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# The Cultural Observatory "Cénit": An Experience of Integration to the Training of the Professional of the Carete of Letter

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## To cite this article:

Alberto Pérez Martínez, Sandra de la Caridad Gómez Cisneros. The Cultural Observatory "Cénit": An Experience of Integration to the Training of the Professional of the Carete of Letter. *International Journal of Literature and Arts*. Vol. 9, No. 6, 2021, pp. 367-373. doi: 10.11648/j.ijla.20210906.26

**Received:** July 22, 2021; **Accepted:** September 28, 2021; **Published:** December 3, 2021

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**Abstract:** The university extension represents one of the fundamental pillars of higher education, because through the processes that is articulated in its dynamics it contributes to a higher quality education. Being the management of knowledge and its dissemination through the media that has one of the main purposes, creating the Cultural Observatory "Cénit", at the University of Oriente. In this work, the experience of the contribution made by said observatory to the training of arts students from pre-professional practices is presented, as a space for academic research socialization and cultural scientific promotion from university extension, as a university training process. The objective of this research is to improve the process of the integration dynamics of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of the student of the career of letters for the development of their professional activity, which through integration procedures with The elective / elective curriculum and the pre-professional practice allowed the integration to the teaching-learning processes from the disciplines of the career, achieving the integrative and conscious transformation of the student training process with the extension dimension in favor of the preservation, creation and promotion of the university scientific culture. Recognizing itself as a novel experience in the university field, because with this exchange of knowledge not only the University Extension is perfected but it also contributes to the training of the students of the career of letters and they will put into practice their knowledge acquired with this exchange once they graduate in their professional performance.

**Keywords:** Cultural Observatory, Training Integration, Extension Training Process, Learning, Training

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## 1. Introduction

Higher education requires transformations aimed at achieving, among its fundamental objectives, a more scientific approach to teaching and a diversification in its modes of professional performance. Education that stimulates the training process of professionals in Higher Education institutions, in order to respond to the demands of the context, with levels of social relevance and impact, which should allow to sustain human growth from the integration of training processes [7]. That is why it is necessary to train a professional capable of recognizing both the environment in which he lives, as well as the authenticity of his activity in it, who at the same time learns not only to live in his environment as a social being, but to know it, understand it

and to value it, to facilitate the expression of its originality, because its sincerity is implicit in it. The university is, in the sociocultural setting, one of the most important actors: "University is precisely that, the universal in culture" [5].

If man is, in inseparable dialectic, result and leading agent of the creation of culture, then he can never be taken as an accessory or adornment of life, he is the creator of his own environment and at the same time encourages his own styles and ways of life. In this sense, cultural observatories constitute academic spaces, necessary references for teachers and students [1]. These are related to the cultural policies and media of each region, as they respond to cultural problems that must be resolved. Therefore, its contextualization is necessary depending on the socio-cultural and political characteristics of each country.

These should generate an information and knowledge management system based on studies, inquiries, monitoring, data banks, communication products and other related proposals that allow feedback between managers or decision-makers of cultural work, the university public and the extra-university community in pro of cultural and human development.

The "Cénit" Cultural Observatory develops products such as: research reports, essays, articles, repositories, newsletters and yearbooks, which promote the potential of literature students in the development of their capacities and abilities in their professional activities. In this regard, the observatory system has not achieved full satisfaction in complying with the integrative training requirements for related careers, because although it is a recognized policy, it has not yet achieved sufficient transforming will for its institutional dynamics and promoting systematic management. Extension's that allows the most diverse cultural creation, in correspondence with contextual cultural development. This process, therefore, still does not achieve the efficiency and effectiveness necessary to promote, spread the preservation and cultural development.

For the development of this investigation, the importance of this formative process of integration of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in related careers is kept in mind.

That is why a factual diagnosis was made at the University of Oriente, through the application of scientific research methods and techniques, which included: surveys and interviews with students and professors; as well as the documentary analysis that contributed significant data to this assessment. Through the analysis of the results of the applied instruments, it was stated:

Insufficient links between the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory and related careers that limit its academic-research space.

Insufficient levels of elaboration of the products of scientific dissemination of the results of human endeavor that slow down their preservation, creation and promotion in the diversity of contexts.

Limited student integration into university scientific-cultural work through the dissemination of specialized content.

The research that we present here starts from recognizing as a scientific problem: insufficient integration of university careers at the end with the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" that limits the formative process of students. This assessment allowed defining as the research object: The Cultural Observatory "Cénit" as an academic-investigative space and cultural scientific promotion, the field of action, the dynamics of integration of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of the student of the careers related.

Said foundation necessarily starts from establishing the theoretical-conceptual positions that support the proposal in question. Thus, it briefly discusses operational categories and their fundamental relationship systems: cultural observatory, training integration, and teaching-learning process, extension training process, which allows systematizing some

considerations and experiences in a first phase of experimentation.

Consequently, in the epistemological and methodological foundation of the object and field of this research, it is possible to configure the need to reveal how the integration dynamics of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory is singled out as an academic-investigative space and cultural scientific promotion in training of students in related careers<sup>1</sup> for the development of their professional activity. This is configured in the epistemological orientation of this research.

The idea to be defended in this research is that if we manage to conceive that the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory as an academic-investigative space and for cultural scientific promotion, be integrated into the formative dynamics of students in related careers that are relevant in their training, we would be able to offer other alternatives that contribute to university extension training.

From this, we assume as the objective of this investigation: the improvement of the process of the integration dynamics of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of students of related careers for the development<sup>1</sup> of their professional activity.

## 2. Higher Education in Cuba, the University Extension and the Cénit Cultural Observatory

The Higher Education system through University Extension must foster permanent feedback with the different contexts, so as to guarantee an agile and pertinent response to the problems of the various micro or macro social scenarios. To do this, it must have instruments, a policy proposal, scientific inquiries and other tools; but it should also favor access for managers responsible for managing this process. The new information technologies could give a boost, especially focused from the cultural paradigm of communication. [2]

Therefore, the Cénit Cultural Observatory<sup>2</sup> is recognized as an academic-investigative space and for cultural scientific promotion, which from the university extension process is seen "as a process of cultural promotion within the university and towards the society that is projected to the development of the professional as a factor of change to spread the culture preserved and developed in the university" [4], with which this process is signified from its essentially formative nature [11].

In this way, the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" from the university extension behaves as a formative process insofar

1 Related careers are those that, due to their modes of action, contribute to the objectives and functions of the Cénit Cultural Observatory.

2 Cénit that represents aspiration, cultivation, growth, is a place towards which to look and walk. Man has to take advantage of the culture that ferments in him to rise to the zenith, that crossroads between clarity and the unknown, that right place that must make him a perpetual discoverer, a shrewd and sensible observer, a better human being, in guarantee of its own existence.

as it includes the process of teaching-learning of the subjects, expressed through the links of design, dynamics and evaluation of the process (teaching), which favors the development of cognitive-emotional capacities and professional skills for the construction of scientific knowledge through inquiry, argumentation, innovation and creation (research), which allow them to participate as promoters of the culture that is preserved, developed and promotes (extension) in pursuit of a socio-humanistic construction for the responsible implementation of sociocultural transformation projects [12].

Therefore, the integration perspective of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory is defended as an academic-investigative space and cultural scientific promotion, which from the university extension manages to develop as an articulating axis of the university training process, as it must exceed the limits of the academic, the labor and the investigative, by penetrating and, at the same time, sustaining these components, from an integrating approach in that inseparable whole that constitutes the training of the professional with the related careers.

The mission of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory is to promote the cultural development of the intra and extra-university community, through an information system developed by experts and specialists that promote articulation and feedback as distinctive characteristics; as well as the vision is "we are within the network of cultural observatories, the main reference that promotes sociocultural work for the development of the intra and extra-university community, with integrative, proactive capacity and a high level of competence". [6]

### 3. Importance and Need to Create a Cultural Observatory at the University of Oriente

The creation of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory [13], whose performance began in September 2012 and became official in April 2013, had among its motivations:

The need to nurture the decision-makers of the extension work with scientifically supported proposals that allow updating the extension model, attend with relevance and efficiency to the demands of sociocultural work, contributing to a positive impact on the intra and extra-university community.

The limitations regarding the forms of university-society feedback, which does not always favor a timely and pertinent response to problems.

The imperative to deepen in the platforms of "cultural policies" of these and its outputs, as well as to work on new proposals in the light of current times.

The complex cultural dynamics reinforced by the impact of ICTs that constantly reconfigure cultural practices and make trend analysis more necessary.

The need to promote the socialization and implementation of investigative results from instances such as the DEU,

subsidiaries, faculties, the CES of the territory and institutions that contribute to extension or sociocultural work.

From this, this observation unit is conceived [14], later integrated into the Network of University Observatories (ROU) of the MES, in order to provide the institution with advanced results, products and services of interest for extension management. From the perspective and social essence of the University Extension, in its expression within the helps and social responsibility beyond them<sup>3</sup>.

The Cultural Observatory would come to offer a bank of information, data that did not exist until now in our context, and even spaces that allow the construction of proactive knowledge, the search for ways, methods, alternatives to overcome the limited approaches that training still lacks. of our or future graduates, frequently reduced to the scope of their sciences regardless of their cultural substrate, their systemic interaction with human evolution and cultural development, or others that are concomitant or at least complementary to their teaching training and investigative and that favor the development of a sensitivity towards the environment and man. [3]

### 4. Main Achievements of the Cénit Cultural Observatory

The fundamental contribution of this observatory lies in an information system that favors our institution, as it strengthens its role as a more complete professional educator, aware of their environment and prepared to contribute in a more pertinent way to society; as well as dynamited its transformative action, favoring the social perception of its processes and the cultural dimension of its system of influences. [14]

As an academic-research and scientific promotion space, its general objective is to base the implementation of policies; as well as viable, effective and coherent cultural practices with the model of the university and Cuban society in order to contribute to the sustainable cultural development of and from the university community [9]. While the specific objective is to generate an information and knowledge management system based on studies, inquiries, monitoring, data banks, communication products and other related proposals that allow feedback between managers or decision-makers of cultural work, the university public and the extra-university community in favor of cultural and human development.

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3 The Cénit Cultural Observatory seeks to satisfy the need to update human resources with an information system that must qualify as a knowledge system, monitor the ways in which cultural phenomena are expressed in the university environment and their social interaction; to offer an alternative discourse in the face of the cultural vassalage that has historically fostered the centers of power, making visible in the so-called "global village" the commonly relegated referents, among them the accumulated of "peripheral" segments or sectors, the micro-localities and communities; nourish ourselves in that expeditious exchange that fosters the network of information networks and "highways" to catalyze endogenous and cultural development; promote the culture of productive dialogue and participation in the event of criticism or non-participatory hypercriticism.

Among the reasons that motivate (necessity) the proposal of the University Cultural Observatory of the University of Oriente, we could refer in an abbreviated way the need to nurture the decision-makers of the extension work with proposals that allow updating the extension model, attend with relevance and efficiency the demands of sociocultural work, guaranteeing its positive impact on the intra and extra-university community. The lack of an articulated research system that, from the perspective of university extension, guarantees a coherent, systematic and interdisciplinary approach to the main problems of extension management and impacts in the center. [15]

That is why the imperative to deepen the platforms of "cultural policies"; as well as working on new proposals in light of current times. The complex social and cultural dynamics reinforced by the impact of information and communication technologies that constantly reconfigure cultural practices and make trend analysis more necessary. The need to promote the socialization and implementation of the research results generated from instances such as the DEU or others from the Universidad de Oriente (CUM, faculties), and higher education centers and institutions that contribute to extension or sociocultural work. Limitations regarding the forms of university-society feedback, which do not always favor a timely and pertinent response to the problems of today's society.

Universities must promote the socio-cultural transformation of their environment, in accordance with the most advanced thinking, science and technology, in this knowledge society - information society, learning - and University Extension, as the most dynamic process that are deployed by Higher Education institutions should, in the same way, be nourished with new forms of communication that, together with those already validated in their evolution, promote the updating of extension models in the face of new technocratic scenarios and the imperative to continue looking for alternatives to promote social transformation, the solution to the pressing problems of society and especially cultural and human development.

This is how the emergence of thematic observatories -as instances for knowledge management- in different parts of the world, has come to take advantage of those possibilities offered by ICT for the monitoring of processes and the distribution of informational resources that catalyze the study of the phenomena objects of analysis, their trends, the forecast of future scenarios and the production of proposals that could contribute to decision-making and the construction of public policies.

The proliferation of cultural observatories in the field of public organizations and particularly in universities around the world, for approximately two decades has been taking place, some with their emphasis on the observation of cultural policies, others emphasizing the monitoring of cultural activity (focused on artistic-literary activity). However, in Cuba, in addition to the work carried out by the Juan Marinello Cuban Institute for Cultural Research, we had not identified, until a few years ago, the wealth that a cultural

observatory or University Extension could generate.

The thematic or research lines of the Cénit Cultural Observatory are made explicit:

- 1) Cultural policies and extension management.
- 2) Art and communication for development.
- 3) Social dimension of science and technology.
- 4) Identity and heritage.
- 5) Local and sustainable development.

As well as the services and products those make it possible to visualize their relationship with the races at the end. In the order of scientific-cultural promotion, we cannot fail to mention the on-site space Science in the Sight, with monthly frequency, for the socialization of university science and "to give a voice and find meaning to science" [8].

El observatorio Cultural Cenit ofrece servicios a la comunidad universitaria, entre los que se puede mencionar:

- 1) Investigacion científico-cultural.
- 2) Monitoreos de procesos.
- 3) Promocion científico-cultural.
- 4) Revisiones bibliograficas.
- 5) Publicaciones.

A su vez, se centra en productos que luego comparte con la Universidad como:

- 1) Informes de investigacion.
- 2) Ensayos.
- 3) Articulos.
- 4) Repositorios.
- 5) Boletines
- 6) Anuarios.

Each Cultural Observatory has the means to disseminate its results. Although their specificities vary according to their interests. Some have a biweekly, monthly and even quarterly frequency. They also have distinctive characteristics according to the sociocultural reality of each country; as well as the cultural policies that prevail in each region. For example, there are newsletters that present full research and others only summaries of research results.

Our newsletter of scientific dissemination is published every two weeks and presents research summaries, so that readers can locate it on our digital page or in other electronic addresses. In his editorial discourse, he presents three sections, the first one containing the summaries of the research. The newsletter has the characteristic that it is monothematic. Then there is the section what Cénit offers, where we recommend to readers, due to its importance, a text, linked to the topic in question. Finally, we find the information, where interesting and updated news related to the scientific, sports and cultural activities of our university are captured.

Therefore, the Cénit Cultural Observatory is an instance of knowledge management in the web environment that favors the updating, training and feedback of extension managers, decision-makers, as well as different actors of the sociocultural process, from the student, the teacher, the cultural promoters of the university and its environment, among others, which infers as an academic research space and cultural scientific promotion in the insertion of related

careers for their development and contributes to the professional development of students in training with levels of relevance and impact from the integration of university extension as the articulating axis of its dynamics.

That is why the training of professionals in Higher Education institutions must respond to the demands of the context, with levels of relevance and social impacts, which must allow to sustain human growth from the integration of training processes that are necessary for the training of a professional capable of recognizing both the environment in which he lives, as well as the authenticity of his activity in it, who at the same time learns not only to live in his environment as a social being, but to know it, understand it and value it, facilitating the expression of its originality, because its sincerity is implicit in it.

The integration dynamics of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory is meant as a formative process of social and individual construction, thus fostering the satisfaction of the cultural need in a dialectical unit of the instructive, the educational and the developer. This integrity contributes to the transformation and assumption of new values, meanings through cultural promotion and concretized in a set of actions of the educational cultural system. The condition of methodology of cultural promotion allows it to be used to undertake the development of educational training projects aimed at the development and transformation of training situations, as a process that has not yet been sufficiently promoted.

Therefore, in terms of training, the dynamics as a process of integration of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" from the university extension should contribute to improve the cognitive, emotional and technical-instrumental skills that allow the student to participate in this process as a space for cultural promotion, through its influence on the modes of professional performance, through which it is possible to promote a training that is resinified, developed and enriched in the sociocultural training context.

Similarly, this dynamic of integration of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit", through cultural promotion, implies favoring in the professionals in training, the development of feelings and emotions, as a result of the experiences that occurred during the training process in relation to their previous experiences and with the objects, processes and phenomena of reality. Therefore, pleasant and unpleasant, satisfactory or unsatisfactory aspects are always generated, such as socio-professional experiences that, based on their modes of professional performance, determine the pleasure of enjoying -or not- both the training process, as a more general category, as well as those threads contained within the particular dynamics of cultural content for the purpose of their profession.

## 5. Results of the Educational Experience

To corroborate how the process of the integration dynamics of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of the student of the related careers achieves the development

of their professional activity, an application experience was developed in the third year of the literature career of the Faculty of Humanities of the Universidad de Oriente, with a view to identifying the qualitative changes experienced in the subjects during the process.

From a first approach and interaction of the students with the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory, as an academic-investigative space and cultural scientific promotion, which from the subject of Editing and through pre-professional practice, where the subject The Cultural Observatory: An alternative for the innovative university scientific promotion, allowed them to specify and select which cultural contents of sociocultural relevance should be valued in correspondence with their modes of action to contribute to their socio-professional development.

Later, the individual characterization of the students was assigned, where they were assigned the topics to be investigated from the diversity and cultural complexity, which allowed them to determine the essential features that typified the object of attention for the writing, correction and synthesis in the process of edition of these newsletters, which was expressed in the images, impressions and external sensations represented in the textures from the design; the harmony that should exist between the background color and the effects that make up each of the proposals.

This led to an adequate value sensitization of the cultural content, of the bulletins in relation to the educational context, as an expression of spiritual delight by promoting complacency for the professional work carried out (Bulletins), although it was still possible to perceive some limitations in the management of resources in his style and writing to develop the editing process, which led to insufficient levels of critical depth in the evaluations made.

From this investigative-formative logic that is deployed, then, the interpretation of the investigated object in the professional contextual culture was promoted by enhancing the cultural perception of the issues addressed by the students of the professional content from the appropriate modes of action in their relationship with his professional experience, which allowed to foster an adequate level of autonomy and capacity for spiritual growth, in correspondence with the formative development achieved so far.

Consequently, the students were achieving in their actions as future editors, the incorporation of new content endorsed from the Cultural Observatory "Cénit", based on advances and scientific-technical and cultural contributions in relation to the development of their sensitivity to appropriate creatively of the culture of their profession, through the development of the products offered by it.

The foregoing guaranteed the systematization of the contents of the specialist in philology that favored the level of self-management, responsibility and interest of the students for the development of the editing activity from a certain level of belonging and awareness of their sociocultural mission, by offering support, such as means of scientific-cultural dissemination aimed at the university

community, which facilitated the management and promotion of knowledge on different historical, cultural-artistic and scientific needs. This favored the creation of a coherent and interactive product, as an expression of contextualized socio-humanistic construction, enhancing the results in pre-professional practice. Evidence therefore one:

Adequate significant appropriation of the cultural contents of the modes of professional performance, which was expressed in the construction of novel proposals based on the products offered by the Cultural Observatory "Cénit", facilitating flexibility of the students towards the acceptance of the Necessary transformations in the dynamics of the products offered.

Increase in the actions that link the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" with the career of letters through teaching and research that led to the development of scientific-cultural bulletins, through the development of El Visor and conducting research bibliography, which allowed the development of skills as letter students in the writing, correction and synthesis in the process of editing these bulletins.

Changes in the evaluative orientations of the students towards the extension activity are appreciated from a process of new ways, resources, methods and personal strategies to develop their socio-professional spirituality, by offering committed and flexible responses in correspondence with the demands of the professional context.

Encouraging results are shown in their behaviors, manifestations, attitudes in relation to the new positions and worldviews assumed in their feedback process with the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the Literature career, which is expressed in greater motivation and commitments ethical-identity with its formative context.

As a result of the integration, the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" was turned into a permanent academic research and scientific cultural promotion space for the development of pre-professional practices of the career of letters.

## 6. Conclusions

The research carried out corroborates the contribution made by the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of students of letters from pre-professional practices, in this sense, integration into the teaching-learning processes from the disciplines of the career of letters was specified and the Cultural Observatory "Cénit", achieving the integrative and conscious transformation of the student training process with the extension dimension in favor of the preservation, creation and promotion of the university scientific culture.

Satisfactory results are shown in the students, which were manifested through their behaviors and attitudes in relation to the new positions and worldviews assumed in their feedback process with the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" and the cultural contents of the career of letters, that are expressed in a greater motivation and ethical-identity commitment with their specialization and their educational context, through the

preparation of cultural scientific bulletins, which facilitated their professional concretion, satisfying the integration dynamics of the "Cénit" Cultural Observatory in training of the student of the career of letters for the development of their professional activity.

The integration dynamics of the Cultural Observatory "Cénit" in the training of the student of the arts career for the development of their professional activity, aspires to achieve the systematization of a logic of conscious transformation of the cultural training process, which from this academic space research and scientific promotion and from the extension dimension favors the preservation, creation and promotion of the university culture through its integration into the teaching-learning processes from the own disciplines in the different related professions, which contribute to the formation of the University professional.

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