Ethical Issues for Universities in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century

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In 1967 Ginsberg became the first faculty member named to the new Penn State campus near Philadelphia. He has served as Director, Colloquium for Social Philosophy; Director, Advanced Studies Project; Founder, Peace studies Committee; Founder, Symposium on Value Studies; and coordinator for academic programs in Philosophy, Classics, Comparative Literature, and Non-Western Studies.


Ginsberg was Founder and Editor in Chief. Social Philosophy Research Institute Book Series (University Press of America). He is Executive Editor, Journal of Value Inquiry. He has served as President, American Society for Value Inquiry; President, Conference of Philosophical Societies; and Executive Director, Conference on Value Inquiry.

Prof. Ginsberg writes about his topic:

A university, whether in Hong Kong or in Philadelphia, must give attention to ethics as a field of study at the core of being human. And a university, like other professional and social institutions, must see that its internal activities are conducted ethically.

But a university does not exhaust its ethical service by making room for the
subject matter and by conducting itself properly. For the university itself may become a significant power for the good of the community. Human betterment has really been the goal of every university. Such betterment takes the form of an increase of knowledge, but also of an expansion of understanding. It takes the form of improvement of practices, say in agriculture, and the preparation of professionals, such as medical doctors. But it also improves human relationships and prepares studies to be better citizens of the planet earth.

While we may list many specific goods that universities offer, we should recognize that the overall aim is the human good, whether for the immediate community, the nation, or even a larger community.

What is the largest community which the university is being called upon to serve as we move toward the twenty-first century? The world. Universities have been rapidly developing in the twentieth century to world-consciousness. Student taught in any one university become ethically aware of their ties to humanity everywhere. Scholarship by its internal workings becomes international.

An international community of scholars is being formed in every field. Then the whole world will benefit from the activities of scholars and universities all over the world.

Universities in the twenty-first century may be of great help in the evolution of a global ethical community in which people everywhere recognize a shared humanity. This enlarged mission of the university is facilitated by exchange of scholars, internationalization of courses of study, multi-cultural extracurricular programs, electronic communication, and new programs in peace studies. I will examine each of these features which may turn each university into a world university meant to benefit the entire human community by such ethical service.