of more than 70 points). Table 3 summarizes the 25 credit hours of the ELP.

[Table 1] The ELP's Curricular Requirements

	Humanities		Problem Solving	
	Courses	Hours	Courses	Hours
University general education core	Humanities 1, 2	4	CAP (Creativity, Analytical competence, and Problem-solving competence) 1, 2	4
	Spiritual, Community Service	4	English	4
Common course	Ethics	3	-	-
Courses for major	ELP course for major	3	ELP course for major	3
	Total	14	Total	11

In order to get the ELP certificate, a student's final grade point average (GPA) must be 3.0 or above, and the average ELP-related academic course grade should be at least 3.0. On the other hand, in extracurricular activities, at least 20 points each in personality and problem solving and a total of at least 70 points are required, as shown in Table 2.

[Table 2] The ELP's Extracurricular Requirements

A. Humanities Fields

Humanities		
Service	Helping farmers	30 points for more than 30hours
	Helping handicapped students	
	Helping foreign students	
	Korean language tutoring	
	Community service	
	Helping needy people	
Leader	Leaders in student organizations	20 points for president, 10 points for executive member for one year of service
	Student ambassador	
	Work for university newspaper	
Experiential Learning	Spiritual mentoring program	10 points
	Experience in monastery	20 points
	Multi-culture experience	10 points / activity
	Life and human experience	10 points/ experience

B. Problem-Solving Fields

Problem Solving		
Intramural	Academic research paper	20 points for award 10 points for participation
	Self-directed learning, faculty-student mentoring	20 points for award
	Computer-based learning	15 points for student lecturer
	SOS class (Remedial Education Requests)	15 points for student lecturer
	Participate as educational panel	10 points for participation
	Learning by reading program	5 - 10 points for participation
	Idea or case competition for ethics practice	5 - 10 points for award
	Presentation of ELP leader	20 points for award 10 points for participation
	Career development program	5 points
Extramural	Academic research paper award outside of campus	20 points for award
	National discussion competition award	20 points for award
	Internship	5 points

5. Assessment of the ELP

Developing a scale to measure the success of an ethics program is a very important task (Weber, 2006). Hazen, G. F. Cavanagh, and Bossman (2004) report outcome measures to show the effects that the ethics courses in an MBA program have on students. One of the scales measured the students' awareness of the mission of the College of Business. Students reported much better understanding of the college's mission after taking the ethics courses than before.

For the assessment of the ELP, the students' satisfaction with the activities were assessed after the students participated in the Giving, Sharing, and Respecting life activities, part of the ELP's extracurricular activities. The participants' responses show that they were satisfied with the activities (a 4.20 on a 5 scale, 1—"very dissatisfied", 5—"very satisfied").

We surveyed 250 students in the CUK. Participants for the study were recruited from the undergraduate classes in business administration composed of various majors at the CUK. To represent the population in terms of student classification and enrollment in the ELP, we conducted stratified sampling. Students voluntarily completed an in-class pencil-and-paper questionnaire, the exact purpose of which was not initially disclosed. Students were instructed to evaluate business ethics of an anonymous company based on the information presented about the company activities. This survey was completed within 10 minutes at the end of class sessions. Out of the 250 participants, 246 students completed the questionnaire. Furthermore, we removed the respondents who left many questions unanswered and ended up 237 valid respondents for our analysis.

Ethical sensitivity, the key outcome variable, was measured by asking the students to evaluate the ethics of business practices on a seven point scale, where 7 is completely ethical and 1 is completely unethical. In this measure, we used three specific business practices from Sturdivant and Cocanougher (1973). The business practices are: (1) "A well-known magazine, very popular with teenagers, obtains a large portion of its advertising revenue from cigarette companies," (2) "A manufacturer of household products uses TV commercials which have been described as 'an insult to the intelligence and good taste of the viewing audience.' However, according to the president of the company, the commercials do a good job of selling the product and will be continued," and (3) "A development company advertises that its housing project is only a

15-minute drive from the downtown area. It is true that under ideal traffic conditions, and driving at the maximum legal speed, a person can make the trip in about 15 minutes. Under typical rush-hour conditions, however, the trip takes 25 to 45 minutes.” We aggregated the scores of these three items to form a composite score of student’s ethical sensitivity.

We used a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test whether the ELP is effective to improve the student’s ethical sensitivity. We compared the average value of the student’s ethical sensitivity between the group enrolled in the ELP and the ones not enrolled. As Table 1 shows, the program participating students are more ethically sensitive than the non-participants ($p = 0.009$).

[Table 3] One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Test

	Group Enrolled in ERP (n=107)	Group Not Enrolled in ERP (n=130)	F	Sig.
Student’s Ethical Sensitivity	15.30 (2.01)	14.54 (2.39)	6.851	0.009

() : standard deviation

6. Benefits for the students who participate in the ELP

The CUK’s ELP program provides benefits to its program participants. In the program, those who complete the ELP are given benefits such as scholarships, preference in selection for exchange students and overseas culture explorations, preference in job recommendations, the ELP certificates at the commencement, and the ELP performance records in transcripts. More specifically, for students who have completed at least 16 credits of the ELP subjects with a 3.5 GPA or above, scholarships are given. Next, when students obtain additional points in the “personality” section, they can increase their chances for exchange students. Lastly, those who have taken the ELP courses are given priority during the first document-selection process for overseas culture exploration applications.

III. Conclusion and Discussion

This research is aimed at promoting ethics education at universities. Toward that end, we used a Catholic university of Korea as a case. Specifically, we analyzed the school's ethics education program (i.e., the Ethics Leader Rearing Program) in terms of the six factors to provide insights into how universities can make such education effective. The program of interest is summarized as follows. First, the president of the university has a strong commitment to ethics education and that the ELP committee has shown dedicated efforts. Second, associated with a centralized ethics office, the university has an independent body called the "ELP Office" for effective support and promotion of the program. Third, an ELP mission statement has been created and emphasized. Fourth, content emphasizing ethics has been well integrated into academic and extracurricular requirements. Five, an evaluation standard associated with the examination of the program is in the process of being developed. Lastly, benefits for the students who are enrolled in the ELP are provided.

This study has the following limitations.

Our study is based on one school's example. Therefore, to ensure the positive impact of ethics education in the college environment, we would like to encourage ethics researchers to find other similar cases. More cases would allow us to evaluate what factors work and what factors do not work.

Furthermore, the ethical training for the faculty and staffs in the ELP has not been considered. The effectiveness of the ethics education program may be affected by the ethical perception or behavior of the faculty and staffs who implement the program.

Lastly, we only compared program participants and non-participants and did not look into how much of education would be effective according to the participant's individual characteristics. Learning about how much ethics education would be proper will help implement such programs more efficiently with diversified programs for specific groups of students. It would be worthwhile to extend this stream of research to non-students with multiple-years of actual social and business life because they may possess very different ethical views from students.

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윤리적 리더 양성: 가톨릭대 사례를 중심으로

박형진·문상길·김기찬·김용철·김성진

비윤리적 행동은 심각한 조직위기를 야기할 수 있는 반면, 윤리적 경영규범의 확립은 조직의 경쟁우위를 제고할 수 있다. 그러므로 조직들은 유능할 뿐 아니라 윤리적이고 사회적 책임을 수행할 수 있는 인재들을 고용하고자 한다. 그 결과로 대학에서 윤리교육의 중요성이 날로 증시되고 있다. 윤리적 리더의 중요성은 이제 어떻게 대학에서 윤리적 리더를 양성할 것인가 하는 질문을 던지고 있다.

본 연구는 대학 환경 내에서 효과적인 윤리교육 프로그램을 개발하는데 있어서 Weber (2006)가 주장한 다섯 가지 요소 및 윤리교육 프로그램에 참여한 학생들에게 제공되는 효익이라는 요인들에 기반하여, 가톨릭대학이 어떻게 윤리적 리더를 양성하는가에 대해 알아본다.

이 연구는 윤리교육 프로그램을 개발하고 수행하고자 하는 다른 대학들에게 지침이 될 수 있을 것이다.

핵심어: 윤리적 리더, 효과적인 리더 양성 프로그램
