



**Addressing the institutional ethos:
The process of developing the
Ethical Code for the Faculty of
Industrial Engineering at the
Universidad Politécnica, Valencia
(SPAIN)**

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1. Introduction
2. Ethical codes as a means of organisational improvement
3. Critical-hermeneutics process for developing a professional code of ethics
4. Conclusions



1. Introduction

- The institutional ethos is extremely important in the individual decision making process
- They are not likely to commit to making changes in society unless the institutions in which the person have trained display a similar commitment.



1. Introduction

- Tertiary institutions have different instruments to deal with the institutional ethos:
 - training programmes addressed to teachers and staff,
 - courses, conferences and workshops which deal with different matters related to ethical issues,
 - social Responsibility reports,
 - ethical self-regulation instruments (ethical codes).



2. Ethical codes as a means of organisational improvement

- An ethical code is expression of: “the desire to formulate an organisation’s shared responsibilities in a reflective way and express publicly the criteria, values and aims which identify it”

(Lozano; J. M^a., 1997: 186).



2. Ethical codes as a means of organisational improvement

- Characteristics we consider are essential in a true ethical code:
 - The reflective method for formulating responsibilities.
 - Responsibilities and commitments must be shared
 - The commitments must be made public
 - The code must be a well-organised set of aims, values and criteria.



2. Ethical codes as a means of organisational improvement

- Ethical code functions
 - The *regulatory function* has three different aspects:
 - Guidelines
 - Contract
 - Judicial
 - The *ideological function*. The ideas which professionals have about the activity they perform and the attitudes required in order to be an excellent professional.



2. Ethical codes as a means of organisational improvement

	COMPLIANCE APPROACH	INTEGRITY APPROACH
Ethos	In accordance to externally imposed rules	Self-control according to chosen standards
Objective	To prevent criminal behaviour	To favour responsible behaviour
Behaviour	Independent beings guided by their own material interests	Social beings guided by material interests, values and ideas

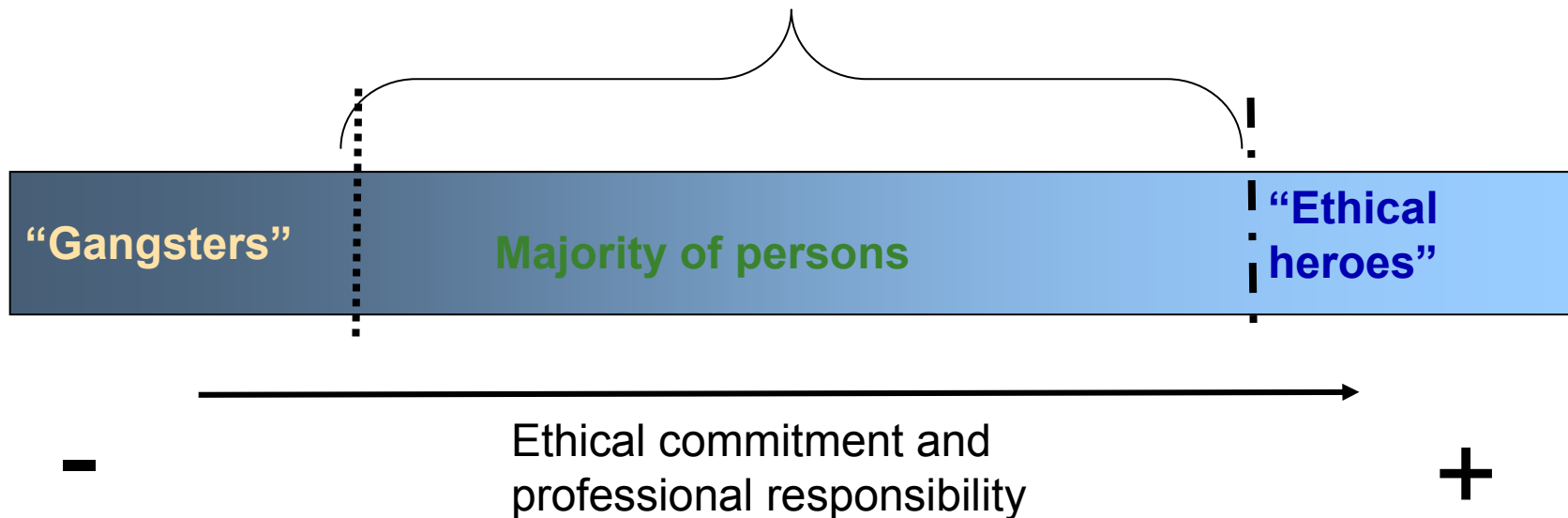
Source: Steinmann / Scherer, 1998b: 25.

3. The critical hermeneutic process of producing the ethical code for the Faculty of Industrial Engineering in Valencia (ETSII)

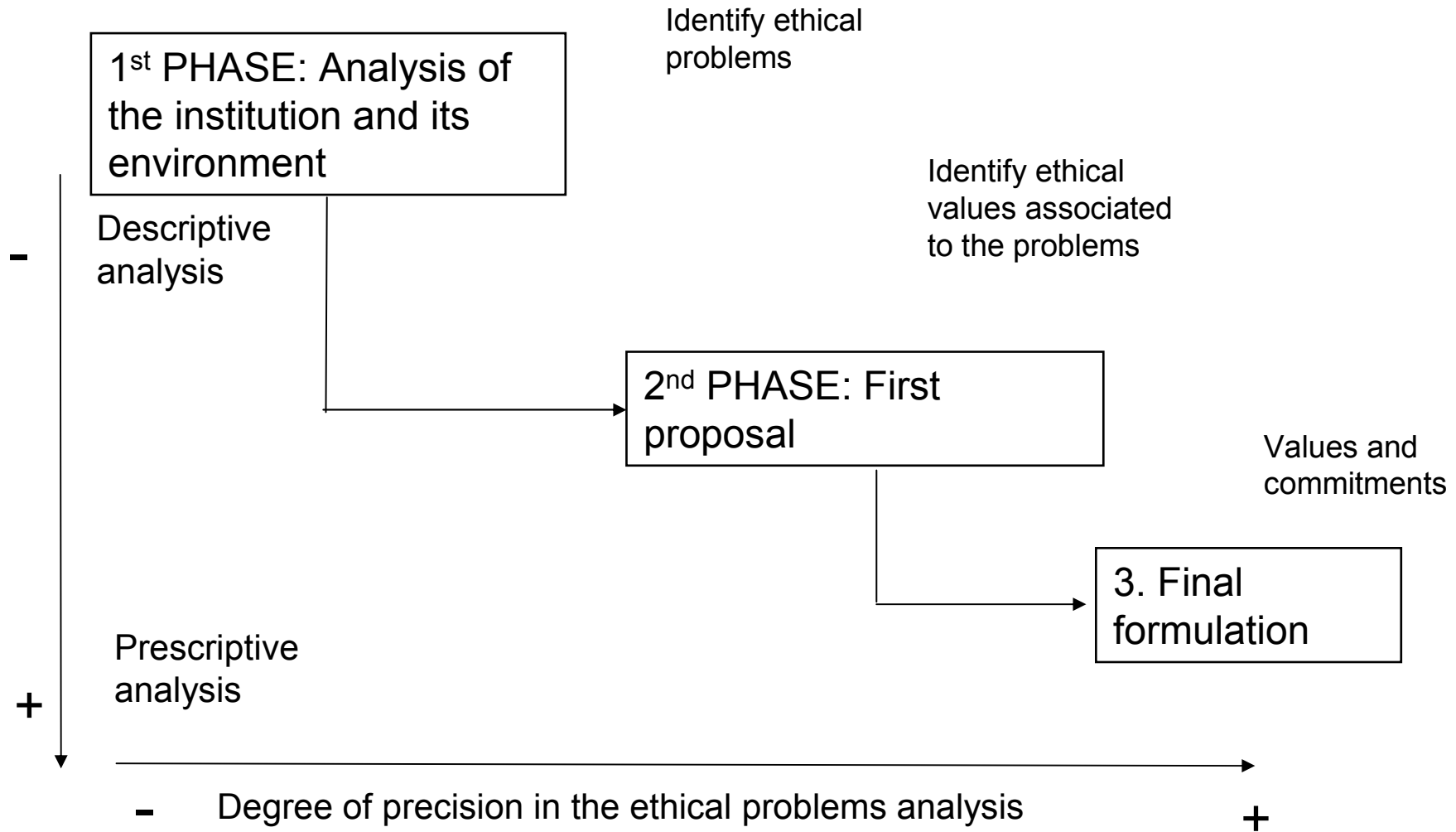


Object of the code:

“to improve persons’ ethical commitment and encourage the voluntary acceptance of responsibility”



3. The critical hermeneutic process of producing the ethical code for the Faculty of Industrial Engineering in Valencia (ETSII)

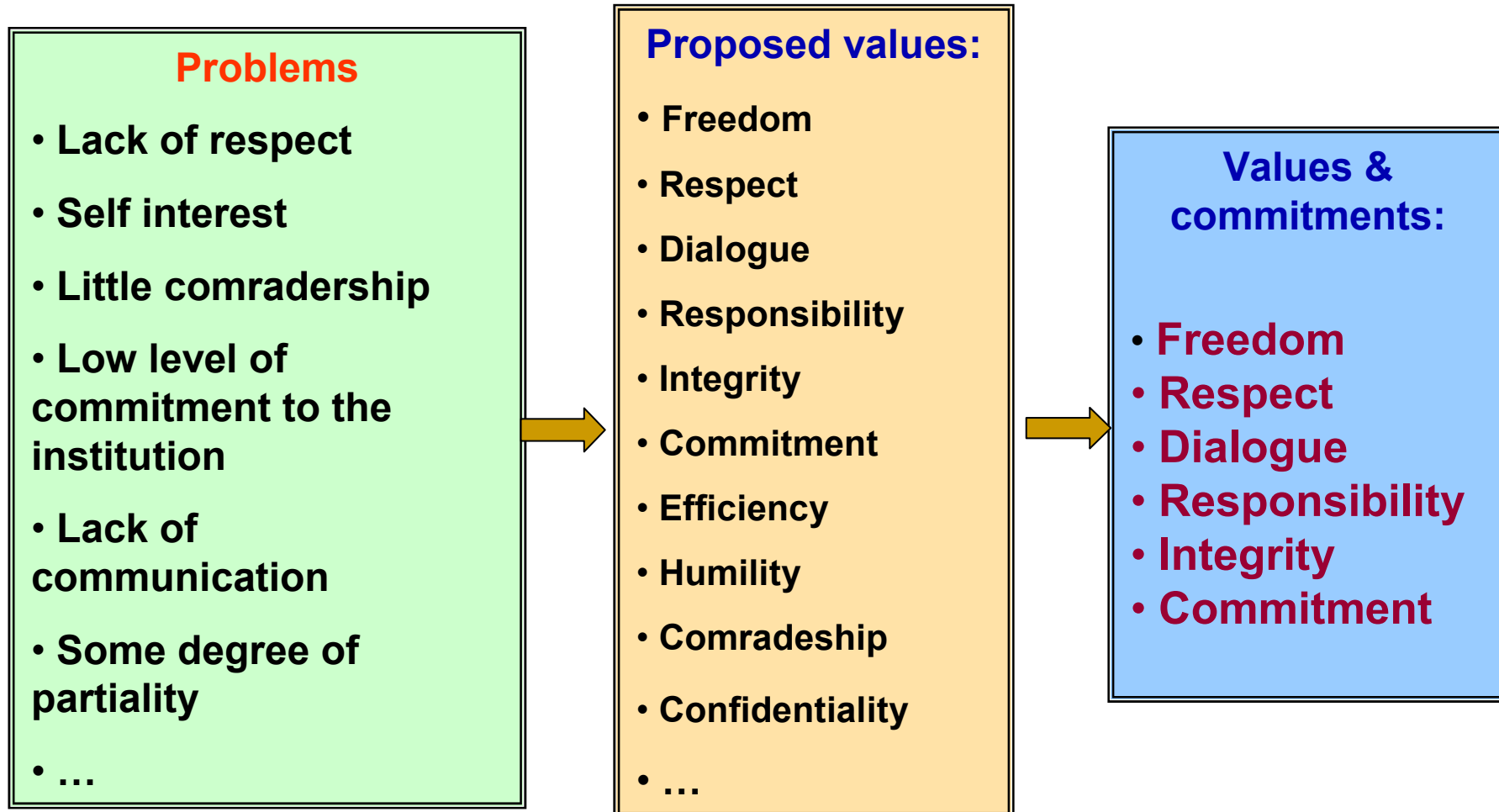


3. The critical hermeneutic process of producing the ethical code for the Faculty of Industrial Engineering in Valencia (ETSII)



PHASE	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evaluate sensitivity to ethical problems ■ Identify the ethical problems and their causes ■ Identify ethical values present in the Engineering Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Study of the relevant documents ■ In-depth interviews with “key informers”: Teachers (5), Staff (8) and Students (8) ■ Meetings with management
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Produce a basic document including the values derived from the problems and the ethical values proposed by the Students, Teachers and Staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Questionnaire for Teacher (62) and Staff (11) ■ Group dynamics with Students (260)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Produce a definitive document on professional values and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Three group dynamics with professors and staff (30). ■ Analysis of the provisional proposal with independent experts (5) ■ Meetings with members of the board of directors (10)

3. Critical-hermeneutics process for the development of a professional code of ethics



Example of values and commitments



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RESPECT

Recognition of the equal dignity of all people is the essence of any ethical conduct.

Discrimination based on religion, race, gender or culture is inadmissible in ETSII.

Respect means making the effort to understand those who are different and cooperate with them; and foster equal opportunities for everybody.

We undertake to:

- *Respect ideological pluralism and cultural diversity.*
- *To evaluate everyone's efforts in accordance with criteria of equity, impartiality and transparency.*
- *Recognise our colleagues' work and not appropriate material or documents belonging to others without their consent.*
- *Never divulge private and/or confidential information.*
- *Reply to any questions and criticisms put forward in good faith.*
- *Make every effort to achieve equal opportunities for people with disabilities.*
- *Promote social responsibility and cultural sensitivity in all our spheres of action.*
- *Foster respect for linguistic and cultural plurality in our Region.*
- *Take into account the ecological impact of all our work and take the initiative to promote greater environmental responsibility.*
- *Present our criticisms and objections in a polite and well-argued manner.*
- *Not offer criticism in bad faith nor make unfounded accusations.*



4. CONCLUSIONS

1. Teacher involvement has been noticeably lower than that of the Administrative staff
2. There is general agreement on the ethical problems detected by the teachers, students and administrative staff.
3. The people who participated in the process of drawing up the ethical code valued the initiative positively but were doubtful about how it would develop

4. CONCLUSIONS



4. The commitment from the Engineering Faculty's Board of Directors has been a key element in facilitating the project and its future development.
5. The Critical-hermeneutics methodology allowed us to elaborate a code that responds to the real problems of the institution in the concrete cultural and socioeconomic environment.
6. Deeper research is needed to confirm the impact of this code



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