

# **A President's Challenge: Case study on stewarding the University's Catholic mission in the business school**

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## **Abstract**

This case study contrasts a retrospective account of the design and implementation of an undergraduate business program that embraced the Catholic and liberal arts mission of the university with a prospective assessment of the opportunities for expressing the Catholic mission in its graduate business programs. Within this context, the President of the University of Dallas presents his vision for how presidents can steward the Catholic mission in graduate business schools and his plans for the University's Graduate School of Management.

## **The Opportunity**

At the University of Dallas, the President stands currently at a pivotal point in the development of business studies. Under the leadership of the former President, the University designed and implemented an undergraduate business program where one had not existed before and was resisted strongly by some on its traditionally liberal arts campus. It subsequently submitted a description of the program as its *Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)* to the *Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)* for accreditation reaffirmation. The design of the business program was distinctive and innovative out of necessity to marry professional studies with liberal education and Catholic social teaching. The new business program became the bridge joining a bifurcated University between the liberal arts and the Graduate School of Management. What set the program apart from others was the incorporation of a traditional liberal arts core curriculum and Catholic social teaching with contemporary and practical business study. Like many programs, which typically include some form of ethics studies, this program incorporated the study of business ethics, but then went further with specific required coursework in Catholic social justice. The QEP was accepted by SACS and the program is currently in its sixth year. By several standards it has been successful at both bringing together a campus around its liberal arts and Catholic mission and providing a distinctive business education designed to develop “*competent and responsible managers who are principled and moral leaders.*”

On the heels of the successful development of an undergraduate business program firmly grounded in Catholic social teaching and liberal education, the new president now faces the more daunting challenge of transforming the culture and climate of the long standing Graduate School of Management to better reflect the University's mission and purpose. Among the opportunities he faces include guiding the school's dean, encouraging the school to affirmatively attract and hire Catholic faculty, developing an understanding of and appreciation for Catholic social teaching among a faculty of which more than two-thirds are not Catholic, and balancing an openness to a global community of students of all faiths, which has been a hallmark of the program, with the mission's call to “*help students acquire a mature understanding of their faith, develop their spiritual lives, and prepare themselves for their calling as men and women of faith in the world.*”

### **The Broader Perspective: Business education and the Catholic university**

Depending on whom one asks, the contemporary business school either is facing a crisis of narrow and faddish vocationalism that threatens the intellectual and ethical development of the business leader (Lindsay, 2002), or is too intensely focused on scientific methodology to see the real decision making challenges faced by business executives (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). Consistent among critics of business education is a belief that it lacks a holistic perspective that includes not only the acquisition of technical skills and scientific knowledge, but also the moral, intellectual, and practical capacity to effectively lead in a rapidly changing global business environment. Without these capabilities there is harm to both the students' careers, which are hindered by perishable, point-and-click technical skills, and to corporations whose long-term viability lies in the hands of future leaders whose academically parochial, functional training leaves them ill-prepared for the breadth of understanding necessary to lead complex organizations situated among widely varying cultures. For the student or the corporation seeking business leadership development beyond technical training and scientific methodology among America's business schools there appear to be few options.

The modern Catholic university is particularly well positioned to address the challenge of educating the next generation of business leaders. Business leaders need three particular capacities that can be developed in the business school: (1) the ability to translate positivistic science-based business research into evidence-based management that effectively informs decision making (Colbert, Rynes & Brown, 2005; Rynes, Giluk & Brown, 2007), (2) the functional and technical skills and knowledge particular to the profession, and (3) a transcendent understanding of the human condition that informs questions of morality, ethics, social justice, and corporate sustainability for which positivistic economic rationale falls short. It is on this third point where a Catholic university stands apart from its secular counterparts (Neimeyer, 1975). Neimeyer's (1975) essay on *The New Need for the Catholic University* established the distinctive role played by the Catholic university in modern education as one that liberates educators from the grip of the positivist perspective and "reopens the flow among *mens*, *intellectus*, and *fides*." (p. 152) He argued that the Catholic university is the "unreduced university" where the *ratio* of science is informed by divine transcendence, which leads to a more complete capacity for imagination and understanding grounded in the "full extent of reality."

This interpretation of the Catholic university is particularly important to the education of business students. Where economic science guides business leaders' understanding and informs their practical decision making, *ratio* grounded in a faith of divine transcendence calls educators, students and business leaders to contemplate and respond to the dignity of the human person in matters such as employment, remuneration, and outsourcing. Faith and reason provide several challenging questions for educators and students to consider. For example, business students should wrestle with the question of the just wage versus the equilibrium wage. Likewise, students should reflect on Milton Friedman's assertion of the ethical superiority of profit maximization in light of John Paul's teaching, "*Profit is a regulator of the life of a business, but it is not the only one; other human and moral factors must also be considered which, in the long term, are at least equally important for the life of a business*" (John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, 1991: no. 35).

The particular role of a Catholic university, and consequently its business school, is informed more broadly by John Paul II's statement:

*“Students are challenged to pursue an education that combines excellence in humanistic and cultural development with specialized professional training. Most especially, they are challenged to continue the search for truth and for meaning throughout their lives, since ‘the human spirit must be cultivated in such a way that there results a growth in its ability to wonder, to understand, to contemplate, to make personal judgments, and to develop a religious, moral, and social sense’. This enables them to acquire or, if they have already done so, to deepen a Christian way of life that is authentic. They should realize the responsibility of their professional life, the enthusiasm of being the trained ‘leaders’ of tomorrow, of being witnesses to Christ in whatever place they may exercise their profession.”* (John Paul II, *Ex corde ecclesiae*, 1990: no. 23).

Accordingly, the “Catholic business school” is distinctive in an obligation to address several aspects of the students’ development, some of which may be beyond the attention of a secular school, including: humanistic and cultural development, specialized professional training, capacity for life-long reflection and personal development, and an ability to recognize and respond to opportunities to “witness Christ” in their professional decisions and actions. These educational components and outcomes should be reflected in a Catholic business school’s vision, mission, goals and strategy, which distinguish it from its secular counterparts.

### **The University of Dallas Mission and the President**

The University of Dallas’ mission includes both a broad statement for the institution and specific statements of the missions of each of the major academic units. The broader mission emphasizes *the pursuit of wisdom, truth, and virtue as the proper and primary ends of education*. It highlights the importance of a liberal education that is *committed to the recovery and renewal of the Western heritage* while being *committed to professional programs that are dedicated to reflecting critically upon the ends governing one’s own profession, to fostering principled, moral judgment, and to providing the knowledge and skills requisite for professional excellence*. Specific to a Catholic affiliation, the mission calls the University to be *dedicated to the recovery of the Christian intellectual tradition, and to the renewal of Catholic theology in fidelity to the Church and in constructive dialogue with the modern world*. Likewise, it calls the University to *maintain a dialogue of faith and reason in its curriculum and programs without violating the proper autonomy of each of the arts and sciences* (see Appendix A for Mission Statement).

The specific mission of the College of Business demonstrates both a symmetry and contrast to the University mission. Much like the broader mission statement, it defines the primary purpose of the College as the preparation of its students *to become competent and responsible managers who are also principled and moral leaders*. It defines its undergraduate business education as *a foundation for the students’ life-long development of the intellectual, moral, and professional capacity to lead organizations effectively*. It also emphasizes the close alignment of the undergraduate business and liberal arts *shared mission to prepare students for a meaningful and fulfilling life’s work*. However, the mission verbiage specific to the Graduate School of Management (GSM), both in content and wording, stands apart from the broader mission with an emphasis on skills, practical wisdom, practice-oriented and convenient education, and innovation in the delivery of education. The full paragraph dedicated to the GSM exists without reference to truth, virtue, liberal education, morality, ethics, faith, reason, or Catholic.

The University's president is the chief steward of the institutional mission, and as such must shepherd his deans and faculty according to it. When this mission includes an imperative to lead the "*recovery of the Christian intellectual tradition and a renewal of Catholic theology in fidelity to the Church and in constructive dialogue with the modern world,*" the President faces both a challenge and an opportunity. On the one hand, he confronts the autonomy of an MBA program that stands apart from the rest of the University in how it expresses its particular identity, the harsh reality of the secular resistance of Catholic and non-Catholic business faculty to the incorporation of Catholic social teaching in the curriculum, and a dearth of academically qualified Catholic and non-Catholic faculty applicants who are also well versed in Catholic social teaching. On the other hand, he has a perspective from which to redefine contemporary business education to achieve the mission's call to dedicate its professional studies toward "*reflecting critically upon the ends governing one's own profession, to fostering principled, moral judgment, and to providing the knowledge and skills requisite for professional excellence.*" Unlike his colleagues at secular universities, he has a basis for rejecting moral relativism and leading the search for truth as informed by great historical writers, theologians and philosophers, like Thomas Aquinas, and by the Magisterium and expressed in the Holy Fathers' apostolic constitutions and encyclicals including *Ex corde ecclesiae*, *Rerum novarum*, *Quadragesimo anno*, *Laborem exercens*, and *Centesimus annus* among others.

How does a president express the mission throughout an institution? To be fully manifest a mission should be evident in both the formal and informal aspects of university life. Formally, it should be incorporated into governance, curriculum, staffing and development objectives, enrollment, recruiting and marketing, student life programming, and ancillary initiatives (e.g., research centers, conferences, lecture series, etc.). Informally, it should be evident in the culture through traditions, ceremonies, symbols, and shared expectations. To shepherd these components the president searches for a delicate balance among supporting faculty self-governance, guiding his deans without contravening their autonomy, and issuing specific directives.

### **Policy Questions in Expressing the Catholic Mission in Business Education**

Policy questions arise among several aspects of the management of the university. A president informs these issues by the strategic decisions he makes. Among the questions that most influence the manner and extent that the Catholic mission has been, is, or will be expressed in the business school at the University of Dallas are issues of staffing, leadership, marketing, curriculum, and sponsorship.

**Staffing.** The most fundamental conduit for expressing the mission of an institution is its people. Both social scientists and the Church agree on this point. Strategic issues in staffing include: the quantity and characteristics of employees, the "make or buy" decision, and the job-fit versus organization-fit orientation in selection and promotion. For the Catholic university, then, several questions arise. First, what proportion of the faculty, staff and leadership must possess the quality of "Catholic"? Second, should an understanding and commitment to Catholic social education be a prerequisite characteristic, or can it be trained and developed among existing faculty, staff and leaders? Third, what is the appropriate balance in hiring between job skills and commitment to Catholic education as selection criteria?

From a social science perspective, the staffing issue is best informed by Benjamin Schneider of the University of Maryland and colleagues. Professor Schneider developed an attraction-selection-attrition model of organizational behavior offering several propositions (Schneider, 1987; Schneider, Goldstein & Smith, 1995). First, organizations are *systems of people*, and it is these people who make decisions about the mission, values, structures and policies that are the observable characteristics of the organization. Second, the decisions are initiated or led by the organization's founder(s) and are perpetuated by the selection of other individuals into the organization who share common personalities or ideals. Third, the attraction-selection-attrition of people into and out of the organization is based on assessments of shared values, personalities, and other individual characteristics. Over time, this attraction-selection-attrition process yields and maintains a homogeneity of shared values and ideals. Fourth, one of the primary outcomes of the organizational homogeneity is an organizational ability to create and sustain cultural characteristics along side a decreased responsiveness to external environmental change (Schneider, 1983, 1987). Empirical research on the attraction-selection-attrition model and the homogeneity hypothesis has demonstrated support for them (Bretz, Ash & Dreher, 1989; Turban & Keon, 1993; Schneider, Goldstein & Smith, 1995; Schneider, Smith, Taylor & Fleenor, 1998; Van Vainen, 2000). The lesson for Catholic universities from this perspective is that if a university wants to influence its informal culture through the formal activity of staffing, then its decisions should and will favor attraction, selection and attrition activities that affirmatively hire and retain individuals with a demonstrated commitment to Catholic social teaching in the business curriculum, and should base some aspect of the reward system on the expression of the Catholic mission. When it does so, the university should experience a more open and sustained expression of the Catholic mission in its business school, and faculty and staff should demonstrate greater organizational commitment and reduced turnover when the school mandates or supports the expression of the Catholic mission.

From the perspective of the Church, the staffing issue is addressed through the guidance of John Paul II and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. In *Ex corde ecclesiae*, John Paul II explicitly recognized the legitimate roles of both Catholic and non-Catholic faculty in the academic life of the university. He called Catholic, and more broadly Christian, faculty “*to be witnesses and educators of authentic Christian life, which evidences attained integration between faith and life, and between professional competence and Christian wisdom.*” (no. 22) He defined the role of non-Catholic faculty as offering “*their training and experience in furthering the various academic disciplines or other university tasks.*” (no. 26) He further emphasized that the people of the university must hold and demonstrate a “respect for Catholic doctrine.” From this perspective, he mandated that the number of Catholic teachers should compose a majority of the university's faculty (Part II, Article 4, section 4). The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops further emphasized John Paul's teaching in its document, *The Application of Ex Corde Ecclesiae for the United States* (USCCB, 1999), which emphasized specific employment practices:

- “*The administration should inform faculty and staff at the time of their appointment regarding the Catholic identity, mission and religious practices of the university and encourage them to participate, to the degree possible, in the spiritual life of the university.* (Article 4.3.c)

- *“In accordance with its procedures for the hiring and retention of professionally qualified faculty and relevant provisions of applicable federal and state law, regulations and procedures, the university should strive to recruit and appoint Catholics as professors so that, to the extent possible, those committed to the witness of the faith will constitute a majority of the faculty. Professors who are not Catholic are expected to be aware and respectful of the Catholic faith tradition. (Article 4.4.a)*
- *“All professors are expected to exhibit not only academic competence and good character but also respect for Catholic doctrine. When these qualities are found to be lacking, the university statutes are to specify the competent authority and the process to be followed to remedy the situation.” (Article 4.4.b)*

The Church’s guidance, accordingly, speaks to several employment issues. It implies that staffing is not only an issue of the proportional quantity of Catholic faculty, but also the initial orientation information that is provided to new faculty, the behavioral expectations relative to a respect for Catholic doctrine, and the need for a disciplinary due process for addressing offenses to that respect by faculty.

Together the social science and Church’s perspectives point to the driver of a president’s decision making – *the people matter*. A president’s policies, therefore, ensure that there are enough Catholic faculty who possess the quality of respect for Catholic doctrine, that non-Catholic faculty are informed of the Catholic nature of the university and possess a respect for it, and that there are processes in place to orient, evaluate, and discipline faculty relative to maintaining a supportive Catholic academic environment.

**Leadership.** Corollary to the question of staffing is the selection of the leader. The leader is particularly important to the initiative of expressing the Catholic mission in the business school, because he or she communicates the vision of the identity of the school, demonstrates the behaviors that motivate individuals to act according to the mission, and establishes the organizational structures to support or substitute for his or her direct leadership. To say “leader” is a misnomer to the extent that there are several leaders relevant to the present issue. There is the institutional leadership of the president, the academic leadership of the provost, the college leadership of the dean, and the program leadership provided by associate deans, department or program chairs, and faculty. Accordingly, there are several opportunities to select leaders and for those leaders to influence the Catholic nature of the business school.

Based on contemporary understanding of leadership, there are several considerations a president has in selecting and supporting the leadership of the business school. First, he or she can consider the traits and individual characteristics of the leader. Important traits might include a passion for the Catholic mission and knowledge or experience relevant to expressing Catholic social teaching in a business school. Leadership theory and research has defined charisma as a potentially important trait for an organizational leader; however, it also warns that charisma can be dangerous to the school if the chosen leader has passionate interests contrary to the Catholic mission of the university and steers his leadership toward those interests. Second, the president can consider alternatives to individual leadership or opportunities to support or enhance the leader’s behaviors. Examples of enhancers that a president might use include providing resources that the leader can use to reward and reinforce desired behaviors, allowing the leader autonomy in designing faculty work load to motivate particular behaviors of faculty, or

providing facilities and technology that facilitate interaction and communication between the leader and his or her faculty. Conversely, a president might engage neutralizers to mitigate the effects of college leadership that are contrary to the mission. For example, he might limit the autonomy of the leader in defining goals and assigning rewards. Finally, the president can provide organizational structures as alternatives to particular leadership traits or behaviors. For example, he might relieve the College leader of responsibility by creating supporting organizational structures, like faculty committees, professional staff positions, and designated faculty advocates that take ownership of designing and implementing programs to support the expression of the Catholic mission.

**Marketing.** Two trends in the marketing of higher education will dominate all university presidents' attention respective to marketing in the future (Hayes, 2007). First will be an organizational restructuring that allies marketing with the university's strategic planning function. Second will be an emphasis on branding and integrated marketing communications. The latter point demands a distinctive attention on the part of a Catholic university president.

When pursuing a strategy of integrated marketing communication, the university president should be cognizant that his programs "*effectively communicate the same message across all divisions of the school*" (Hayes, 2007: 930). Accordingly, if the mission statement calls for a commitment to Catholic education or affiliation, and that message is primary and important to some academic units, then some essence or aspect of Catholic should be present in all units' marketing messages, including those of the business school. Hayes (2007) identified the approaches to achieving integrated marketing communications in higher education as a liaison-based organization structure or a unified structure.

The message delivered through integrated marketing communications is the *brand positioning*. Two strategic issues with which the president must grapple are: "(i) the determination of a position strategy and (ii) the formulation of a brand position statement" (Abreu, 2006: 141). What makes this decision activity more difficult is that the business school often has a well developed brand position and image that may or may not include a relationship to Catholic education or social teaching. Therefore, the president must weigh the good and harm that occurs while reconciling the brand position of the Catholic mission of the university with the professional brand image of its business school.

**Curriculum.** Although the faculty traditionally has been the source and steward of curriculum design, the Catholic university president has an obligation to ensure that the curriculum does not contradict or offend Catholic doctrine (John Paul II, *Ex corde ecclesiae*, 1990). Relative to curriculum in a business school, this duty can be conceived as more protective than affirmative. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, for example, directed that relative to professional education, "*Secular subjects are taught for their intrinsic value, and the teaching of secular subjects is to be measured by the norms and professional standards applicable and appropriate to the individual disciplines*" (USCCB, 1999: footnote 37). Strategically, therefore, the President is faced with the decision of whether to encourage a lead, lag, or meet curriculum strategy. That is, will the business curriculum lead in presenting Catholic social doctrine in a manner that makes it a recognizable and distinctive component of the educational experience and a driving element of how the mission is manifest in the business school? Will the business

curriculum lag in its expression of the mission such that it is ancillary to students' experience of the Catholic character of the institution? Or, will the curriculum be designed to meet, or be at parity, with the offerings of typical Catholic and secular business schools; for example, will generic business ethics instruction stand as proxy for Catholic social teaching?

**Sponsorship.** One way that a business school expresses its identity is through the sponsorship of research centers, conferences, journals, or guest speakers. Successful sponsorship relies on at least two resources. First, there must be a particular faculty resource person who is both qualified and interested to champion the sponsored activity. Second, the university must be recognized as a place of authority on the issue (brand image). For the university president, consequently, there are several issues to consider when pursuing a sponsorship strategy to express the Catholic mission: staffing, resource allocation, and marketing message. From a staffing perspective, the president must motivate the affirmative identification, attraction, hiring, and retention of the talent to lead the sponsorship. From a resource perspective, the president must view sponsorship expenditures as investments rather than costs. The sponsorship, accordingly, should be evaluated on the returns to manifesting the mission in the business school. From a marketing message perspective, the choice among sponsorship opportunities should be driven by assessing which opportunity most effectively expresses the mission both internally and externally.

### **Expressing the Mission in Undergraduate Business Education**

To provide examination of the development of a business program that was designed with the intent of bringing the University's mission, which is grounded in the liberal arts and the Christian intellectual tradition, into the business school, a description of the University's development of undergraduate business studies is presented here. The focus of discussion includes key elements of the program's history, staffing, leadership, curriculum, governance, marketing, and student life. The question that can be asked throughout is *what is the role of the president versus the dean, staff, and faculty in ensuring the expression of the University's mission in the program?*

**History.** The development of the undergraduate business program was a greenfield project. Prior to the program, business study was provided through finance-oriented courses in the Economics department and the use of Graduate School of Management (GSM) courses as electives toward a business concentration for undergraduates, which facilitated matriculation into the MBA program. The program was conceived from financial necessity as a means to diversify and broaden the academic offerings of the University in order to attract a new population of students. However, a concern about a disconnect between the undergraduate college and the GSM preceded the financial motivation to create a business major. During the 1994 accreditation review by the University's regional accrediting body (SACS), the SACS review team noted that it was difficult to see any connection between the two academic halves of the University. They observed that the only thread weakly tying together the University was the undergraduate business concentration that acted as a conduit into the MBA. Consequently, in 2000 and 2002, there were discussions of whether there was a way to bring together the disparate perspectives across the University. Resulting from these deliberations, the University's president announced to the faculty that the Provost had been asked to prepare for the Board of Trustees a proposal considering the question of whether a business degree should be considered to address both the University's financial and organizational needs.

In June 2002, a faculty committee recommended to the Board a *Bachelor of Arts in Business Leadership* program, which the Board subsequently charted for the University and created a College of Business (COB) to house the program along with the existing Graduate School of Management. Continuing liberal arts students began declaring the major during the Summer of 2002, and the first freshman business class was enrolled in the Fall of 2003. Within two years, the program became the second largest major on campus. Its first three alumni graduated from the program in December of 2004.

**Governance.** The birth of the program was hounded by questions of faculty governance, but the mature program is lauded for its approach to governance. On the one hand, many faculty members felt that the President overstepped the boundaries of his position, in their perception, by mandating the creation of the major and elevating the academic unit to College status. Consequently, the implementation of the program was not supported, and in many cases was resisted, by factions of liberal arts faculty. On the other hand, the creation of a governing committee composed of both business and liberal arts faculty earned the respect of colleagues across the University for its commitment to developing a program that fit well with the mission and character of the University.

The official governing body of the undergraduate business program is the *Joint Committee on Business Education* (JCBE). The JCBE was commissioned by the Board of Trustees and composed of those faculty members who originally volunteered to study the question of a business major. Its original membership included six business faculty and nine liberal arts faculty, and was chaired by the Provost. Its charge was to ensure that the program reflected the character of the University and its mission through its oversight of all matters related to the creation and management of it. Over time, through natural attrition and replacement of members, the JCBE became fifty-percent populated by each business and liberal arts faculties, and was chaired by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Business.

The JCBE expressed its role by focusing on three objectives. First, it made its decisions with respect to ensuring that the program fits with the broader liberal education mission of the University. Second, it paid attention to the quality of the professional development of the students. Third, it aligned the curriculum with the distinctively Catholic character embraced by the undergraduate student body. By focusing on these priorities, in this order, anecdotal accounts of the assessment by faculty who were originally opposed to the program indicate that the JCBE has been a successful guardian of the mission and character of undergraduate studies at the University while providing a valuable addition to its education portfolio.

**Curriculum.** Most notably, the degree is a *Bachelor of Arts in Business Leadership* (BA) rather than a BBA. The JCBE recommended this distinction for several reasons. First, it reflects the liberal arts core curriculum that is the largest part of the students' study. Second, it embraces the University's mission to develop leaders. Third, it draws on the shared interest in leadership studies among business and liberal arts faculty. Fourth, it implies a more dominant focus on critical reasoning, rhetoric, and ethics relative to the BBA's traditional emphasis on administration and technical-professional skills. Catholic social teaching is included in the curriculum as a theology course titled *Social Justice*, which was developed for the business

program. Its original form was a comparative course of social justice across world religions, but in implementation has become a study of Catholic social teaching on business and economics.

**Leadership.** The operational strategy of the program has been led primarily by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Business Programs. The first Associate Dean for the program held a portfolio of skills, experience and characteristics that fit the challenge of implementing the BA, including experience in undergraduate academic policy and curriculum development and a Catholic faith. This latter characteristic, surprisingly, was most relevant to the majority of concerns and questions expressed by prospective students' parents. Leadership of the program has recently been passed to a new Associate Dean. Although possessing a different portfolio of skills, experience, and characteristics, which better fit the mature program, she shares with her predecessor a dedication to the mission of a liberal education grounded in Catholic social teaching that prepares responsible, competent, principled, and moral leaders.

**Faculty.** The program's original faculty was borrowed from the GSM, but the Board made provisions for the hiring of a faculty specific to undergraduate education. Like many small business programs, the College has had difficulty attracting qualified and interested faculty. The staffing challenges and the immediate need for course coverage, accordingly, demoted the question of whether Catholic affiliation should be a consideration in hiring. As it turned out, of the four faculty hired for the program, only one possessed direct experience with the Catholic faith.

**Enrollment/recruitment.** Recruitment of students for the program can be divided into two phases. In the early years of the program, the University's Office of Admission pursued a major-specific strategy. They consequently marketed the program as a "business" major, which was relatively indistinguishable from the marketing of any business program. In the more recent years, the Admission Office pursued a strategy of marketing a unified message without regard to major, which resulted in a more homogeneous expression of the educational experience at the University.

Two very different outcomes were experienced within the program from the alternate recruiting strategies. The former approach yielded students who were interested in studying business, but had no particular interest in the liberal arts core curriculum or the Catholic student life. The latter approach yielded students who fit well with the overall student experience, appreciated or understood the liberal arts education, and were active participants in the University's religious life. For example, in an annual survey of incoming freshman, business students in 2003 and 2004 included "Catholic" on their list of reasons for selecting the University, but it was the lowest or second lowest ranked factor. In 2005 and 2006, "Catholic" rose to the fourth and first rankings, respectively. Retention of students from the former strategy was difficult, because the students were "surprised" and "disappointed" by the emphasis on liberal arts study. They wanted the majority of their coursework to be technical-professional business study. Retention of students from the latter strategy has been consistent with majors university-wide. The number of business students attracted by the latter strategy is proportionately slightly less, but they seem to fit better with the University. They continue to demonstrate some differences, which may be related to the attraction to business as a field of study. On average, business students are more

often male and athletes, and the percent of business leadership students who are Catholic (62%) is less than the undergraduate population (76%)<sup>1</sup>.

***Retrospective assessment.*** There are several aspects of the program and its implementation that worked well for supporting the mission of the University. First, the joint-committee model of governance was especially useful for integrating diverse elements of the University and supported broader faculty buy-in of the implementation. Second, the inclusion of Catholic social teaching as required coursework in addition to general philosophy, theology, and business ethics helped to define the program's place within the Catholic character of the University. Third, the appointment of a Catholic leader for the program provided both a basis of knowledge and legitimacy for the initial design and implementation and for a self-motivated dedication to the Catholic mission. Successful ongoing leadership, moreover, can be provided when the leader is strongly committed to the Catholic mission of the organization regardless of his or her own religious affiliation. Fourth, recruitment based on the mission and culture of the broader University yielded better retention and satisfaction outcomes for students relative to recruitment for "business majors."

There likewise are aspects of the program and its implementation that did not work well to support the mission of the University. First, marketing messages based on studying business, without regard to the liberal arts or Catholic nature of the University, yielded more positive immediate enrollment outcomes, but led to negative long-term retention and satisfaction outcomes for the students. Second, and most important, the failure to attract and hire Catholic faculty has limited the program's ability to fully express Catholic social teaching throughout the business courses and has relegated it primarily to the liberal arts coursework.

### **Expressing the Mission in Graduate Business Education**

In contrast to the greenfield development of the undergraduate program, the prospect of reforming the graduate business program offers several new challenges. The following information is provided as case background for the situation facing the University's current president. Its content mirrors the categories of information assessed in for the BA program. Following this description, the President provides a prospective analysis of the opportunities and challenges for his office in motivating the expression of the University's mission in this school.

***History.*** Graduate business study at the University began as the Business Department in 1966 and evolved into the Graduate School of Management (GSM) in 1969. The first MBA degrees were awarded in 1968. The GSM grew to be the largest MBA program in the southwestern U.S., boasting a class size of over 2,000 enrolled students in 2000. Throughout its existence the GSM consistently has held to an educational objective of providing developmental opportunities for working adults, and of a belief that the best providers of that education are instructors with practical business experience. It has been an innovator in providing MBA education as evidenced by its early use of field experiences with corporate clients for MBA students in the 1970's and the pioneering use of the internet for delivering online graduate education in the 1990's.

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<sup>1</sup> The undergraduate population includes majors which are dominated or are wholly populated by Catholic students, including theology and the Philosophy & Letters program, which is composed entirely of seminary students.

Several trends and events occurring between 2000 and 2008 initiated a paradigmatic shift for the GSM. First, the competition for MBA students in the education market intensified such that in 2004 there were at least 19 regionally accredited schools providing MBA programs in the metropolitan area. The GSM, accordingly, lost some proportional share of the market and was less able to contribute financially to the broader University. Second, the GSM realized the strategic importance of business school accreditation within the intensely competitive landscape. It consequently began a systematic evaluation of its faculty and curriculum, which led to the hiring of a greater proportion of professional academic faculty with an interest and ability in applied and discipline-based research and the redesign of the MBA core curriculum to emphasize value-based management and integrated learning. The GSM was accepted into initial accreditation preparation with the AACSB in 2008. Third, the College of Business (COB), composed of the GSM and the undergraduate business program, was established in 2002. This new connection with the greater University through undergraduate studies both served to elevate and improve its academic relationships with liberal arts colleagues and to emphasize the disparity between the academic and organizational identities of the professional and liberal arts academic units. Fourth, in 2004, the University welcomed its seventh president, Dr. Frank Lazarus, who committed his tenure to vitalizing the Catholic character of the University and its expression throughout all of its units.

**Governance.** Administratively the College of Business and GSM are governed by a dean, four associate deans, and an assistant dean. The organization is structured functionally, rather than by academic fields, so there are no departments or chairs. Faculty governance is achieved through standing committees and ad hoc task teams at the College and University levels. All rank and tenure deliberations are at the University level, with no College level committee. General curriculum, faculty development, and academic policy governance is provided through the Faculty Senate, onto which business faculty are eligible to be elected.

**Curriculum.** The GSM awards three graduate degrees: Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Science (MS), and Master of Management (MM). The MBA is the dominate degree program and offers nineteen associated concentrations. The Master of Science program is a newer and small program that offers majors in three technology areas and accounting. The Master of Management program is a post-MBA degree program that offers majors in fields for which MBA concentrations are offered. None of the graduate programs provides instruction in Catholic social teaching. Prior to the reformation of the MBA program, which was inaugurated in 2007, an ethics course was absent from the MBA core, except a three-hour workshop requirement, which could be fulfilled by viewing a videotape. The revised MBA program has integrated the study of ethics as a unit in its Business and Society course. The MM and MS-accounting programs require a business ethics course, and the MS-technology programs require the study of ethics in research methods.

**Leadership.** The general leadership of the GSM always has been embodied in the dean. There have been nine different deans of the GSM/COB, of which none have been Catholic. Their support of the Catholic mission has ranged from quiet respect to outright, public hostility. One dean is alleged to have referred in an open faculty meeting to her colleagues as “those [*blank*]ing Catholics”. The current dean, in many ways, is an outstanding example of the Christian mission of the University. He has a strong and authentic commitment to Christianity, and is an ordained

minister in the protestant tradition. From this perspective he is a powerful advocate and articulate representative of Christianity. He maintains a scholarly interest in spirituality at work, and has published in the area of Paulistic leadership. He lives his faith through extensive service in his community, and accordingly is an exceptional example of witnessing Christ in one's life.

**Faculty.** The GSM faculty is composed of 34 full-time faculty and 80-100 adjunct faculty, depending on instructional needs. Of the full-time faculty, at most seven could be identified as Catholic. No Catholic faculty member possesses substantial graduate training or degrees in Catholic theology or social teaching. One Catholic faculty member has advanced education and experience in the teaching of ethics and business and society. Of the non-Catholic faculty, none has graduate education or a scholarly record in Catholic social teaching.

**Culture.** The culture of the GSM is not currently supportive of expressing the Catholic mission in the business school. Some faculty members openly oppose associating the word "Catholic" with any marketing or other descriptions of the School. Others are heard to regularly mock or speak uncharitably in regard to Catholic initiatives or issues at the University, and go unchallenged for their statements. At a more subtle level, a substitution of protestant Christianity for Catholicism has taken root.

**Enrollment/recruitment.** The GSM maintains an active recruitment and marketing program. It includes print materials, information sessions, on-site education fairs, international recruiting tours, and a website – but it does not include "Catholic." For example, the University's general website prominently displays the University's slogan, *The Catholic University for Independent Thinkers*, and includes in the student resources/campus life dropdown menu a link for spiritual life (Campus Ministry), but both of these disappear when one moves to the GSM page. The word Catholic and support for the graduate students' spiritual life are nowhere to be found. Likewise, the word Catholic is absent from the presentation at the MBA information sessions. One would not know that the GSM was not a unit of a secular university, and certainly would not know that it was affiliated with a Catholic university.

### **The President's Response to the Leadership Opportunity**

Leadership for mission can be understood in a number of different contexts, each of which presents a different opportunity or challenge for expressing the specific religious identity or character of a university, college or component unit of an entire institution. The responsibility of the president is to provide positive and effective stewardship of the mission of the institution, and, for our purposes, that means defining, articulating, and promoting the Catholic character of the college or school of business. The fact is, however, that there are more similarities than differences in exercising stewardship of the mission of a component academic unit and of the institution as a whole. And the reason why similarities predominate is that the essential quality of effective stewardship of mission is embodied in unit leadership.

The president's distinctive responsibility and challenge in providing effective leadership to the business school is in the selection and mentorship of the dean. Decanal leadership is a position of singular privilege, authority, and responsibility in American higher education, and the increasing autonomy of professional schools within the aegis of the university's central administration

magnifies and emphasizes the importance of the dean's role in reflecting and implementing the president's vision and plan for stewarding the Catholic mission of the college or school.

An effective dean of a Catholic business school can make a positive contribution to and exert distinctive influence in all of the areas of mission relevance that we have outlined to this point. Curriculum, faculty hiring and development, research, strategic planning, special programming in centers and institutes, and fund raising all fall within the dean's responsibilities and sphere of influence. The dean is also the chief academic and the chief executive officer of the school, and his or her position parallels that of the president in many respects. The president, for his or her part, must always respect the dean's prerogatives and attend to the principles of delegation and subsidiarity in dealing with the dean and his other staff. The president must select as dean not only someone who has the intelligence, experience and good judgment adequate to administer the school, but also a person with the integrity and humility to accept the president's leadership in assigning specific aspects of the mission to the dean for implementation.

The aspects of the Catholic character of the institution that the president can and should assign to the business dean and hold him or her accountable for incorporating into the school of business include, but are not limited to:

- Curriculum that reflects general ethical training and specifically the Catholic social gospel as a component part of appropriate business practice
- Research that probes beyond narrow empiricism and statistical analysis to identify and explain individual and corporate leadership, management, development, competitive practices, collaboration, finance and investment strategy, and logistics that create value and distribute wealth in positive ways for the greater good.
- Sponsorship of programs and initiatives that seek to integrate the general secular character of the school of business' curriculum and research efforts with the broader mission of the university and to suggest, develop, and incorporate faith and reason as appropriate, necessary and sufficient means to expand knowledge within the business disciplines and govern the development of professional practice.
- Development of an engaged faculty who reflect in their lives, their scholarship and their professional practice dedication to the fundamental principles of Catholic intellectual life. Such faculty members understand the need to progress beyond mere respect for the mission and seek to find ways in which they can actively contribute to it.

There are many ways in which the president can assist the dean in incorporating these mission assignments into the life of the school of business, but principally the president employs the power of persuasion and the power of the purse to effect his or her ends. A president who is too prescriptive in dictating specific objectives runs the risk of stifling the dean's creativity at least and undermining the dean's authority among his or her faculty in an extreme case. The president is well advised to balance the urgency of the mission imperative with the dean's ability to comprehend, internalize, and articulate to his or her faculty the specific embodiment of that imperative into the school's goals and priorities. Patience, persistence, and powerful example are the president's best tools in achieving the desired outcome.

Most Catholic universities do not require that the business school dean be Catholic to assume the position, and that fact can affect and help determine the role of the president, acting either

directly in his or her executive capacity or by delegation through an academic vice president or provost, in mentoring, supporting, and evaluating the dean's performance of these and related mission oriented activities. With a dean who is not Catholic, the president's mentoring role is perhaps the most important aspect of his or her interaction with the dean, while for a Catholic dean the role of support may be most prominent. For both Catholic and non-Catholic business deans, however, the president's role in evaluating the dean's performance must include determining the dean's success in fulfilling the objectives that have been established for the incorporation of the mission into the life of the college.

Mission related performance is measured in action, not merely in intention. The president must employ prudence in developing annual objectives with the dean and justice in evaluating how well the objectives are fulfilled, regardless of the dean's religious affiliation. The president's responsibility demands such accountability and his or her own evaluation by the institution's board of trustees will depend largely on how well the entire institution, including the school of business, succeeds in fulfilling all aspects of the mission, including the continuous development of its Catholic identity and character.

In the context of these general principles and guidelines concerning the selection and mentoring of the dean of a Catholic business school, I would like to outline briefly the tact I have taken in exercising these activities with our dean at the University of Dallas. As we mentioned earlier, the current Dean is not a Catholic, but is an ordained minister in a Protestant denomination and a person who has incorporated his deep Christian faith into his scholarly work and into his leadership practice. The dean is both a reflective and prayerful person and these traits render much easier my task of mentoring him in a knowledge of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and in the implementation of the religious character of our University and its mission into his quotidian work.

The dean and I meet bi-weekly by arrangement and as necessary by request to ensure that there is a regular flow of both formation and information between us. I regularly encourage the dean to call and let me know when he has questions, doubts, or simply anxiety about any aspect of his role, but especially with respect to questions that touch upon mission. He is confident in his role and committed to incorporating the University's mission into the school's academic agenda and I believe that he has a working knowledge of the basic principles of social justice in both a secular and a Christian sense. This knowledge, however, is not supplemented by a theoretical or historical knowledge of the Catholic social gospel.

These facts require attention to personal and professional development for the dean and for other faculty and administrators in the school of business who either have the theoretical and historical background of the Catholic social gospel or who wish to acquire it. One of the approaches to stewarding the mission in the College is to increase the number of faculty and staff who are familiar with and responsive to the Catholic character of UD, so their expertise and effort will expand through the College of Business and begin to affect the dominant culture in a positive sense. Since we have less than one-third Catholics on the business faculty, there is urgency in convincing more faculty who are not Catholic to develop an interest in incorporating explicitly the Catholic character of the institution into their teaching and scholarship.

The President's Office, in spite of difficult budget constraints, has provided funds to enable the dean to do an intensive personal development analysis and plan through his church and will make such resources available when we agree on a Catholic program that would offer similar or related benefits to his work as dean. The dean is very open to such a possibility and that positive attitude is much appreciated and will prove helpful to the College.

The area in which the dean and I have made the most notable progress is in the area of "hiring for mission" in spite of the statistics presented earlier in our paper that the total number of Catholics in the College of Business remains quite low. The fact is that there is no indication that previous administrations in the College were concerned with the balance of Catholics and non-Catholics on the faculty and the very fact that the dean and I discussed the issue at one of our first meetings marks an important point of change in the College's agenda.

Hiring faculty for UD's College of Business is complicated and made more challenging than hiring is at most business schools by the College's resolute policy of only hiring individuals who have had direct business experience at the managerial level, who also, incidentally, have a business related Ph.D. Finding that combination of theoretical knowledge and practical experience in a single individual is difficult and demands regular and focused attention to the market. Finding Catholics who meet this threshold is even more difficult, especially in an institution that has only been accepted into the initial stage of pursuing AACSB accreditation and which requires a heavy teaching load for, at best, average pay.

To offset these disadvantages, we emphasize the positive feature published in the *Harvard Business Review* about UD's College of Business and its innovative and practical approach to business education, the broad consulting contacts our current faculty develop (with University approval) with managers who might make interesting candidates for faculty positions, our highly desirable Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex location, the relatively low cost of housing and living in the area, and the excellent collegiality that prevails among the current faculty. These efforts have been relatively successful, but they are almost completely secular in character, and our recent good fortune in hiring Catholic faculty has been almost as much a factor of luck as conscious device. Our efforts must reflect greater intentionality about hiring for mission, especially by using the networks that exist among current Catholic faculty, their graduate school advisers and classmates, and their academic colleagues.

In addition to the "hiring for mission" strategy, there is another potent opportunity available to business deans and university presidents at almost every institution to promote and cultivate the Catholic character of the business school. I refer to the very common practice of creating centers and institutes to focus teaching, scholarship, community service, and donor interest on specific areas of business theory or practice. At the University of Dallas we have developed three such programs: a Center for Entrepreneurship, a Center for Information Assurance, and a Center for Corporate Sustainability and Ethics. The last of these attracted my attention as soon as it was formed. My interest arose from a combined disappointment I had when I arrived at UD to find that there was no specific organizational unit in which the College of Business' ethics efforts were located and my belief that combining the concepts of sustainability and ethics would allow us to differentiate our center from other, more generic centers of business ethics.

Our center is directed by a former national managing partner of corporate sustainability at PriceWaterhouse Coopers who quickly won my support for his efforts when he described his plan to develop a membership-based center that created a data base of corporate best practices that it makes available to its supporting members in the form of case studies, direct consulting, and regional conferences. The data base of best practices would include materials that integrate the fundamental ethical principles of individual and corporate honesty, social justice, environmental concern, supply chain and vendor relations, transparency and accountability with a legitimate concern and effort to earn reasonable profits for goods and services over extended periods, to assure the long-term sustenance and security of employees and build value for shareholders and the community.

Since all three of our centers were brought on-line almost simultaneously, and since wealthy donors almost always want to fund entrepreneurship first, we have struggled to find the funds necessary to get the Center for Corporate Sustainability and Ethics the initial funding it needs to move its business plan along. The Center has sponsored two quite successful regional conferences on sustainability, but our efforts to secure an endowed chair for the Center's directorship or to develop a membership base have thus far not been successful. I continue to believe, however, that the idea behind this center is a notable advance over the generic business ethics centers found at most other universities and that it speaks positively and directly to the kinds of companies with whom the University of Dallas would like to be associated and to the development of the Catholic character of the College of Business.

The third and most challenging area in which I have sought to promote the Catholic character of the University in general and the College of Business specifically is in developing a culture which responds positively to the first of the four "essential characteristics" of a truly Catholic college or university, as expressed by Pope John Paul II in *Ex corde ecclesiae*: "A Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such" (no. 13, 1) What the Holy father was expressing here is what we might call the corporate culture of the university with respect to its "Christian inspiration." The power of that culture was expressed succinctly, but pointedly by a bishop friend with whom I was discussing the challenge of preserving and promoting Catholic character when I was a provost: "Teachers teach and preachers preach, but only culture enculturates."

The president has a legitimate role as teacher of the mission for vice presidents, deans, directors and leaders at every level of the college or university and a stable and respected podium from which to preach the mission to any and every available audience. The university chaplain has an even more recognized location from which to proclaim his message, but the pulpit is a place from which the chaplain may well be singing to the proverbial choir and getting the message about transforming the culture to those who most need to hear it.

The reality that every president faces, therefore, is that lessons can be forgotten and homilies ignored, while the dominant culture never rests, is present in every aspect of institutional life and brings with it both the power of historical inertia and the influence of peer expectations. Unless the president, with the assistance of the entire community, builds a culture that understands, embraces and strives to develop and promote the Catholic identity and character of the institution the teaching and preaching tend to fall short of the mark. The president's first, enduring, and

final challenge is to develop a culture of focus on institutional identity and character that will expand the stewardship of the Catholic mission to willing, able, and engaged colleagues.

At the University of Dallas, that challenge is currently centered on the College of Business, even as we seek to reaffirm the strong presence of our Catholic identity and character in the Constantin College of Liberal Arts and take the first steps to establish it in our embryonic School of Pharmacy. With the assistance of a willing and engaged Dean, the increasing number of Catholic scholars on the Business faculty, the strength of the social justice theme in our undergraduate business curriculum, and the leverage provided by the curricular renewal for the Graduate School of Management being motivated by our accreditation plan, we hope to move the culture of the College of Business toward a more explicit and more visible engagement of the “Christian inspiration...of the university community as such” that *Ex corde ecclesiae* challenges us to create.

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