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Justice for All? Anti-Corruption Studies at Ukrainian Law School

Since the 1970s the Soviet law schools have included to their curricula such academic disciplines as “Legal deontology”, “Professional ethics of a lawyer”. Their role in shaping the outlook of the future lawyers had been undermined by the shattering double standards of socialism. After the collapse of the USSR, the moral standards of the legal profession were still of no great concern for all the main stakeholders of legal education, while the anti-corruption legislation was usually covered by the curriculum of Criminal Law. The Revolution of Dignity has proclaimed a new vision for the development of Ukrainian society, stressing the importance of elaborating independent and transparent institutional mechanisms in public policy and business. The key to successful implementation of these reforms is primarily the fulfillment of Ukraine’s international obligations, supported by a brand-new generation of lawyers, brought up outward the post-Soviet educational heritage. The paper aims to take a critical eye on the anticorruption component of the new higher legal education concept, with a special regard to the high level of tolerance to the informal payments and academic dishonesty in Ukrainian universities. The methodological framework of teaching anticorruption disciplines is based on the content analysis of independent surveys and a case study of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University. The author concludes that a higher level of legal culture in universities is a sine qua non for developing exclusive professional and personal qualities of lawyers, hence – restoring confidence in the judiciary, the prosecutor’s office, and other law enforcement agencies.