

GUIDANCE SERVICE MODELS OF UNIVERSITIES IN FRANCE, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND SPAIN

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Con la implantación del nuevo modelo universitario del Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES), los Servicios de Orientación en la Etapa Terciaria son imprescindibles como apoyo a los estudiantes en aspectos académicos, personales, toma de decisiones, itinerarios y salidas profesionales. Este estudio se ha llevado a cabo a través del análisis cualitativo de la información que ofrece la página Web de estos servicios en universidades de España, Francia, Estados Unidos, Canadá y Reino Unido. Para ello, se ha diseñado una rejilla de evaluación que consta de una parte general (visibilidad, navegación, enlaces, etc.) y otra específica relativa al campo de la orientación (futuros estudiantes, familia, alumni, etc.). Los resultados obtenidos nos permiten conocer cuáles son los aspectos importantes que se deben contemplar en todo Servicio de Orientación Universitario, así como generar un modelo de Servicio de Orientación para las Universidades españolas.

Palabras clave: Educación terciaria, Servicios de orientación universitarios, TIC, Orientador universitario.

With the introduction of the new European Higher Education Area (EHEA) university model, guidance services in tertiary education are essential to support students in academic, personal, decision-making aspects and for career paths and opportunities. This study was based on qualitatively analyzing the information provided about these services on the websites of universities in Spain, France, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. For this purpose, a repertory grid was designed, which comprises a general part (overview, browser, links, etc.) and a more specific one relating to the field of guidance (future students, family, alumni, etc.). The results obtained allow us to know not only the important aspects that must be considered in all university guidance services, but also how to construct a guidance service model for Spanish universities.

Key words: Higher education, University guidance services, ICTs, University counsellor.

In higher education, student guidance should be understood as the planned functions of guidance and support for students within an institutional system. In the analysis of various organizational proposals of guidance systems, the coincidence of certain basic organizational elements stands out: the previous analysis of the needs of the institution, the evolutionary nature of the guidance functions (before, during and after completion of studies) and attention to various areas (academic, professional and personal support). Moreover, most of the proposals coincide in pointing to the eminently preventive character of guidance.

When giving guidance regarding a transition of a complex nature, in which the principle of "learning to learn" takes maximum validity, as well as the need for a thorough understanding of the students' personal and professional development, the need to invest in basic training, the development of creativity, communication and leadership skills, and the need to adapt to change, it

is necessary to take into account the new reality of higher education. Álvarez and Fita (2005) highlight the following features of the new scenario: a) a greater diversity of university students, b) maximum validity of the principle of learning to learn, c) implementation of new ways of learning, d) increased optionality in the curriculum, e) life-long education, f) the need to update professional knowledge, g) less linear educational trajectories, h) expiration of technological knowledge, i) the need to innovate and adapt to change, j) the need to integrate our university system into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

This new educational scenario will guarantee the students sufficient and up-to-date professional knowledge, as well as providing training to prepare them for life. For this, students will need support in order to integrate socially in the new educational context, to identify with the institution and meet new academic requirements, etc., which will require the help of all stakeholders to define their personal and professional plans.

Coordination and cooperation with secondary schools is important, on a preventive level, to facilitate adaptation to university life and to develop in students the skills they will

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need in this stage of their education. Accordingly, mentoring and the role of the university tutor are considered key elements in the overall development of the individual. However, it should also be noted that the professional qualifications of the guidance counselor are necessary to carry out good guidance services.

In reality, the time at university can be considered as one of the transitions with the biggest consequences for the professional, social, personal and emotional development of students. They need the university to offer support in dealing with this transition and to train them for future transitions that they will have to face throughout their lives (Rodríguez Moreno, 2002). Both the variety of students and the changes in the systems of higher education imply the need for updated guidance and information, in a format that is tailored to the specific needs of different groups of students.

The importance of university guidance services in our country is currently supported by responding to the issues raised in the Statute of the Student (Royal Decree 1791/2010 of 30 December), since explicit reference is made to these services in Chapter XV "Services to university students" in Article 65, "Student care services".

At the European level, guidance services are considered very important in supporting students, especially for the successful development of the EHEA, in order to provide support in academic areas, decision making, and career paths and opportunities. All of this takes place from the perspective of prevention.

These services are crucial in a democratic society and offer feedback regarding the quality and development of the society. They are very important in tertiary education, especially in the internationalization of the student body, i.e., in all matters relating to the mobility of the students.

According to the Trends V report, guidance services cover the following aspects in European universities: Information on Studies (74% of universities), Academic Orientation (85%), Language Learning (85%) and Vocational Guidance (66%).

In the Lisbon conference, the importance was highlighted of careers guidance in the transition between secondary school and university, as well as between university and the world of work. It was also observed that guidance is especially important with regard to *lifelong learning* and *attention to diversity*, to avoid generating social inequalities.

At the Bergen conference, on the other hand, special emphasis was placed on the governments providing the

universities with these services to cater to students. Ultimately, guidance counseling services should extend to postgraduate students and promoting employability should also be one of their objectives.

In order to obtain the most global view of how university guidance services are organized, we chose to carry out a study on the universities of different countries: France, the USA, Canada, the UK and Spain.

METHOD

Participants

The universities analyzed in each country were:

- ✓ Universities in France: Paris 3; Paris 12; Lyon 2; Montpellier 1
- ✓ Universities in the USA: Oklahoma; The Shawnee State (Ohio); Minnesota; Illinois
- ✓ Universities in Canada: Montreal; Toronto; Vancouver; Saskatchewan
- ✓ Universities in the UK: Manchester; Queen Mary (London); Newcastle; Oxford
- ✓ Universities in Spain: Universidad de Alicante, Universidad de Almería, Universidad de Barcelona, Universidad de Extremadura, Universitat Jaume I, Universidad de La Laguna, Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Universidad de Oviedo, Universidad Politécnica de Valencia, Universidad Ramón Llull, Universidad de Valencia and Universidad de Valladolid

For the selection of universities in France, the United States, Canada and the UK, we took into account the information gathered through various reports from the European Commission, FEDORA (*Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique*) and journal articles that made special mention of these universities in relation to the good performance of their guidance services, citing them as examples of good practice.

For the selection of the Spanish universities we used as a reference the universities participating in the Research Group of Vocational / Professional University Guidance - GIAVPU-(Mora, 2008) as well as our knowledge of the current situation in universities from our own professional experience.

Instruments

For each university, we carried out an analysis of the guidance service through the information provided by the website in question. For the descriptive study of the website, we designed a repertory grid with a series of indicators, which provided in as much detail as possible



information on the functions that the guidance service offers. The grid comprises two parts, firstly the general part, which contained items such as:

- ✓ Visibility of the service within the website of the university
- ✓ Navigation
- ✓ Name of the service
- ✓ Identification of functions, such as counseling, clinical advice, employment, etc.
- ✓ Personal identification of service professionals, such as their photograph and curriculum relating to their work
- ✓ Data search within the website
- ✓ Existence of links of interest
- ✓ Physical location of the guidance service on campus

And the other part was more specifically related to the guidance service, analyzing information concerning:

- ✓ Future students
- ✓ Family / parents
- ✓ Alumni / friends of the university
- ✓ Guidance during the university period:
 - a) First year students
 - b) Personal guidance
 - c) Online presentation
 - d) Resources
 - e) Tutorials
 - f) Counseling
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Information center

RESULTS

French universities

Regarding the general aspects, visibility on the Web is very good, as it is very easy to identify the guidance service because it has the same name for all French universities: *Service Commun universitaire d'information, d'orientation et d'insertion professionnelle (SCUIO-IP)*.

Its internal navigation is very easy, since all functions are grouped into blocks, with very useful links to expand or search for more specific information.

The guidance service staff members are featured individually with a photo of each person and a short description of the area they serve (careers, academic, employment guidance counseling, etc.) Also displayed are the email addresses, phone numbers, fax and location on campus of the head of the guidance service.

The people providing this service are specialists in guidance, (clinical) counseling, employment and administrative support from information technicians.

There is a search engine on the website of these

universities allowing direct access to the different services.

Regarding the specific aspects:

- ✓ Prospective students: All universities maintain relationship with high school students. The *Service Commun Universitaire d'information, d'orientation et d'insertion professionnelle (SCUIO-IP)*, works in conjunction with the guidance counseling services of the secondary schools, with whom they hold open days, tours, information sessions, etc., serving students, counselors, teachers and/or parents.
- ✓ We have found no references to the figure of alumni / friends of the university.

With regards to guidance throughout the academic year, the following is provided:

- ✓ Special attention to first year students, in order to facilitate their adaptation and prevent academic failure.
- ✓ Individualized counseling through one-to-one interviews.
- ✓ There is guidance online through specific programs such as Inforizon, and mainly through Le Cyber-SCUIO.
- ✓ IT resources such as Pass Avenir.
- ✓ Tutorials: great importance is placed on tutorials in pairs
- ✓ There is a clear difference between guidance counselors and clinicians: *Counsellors d'orientation Psychologues (COP)*.
- ✓ The area of employment has great importance within the service, broadly addressing the issue of entry into the labor market.
- ✓ There is a well-equipped documentation center, with both direct and online consultation.

American Universities

Regarding the general aspects, the visibility of the guidance service websites is very good, adding important visual information (photos, videos, etc.) both of the guidance service (its location within the campus and the services incorporated), and the university.

Both the navigation and the personal identification of the staff members of these services are presented in the same format as the websites of the French universities we have mentioned above.

The name of these services is not the same in the various universities (Career Services, Career, University website followed by "Orient"), but they all have a search engine and, using the term "Career", we were able to locate all of the counseling services.



There are many links and these are of great interest, especially those connecting with government services, industry, associations, etc.

Regarding the specific aspects:

- ✓ Prospective students: great importance is attached to this issue, and a virtual campus tour is a common addition. There are links with high schools. The actual campus visit is usually carried out at the weekend (throughout the whole year), with the participation of college guidance counselors and university students from other years. A specific guidance program has been designed, aimed at both students wishing to enter the university and their parents.
- ✓ Family and parents: before starting university studies, we have already seen how special attention is paid to the family as playing an important role in their children's decisions regarding education.

At the university stage, parents have within the website of the university (in the toolbar) an exclusive block for them, where they are provided with all the information they need as well as a link to the guidance service of the university. Parent associations are also very important and have great influence within the university. Finally, there are specific guidance programs aimed at both parents of first year students and continuing throughout this period of their education.

- ✓ Alumni / friends of the university: these have a very important part in the organization of the university, they play a very active role and they also have a block dedicated to them in the toolbar. Their role is very much appreciated as a driving force in university life, however, specifically in the field of guidance counseling their actions are focused on: as tutors of undergraduate students; mentors for work placements; an active role in introduction into the labor market; influence of their political and social associations related to the university, participation in informative sessions and finally as a student ambassador when they go to live in another state or another country.

Regarding guidance throughout the academic year, we make the following observations:

- ✓ Special attention is given to first year undergraduate students.
- ✓ Personal guidance is offered through individual interviews (widely used by students), which are very easily accessible by students, since counselors are distributed within the campus in central services and in the various faculties. This is possible because these services are

contracted to companies that are external to the university.

- ✓ Online guidance is of great importance, using various tools such as: DISCOVER, SIGI-3, FOCUS, OKCIS.
- ✓ IT resources are also widely used in careers guidance; primarily online tests such as *Strong*, MBTI, SDS, etc. Additionally, the use of social networks such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* is emerging in the work of guidance and information.
- ✓ Tutoring is carried out by students from more senior years, lecturers and counselors. It should be noted that in some universities online 24 hour tutoring is becoming available.
- ✓ The clinical field (counseling) is of great importance and is more developed than that of careers guidance. Great consideration is given to the potential problems that the student may have, with an abundance of preventive online documentation, and the support of clinical specialists according to the issues raised (suicide, sexual, alcohol, etc.). Additionally, they usually have a 24 hour emergency phone number, which is advertised on the forums in which university students usually participate.
- ✓ Employment: the area of employment is very well structured and developed and is one of the features that the university "sells" as a quality indicator, hence the support of foundations of alumni and friends of the university. Online guidance predominates here, with the "Explore Your Future" program acquiring special relevance.
- ✓ Information Center: the documentary resources are extensive; there is a central service (usually with many computers) that allows students to access a large number of places to get the information they need.

In many cases these services are usually free for students, so the only requirement is access via passwords that the university gives to students. In other cases, students have to pay to access certain links.

Canadian universities

Regarding the general aspects, Canadian universities follow the same lines as those mentioned above (French and American). The difference is in the name, which depends on the area of origin: the Francophone areas use "Orientation Scolaire et Professionnel", while the Anglophones utilize "Career Counsellors".

The location of these services on campus is very visible and a highlight is the information that is provided to both



students and parents. There is also a calendar with the most important events.

Regarding the specific aspects:

- ✓ Prospective students: great attention is paid to these, since they also have a dedicated block in the menu bar of the university. Workshops, guidance seminars, visits and informative session are carried out. Work is carried out together with high school guidance counselors and an orientation week is held. As an interesting contribution, the student ambassador appears in secondary schools as part of the activities of the alumni association of the university, and this student ambassador has a timetable from Monday to Thursday from 17:00 to 21:00 via the Internet.
- ✓ Alumni / friends of the university: these associations provide special support in promoting employment possibilities for graduates from their university. They also collaborate in the orientation week. Additionally they support students during their time at university.

An aspect that distinguishes Canada from the other countries is that in Canadian universities there is an initiative for alumni with regards to lifelong learning.

As for guidance throughout the academic year, there are:

- ✓ Initiatives of support, information and guidance aimed at first year students.
- ✓ Personalized counseling from guidance professionals through individual interviews. Similarly there are "career planning" programs.
- ✓ Online orientation programs which the student can access, such as "learning to know yourself".
- ✓ IT resources that are very similar to those used by American universities; they use interest tests, questionnaires, personality tests etc. Likewise, *Twitter* and *Facebook* are also used, as sources of information and guidance.
- ✓ Mentoring is conducted by more senior level students and is primarily academic, carried out through each degree program.
- ✓ The area of counseling is extremely relevant, as in American universities.
- ✓ Employment: the area of employment is one of the most important in the set of services offered by the university, with alumni playing an important role. There is a direct relationship between the university and various organizations and companies which facilitates the entry of its graduates into the labor market. As such, one of the most interesting projects being developed

- by universities in this field is the "Telemachus project"
- ✓ Information Center: there is usually a general resources center and other centers in the faculties. Access to these resources is often primarily online and large rooms are provided with computers for student use.

UK Universities

Regarding the general aspects, unlike the previous countries, in the English universities we have consulted, we see that visibility within the website is not very good; finding the guidance counseling services involved certain difficulty. Similarly, searching the website itself takes you to Google and not the Intranet.

Once you have located the guidance service, navigation is usually easy, although the organization of information often leads to different screens, so the overall picture of what we are looking for is lost.

The name of the university guidance counseling service varies among the different universities, so we have to resort to the generic term "career" and from there, analyze the various services available and focus on guidance. The location of the guidance services on campus does not usually appear, nor do the profiles of the professionals working there.

In short, this general analysis shows a clear difference from the universities in the countries analyzed above, since it is not at the same level as these in terms of the visual, graphical, location aspects, etc. In other words, the websites of these guidance services should be improved for ease of reference.

Regarding the specific aspects:

- ✓ Prospective students: the university counseling service produces an abundance of information online, allowing access to prospective students and their parents, as well as secondary school guidance counselors. Seminars are usually conducted, with the visits being an important part of the initiatives aimed at them. These are carried out by more senior level students. Also there is a student ambassador from the university linked with the secondary school where he or she studied.
- ✓ Family/Parents: these follow virtually the same practices as in previous studies, but we have to make special mention of the guides that are developed specifically for parents.

An interesting aspect that we wish to highlight is the initiative that takes place at the University of London. Here the families of alumni offer to host the families of new students for a weekend.



✓ Alumni/friends of the university: the support and involvement that alumni have for their university is customary in English universities. The university alumni directory plays an important role in society, both for finding employment for graduates as well as family support and mentoring students during their university life.

As for guidance throughout the academic year, we make the following observations:

- ✓ As we have seen throughout this study, the UK universities also provide special attention to the first year student, especially in two respects: in relation to academic performance and also in terms of guidance and decisions regarding degree options.
- ✓ Guidance is very personalized, through individual interviews. It tends more towards this format rather than group counseling or online programs.
- ✓ With regards to online guidance, some programs are being developed to provide this, but it is at the beginning stage. In this regard, we can cite the "Live Guidance System" program as one of the most accepted in this field.
- ✓ The IT resources are focused primarily on personality tests and programs such as Compass. *Twitter* and *Facebook* are also starting to be used with the same functions described above.
- ✓ Mentoring is usually carried out by students of a more senior level. As such, in relation to the first year students, mentoring is more directed at facilitating adaptation to and knowledge of life at university. In the final years, however, tutoring often becomes more academic; at the same time the figure of the mentor (former student) appears, offering support with regards to future employment.
- ✓ Counseling is at the same level as the universities studied previously. However we should highlight the very high number of self-help programs which appear in the English universities.
- ✓ Employment: they have a very well structured web portal on employment, in which alumni associations and friends of the university play a very important role. Also noteworthy is the highly personalized service to help the student find employment. There is a considerable amount of information online and many links.
- ✓ The information center: the information centers have many resources, both printed materials and online, etc. In some universities there is specific support staff, to help the student to obtain the maximum benefit from these resources.

The documentation in the center is grouped according to students, parents and guidance counselors.

Spanish universities

In Spain, the lack of legislation regarding university guidance services and the rapid proliferation of student support services have led to the organization of guidance in universities to move away from the concept of an institutionalized system.

However, the absence of a legislative framework has not been an obstacle to begin the process of institutionalization of university guidance that began in the late sixties with psychotechnical type guidance activities. In the nineties, the implementation in Spain of institutional plans for evaluating the quality of universities promoted the beginning of improvement actions related to the tutorial at the institutional level.

As is stated in several studies, the actual practice of university guidance counseling in our context is characterized by a very heterogeneous reality of services and consequently the panorama of university guidance counseling is dispersed, poorly structured and poorly systematized (Álvarez Rojo et al, 2000).

Of the research addressing this issue, we highlight the following studies:

- 1) The results of the study by Vidal, Díez and Vieira (2001) show that there is a clear tendency to give information (96%) and guidance (81%). However, other objectives have been detected that occur to a lesser extent, but which should be attributed a significant presence. These are: management (57%), training (41%), diagnosis (12%), research (7%) and evaluation (6%). The presence of these objectives shows that the services are expanding their areas of activity.
- 2) The recent report by the Ministry of Education and Science "Analysis of the information, guidance and support services provided by universities and use thereof by the university students" (Project EA2007-0235, 2008) includes a catalog of the services provided in the universities in terms of information, guidance, support and/or counseling to university students.

The report shows that one of the least common services among the universities studied is that of counseling. According to the report, only 69% of universities provide this service. It is also one of the least known services. Only 9.55% of university students who answered the questionnaire were aware of



educational guidance counseling services at the university. However, despite the lack of such a service and use thereof, it is one of the most valued services among university students, with a score of 7 out of 10.

3) The Research Group of Vocational / Professional University Guidance -GIAVPU- (Mora, 2008) developed a project on behavior and counseling in pre-university students. The research involved twelve Spanish universities (those in our sample) and obtained extensive information on the situation of the Spanish universities that took part in the research regarding university guidance services and their creation, operation, goals and objectives, as well as, where appropriate, the programs or activities developed.

4) In a recent review of the services dedicated to personal, educational and psychological guidance counseling, in all Spanish universities (Saúl, López, and Bermejo, 2009), it is concluded that such services are found in 68.91% of the universities in this country and they have experienced very rapid and positive developments in implementation in recent years.

Although the studies discussed above give us information about the status of the university guidance counseling service in our country, it is of interest to apply the analysis grid used in the study of the websites of universities in other countries:

Regarding the general aspects:

- ✓ The guidance services have little visibility, since they are found at very internal levels within the university website
- ✓ Navigation is difficult, as it is closely linked to administrative links which "obscure" the information about the area of guidance
- ✓ The name is excessively varied: Unidad de Apoyo Educativo, Servicio de Información, Servicio de Orientación al alumnado, Servicio de Asesoramiento y promoción del estudiante, Gabinete de Orientación Universitaria, etc. [Educational Support Unit, Information Service, Student Guidance Service, Counseling and Student Promotion, Office of University Guidance, etc.]
- ✓ Identification of the functions generally does not exist or it is very confusing. In most cases, there is a lack of a directory showing the functions of the service
- ✓ Personal identification: photos, descriptions, responsibilities, etc. is unusual
- ✓ There is an excessive number of links that impede rather than facilitate information

✓ Searches within the website are ineffective as each university has a distinct name for their service orientation.

In short, these general aspects are at a level of efficiency well below the other universities discussed above. Most of the time, even the main university website itself produces certain difficulty in finding what we want in searches.

Regarding the specific aspects:

- ✓ Prospective students: these appear as a key element of the service on the website. All universities have initiatives relating to school events; however activities relating to access for people over 25, 40 and 45, and vocational training are rather left in the background. Also, most information generally refers to administrative aspects rather than guidance initiatives.
- ✓ Family / Parents: there is no specific organization dedicated to parents or the family, and these do not appear in the menu bar of the university.
- ✓ Alumni / friends of the university: these are contemplated only as an association and as beneficiaries of certain actions, events, etc., which are held at the university where they performed their studies. They do not usually have direct involvement in guidance events or employment-related activities.

As for guidance throughout the academic year, we make the following observations:

- ✓ First-year students do not usually have specific orientation activities, most universities focusing on Welcome Day.
- ✓ Personal guidance through individual consultations is rare, although more informative queries are usually carried out.
- ✓ Online guidance: no such program was found. It is the case that some universities perform certain actions online that could be integrated into a university guidance program.
- ✓ IT resources: the existing resources are found in the market and require payment for use. They include questionnaires of interest, personality, etc.
- ✓ Tutorials and mentoring: these do not appear explicitly in the website of the service. Currently, due to the adoption of the Student Statute, universities must respond not only to academic tutoring but also other mentoring for personal and professional development.
- ✓ The clinical area is usually present in all Spanish universities, either within the university health service or the counseling service.
- ✓ Employment: this is not usually included within the guidance service; rather it constitutes a specific service



within the university, often depending on the University-Employment Foundation. Here we also find different names that identify this area: *Oficina de Inserción Laboral*, *Centro de Información al Empleo*, *Oficina de Colocación y Promoción al Empleo*, *Oficina de Promoción de la Ocupación*, *Centro de Orientación e Información de Empleo*, *Servicio Integrado para el Empleo*, *Servicio de Orientación y Planificación Profesional*, etc. [Job Placement Office, Employment Information Center, Office of the Promotion of Placements and Employment, Office of Occupational Promotion, Center of Vocational Guidance and Employment Information, Integrated Services of Employment, Guidance and Career Planning, etc.]

✓ Documentation Center: in our universities there is not usually a resource center dedicated to the subject of careers guidance. A corner of the university libraries could be dedicated to this type of documentation. It would also be useful to have a link within the guidance service to a specific website within the university providing documentary resources in this field.

Having analyzed the Counseling Services universities mentioned above, we present Table 1 highlighting the most representative aspects, in order to obtain an overview of the configuration of these services.

DISCUSSION

In the descriptive analysis that we carried out on university guidance services in different countries, we show the significant differences between them, especially with regard to the Spanish university. From a scientific

point of view, we admit that it is not possible to carry out a comparison between them, as the cultural and social differences and those of the educational systems themselves clearly influence the organization of the service. Hence, an important contribution of our study is to understand what is being done well and to implement it in other universities, so that they can improve the development and utilization of the service.

In recent years, the European Union has attached great importance to the role the university guidance counseling service has in successfully promoting the academic and personal development of the student.

For our part, with regards to the Spanish university, we believe that the starting point is that the identification of the university guidance counseling service should use the same name in all universities. As such, we propose the name "Educational Counseling and Careers Guidance Service." This will enable quick location and greater visibility within the website of the institution.

As for the content of the guidance service website, we propose that this should cover five areas and their respective fields. This would constitute the toolbar of the website. Thus we have: a) Student Guidance with the following fields: information, guidance counseling (before, during and after entrance to university), counseling and attention to diversity, b) Teachers with the following fields: training new teachers, continuous training and attention to diversity, c) Employability, with the following fields: labor market entry and employment sites; d) Social Participation, with the following fields: alumni, family and social agents, e) Links, with the

TABLE 1
MOST RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE SERVICES

Universities / Aspects	U. France	U. USA	U. Canada	U. UK	U. Spain
Visibility	Very good	Very good	Very good	Good	Bad
Title	Common to all: SCUJO-IP	Not common to all: Career...	Common to all: OSP CC	Not common to all: Career...	Not common to all:
Professional guidance before university	Yes Contact with secondary schools	Yes Specific program	Yes Student ambassador	Yes Student ambassador	No Contact with secondary schools
Guidance during university	- Online guidance - Tutoring	- Online guidance - Tutoring	- Online guidance - Tutoring	- Online guidance - Tutoring	Predominantly information - Tutoring
Employment	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good	Average
Alumni	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Family	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Information Center	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good	Average



following fields : guidance counseling service of Spanish universities, guidance counseling services of universities from other countries, internal services of the university, external services to the university and databases.

It should be noted that, for the service to be effective and efficient, firstly, the website must be attractive and easy to navigate and, secondly, it must be run by qualified guidance professionals, such as psychologists, educators and psychologists.

Therefore, we cannot remain purely at the descriptive level; the challenge of the 21st century society is to offer a quality service. In this respect, and considering the various reports of the European Union, we recommend that the university guidance counseling service should contemplate a series of procedures, such as:

- ✓ The requirement for professionals to have the necessary skills to perform the guidance tasks.
- ✓ The clear definition of the rules that these services must fulfill, some way of monitoring whether a service meets these standards, and when this does not happen, a procedure to follow in order to achieve compliance with the standards.
- ✓ Assurance that the guidance materials used meet the quality criteria established by specialized technicians.
- ✓ Consideration regarding the rules that could be used for the accreditation of counseling services.
- ✓ Improvement in the quality of services by requiring higher levels in the initial training and continuing professional development of guidance service staff.

Finally, we are aware that all of these contributions can be carried out in the Spanish university by introducing them progressively. As an example, we can mention the Educational Support Unit (Universitat Jaume I) as a service that complies with many of the variables presented, in addition to meeting the quality standards evaluated by Vieira (2008), which take into account the quality criteria of prestigious evaluation agencies in the USA and UK, among others.

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