Ethics at the University: the sky is the limit
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University professors have several tasks: education, research and public service. During the last years each task, especially research, is more and more evaluated. Therefore the universities use criteria and targets. However, it is difficult for the professors to define the objectives, to precise the importance of each objective and the consequences of each objective. In research there is the mission of excellence, in education there are the needs of the students.  However the time that has been used for research cannot be used for education and the other way around. It is not always clear how to manage this trade-offs. The incentives from the university are not unambiguous. Moreover the evaluation never allows that what the professors have done, is enough. The feedback is always: more publications, more research, more phd’s… the sky is the limit, but the sky has no limits… This creates an uncomfortable feeling of distrust, uncertainty and rival. In this situation, the risk is great that the actors develop an “ethics of egoism” and “pragmatic utilitarianism”. As a consequence, we lack the most important form of ethics: the ethics of responsibility. We need more and clear incentives for professors to take their responsibility for the university as an institution, for the students as the future of our society, for our peers as our colleagues. I agree that we need evaluations, but the evaluation should ameliorate the work of professors. Nowadays, it is not always clear that this is indeed the case…