

Area of Nutrition in Capes

The researchers that work in the so-called field of food and nutrition in Brazil have much to celebrate with the creation of the new area of nutrition in *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (CAPES). In addition to celebrating, those who work in the graduate programs that make up the new area have a great responsibility ahead of them which is of making the area increasingly relevant scientifically and compromised with the national development and improvement of the life conditions of the population. As a matter of fact, this has been the tonic of research on food and nutrition in our country since its beginning. Already in 1932, Josué de Castro with the article "The life conditions of the working-class in Recife" was directly responsible for the formulation of the minimum essential ration, established by the Decree-Law number 399, dated April 30, 1938, and later regulation of the law of the minimum salary, dated May 1, 1940, whose cost was based on the studies of Josué de Castro. This type of relevance and action, in which scientific discoveries change the world, is what the new area of nutrition should be based on, that is, the example established by the founders of the field of food and nutrition. Not only those who are no longer among us are cited, but also those who founded the higher courses and graduate programs on nutrition and that are still active, such as Bertoldo Kruse, Malaquias Baptista Filho and Dirce Sigulem, among many others.

What in fact convinced Capes' Higher Council to approve the new area of nutrition was the maturity of a set of programs that were united in the area of medicine II, already in a specific chamber of nutrition. These programs, because of their specificity, multi- and interdisciplinarity, differed from the other programs in the area of medicine II and did not fit in any other Capes' area. It is worthy of notice that this approval occurred after a long process that started with the establishment of the first Forum of Coordinators of Graduate Nutrition Programs in *Salvador*. Six years and eight reunions of this group were necessary for the progression of this process, analyzing and stimulating the qualification of the programs, based on the criteria established for the area of medicine II, in an on-going interchange with the assessment commissions of this area at the time, with Professors Julio Sérgio Marchini, Pedro Israel Cabral de Lira and Maria Teresa Olinto. In 2009, with the approval of its statute, this group became known as the National Forum of Coordinators of Graduate Food and Nutrition Programs. All this led to the realization, within the area of medicine II, that nutrition could already strive for the status of a new assessment area, with its own dynamics and at the same high level of other similar areas, especially the three medical areas, public health, food science and technology, which belongs to agricultural sciences, and the biological areas. Hence, the effort of the coordinator of the area of medicine II, Professor João Pereira Leite, as representative of the Forum in Capes' board of assessment was guaranteed.

The work of Professor João Pereira Leite, coordinator of medicine II during the 2007-2009 period, of convincing the Scientific Technical Council (CTC) of Capes of the maturity of the new area of Nutrition, was of the utmost importance, given the high criteria that have guided the assessment of medicine II. A presentation to the CTC done in 2009 by Professor Gilberto Kac as president of the

Forum summarized the reasons for the creation of the area and intensively encouraged the final decision of the CTC towards creating the new area. This situation was facilitated by the process of creation of other new areas in Capes, such as biodiversity, which combined the subareas biology I (botany, oceanography and zoology) and the already existing area of ecology; the area of teaching and the area of environmental sciences, originating from the interdisciplinary area. In all of them, the criterion of academic rationality and the maturity of the set of programs was the common denominator for the approval. It is important to point out that academic rationality alone, as a specific field of knowledge, would not allow the creation of a new area if the number of programs and their expressivity in terms of scientific production and training of students were not evident.

Once convinced, the CTC and Capes' Director of Assessment, Professor Lívio Amaral who presides the CTC, sends the proposal for the creation of new areas to Capes' president, Professor Jorge de Almeida Guimarães, who then presents it to Capes' Higher Council. It is never too much to emphasize the role of Professors Jorge and Lívio who accompanied the entire process and with their questions, greatly improved the proposal for the creation of the new area, which ended up happening at the right time.

At first and as usual, the Higher Council determines the creation of a search committee for the pro tempore coordinators of the new areas, whose profiles imply an important scientific production in the area and an equally important experience with the assessment process. Professor Egberto Gaspar de Moura was chosen not only because of his work in the field of experimental nutrition, but also because of his 9-year experience in Capes' assessment commissions, and for having been adjunct coordinator of the area biology I in the last 3 years, participating in the process of creation of the new area of biodiversity. However, the fact that he accompanied most of the reunions of the National Forum of Coordinators of Graduate Food and Nutrition Programs since the II Forum of Recife made a big difference. Thus, he contributed to the shaping of the new area of nutrition working with many others who also worked in the process of convincing the assessment commissions of medicine II, such as those already mentioned, Pedro Lyra, Julio Marchini, Maria Teresa Olinto and, more recently, Gilberto Kac himself, when he was no longer president of the Forum. The detailed story of the discussion process of the Forum and of the creation of the new area of nutrition can be read in the article by Kac *et al.*, in this issue of the journal.

Chosen to be the pro tempore coordinator of the area in June 2011, it is up to him to organize the area, whose main core became 18 programs stemming from medicine II and that were assessed at the chamber of nutrition, except for the programs from *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte* (UFRN) and that from *Universidade Federal de Pernambuco* (UFPE) of Vitória de Santo Antão, since they became programs whose most projects and lines were out of the area of nutrition. Programs from other similar areas, such as public health and food technology are also being consulted and may be included in the area of nutrition. For this task, Professor Egberto counts with a pro tempore commission, approved by Capes' presidency, whose constitution is due, firstly, to the scientific merit of its components, followed by the work in different areas that compose nutrition, and finally, for the regional distribution. One task already established by the new commission was the initial definition of the fields of knowledge that delimit the new area, a classification that may undergo changes as the discussion deepens, which are at this time: 1. clinical nutrition, 2. experimental nutrition, 3. food and nutrition in public health, 4. humanities and social sciences applied to food and nutrition and 5. food science applied to human health. In conformity with these criteria, five researchers were chosen: Prof.

Egle Siqueira Masi (*Universidade de Brasília - UnB*), Prof. Francisco de Assis Guedes de Vasconcelos (*Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina - UFSC*), Prof. Gilberto Kac (*Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro - UFRJ*), Profa. Lilian Cuppari (*Universidade Federal de São Paulo - UNIFESP*) and Prof. Raul Manhães de Castro (*UFPE*). The commission is responsible for the development of the documents of the area, including the attribution of Qualis to the journals that the researchers of the programs publish during the three-year period and the assessment during the period of the different Capes announcements for the area of nutrition, as well as the assessment of new courses (APCN).

Finally, the graduate programs that constitute the new area of nutrition have a great challenge ahead of them: the improvement of their quality and the search for excellence levels yet to be reached (the area has 3 level-5 programs but no level-6 or level-7 program). To reach these levels, the programs have to work together, helping each other and encouraging the growth of the area in an orderly fashion, always based on scientific merit, but also striving to reach the different regions of the country, especially the North, which does not yet have a nutrition program. Other challenges involve greater internationalization, with the engagement of students in the Program Science without Borders, for example, the creation of professional master's degrees that train people to work in different areas of nutrition and the constitution of an Interinstitutional Program which would allow highly qualified peers who work in the field of food and nutrition and belong to the group of institutions that still do not have a critical mass of supervisors, to supervise graduate studies.

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