

CATHOLIC BUSINESS EDUCATION PROJECT

1. Overall Purpose: The purpose of this project is to deepen our understanding of Catholic business education and to provide curricular materials that reflect this understanding. In other words, it is to help Catholic business to be who they ought to be. We do this in order to initiate our students into the profession of business, a profession that is a complex form of work entailing technical, psychological, social, moral and spiritual dimensions.

Embedded within a Catholic university, a Catholic business school, in order to be mission driven, must conceive of their students as whole persons. They must confront the ethical schizophrenia, the divided life, the split between private and public morality that characterizes modern day professional life. They must craft a curriculum that not only remains faithful to the rightful autonomy of professional practice but also enables students to understand their work as part of a larger whole, as a vocation.

Catholic business schools must focus their programs of formation on service to the common good. Students should be brought to see that business knowledge and skills are not private possessions to be used for the benefit of the individual but rather are instead powerful resources held in trust for the benefit of the community. It is by using their knowledge and skills for the common good that business professionals truly find their vocation, lead lives of genuine integrity and transform society.

It is our contention that Catholic business schools have generally succeeded at one level while missing opportunities at another. Over the last several decades, Catholic business schools have responded energetically to the challenge of reforming their programs in order to meet the technical standards of the best secular schools. On the other hand, few schools of business in Catholic universities infuse their courses with Gospel values or with a Catholic vision of the person and the just society. Students may receive a fine technical education but they tend no longer to receive the personal education that could be and should be the hallmark of a Catholic business school. In this, we are missing opportunities to provide an education of added value to students and to shape future business practice in service of the common good.

2. Three Activities:

A. First Meeting: Seminar of Representatives from 10-15 Catholic Business Schools (Summer 2007)

- a. Prior to Meeting through email, teleconferences, and mailings:
 - i. Develop a reader on Catholic business education on which all partners will have a common knowledge.
 - ii. Partners collectively deepen their understanding of the business education within a Catholic university.
 - iii. Develop criteria on the distinctive character of a Catholic business school and discuss ways in which to conduct audit/gap analysis (see AACSB gap analysis)
 - iv. Start and complete audit of one's school. Each partner provides an assessment of their own school through a gap analysis between the distinctive characteristics of a Catholic business school and their actual practices. Some possible areas could be:
 1. Articulation of Mission of business school and its connection to the larger university's mission
 2. Hiring for Mission: does it, how does it, etc.
 3. Research of Faculty connected to the mission of the school
 4. Curriculum: how does it connect to the mission
 5. Connection to the Liberal Arts
 6. Relationship to Ethics: does it take it seriously, if so how, whose ethics, what is the relationship to the ethics and it Catholic identity.
 7. Relationship to Catholic social thought: vocation, justice, Catholic social principles, etc.
 8. The Poor: service to the community, service learning, etc.
 9. etc.
- b. Meeting at University of St. Thomas: (Summer 2007)
 - i. Get to know each other
 - ii. Discuss Criteria of a Catholic business school
 - iii. Present schools audit/gap analysis
 - iv. Discuss and plan larger conference

B. Second Meeting: 7th International Symposium on Catholic Social Thought and Management Education (Summer 2008)

- a. Site to be determine by Partners (most likely University of Notre Dame)
- b. Call for papers:
 - i. Attract insightful faculty to develop curricular materials that will enable faculty to teach based on its Catholic mission:
 1. Curriculum models (define)
 2. Sample syllabi for a wide variety of courses in business
 3. Teaching Notes/Lesson Plans
 4. Readings and Books for Class:
 - ii. Attract faculty who can help in deepen the philosophy/theology of education of a Catholic business education

C. Third Meeting: Seminar Summer 2009

- a. Invite a small number of faculty who can best contribute to produce a book that would serve as a resource to administrators and faculty on a distinctive understanding of Catholic business schools

3.Outcomes:

- A. Community of Scholars: create a community of Catholic business educators who have an understanding of the mission driven character of Catholic business education
- B. Greater curricula resources for Catholic business education distributed on the web
- C. Book: Resource on Catholic Business Education

4. Commitments: Financial and Institutional

- A. Each partner will provide a \$5,000 contribution over the 3 years of the project, which will be used to finance seminar, conference, and publication costs (see budget in grant proposal; this contribution along with the \$50,000 grant we have acquired will help guarantee a successful project).
- B. Garner support from university administration: dean, AVP, etc. We want this series of conferences to be support by the institution and not just individuals.