

HOW ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP SHAPES CATHOLIC BUSINESS EDUCATION

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Thanks to Beth Woo and Andre Del Becq for their thoughtful and stimulating presentations. My response will have four parts representing the direct leadership contributions of both authors from a scholar/practitioner perspective and some suggestions for further reflection/research. (thematic vs. pragmatic outlook.)

1. Dean Woo's contribution for leadership action:

A. Leadership vision expressed in systems, culture and ethos. Business and business education as a vocation. I suggest some reflection on Aristotle's concept of the development of virtue, which depends on intention, imitation of a role model (mimesis) and then the cultivation of the habit of virtue (grace, prayer, discernment).

B. Integration of values across disciplines, ranks, curriculum and scholarship. Dr. Woo's comments are directly congruent with John Paul II *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (First requirement of a Catholic university is the "Christian inspiration of the institution as a whole as well as in individuals.")

C. The power of witness and clear, conscious, and intentional communication of

*Acceptable approach to success = stewardship

*Responsibilities of power = Humility (overcoming fear and hubris as Father Spitzer said in his Keynote Address)

*Boundaries of conduct = ethical reflection and virtue ethics

2. Dean Delbecq's Contribution for leadership action:

A. Distributed Leadership—not only empowers subordinates, but attracts champions for incorporating mission imperatives into the culture and promotes Christian inspiration of the institution (*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*'s first requirement for a Catholic university again!)

B. Dean Delbecq's paper is self-consciously "pragmatic" and the focus is on "practical interventions" to provide a clear, well-organized, and absolutely compelling presentation of what to do. He simplifies the "rocket science" part of the work and just leaves the application to us.

C. Lovely distinction between "front end" and "back end" scholarship support that applies not just for the purposes of this paper or this conference.

3. Dean Woo's comments for additional reflection/research:

A. Mission driven or driving variables such as campus ministry, the mission office, liberal education, residential life and Board of Trustee matters are the "context" but not the "decision variables" for the Business School. Perhaps not, although I think I could make an argument that liberal education is (and should be) a "decision variable" and that residential life could be. But the real question is what are the "decision

variables” at what Dr. Woo calls “this level of the University?” How about faculty development? student learning outcomes and assessment? general ethics education? How do we incorporate these into the core life of the Business School? And how do they affect the fulfillment of the University’s general mission and its Catholic character?

B. To what degree does “hiring for mission” need to employ what Dean Woo calls “mission screens” that can produce a diminished set of candidates? Are there counteracting “mission incentives” or “mission empowerment techniques and strategies” that would change the hiring context in a positive direction for hiring for mission?

C. Dean Woo has provided some excellent examples of how to provide leadership into the mission related areas of business ethics and social service outreach, but then asks, perhaps rhetorically, “What is left?” Although a graduate business program might not focus on recruiting Catholic students specifically or even Catholic faculty, perhaps there is a need to consider the appropriate kinds of formation, socialization and demonstration to students and faculty alike of the integration of professional skills with liberal principles of intellect and will as some of the “what” that is left.

4. Delbecq’s comments for further reflection/research:

1. How do we make the moniker “Roman Catholic” cease to be a scary and negative symbol – and one little referred to in public? David O’Brien of Holy Cross College has written an interesting article “Jesuit ‘Si’, Catholic—Not So Sure” on this topic of special concern to schools with an identity from a religious congregation. Do our few diocesan, independent, or even the “new Catholic” colleges have anything to contribute to this effort to promote the benefits from our common Catholicity at least as much as our congregational Christian? Can “Catholic character” be apprehended positively outside of our “founding congregations’ charism?” I believe it can.

2. I applaud and celebrate Dean Delbecq’s call for a new form of prayer to help provide us a better way to listen to and communicate with God. I agree heartily that our work in education is primarily to present hands and feet, eyes, ears, and minds to carry out God’s will for the development of his people. I further agree that such prayer that energizes and draws others to praise and worship God would be most beneficial for faculty and students of all denominations. But, on the basis of my own experience, I question whether inter-religious prayer on an institutional (as opposed to a personal or interpersonal) basis is better than traditional denominational prayer. Ecumenical services are often inspiring, moving, and even profound, but not very consequential in arriving at a general and sustained enrichment of communal or institutional prayer.

3. Finally, I will leave this conference tomorrow and spend some precious quiet time this summer reflecting on Delbecq’s phrase “the rhythm of discernment” and what a powerful process that could be for leaders, if we only knew more clearly, more surely, and more precisely how to develop such a rhythm.

