

Gabriela Aisenson

University of Buenos Aires

Report on the University of Buenos Aires award of Honoris Causa Doctorate to Professor Jean Guichard

The collaboration between professor Jean Guichard and the University of Buenos Aires started in 1997, when professor Diana Aisenson took part in a AIOSP-IAEVG (International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance) conference in Brasov, Romania, on the topic *Career: Chance or Planning?* It marked a beginning of a fruitful academic exchange and research collaboration between INETOP-CNAM (France) and the University of Buenos Aires (Argentina), which contributed not only to the development of counselling and vocational guidance in Argentina, but also at the research institutions in other Latin American countries. Since its beginning, the academic and professional exchange involved numerous meetings between the staff of both Universities and other institutions.

In 1998, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008 and 2017, professor Guichard led six modules addressed to MA students in Pedagogic Psychology at the University of Buenos Aires and within the Franco-Argentinian Centre for Advanced Studies. The modules covered:

- Development of future projects in adolescence – 1998;
- A Century of Theories and Practices in Vocational Guidance - 2000;
- Guidance for human development – 2002;
- Transitions, work and life self-construction – 2005;
- The continuous self-construction, the major challenge of guidance in contemporary industrialized societies - 2008;
- Guidance and Counseling in the anthropocene era – 2017.

Professor Jean Guichard supervised two PhD students at the University of Buenos Aires as part of an academic exchange agreement between the University and CNAM (National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, France). The two PhD theses under his supervision were: Diana Aisenson's (2005) – *Contributions to*

the psychology of counselling: The future project and the construction of identity in adolescence and Gabriela Aisenson's (2009) - *Representations, preferences and occupational choices of young people who finish middle school*.

Professor Guichard's significant contribution towards counselling psychology worldwide and the long-term exchange of experience between research centres in Argentina and France were highly acclaimed by the academic community. On the 12th of September 2012, Jean Guichard was awarded an Honorary PhD by the University of Buenos Aires, but the official awarding ceremony took place much later – on the 22nd of September 2017. Our University also appointed Jean Guichard as the Honorary Professor of the University of Buenos Aires. These marks of recognition are also a sign of appreciation of an excellent scholarly and academic personality and Professor's major contribution towards the development of research and critique of counselling and life design interventions in our country.

Professor Guichard's stay at our University was made possible through the efforts of the Group of Research and Interventions in Guidance and Counselling Psychology of Buenos Aires University (GIPO, in Spanish), the Chair of Vocational and Occupational Guidance and Counseling of the Psychology Department of Buenos Aires University, together with the authorities of the Psychology Department and the Buenos Aires University.

The academic ceremony was held in attendance of Professor Nélide Cervone, Dean of the Psychology Department and the vice chancellor of Buenos Aires University. Other attendants were professors and distinguished professionals. The academic praise was made by Professor Diana Aisenson, who highlighted the important contributions that Professor Guichard had made, both in theory and in practice, in the field of Guidance and Counseling. In a friendly and emotional environment, she referred to the extensive history that links the University of Buenos Aires and Professor Guichard.

On the occasion of the award, Professor Guichard delivered the lecture: *A century of accompaniment in Guidance and Counselling: towards which future?* The speech, which was very interesting and inspiring, was also a summary of what had been done in counselling so far, and, on the other hand, provided an occasion for looking into the future. By taking stock of the activities and research in vocational guidance and counselling, professor Guichard attempted to answer the following four questions: Why did the interventions that assist individuals in constructing their active life occur at a specific moment? What factors were decisive for their evolution? What is the current status of these interventions and what kinds of relevant research is currently conducted? And, last but not least, what direction should vocational guidance and counselling take in the future? The lecture thus combined three temporal perspectives – it related to the past (where are we coming from?), present (where are we now?) and the future of counselling (what shall we do next?).

While addressing the above issues, Jean Guichard focused on the social-political-economic contexts and their transformations; outlined the issues related to prevalence of IT, robotics and globalization; stressed the negative impact of global crises (demographic, ecological and the crisis related to labour and employment), and problems resulting from limited access to decent work and unjust distribution of goods.

He also referred to the contribution made by the international research team *Life Design*, which in 2009, seeing the scale of dangerous phenomena, put forward a proposal to redefine objectives of counselling interventions, since – which Professor stressed – these interventions can no longer be limited to increasing employment opportunities for people seeking counsellors' assistance, but should aim to help individuals in designing and construction of their active life (*life design*).

In terms of the future, Jean Guichard outlined two possible solution pathways. The first would involve a new career education oriented towards making decisions related to a dignified active life. The second pathway would involve elaborating activities that assist clients in the process of constructing their active life, carefully minimizing carbon footprint and other kinds of ecological impact of professional activity.

Benefiting from the presence of professor Guichard at our University in Argentina, we extended this intellectual feast by organizing, on the 21st–23rd September 2017, a post-graduate seminar on the topic of *Guidance and Counselling in the Anthropocene Era*, which was attended by 60 participants.

Summarizing these several days of academic exchange and meetings with Professor Guichard, we can say that they were extremely rich in content and results. We hope that in the future we will have many more opportunities to benefit from Professor's vast experience, and that our friendship, initiated in 1997 and flourishing until today, will keep on growing.