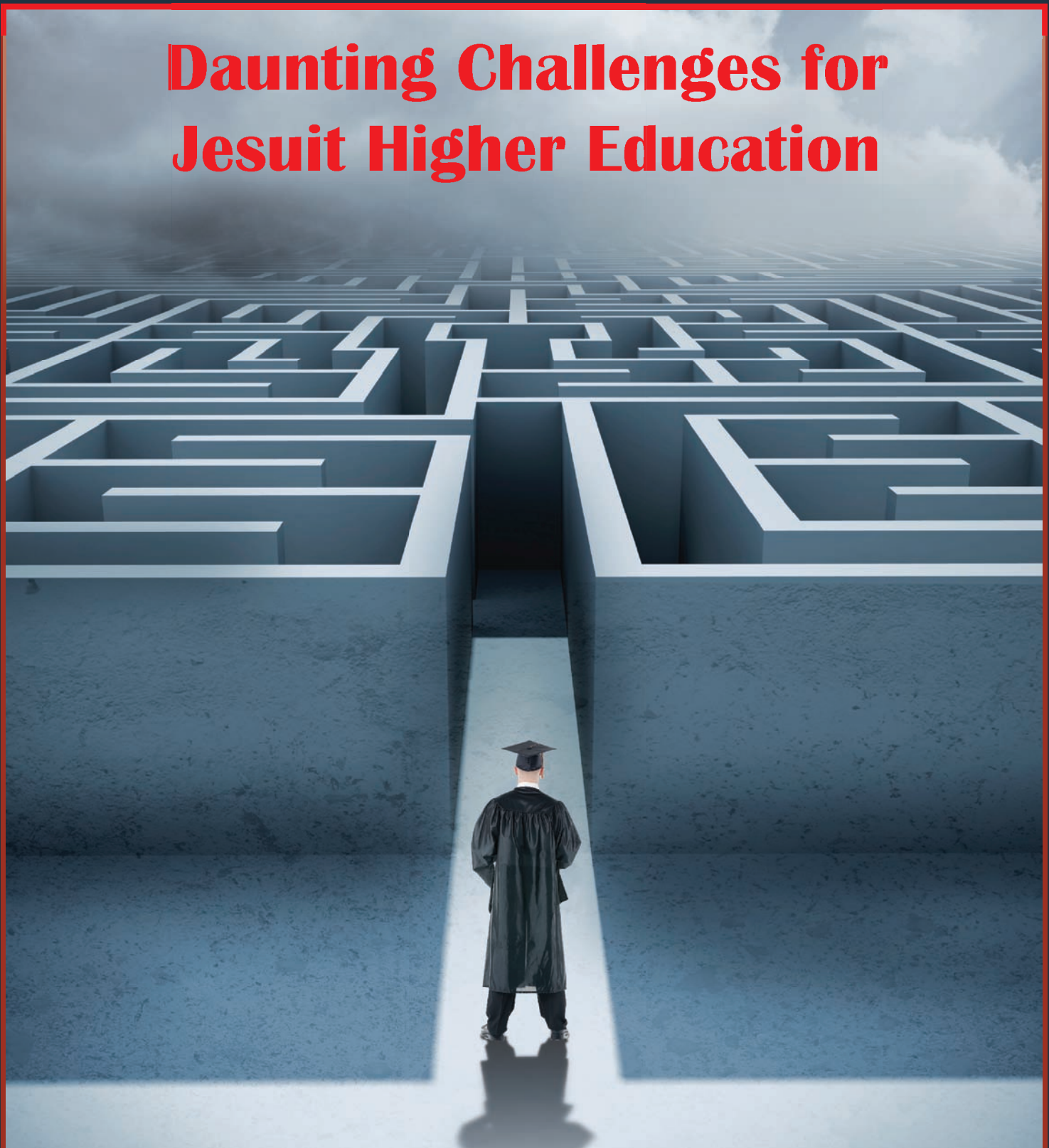


# CONVERSATIONS

ON JESUIT HIGHER EDUCATION

Fall 2015 - Number 48

## Daunting Challenges for Jesuit Higher Education



FALL 2015  
NUMBER 48

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Front cover design by Mark Scalse, S.J., director of campus ministry at Fairfield University.

# Daunting Challenges as We Move Ahead in Jesuit Education

July 1. In many settings, it marks a new beginning, a new start. Financially, of course, a new fiscal year often starts here. In our schools, too, we start gearing up for what is to come at the end of August when students return, classrooms come alive, and the empty in-box starts to fill. July 1 marks a lot of passages from the old to the new: a quick and informal survey of when new presidents begin their terms in our schools shows a great leaning towards July – at least 13 of the 28. (Some websites give only the year.)

A big news story from the *Omaha World-Herald* in June was brimming with optimism over the arrival of Daniel S. Hendrickson, S.J., as the new president of Creighton U. beginning on July 1 of this year. The writer, Kate Howard, had gone to Marquette, where Daniel was coming from, and interviewed students and colleagues about what they thought Creighton could expect in its new president. Students said that “he has an energy about him” and that he is “incredibly approachable” and “incredibly intelligent.” Colleagues noted “his commitment to Jesuit ideals” and “his ability to connect with people,” seeing these as “strong assets” for the new president. They said there would be a learning curve but trusted that Daniel was up to it.

The optimism was great, and I am sure similar reports and sentiments filled other campuses and local news outlets as new leadership took over. On July 1 St. Joseph’s welcomed Mark Reed as its new president; he had been serving at Fairfield. And on the same day, long-time faculty member John Pelissero became interim president of Loyola Chicago. And at Loyola Maryland, Susan Donovan, already serving as executive vice president, began a six-month term as acting president.

A month earlier, on June 1, Christopher Puto took over as president of Spring Hill College. He had graduated from Spring Hill in 1964 and brought with him experience as a faculty member and administrator at other universities. And Loyola Marymount welcomed its new president, Timothy Law Snyder, who moved there from Loyola Maryland.

On July 1 I was sitting at my desk in New York, pounding away at my computer, doing final edits to this issue of *Conversations*. Its title, “Daunting Challenges,” well represents the content of the articles. From 11 of the 28 AJCU schools, authors write to describe the challenging reality of university education today and the tough issues we face as we move ahead. What is technology doing to our traditional education: can one teach/learn deep values from a screen? How do we include those left behind or left out of the great experience of intellectual, social, and moral growth we propose to offer? What is the proper response to the ever growing shadow of college

sports? How can schools manage exploding expenses, and how can students work out strategies to pay off staggering debt built up over four years and find a job equal to what they can do with their education? To balance all the questions and tough times, we present two stories of new initiatives – Georgetown’s Red House and Loyola Chicago’s new Arrupe College.

These issues are just some of what these new presidents will face as their days fill up with conferences and meetings and reports. And these questions are pertinent likewise for all faculty and levels of administration. They have come to our attention before, of course, but seeing them published together is somewhat daunting. But that is why we explore and analyze and hold conversations. Moving ahead with the great mission of Jesuit education is not beyond us. It simply demands our awareness of what is happening, determination to move ahead, and gratitude for the opportunities that our great students embody. These students trust us, and their families trust us. And we will serve them with all the immense talent our schools represent.

One day not long after Daniel Hendrickson’s presidency was announced, I ran into him briefly in passing. I caught his glance, and all I could think to say was “thank you!” We moved on, but I think he knew what I meant. I’ll be more explicit here, and I say “thank you” to Daniel again, to Susan Donovan, to John Pelissero, to Christopher Puto, to Mark Reed, and to Timothy Law Snyder. And I extend a sincere “thank you” to all the other presidents, long-term or recent, who lead us in facing the great challenges we mention in this issue. That “thank you” moves outward to all the faculty and administrators, support staff, boards, and benefactors. The work you do for our students and their future is beyond description, but it well deserves all the gratitude we can express.

And thank you, students, for the challenge you eagerly present, for the trust you show, and for the future you promise. You’re the greatest! ■

Edward W. Schmidt, S.J., editor



More thanks are in order. Thanks to Mark Scalse, S.J., who designed the magnificent cover for this issue, a twisting path indeed. And thanks to Diana Owen, who was a great part of launching our new website.

Please note that in this issue you will find a letter from our seminar chair, Patrick Howell, S.J., which directs you to this new website and has other important things to say!

# A Context for Changes and Challenges in Higher Education

By Robert Dullea and Heather Geiger

Jesuit colleges and universities are not immune to the broader trends impacting higher education. Technology, the economy, demographics, and work force needs are intersecting in complex and novel ways. Many of us are grappling with a common set of questions: What are the technological, economic, and demographic trends that most strongly impact our institutions? How are these changes playing out in relations with the government, media, and public? How do we need to change and innovate in order to survive and thrive amid these changes? To answer these questions, we need to develop a shared understanding of just what those challenges are.

The Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) Fact Files present a helpful, if sobering, snapshot for examining financial trends. Total enrollment at the AJCU schools grew substantially between 2003 and 2011, but declined from 2011 to 2013. Prerecession, tuition increased by an average of 6.7 percent. Since 2009, the growth rate slowed by almost half, as tuition increases averaged 3.5 percent. Data relating to financial aid are less clear but appear to indicate that discount rates (financial aid provided by the institution) have increased over this period. These trends constrain our ability to grow net tuition revenue, the traditional solution to our financial challenges. They impact our institutions differently based on market position, location, recruiting base, and mission.

Here are some questions that we invite you to consider:

- How is your institution working to develop a shared understanding of its changing environment and of the need to respond?
- What strategies will help your institution identify the right course of action – to balance those things that must change with those things that must be preserved or enhanced?
- What opportunities are emerging within this challenging context and how can you most effectively pursue them?

## *A Historical Perspective*

The end of World War II through the 1980s is often described as the golden age of American higher education. It was a period of increasing prosperity in United States. There was a growing middle class, fueled in part by middle-skill, high-wage jobs. Technological advancements changed workforce needs which created professions requiring college education; jobs that were eliminated primarily

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involved physical labor. Higher education enrollments grew faster than the general population, and tuition increases outpaced overall inflation. During this period, what higher education provided aligned cleanly with what society needed. The added value of higher education for the graduate, for employers, and for society was tremendous. For graduates, the return on investment – earnings potential, employment options, and quality of life – grew faster than tuition increases.

Higher education was both a contributor to and a beneficiary of a rising tide. In this context, the adaptive strategy for colleges and universities was to “climb the ladder.” By raising tuition and enrollment, institutions could increase revenue, quality, reputation, market share, alumni loyalty, and fundraising. This strategy became the default for higher education, and it has been the norm for so long that institutions find it challenging to think in different ways.

The context, however, is changing. The cycle of job creation and destruction continues, but now technological innovation and the global economy chip away at white collar or professional jobs. Many of the careers for which we are now educating people are at risk. We are also in a very different economic situation. In the wake of WWII the United States entered a sustained economic boom. Today, job growth and wages in the wake of the recession of December 2007 to June 2009 have been slow to recover.

Today’s graduates are not reaping the benefits of their college education in the way their predecessors did. They have paid more, borrowed more, and are more likely to be underemployed. The middle class that fed the growth of higher education for many years is hollowing out. An economic elite will sustain parts of the system, but a large and growing population will find it difficult to access education as it is currently provided and priced. How are Jesuit universities and colleges, as part of our ethical obligation to students, considering the environment they will face and changing the education we provide to support their success?

In one important sense, our current environment reflects the golden age of higher education. New populations of potential students are seeking access to higher education. A half century ago, they were often veterans funded by the G.I. Bill. Today, they are members of communities that have traditionally not had access to college. Too many of these students are unable to attend. In the most unfortunate cases, students are able to attend for some period of time but leave an institution with significant debt and no degree. How do we respond to this problem in a way that encourages student financial literacy, minimizes the number of former students in untenable financial situations, yet does not make our institutions less welcoming to students with lesser means? This challenge will be among the most difficult that Jesuit institutions will face.



Boston College

This challenge plays out in several ways. It is reflected in increasing concern that debt held by both colleges/universities and students is unsustainable and that higher education may be the next economic bubble to burst. It has manifested itself in the form of downgraded credit ratings for many institutions and the negative outlooks that both Moody's and Standard and Poor's have issued for the education industry, citing reduced revenue growth prospects, growing expense pressures, limited ability to adjust, and increased competition for students. It also is reflected in greater public frustration that tuition has grown faster than income, inflation, and the resources of potential students.

### ***Challenges Going Forward***

An interesting way of framing the differences between the 20th and 21st centuries was presented at Thomas L. Friedman's Next New World forum: the 20th century was a time of financial abundance, knowledge scarcity, and reliance on experts and institutions. The 21st century is a time of financial scarcity, knowledge abundance, and reliance on individuals and communities. This comparison has implications for higher education. The people who make the most dire predictions regarding the future of higher education are typically those who consider

“the lecture” to be the industry's most essential element and who understand *learning* primarily to be content or knowledge acquisition. If we understand the 21st century as a time of scarce dollars, abundant knowledge, and distrust of institutions and experts, we can see why “the sage on the stage” – the expert providing knowledge in exchange for tuition dollars – is no longer a compelling value proposition.

Ignatian pedagogy, with its emphasis on experience, reflection, and action, is a very different model from the passive, note-taking role assigned to the student in the traditional lecture. It is an active learning pedagogy, developed hundreds of years before the notion of active learning was popularized. It is a tremendous asset for Jesuit colleges and universities, but its practical value depends on how this approach is implemented, an important question for each Jesuit institution.

It has also been argued that higher education is ripe for “disruptive innovation.” This concept, developed by Clayton Christensen of Harvard Business School, describes the dynamic through which established industries are replaced by new competitors that use a different, less expensive, business model. The newcomers initially serve lower-resourced and under-served segments of the market, then improve in quality, expand their market share, and ultimately displace the incumbents.



University of San Francisco

Christensen argues that higher education is a classic established industry – overpriced and inflexible – and predicts that half of the colleges and universities currently operating in the U.S. will shut down within 15 years. In the *Times Literary Supplement*, economist Tyler Cowen observes that American higher education is more indebted than it appears on the books due to implicit debt from salary commitments to tenured faculty and commitments to programs and sports. Tuition increases will be difficult to implement due to the slow economic recovery, sluggish entry-level wages in labor markets, recalcitrant state legislatures, and student debt challenges.

## ***Costs Escalate***

The relationship of government to higher education was once primarily one of support and investment; the most obvious example is the G.I. Bill. Today, it is more regulatory. The government has imposed myriad statutes and regulations, including the Higher Education Act, Cleary, Sarbanes Oxley, and Gainful Employment, that have good intent and value but that also impose significant costs. The Higher Education Compliance Alliance has developed a “compliance matrix” that includes 264 distinct requirements. In 2012 Hartwick College found that staff logged over 7,000 hours completing federal compliance forms. *The Atlantic* estimated the cost to a university of taking federal financial aid at \$1,000 per student; Vanderbilt put the figure at \$1,100.

Legal liability, insurance policies, and accreditation are all increasingly demanding. These requirements have cultural as well as financial implications. At Seattle University, we have seen many situations in which faculty, staff, or students become frustrated by what they see as an arbitrary or misguided rule imposed by some administrative office. Staff in that office are, in turn, equally frustrated by the challenges of ensuring that all parts of the university comply with externally mandated directives. This situation negatively impacts campus culture and reduces agility at a time when we need to be nimble.

## ***Is College a Good Investment?***

The value of a college education is increasingly, and publicly, under debate in a way that focuses on three questions. How much have costs increased? Is college still a good investment? (Or to make it a more nuanced question, for whom is college a good investment?) Finally, how big a problem is student debt? The extent to which these questions are unresolved is striking.

Federal statistics tracking inflation in college tuition are based on published sticker prices. They show an increase of 107 percent since 1992. This figure plays a

significant role in public and governmental discussions of higher education. College Board data factor in financial aid and show an increase of 22 percent for private four-year colleges and a net price increase of 60 percent at public four-year institutions, reflecting lower levels of government support.

Total student debt now exceeds \$1.2 trillion; whether or not this figure constitutes a crisis depends on whom you read. The *Economist* noted that “Between 1993 and 2012, the share of American graduates taking out student loans increased by 25%, and the average debt per graduate more than doubled, after adjusting for inflation.” At the same time, the Brookings Institute said that Federal Reserve data “strongly suggest that increases in the average lifetime incomes of college-educated Americans have more than kept pace with increases in debt loads.”

Student loan default rates also are a key figure. For the 2011 cohort, the national average is 13.7 percent, and the private non-profit average is 7.2 percent. AJCU rates range from 0.8 percent to 8.1 percent, with a median value of 4 percent. It is good to see these relatively low figures for Jesuit institutions, but each institution should consider why this is the case. Have we been better at professionally preparing our students so that they are better able to repay their loans? Have the ethical and moral dimensions of a Jesuit education made our alumni more committed to meeting their financial commitments? To what extent do we simply enroll students with academic and financial backgrounds that support them regardless of the education we provide?

How do we understand the value proposition – the return on investment – of higher education? For students as a whole, the value of education continues to grow not because graduates are more successful but because the options for non-graduates are deteriorating. While there will always be spectacular exceptions (Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, and Mark Zuckerberg typically top the list), it is increasingly difficult to prosper in American society without a degree.

Increased college costs play out across the financial spectrum. People with fewer resources are priced out, while those with more resources are more cost sensitive and have escalating expectations for services and amenities that are expensive to deliver.

## ***Technology and Competition***

Technology impacts higher education in three key ways. First, technology is ubiquitous and expensive: it requires sizable investment within limited resource environments. It is changing the employment opportunities for and the skills needed by our graduates. It has expanded the ways that education can be delivered, thereby upending the competitive landscape of higher education.

Higher education faces new forms of competition. Businesses and industries are developing alternate ways to teach and certify knowledge and skills. This trend can develop in ways that compete with the college degree, especially if competency-based certifications gain broader acceptance with the public and employers. Established universities and new competitors have experimented with technology to deliver curriculum in new ways. The Massive Open Online Course, or MOOC, is a web-based course, typically free, easily scalable, and intended for a global audience. Proponents framed MOOCs as an alternative to standard higher education and argued that they are the disruptive innovation that will eventually displace traditional colleges and universities.

The conversation has shifted as the challenges facing the MOOC instructional model have become more apparent. Students are more successful when they have an engaged presence to help personalize instruction, offer encouragement, and provide accountability. These resources are not “scalable” in the way recorded lectures and automated exams are. Distance education can be high touch and it can be highly inexpensive, but it cannot, as of yet, be both.

Instructional technology will continue to improve. Advances in social media, gaming, and other fields will inform this work. We need to better understand and take advantage of web-based education. How are Jesuit colleges and universities thinking creatively about combining the best of what we always have done with emergent models and opportunities? What are our opportunities for improving the education we provide and extending the reach of our institutions?

## ***Challenges and Opportunities***

Part of the challenge to creative thinking is that the discussion has focused more on challenges than on opportunities. It is a discussion that in many ways has put traditional higher education on the defensive. Books like *Academically Adrift*, *Hacking the Academy*, *The End of College*, and dozens of others offer pointed critiques. Higher education is prominent in the national media in ways that are not positive; stories like “Is College Doomed?” from *The Atlantic* are not uncommon.

These criticisms tend to be expressed primarily in terms of employability, and they follow a common storyline. The market value of technical expertise continues to grow, and the particular expertise that is needed evolves ever more rapidly. Employment is serial and retooling is ongoing. Universities are too slow and too expensive, and as a result industries are developing new models of certification. The traditional degree has become less meaningful and valuable, and eventually it will be obsolete. Fareed Zakaria summarizes the conversation in this way: “The irrelevance of a liberal education

is an idea that has achieved that rare status in Washington: bipartisan agreement.... [T]echnical training is the new path forward. It is the only way, we are told, to ensure that Americans survive in an age defined by technology and shaped by global competition.”

This perspective is often accompanied by prescriptions or recommendations. Higher education should disruptively innovate itself: we should create the low cost alternative that will otherwise displace us from outside. We should reinvent education by eliminating tenure, forgoing accreditation, abandoning the credit hour, so we can shrink and rise again as leaner and smarter organizations.

This is a conversation about both our value and our future, and we need to be listening carefully. At the same time, we cannot help but recognize that many of the remedies proposed are unworkable and would not serve the educational missions of Jesuit colleges and universities. There is, however, an interesting counterpoint to this conversation, in which the changes in our society and our economy are seen as placing a different set of demands on colleges and universities. Fareed Zakaria poses the question of whether it still makes sense to “study English in the age of apps.” His conclusion is different from that reached by many in the media and government. The rapid evolution of technology means that technical and vocational education is quickly outdated. It is the liberal education that provides the communications skills, the creativity, and the ability and desire to keep learning that are most needed in this new world. Dov Seidman, in his book *How*, similarly argues that individuals and organizations must develop and operate within a framework of sustainable values: “in the twenty-first century, principled behavior is the surest path to success and significance in business and in life.” William Deresiewicz’s *Excellent Sheep*, which outlines the limitations and shortcomings of an education intended primarily to foster professional success, is another good example of this genre. These authors argue for a “traditional education,” not in spite of extensive social changes but in response to those very changes. They call for an education that develops people with those qualities that technology will not quickly replicate: critical thinking, judgment, character, and leadership. These are qualities that align very well with the missions of the Jesuit colleges and universities.

The problems facing higher education – facing each of our institutions – are bigger and more complex than what we have experienced before. At the same time, we know, and we see through the growth of our students, that what we do remains vital. Our Jesuit institutions have tremendous core strengths: we provide high quality education that is desired by potential students and that is of value to society. At the same time we will not excel and we will not be the best institutions we can be without changing and addressing difficult questions. ■



# Responding to Crisis

## *Risk, Opportunity and Strategic Wagers*

**By James Buchanan**

**T**here is a great deal of debate about whether higher education is in the throes of serious systemic crisis and thus in need of radical transformation or whether what we are experiencing is merely a challenging period which needs to be weathered until we can return to something like business as usual. On the one hand, it often seems as if everything is a crisis – an economic crisis, an environmental crisis, an urban crisis, a crisis in the Middle East, and on and on. Has “crisis” become yet another hyperbolic description of every concern? Or are these really crises?

In the end, crisis is what we make of it. The real question of whether something is or is not a crisis really depends upon whether and how we choose to respond to it. Is the real environmental crisis the fact that we have never been able to convince the public that there actually is a crisis? Or is it not really a crisis? If a doctor tells me that I have a medical crisis, I am not likely to just wait for some protracted period to see what happens. A genuine crisis demands

of us that we take action, that we make changes, maybe even radical ones.

Is higher education in a crisis? The presidents and boards of trustees of virtually every college and university are now faced with this question. To many observers of American higher education, including those cited in the lead article in this issue, the conclusion seems to be that we are in a real, long-term, systemic crisis. Predictions that half of the colleges and universities in the U.S. will shut down in the next 15 years, even if off the mark, make this clear.

The combination of rapidly increasing infrastructure costs, a market that will not support further increases in tuition, the challenge of finding new sources of development money for our endowments, and increasing discount rates leads us to the hard, but unavoidable, conclusion that higher education as currently structured is economically unsustainable.

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*James Buchanan, university professor, is director of the Edward B. Brueggeman Center for Dialogue at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio.*



a loose but existing system of over 100 Jesuit colleges and universities worldwide that share this common mission. This is an asset base that no other university system can claim. How might we leverage this programmatically and economically?

In addition to asset-based development models, there is an emerging literature and movement toward what is called the new collaborative economy (Jeremy Rifkin, for example) or the collaborative commons (Lawrence Lessing, for example). There has been discussion about collaboration among AJCU schools in the last few years, but this has not resulted in significant structural collaborative action. I suggest that AJCU, working with Jesuit institutions worldwide, create a new global educational system. Working together and using distance educational technologies, we can develop a global system unrivaled in the educational marketplace.

This long-term strategic wager would require that we develop new transinstitutional structures. Developing these would require the commitment of both time and money. However, it would be shared time and money. This would also mean a change in the way in which we deliver education that would enrich our educational cultures. New collaborative, transinstitutional structures would have short term, destructive impact on existing structures as they are replaced with the new ones. It would require new models of sharing resources, of giving up what may be the competitive advantages that each of our institutions has over others, but could result in AJCU as a system having significant competitive advantage over other educational institutions and systems. It would lead us toward a different administrative and educational philosophy and culture committed to a larger collaborative model of higher education.

## ***Advantages***

The advantages to a new collaborative global Jesuit educational system would be first to our students. This world network would provide an unparalleled opportunity to study all over the world, to learn languages and cultures in those countries, and to prepare students for a global marketplace and for assuming their roles as global citizens. It would allow our diverse student populations to engage with each other around the world. All of this fits perfectly with our Jesuit mission. It would also change the culture of our home universities because our students would bring that international experience back to our campus life and to our classrooms. It also becomes a powerful recruiting tool for international students.

But there are also significant economic advantages to a new collaborative model of global education. Not only can we gain new efficiencies by sharing administrative processes and costs, but this also has the advantage

of helping to address the infrastructural costs that are threatening all of our institutions. By having a significant number of our students studying abroad every semester, using facilities in other Jesuit institutions and using direct or home bill models for tuition and housing, we will be able to increase our student population while minimizing the corresponding infrastructural costs. Whatever the costs might be for running collaborative global programs, they would pale in comparison with the costs of building and maintaining new dorms, classroom buildings, sports facilities, cafeterias, and adding faculty and staff to serve an increased student population. By using distance education technologies we would be able to maintain contact with our students and control over the quality of their education.

**T**he other long-term economic advantage to such a strategy is that the development of transinstitutional structures in this area would open up the possibility of a range of other collaborative programs. While it may seem counterintuitive that we each might gain competitive advantage through collaboration, this is at the heart of the new models of innovation and the advantages of emerging collaborative economic models.

The question of whether this type of new collaboration among AJCU schools is possible and whether developing a Jesuit global education system will work is valid. We don't know – it is a wager. But the belief behind all strategic wagers is that if they do work the huge upside is worth the risk. Such a plan might look too radical and too complex, but if we are in a true crisis maybe radical is what is required. We need to accept that in any such endeavor, there will be failures along the way, but any commitment to innovation accepts that there will be failures, failures from which we learn. We must also believe that ultimately, if the strategic vision driving the wager is solid and carefully planned, in the end we will not fail because we, together, are committed to the that vision. By collaborating we do not eliminate risk, but we do share it.

The long-term strategic wager proposed here may be too complex and too bold, but the principles upon which it is based are the real point. To explore areas of a shared asset base model of development and to move, where we can, into transinstitutional structural collaboration as a system of Jesuit higher educational institutions – regionally, nationally, or globally – could provide a bold new foundation resulting in a range of new programs and efficiencies. Ultimately how much we are willing to wager clearly depends upon whether we believe that there is a crisis or how severe we believe the crisis to be. I am convinced that the institutions that have the vision and the boldness to make long-term strategic wagers will be the ones that not only survive the next 15 years but will thrive. ■

# A NEW TURNING POINT

By Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.

Since Fr. Adolfo Nicolás's address in Mexico City in April 2010, there are four "trends" in Jesuit higher education that mark a turning point in Jesuit institutional development worldwide. Together they amount to a unique and potentially important moment in the history of Jesuit contributions to the world of education, especially higher education. If nourished and developed, Jesuit higher education could once again make a significant contribution to higher learning and to the Church, especially to its evangelization goals. These realities might be described as: an increasing awareness of the relevance of Jesuit education, a greater alignment with the Society's social justice mission, a renewed focus on the Catholic identity of the schools, and a desire to leverage the network.

**1. Growing demand.** There is a persistent demand for Jesuit schools, especially colleges and universities. In Africa, Asia, and throughout most regions there is a desire for new Jesuit programs that will address the need for better-educated workforces and professional classes. No fewer than four African provinces are actively planning on opening a Jesuit university. The success of Jesuit high schools in Africa and Asia has

led to the desire for colleges and universities just as they did in places like North and South America a century ago. And, while the Society is not yet allowed to formally open schools in countries like China and Vietnam, American Jesuit institutions are beginning to operate programs in such places. In some countries, like Indonesia, our higher education presence is expanding into new fields, often with the help of other established Jesuit universities.

The biggest threat to this expansion and to the maintenance of our more established colleges and universities is keeping our schools affordable. With the exception of certain states and some developing nations, most governments are pulling back on their financial support of higher educations. In Europe and the U.S., our Jesuit schools increasingly compete for students who bring with them a diminishing amount of state support.

**2. Renewed commitment to the poor.** This pressure for expansion, in nearly all regions of the world, and the pressure on governments to diminish

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*Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., Secretary for Higher Education, Society of Jesus, was president of Loyola University Chicago from 2001 to 2015.*

funding has come at a time when our institutions have renewed their commitment to educating the poor. The last three Superiors General of the Society have each stressed that our schools produce citizens bent on service, a commitment to justice, to inclusivity and depth as the special hallmark of Jesuit universities. Many Jesuit institutions have turned to specific programs for admitting talented men and women who were traditionally locked out of this opportunity. This has led to greater inclusion of and even a preference for those traditionally excluded from higher education. Worldwide, our institutions are thus more multicultural in their student body, more diverse socioeconomically, and more committed to finding financial resources to include poorer students. In India and elsewhere, some higher education works have been started specifically to educate the marginalized and poorer classes.

**3. More intentionally Catholic.** With the diminishing numbers of Jesuits, especially in leadership positions, and the growing secularization of higher education in general, one would have predicted a lessening of institutional commitment to the Catholic and Jesuit identity. Yet, in nearly every region, there is a concern to pass on the Jesuit and Catholic mission of the institution to academic leaders who embrace that commitment. Our institutions are more comfortable highlighting this dimension of their heritage. One sees this explicit commitment to service, especially service of the Church and those in need, and the commitment to justice in the way our schools make this an explicit part of their recruitment and development of faculty and administrators. It is also visible in their interest in best practices in orientation of faculty and staff for mission, programs for service learning, renewal of the core curriculum, and direct support in training personnel for Church-sponsored programs.

**4. Increasing number of network collaborations.** Another very positive sign is the increasing number of projects which are in fact collaboration between and across Jesuit universities and other apostolates. Such examples include an on-line environmental science textbook that incorporates Jesuit values and collaboration in bringing higher education into refugee camps. This e-text is the result of

40 university scholars and dozens of Jesuit high school science teachers.

The Jesuit Commons: Higher Education at the Margins, with JRS, has been operating for more than five years to deliver higher education classes and certificate and degree programs for refugees in camps and now to other marginalized places around the globe. It involves dozens of faculty at many Jesuit institutions who deliver their on-line courses to hundreds of adult students. Roughly eight Jesuit business schools from five continents are working together to share best practices in social entrepreneurship training. Dozens more are contributing to a business case studies series which is being housed at Deusto in Spain and Le Moyne in the U.S. And, besides these multi-institutional collaborations there are an increasing number of bilateral collaborative projects, too many to mention. New and growing collaborations include such areas as training in Ignatian Spirituality, research on migration and human trafficking, nursing education and research, and inter-religious programming and research.

Why is this a potentially unique and important moment? The Society has the largest and the most culturally, economically, and intellectually diverse system of higher education in the world. Its 175 institutions are unparalleled in terms of scope and importance within their given locale. They share a commitment to social justice, a desire to include the marginalized, an embrace of service and the capacity for leveraging assistance for new projects and programs. This network can be a model of international collaboration for the betterment of all peoples. These Jesuit universities can serve the Church by harnessing their formidable intellectual resources for sharp and clear analysis of unjust systems and practices. Their faculty and students can address a host of issues that cut across national and regional boundaries, from migration and human trafficking to environmental degradation. They have the power to model the proper use and renewal of natural resources. They can be communities of interreligious dialogue and cooperation. In short, they have within them, as a network, the capacity to offer a significant contribution to the global challenges we experience today and to renew the Church's age-old desire and to contribute to the betterment of all humankind, which is its evangelization mission. ■

# Best Practices in College and University Budgeting

By William G. Laird

**C**ritical to carrying out the mission of a Jesuit college or university is its financial health. Whether a small, local college or a big research university, the flow of money is a constant worry. My twelve years as chief financial officer at Loyola University Chicago (2002-2014) began right after a series of operating losses in the 1990s through 2002, made worse by a downturn in enrollment. There had been virtually no investment in the academic and capital infrastructure for many years. The first thing I was asked to do was to organize a new management team that could initiate a best practices business plan to insure for financial success and to initiate the needed human and capital resources to effectively provide for a quality Jesuit Catholic education.

What follows is a little of the history of righting the ship financially at Loyola University Chicago. My remarks come out of my experience at a Jesuit institution that is very large (now hovering around 16,000 students), is research intensive, and has three major and very diverse campuses in the Chicago area alone. Yet I think that what we learned over the years and what we put into place can be of use to any college or university.

## ***1. Enrollment Management***

The first thing our management team did was achieve a 16,000 student enrollment target, a population determined to be Loyola's maximum capacity considering its human and physical assets. By reorganizing the enrollment management operation, the student enrollment was regained and total students increased each year during the ten-year period.

## ***2. Conservative budgeting and financial forecasting***

A budget is an indicator of risk tolerance from conservative to aggressive. Aggressive budgeters are more likely to experience revenue shortfalls and expense overruns. A conservative budget protects the institution from unforeseen shortfalls and provides more stability in the operations. We kept realistic revenue assumptions while making sure expense assumptions were also realistic and reflected economic realities. Finally, each year we built some contingency reserves into the budget. A financially astute

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*William G. Laird is the retired senior vice president for finance and CFO of Loyola University Chicago.*



institution takes advantage of unforeseen opportunities and responds to unanticipated problems.

### ***3. Relative trust in the budget process***

The first thing to do was to restore trust by employing an open process with significant information sharing. We instituted a Budget Review Team (BRT) made up of the university president, CFO, provost, strategic planning committee, human resources, and capital planning. The BRT meets regularly to ensure that the budget and forecasting process is accurate and consistent with management plans and expectations. The BRT builds trust among the many players responsible for the fiscal health of the university.

### ***4. Faculty***

We immediately decided to tie budget bases and faculty salaries to teaching performance. The first operating surplus earned in 2004 was reinvested in fac-

ulty salaries to compensate for outstanding teaching performance. The provost and deans worked closely with us to assess faculty teaching productivity that could be measured in terms of credit hours taught. The credit hours were benchmarked with other peer institutions and standards were set for each college, school, and department for any full-time faculty member. The credit hours were also used as the basis of allocating net tuition revenue to each of the schools. Some budget bases were increased based on teaching productivity, as were the individual salaries of the teaching faculty.

### ***5. Self-sufficient operations***

Early on, LUC's management team determined that certain of the operations would be treated as self-sufficient business units. These units were expected to match revenue pricing with operating and capital requirements without drawing financial support from tuition-related activities. Examples of these self-sufficient operations included the internal bank, student housing, residential rental properties around

the university, our campus in Rome, and the Health Sciences. This insured that each entity pays for its share of debt service and capital expenses. These operations do not draw on the operational cash flow from tuition/teaching activities.

## ***6. Capital budget and funded depreciation***

The amount of the annual depreciation expense is the first deposit to the capital budget and provides for significant cash flow to fund annual deferred maintenance and new construction requirements. In addition, operating surpluses can augment funded depreciation to pay for capital expenditures.

## ***7. Internal bank to repay debt***

Sufficient cash flow is required to make the principal payments on outstanding debt. The management team established an internal bank to bill debt service payments to tuition-based and auxiliary-based budget entities (i.e., housing, health sciences, the Rome center). The debt service – billed and internally collected – provided the cash flow to retire the debt when it was due. Amounts billed are in advance of debt payments and remain as invested cash reserves to pay the debt. Because one of our campus locations is in the heart of a retail area in downtown Chicago, these internal billings were also augmented by rental receipts from leasing the first floor properties of the downtown campus and other land leases of Loyola property. In addition, Loyola's fixed rate debt is 86 percent of total debt with variable debt, amounting to 14 percent. A risky debt portfolio would contain a very high percentage of variable debt and a change in interest rates upward could result in unanticipated interest expense.

The internal bank bills the variable rate debt at a fixed rate of approximately 4 percent to the internal entities while paying current interest rate debt at .3 percent. This technique provided for an internal “swap” and allows the internal bank to retain more cash to repay the debt and does not expose the university to counter-party risk. In a nutshell, we put in place a way to pay off the external debt completely by 2043; the internal bank with reserves results in the debt being internally retired in 2029. This practice has been highly endorsed by Moody's Investor Services.

## ***8. Optimum utilization of facilities***

LUC had a lot of underutilized properties, spread around the three campuses. We decided to sell some properties and consolidate operations elsewhere when applicable, which provided us cost savings. Proceeds from the sale of the Medical School and Hospital Administration Building, for instance, were used to repay debt, and related operating costs were also eliminated. Another property sold was the School of Education building in Wilmette, IL, a campus that was far from our three main campuses. With operating costs eliminated and personnel relocated to the downtown Water Tower Campus, the proceeds were used to repay debt. Using new LEED certified building techniques provided for savings in utility costs and added to the university's mission to be environmentally sustainable. Finally, we established a separate conference services operation that rented out vacant residence halls in the summer and generated savings for housing capital reinvestment requirements.

## ***9. Reinvestment of annual operating surpluses***

Any residual operating surpluses were reinvested under the control of the CEO and were used to establish unrestricted or “quasi-endowed” endowments supporting a variety of needs: future operations, matching donors' gifts, and capital reinvestment. The operating surpluses were used to establish unrestricted endowments earmarked as “quasi-endowed” by the board of trustees.

## ***10. Controlling endowment spending***

The board of trustees authorizes management to spend up to 5 percent of the endowment value for intended purposes. Spending for scholarships is usually at 5 percent. However, not every endowment account automatically gets 5 percent to spend, and the effectiveness of endowment spending is reviewed annually as part of the budget process. The total annual effective rate of endowment spending is less than 3 percent. The endowment asset allocation and investments made provide for sufficient liquidity to meet the annual spending need. The budget review team annually reviews all endowment spending prior to finalizing a budget for presentation to the Board of Directors.

These policies are well entrenched now at the university and are highly endorsed by our board of trustees. ■



# Analysis and Response to Media Coverage of Liberal Arts Education

By Robbin D. Crabtree and David Gudelunas

**F**aculty, especially those of us in the liberal arts, feel beleaguered by frequent stories in the media that question the value of college education in general and liberal arts (aka, “the humanities”) in particular. These questions arise in a context of escalating educational costs and mounting student debt, falling family discretionary income and related declines in access to home equity loans, and much anxiety about the employment prospects for our graduates, influenced in part by the slowed pace of retirement among early baby boomers whose 401Ks took a sizeable hit during the same period. Not surprisingly, then, throughout the economic downturn there were corresponding shifts of college applicants towards fields like business, engineering, and health care.

In response to this perceived media war on education, many articles and editorials countered the negative narrative and sought to broaden discussion of return on investment beyond its narrow focus on immediate post-graduation employment and starting salary. Educators, along with liberally educated people in business, politics, and many other fields, have defended higher education as a public good and detailed the many ways the liberal arts cultivate professional success and flexibility, informed citizenship, and lifelong learning. Organizations such as the AAC&U have delineated and documented liberal arts learning outcomes, not only those related to cognitive development and intellectual capacity (for example critical thinking, broad content knowledge) but those that

also translate as workplace skills, such as writing, communication, and diversity awareness.

As this battle for the soul of American education unfolds, we conducted a systematic analysis of media content about higher education to trace trends during the economic downturn and recovery and to better understand correlations among media coverage and preferences of prospective students and their parents. This analysis shows robust media discussion about a crisis in the liberal arts. Mainstream newspapers and magazines, academic trade publications, and social media channels have all contributed to a conversation that has intensified and morphed since the 2008 economic downturn.

In *The New York Times* alone, there were 795 articles with some mention of the liberal arts between January 2008 and January 2015. The discussion of the liberal arts in the nation’s newspaper of record is significant in that it captures and initiates and also reflects and shapes larger cultural conversations about the academy in general and the liberal arts in specific.

Articles in the *Times* fall into four main categories: substantive articles and features, op-eds, letters responding to op-eds, and brief mentions of the liberal arts that are seemingly incidental to the overall article content.

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*Robbin Crabtree is dean of the Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts and professor of women’s studies at Loyola Marymount University. David Gudelunas is associate dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and associate professor of communication at Fairfield University.*

This last category may seem like insignificant data, but when a wedding announcement says that the bride has a background in the liberal arts and married an engineer or that the new CEO of a technology startup has a liberal arts degree these brief mentions become very telling. Similarly, through using the term “liberal arts” as a descriptor (for everything from small colleges to comprehensive master’s universities, or simply for schools that are not primarily research institutions, or as a modifier for nouns other than “college” or “university”), the *Times* constructs notions of what the liberal arts are and are not.

In those articles where the liberal arts are the primary focus, themes become readily apparent from headlines like: “Demanding more from college,” “Is your student prepared for life,” “How to get a job with a philosophy degree,” “In tough times humanities must justify their worth,” “Making college ‘relevant,’” “Private colleges worry about a dip in enrollment,” and “The fraying ties between education and jobs.” While letters work largely to counter the negativity of op-eds and feature articles, the overarching theme is that the liberal arts, if not in danger, are most certainly in transition.

A cluster analysis used to discover frames prominent among the articles shows that the *Times* most

often discusses the liberal arts in relation to a “career and jobs” frame. A secondary frame is “technology and larger economic forces” that require liberal arts institutions to re-evaluate their role in preparing students for a rapidly shifting global economy. The third most prominent frame concerns the cost of private education and the sustainability of liberal arts institutions.

None of these three primary frames is surprising to those of us who work in Jesuit colleges and universities. Still, knowing the lenses through which those who are less familiar with our collective mission view our work is powerful information. Importantly, even as these media frames and many concrete challenges continue to shape our daily work in Jesuit institutions, the most recent application trends at our institutions offer cautious optimism for the return of the liberal arts.

As academic leaders in liberal arts environments, we must buoy faculty spirits in the face of what has felt like the most hostile climate for the humanities in a generation and continue to reframe the discussion of the liberal arts in the media. In this changing environment for higher education, we also must defend the liberal arts as practically valuable to compete for students and resources. And we must relentlessly promote the inherent and enduring value of education, most especially a liberal arts education. For those of us in Jesuit higher education, this is a sacred commitment. ■



# Justice for All, Including Adjuncts

By Gerald J. Beyer

**O**n February 25, 2015, faculty and students staged walkouts on a number of U.S. campuses marking National Adjunct Walkout Day, as a growing chorus decried the working conditions of adjunct faculty at our nation's universities. Those at Jesuit and other Catholic universities calling for change have the weight of their traditions on their side. Those who either ignore or perpetuate the plight of adjuncts – intentionally or not – violate basic tenets of those same traditions. In addition, they jeopardize the faith formation of their students and impede the evangelizing mission of the Catholic university.

The phrases “the service of faith” and “the promotion of justice” encapsulate the heart of the Jesuit educational mission. As articulated in General Congregation 32, justice and concern for the poor should animate everything a Jesuit university does. Pope John Paul II echoed this view in his apostolic constitution on higher education, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. According to the pontiff, “a Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ.... it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals....” (Part I, no. 21)

Seen in this context, the church's long-standing defense of workers' rights sheds much light on the controversial conversation about justice for adjuncts at Catholic colleges and universities. Much work remains to be done on Catholic campuses to protect the right to a living wage and to form unions, two foundational elements of justice in the economic sphere according to John Paul II (*Laborem Exercens*, no. 19).

According to a statement by more than 135 Catholic scholars, including eight past presidents of the Catholic Theological Society of America, many adjunct professors

today rank among “the poor and vulnerable.” Sadly this is not hyperbole. Most adjuncts are neither graduate students nor professionals earning a salary elsewhere while teaching as an avocation. In other words, teaching is their vocation and their sole source of income. As the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has reported, a growing number of adjuncts earn so little that they qualify for public assistance. According to the 2014 House Committee on Education and the Workforce study “The Just-In-Time Professor,” many adjuncts reported earnings from \$15,000 to \$20,000. Given that the federal poverty line for a family of three is \$19,530 and \$23,550 for a family of four, many contingent faculty members live at the “edge of poverty.”

Some Catholic institutions pay significantly above the national median per course, but the pay rate for most adjuncts on our campuses mostly mirrors national trends. Moreover, the fact that Catholic universities employ academics as temp workers as opposed to full-time workers with decent benefits and job security is inexcusable – even if they try to justify it with a utilitarian logic alien to Catholic social teaching. Saving costs on the backs of adjuncts to keep tuition down while spending money on highly paid administrators, athletics coaches, expensive athletics facilities, stadiums, and luxury dorms runs afoul of the church's “preferential option for the poor.” To add insult to injury, several Catholic university administrations have blocked the efforts of adjuncts to unionize, thereby stripping them of what John Paul II deemed an indispensable “mouthpiece in the struggle for social justice.” Using legal recourse to

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*Gerald J. Beyer is associate professor of Christian ethics at Villanova University; this piece draws on his lengthier article “Labor Unions, Adjuncts, and the Mission and Identity of Catholic Universities,” Horizons: The Journal of the College Theology Society, Vol. 43, No 1 (2015).*

challenge union elections mandated by the National Labor Relations Board on the grounds of religious freedom appears cynical. If excessive government intrusion were really their fear, Catholic universities could simply allow a free and fair union election without NLRB involvement, which Section 9 (a) of the NLRA permits. Moreover, as the USCCB has articulated in *Respecting the Just Rights of Workers*, management at Catholic institutions may never usurp the right to unionization.

As students begin to increasingly realize that the situation of adjuncts glaringly contrasts with the Ignatian and Catholic vision for communities of higher learning, they will inevitably sour on the mission of our colleges and universities. As Rick Malloy, S.J., of Scranton University has contended, if we fail to model the values

of the Gospel, “We will be subtly communicating to our students that it makes more sense to ‘Look out for Number One,’ ‘Grab All the Gusto You Can’ and forget the poor and oppressed of our world.”

Resolving the issues will not be easy, especially as Catholic institutions seek to remain buoyant in a highly competitive market. Nonetheless, ignoring the unjust situation of adjuncts cannot be justified. Moreover, the mounting pressure for Catholic institutions to live up to Catholic principles and values in the treatment of their employees – including but not limited to adjunct faculty – will not likely dissipate. It is time for all Jesuit universities to follow Georgetown’s lead and adopt a just employment policy (see <http://www.justemployment-policy.org/jesuit/>). ■

## A Letter from Patrick Howell, S.J.

Dear Colleagues in Jesuit Education,

Six months ago we launched our first, interactive website for *Conversations* magazine. It enables much more flexibility for us to publish your contributions and, we hope, stimulates greater intercollegiate conversations about key issues and opportunities in Jesuit higher education. See <http://conversationsmagazine.org/>

Let me assure you we will still publish our regular print editions of approximately 48 pages at the beginning of each semester – January and August. But we will have additional articles on the website, which we previously could not accommodate because of space and cost limitations. A *Conversations* Newsletter will be sent to subscribers to alert you to new editions on our website. If you wish to be included please send a quick note by email to [conversamagsubscription@gmail.com](mailto:conversamagsubscription@gmail.com)

Another fruitful initiative is that we now collaborate with all the Jesuit

mission and identity officers to determine the most pertinent themes for the magazine and to share strategies for its use on each of your campuses.

The National Seminar board rotates membership on a three-year basis so it’s always a combination of gratitude and sorrow when we say goodbye to our “veterans.” This year Diana Owen (Georgetown); Laurie Ann Britt-Smith (University of Detroit Mercy), and Sheryl Smith (Le Moyne) with our gratitude earned the distinction of “*Conversations-emeriti*.” And Kristen Heyer of Santa Clara leaves the board after two years as she moves to a new position “in the Jesuit family” at Boston College.

Thank you for your interest and support,

Patrick Howell, S.J., chair  
National Seminar on Jesuit  
Higher Education



# What Technology Can't Replace

By Michael Serazio

**A**s legend has it, the Luddite rebellion of early 19th-century Britain was ignited by the intrusion of mechanized technology into the textile production process. Raging against the machines that they assumed would replace them, the Luddites raided factories and sabotaged machinery by night, in the hopes of salvaging the labor that represented their livelihood by day.

It was, of course, all for naught. The industrial revolution won that round – and a few others – but the Luddites at least bequeathed us a namesake pejorative still hurled at anyone daring to stand in the way of technological “progress.”

I write that not as a self-professed (or, for that matter, accused) Luddite, but as an open-minded skeptic about technology's impact on the state of higher education. Indeed, full disclosure: I have enthusiastically experimented with and adopted YouTube clips, Facebook course pages, and discussion blogs in every one of my classes. Yet, from the vantage point of Jesuit pedagogy, technology has yet to offer an adequate answer to a question that should always be at the forefront of our conversations: How much does the *whole person* really matter?

As many have noted, the experience of a lecture hall – usually a metaphor for college as a whole – has not changed all that much in, say, 500 years: Professor stands astride the podium; she pours forth her expertise; students are edified (or fall asleep). The endurance of that traditional format is either a virtue or vice, depending on how close your zip code is to Silicon Valley.

Against that petrified backdrop, enter the heroic innovators – those for whom disruption appears to be, always and ever, an inherent good. In their view, online learning offers a solution to the various crises of higher education. It strips down costs, accommodates adaptable scheduling, and allures a generation of digital natives already apparently incapable of prying themselves from their screens for even a 45-minute lecture. Call it the TED Talk-ification of college life – the intellectual medium of our time, as techno-utopians would have it.

The flipped classroom format offers one avenue: videotaped lectures watched as homework and homework tackled in class with the professor hovering and roving from group to group. The MOOC format of edX, Coursera, and Udacity offers another: massive open online courses that can enroll tens of thousands of “followers.” (Twitter's term, I would argue, offers a more apt label here than “students.”)

Now, an ethos of flexibility should certainly resonate with our Ignatian ideal of meeting students wherever they are: in a classroom or, I suppose, over an Ethernet cable into their dorm room. And few could find fault with the democratizing impulse that, theoretically, underpins many of these technological wonders. If a faculty member can spread knowledge to populations not privileged enough to afford the sticker shock of today's tuition prices, then that, too, has a worthy social justice rationale.

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*Michael Serazio is an assistant professor in the department of communication at Boston College; he taught at Fairfield University as an assistant professor of communication from 2010 to 2015.*

Is online learning making good on those promises? As best as I can tell, the evidence to this point appears to be mixed and therefore inconclusive. Much has been made of the, well, massive attrition rate in MOOCs, and those who do succeed in finishing seem to be already pretty well educated (not to mention largely white, American, male, and fully employed). Others have noted that these online course innovations seem uniquely biased in favor of fields like science, engineering, and mathematics and less suitable for, say, history, philosophy, or English. In that sense, technology has a bit of a quantitative bias, as any bleary-eyed humanities professor who can't feed a stack of essays into Scantron will tell you.

But even if online learning does get better at spreading knowledge – which, I would wager, it will – can it ever match college's traditional strength in *cultivating wisdom*? Confronting that challenge requires us to answer the question of how much the whole person really matters to our work. Technology seems to suggest it does not and should not. Indeed, the ideology of technology is to *dis-aggregate* the whole person – to extend human faculties such that time and space are rendered irrelevant, as Marshall McLuhan long ago prophesized.

Take Minerva, for example – the all-digital undergraduate start-up profiled in a recent *Atlantic* cover story. It has cut out the bricks-and-mortar “frills” of a traditional campus, as all classes take place in and through the computer screen. On one hand, Minerva's ostensibly laser-like focus on curriculum is admirable, in a Spartan sort of way. (No rec-plex climbing wall or cafeteria sushi bar here!) On the other hand, in seeking to supplant the traditional liberal arts college experience – so central to our AJCU institutions – one can't help but wonder about the value of that experience that is lost.

Because college, at its best, is all-encompassing. It is an intellectual, social, spiritual, and physical transformation. Education happens in the lecture hall, yes – but it also happens on a theater stage, in a stadium, at a homeless shelter, during an internship, on a religious retreat, and in the middle of a study abroad. I remain unclear how Minerva, online classes, or technology in general can help cultivate wisdom across all of those fronts – and therefore cultivate the whole person that Jesuit education idealizes. Mark Twain once said, “Never let school get in the way of a good education.” I've always suspected Ignatius might agree with him on that. We need to be cautious not to let technology get in the way of a good education either.

For there is a crackle – an ineffable, unpredictable vibe – that a great class discussion radiates,

and it leaves its participants buzzing. We might be at the dawn of a posthuman era, as some have argued, but we still need to be face-to-face in the same room to best engineer and achieve that experience. Heaven knows contemporary technology increasingly finds us “alone together,” as Sherry Turkle put it. If the university can avoid bowing to those pressures to convert itself fully to a virtual reality, it may well preserve something frankly essential to our humanity: a sense of community.

That said, the Luddites lost and we might, too. I took refuge in academia from an earlier profession, journalism, which was ripped asunder by many of the same disruptive forces of technology and economics I see conspiring today. Just as it became “redundant” for every local newspaper to field a correspondent in Washington, so, too, might it soon become “redundant” to have every local college teaching the same standard intro sections, as some have forecast, when a one-size-fits-all, online solution presents itself to institutions looking to streamline overhead.

Are we, therefore, facing our own virtual obsolescence just like the Luddites? Only time will tell. But it won't just be faculty's loss if that day arrives. It could be our students' sense of wholeness, too. And that's worth fighting to preserve. ■

## Tech Terms (for Fellow Luddites)

**MOOC** (massive open online courses) – web-based classes that can enroll tens of thousands of students from around the world into lecture hall-style faculty presentations

**Flipped classroom** – innovative pedagogical practice wherein students absorb recorded, standardized online content (for example, lectures) at home and do individualized coursework in class under the personalized supervision of faculty

**TED Talk** – popular series of 18-minute-long, YouTube-based “ideas” lectures on cultural and scientific topics

**Minerva** – digital undergraduate program start-up with minimal physical faculties that was the subject of a recent *Atlantic* cover story.

# The Working Middle Class

By David Surrey

**W**henever faculty and administrators from Saint Peter's University meet peers from other AJCU institutions, we are inevitably told something to the effect that "You are doing what we all ought to be doing." Yet doing what we do means facing major challenges related to the diversity of our student community, their economic background, and our urban context.

Saint Peter's is among the most diverse universities in the nation, public or private. Seventy percent of students are from minority populations, with 30.5 percent identifying as Hispanic. Fifty-two percent of the fall 2014 incoming class are first-generation college students, and 27.4 percent are immigrant or generation 1.5 Americans.

Consistent with these statistics, our students have heavy financial need. Compared to 36 percent nationally, 55 percent of Saint Peter's undergraduates are Pell Grant recipients. Sixty-seven percent of our Latino population and 64 percent of our African American populations receive Pell. Forty-three percent of Pell students are from families with a zero estimated family contribution.

We are located in Jersey City, New Jersey – the most densely populated city in the most densely populated state. Twenty-one percent of Jersey City residents have incomes below the poverty level, compared to 12 percent statewide. Totally urban Hudson County accounts for 42 percent of our undergraduates. Although there are some strong public and private schools, the largest local school districts – Jersey City, Hoboken, and Newark – have been taken over by the state for "failure to deliver adequate education."

Not surprisingly, most of our students face academic as well as social disadvantages, making them "high-

risk." Low-income status, lower standardized test scores, the quality of our feeder schools, and the fact that our students' parents are frequently without a college degree all signal challenges related to academic preparedness. Additionally, 60 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, it is clear that race remains tied to academic success.

Within this context, the university mission and our faculty's commitment underscore our very real embrace of the challenges we face. We seek to educate "a diverse community of learners ... and promote justice in our ever changing urban and global environment." According to faculty surveys, 95 percent understand and appreciate this commitment, and 71 percent say they are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their jobs. Ultimately, Saint Peter's serves our students because we believe we should and because we want to.

Consequently, we have quantifiable successes that really come down to our belief in the university mission. Our Educational Opportunity Fund, serving academically and financially needy students, generally has the university's highest retention and graduation rates. This program begins the summer before the first year and offers paired courses, tutoring, social events, and peer mentoring. A second program that has boosted student retention, Academic Success, targets underprepared students through a reduced-price, credit-bearing summer academy, service learning projects, supplemental classes, mentoring, and tutoring. A new articulation agreement with our local community college has eased the transfer process and allows us to offer scholarships that bring tuition costs close to state tuition rates, making a private

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*David Surrey is professor and chair in the department of sociology, as well as director of African studies, environmental studies, faculty development, and the Oscar Romero Title V Institute, at Saint Peter's University.*



Following the Mass of the Holy Spirit, students, faculty, and staff of Saint Peter's University continued the celebration in front of the Mac Mahon Student Center.

Jesuit education affordable to transfer students. Whenever possible, we also provide individual financial counseling for all new students and their families, examining the cost of attendance and all scholarship, grant, work-study, and loan options.

Our commitment to meeting students where they are and moving forward together has been most recently exemplified in our latest Title V grant, now in its fourth year. This grant has particularly helped our Latino students: first-year retention has risen to 82.3 percent; six-year graduation rates are up 8 points; and first-year GPA has risen to 2.71. The Title V grant has enabled us to narrow the success gap through a series of connected interventions, including establishing an ESL center; providing laptops, book vouchers, and financial supplements; training a total of 100 of our 115 faculty in cultural inclusiveness, ranging from broadening the curriculum to understanding the financial and social backgrounds of our students; sponsoring summer research projects; developing work study jobs; funding students to participate at professional conferences; working with high school students in after-school programs and allowing rising juniors and seniors to earn college credits toward degree completion; providing a more friendly campus

atmosphere with events and classes tailored to Latino students; and developing bilingual workshops for college and high school families on financial aid and the college experience.

**Y**et beyond these successes, we have much more to do to expand educational opportunities and improve the academic attainment of high-need students. Though 70 percent of our students are members of minority populations, only 15 percent of our faculty are minorities, depriving our community of diverse role models and perspectives. In spring 2015, Saint Peter's president, Eugene Cornacchia, publicly challenged us to do better and created a task force to address this issue. Since our incoming students often lack adequate academic preparation, faculty and administrators are also exploring possibilities for expanded summer programs, reconstituting core classes to add supplemental instruction, and working more with local high schools to better prepare incoming classes.

As we concentrate on these two major challenges over the next few years, we will continue to give substance to our university mission and thus, we hope, confirm our distinct leadership role among AJCU institutions. ■



# A Partner with the City of Cleveland

By Robert L. Niehoff, S.J.

**J**ohn Carroll University was founded in 1886 as Saint Ignatius College on Cleveland's west side. Almost 50 years later, our campus would relocate about 10 miles east to the suburb of University Heights, Ohio. Even though Carroll moved from Cleveland proper, our success has remained inextricably tied to the city's well-being.

During the past five years, we have benefited greatly from the Forest City's increasingly prominent place as a health care and cultural hub – not to mention the recent excitement generated by the return of LeBron James to the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers. We are certainly heartened by recent economic developments that are helping the city move forward to a more promising future.

Cleveland still faces challenges many other cities grapple with – declining revenues from a shrinking population base, educating students from a wide range of socioeconomic situations, urban blight, and the continuing challenge of slower job growth, to name a few. Many of these issues stemmed from the decline of the city's traditional manufacturing base over the past few decades. Ohio lost 614,000 jobs between 2000 and 2010, while JCU

enrollment declined by 15 percent during that same period. To be sure, the situation was exacerbated by the 2008-09 recession and the job losses which predated it. These events created real hardships for families and significant enrollment and budget challenges for Carroll.

In order to respond to the loss of jobs and income in our region, which began well before the recession, we have dedicated the financial resources to ensure access to Carroll for students from low-income families. In 2007 we made a commitment to students receiving Pell Grants that they would pay no additional tuition at John Carroll. JCU enrolls the third largest number of Ohio students at any private college in the state. As the recession took hold in 2009, the State of Ohio largely eliminated state financial aid for students from low-income families at private colleges; this resulted in a three million dollar reduction in Ohio aid to JCU students. We recognized that many of our students and families would need additional financial aid support to keep these students here and make their dream of a John Carroll diploma a reality. Between 2008-09 and 2013-14, our total aid budget went from \$39 million to \$60 million, over a 50 percent increase. We have increased tuition by about 23 percent over these

years. Our net tuition per student remained relatively stable during these years even with the additional financial aid expense.

In 2009, in order to fund the student aid, previously provided by the state, we reduced our operating budget by five million dollars through a series of reductions in staffing, benefits costs, facilities adjustments, and travel and entertainment. Although enrollment has grown in recent years, net tuition growth has been small, and expense budget increases have been limited to compensation, enrollment, and advancement investments.

Even so, affordability concerns and competition for talented students continue to be intense in Ohio as the region adapts to a double digit percentage decline in high school graduation numbers. These issues of affordability and access continue to be significant for us. In fact, student aid is the cornerstone of our current *Forever Carroll* capital campaign and has achieved its \$35 million goal.

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*Robert L. Niehoff, S.J., has been president of John Carroll University since 2005; before that he was associate provost and vice president for planning and budget at the University of San Francisco.*

This commitment to access has not come at the expense of the quality of our students or our commitment to a liberal arts core. We did not change our academic expectations for admissions. Indeed, our John Carroll Access Initiative included the support structures to ensure that we not only enroll high-need, Pell-eligible students but also help them persist and graduate at nearly the same rate as non-Pell students. John Carroll now has one of the best four-year graduation rates in the state. While we provide some additional supports for these students and have worked to assist academic advisors and campus staff in understanding the special challenges that low-income and first-generation students experience, our expectation that all students can succeed has helped many students realize the four-year graduation goal.

At the same time, we also have partnered with Cleveland and other urban public school districts and worked to build their students' skills and expectations for college access and success. As I detailed in the September 2014 issue of *AJCU Connections*, we have played a key role in Mayor Frank Jackson's Higher Education Compact of Greater Cleveland. This collabora-

tive program seeks to significantly increase number of Cleveland Metropolitan School District students who earn college degrees.

John Carroll makes many meaningful contributions to the local economy through our service learning and community service programs. Two-thirds of our students participate in community service. One of the new and exciting student-initiated service programs is the Carroll Ballers, a unique service opportunity for John Carroll students that combines the game of basketball with mentoring and educational programming for residents of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center. Many of our most impactful service programs are focused on helping educate Greater Cleveland's youth, exposing them to opportunities that will benefit the region and might help them see college success as a real possibility for themselves.

The professional pursuits of our alumni also have generated valuable industry connections and innovative programs for our students. For example, our new health care information technology program grew out a relationship between computer science professor Daniel Palmer, Ph.D., and JCU alumni working at the Cleveland Clinic. A few years

ago Cleveland Clinic doctors were exploring ways to connect health care and information technology with a JCU graduate. An alum suggested the possibility of working with Dr. Palmer's students. That connection sparked the development of course projects, and then additional courses and, a few years later, a new health care information technology major which responds to one of the Cleveland Clinic skills needs.

Challenging economic times often lead to questions about the value and utility of a liberal arts education. The education Carroll provides creates opportunities for students to develop as whole persons – their mind, body, and spirit. As we make a difference in the lives of our students, we produce graduates who think critically and analytically and are ready to advance into the corporate world and contribute to our global society.

This is what Cleveland needs. John Carroll cannot succeed without helping Cleveland succeed. So as Cleveland and, more broadly, Northeast Ohio improve economically, we're grateful to be a partner in the work of re-energizing our region and in better preparing our students for a diverse and interconnected world. ■



"[T]o educate we need to step out of ourselves and stay among young people, to accompany them in the stages of their growth, placing ourselves at their side. ... Encourage each other to seek new non-conventional forms of education, according to 'the need of the places, times and people.'" Pope Francis, 2013

# Arrupe College

## *Breaking New Ground*

By John Crowley-Buck

In August 2015, just last month, Loyola University Chicago opened the world's first Jesuit community college – Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago. At a time when the gap between the rich and the poor is growing ever wider, Arrupe College offers students from low- and middle-income families the opportunity to attend and successfully complete a rigorous college degree program without incurring insurmountable levels of student debt. Arrupe College embodies the spirit of nonconventional education articulated by Pope Francis, coupled with the affordability and accessibility emphasized by President Obama. With the opening of Arrupe College, the Society of Jesus is once again pushing the boundaries of traditional education and working to bring about the dream of Pedro Arrupe, S.J., past Superior General of the Society of Jesus: namely, educating and forming men and women for others.

What makes Arrupe College unique is its stated goal of serving those "motivated students with limited financial resources" who demonstrate "an interest in transferring to a four-year institution after graduation." According to Stephen Katsouros, S.J., dean of Arrupe College, the drive behind and support for the opening of the college come from the vision and leadership of Loyola University

Chicago's president, Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.: "His vision is to make Jesuit education, particularly higher education, accessible to people who otherwise would be unable to afford it or unable to imagine themselves earning a college degree." Katsouros points to research indicating that "students who are first in their families to attempt

"I want to spread [this] idea all across America, so that two years of college becomes as free and universal in America as high school is today."

President Barack Obama,  
2015 State of the Union Address

college, whose averages and scores are good but not good enough to garner scholarships, and who hail from low income backgrounds, feel that they don't belong in college, that their knowledge is fixed, and any academic setbacks they experience are permanent, pervasive, and personal. As we accompany and support Arrupe students, we want them to grow in their confidence as students ... to perceive themselves as college worthy ... [and to] discover that learning is lifelong."

Arrupe College will offer its stu-

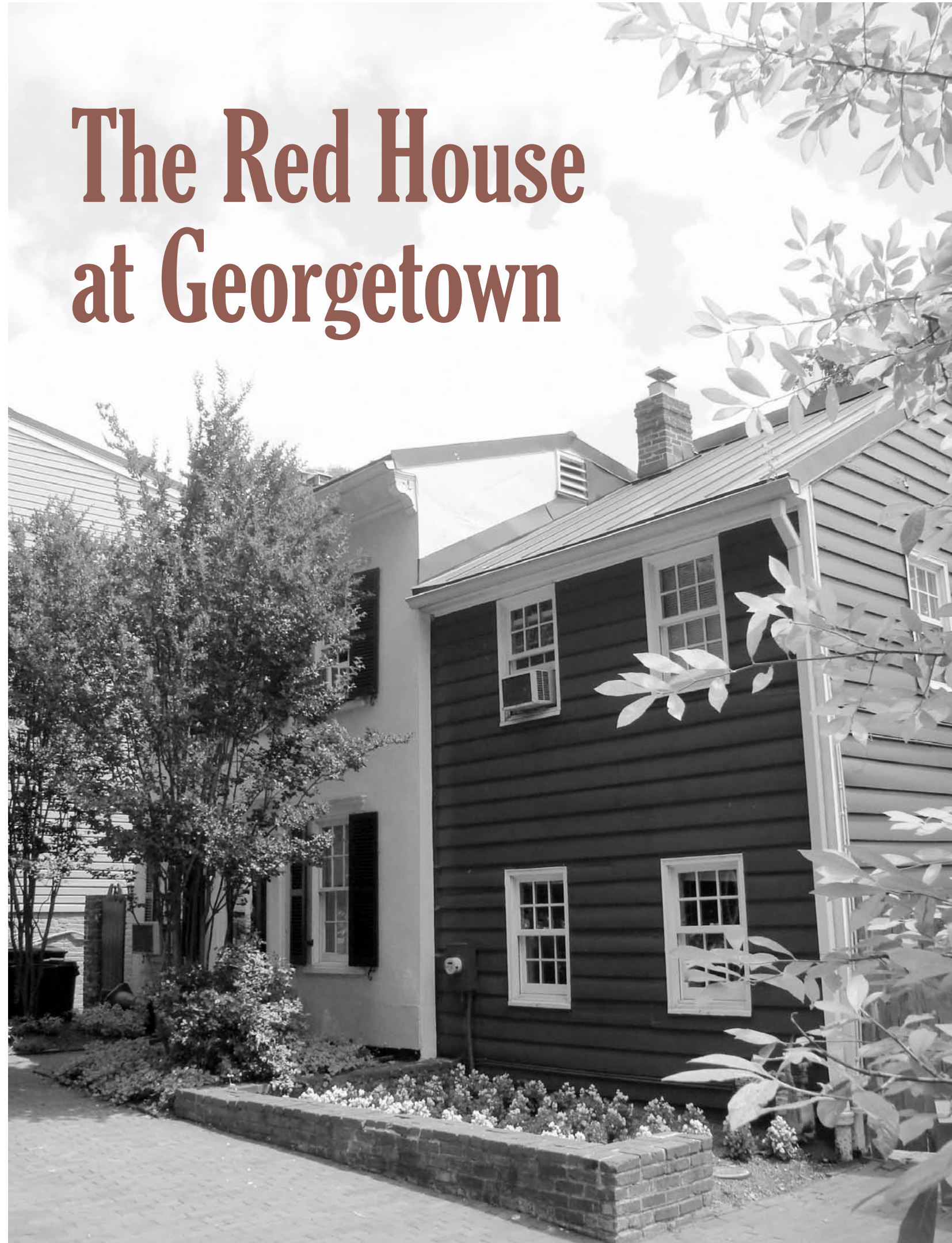
dents a well-rounded educational experience. In addition to time in the classroom, Arrupe College will provide students and their families with financial counselors to help them navigate and minimize the costs of education. The faculty and staff will provide a comprehensive learning environment for each cohort of students, accompanying them through all aspects of their college experience. Students, upon successful completion of their coursework, will graduate from Arrupe College with an associate's degree in one of three areas: arts and humanities, business, or social and behavioral sciences.

With its fall 2015 opening, Arrupe College of Loyola University Chicago stands ready to serve and mentor its incoming students. It is also the ardent hope of all those involved in the college that this initiative will serve as a model for other Jesuit universities looking for ways to more effectively and concretely heed the calls of President Obama, Pope Francis, and Pedro Arrupe. ■

*John Crowley-Buck is Ph.D. candidate in theology at Loyola University Chicago.*

See more at: Jeremy Langford. "Loyola University Chicago Opens World's First Jesuit Community College." Jesuit Midwest Partners, Spring 2015. <http://jesuitsmidwest.org/news-detail?TN=NEWS-20150407011516&Method=Active>

# The Red House at Georgetown



# *Creating a Sustainable Future for Transformational Education*

**By Robert Groves  
and Randy Bass**

## ***Institutional Design***

**I**n fall 2013, Georgetown launched an initiative called “Designing the Future(s) of the University” as a strategic institutional response to the widespread and noisy national conversation about the nature and value of traditional university education. Is college worth it? Will the university be disrupted by massive online education and the burgeoning web-based options for learning skills and content? What is the longterm value proposition of a residential education that aspires to prepare students for a life of professional success, personal flourishing, and make a difference in the world?

We launched the Designing the Future(s) of the University Initiative to address these questions not only through dialogue engaging the whole community but also through active experimentation that could help us begin to address the questions about what a Georgetown education could look like 5, 10, and 15 years into the future.

In April 2014, we released a document called “Five Pump-priming Ideas,” in which we invited the community to imagine the Georgetown education of the future. What might a Georgetown education look like if it were less course-based, less term-based? We invited faculty to think beyond the standard 15-week semester and the three-credit course – or even beyond the credit hour altogether. What if we thought outside the nine-month calendar? Or beyond the boundaries of the classroom and the campus? How might we better bridge curriculum and cocurriculum in order to center undergraduate education on the most transformative experiences? All of these questions are in the context of the most important driving design question: What is distinctive to the kind of education that Georgetown can offer in a world with so many options for learning content, acquiring skills, and finding information? And, finally, how can we do so while controlling the unsustainable rising costs of higher education?

Within a few months of releasing the document, after dozens of hours of conversation with interested faculty and staff, we had identified our first small group of projects that were ready to undergo a design process. The site for this incubator activity was a small red town-

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*Robert Groves is the provost, and Randy Bass the vice provost for education at Georgetown University.*

house just across the street from campus, a place that has come to be known as “the Red House.”

The Red House plays a crucial mediating role as one of the three key components necessary to make this kind of institutional design and transformation possible:

- An institutional invitation to think creatively outside the current structural constraints (“top-down”);
- Faculty-generated ideas for experiments that explore new kinds of courses and degrees (“bottom-up,” grass roots);
- An agile design space process that connects creative development with problem-solving around implementation by key stakeholders (the Red House).

The Red House plays multiple key roles in advancing the Designing the Future(s) work. First, it provides a safe creative space for faculty and staff to spin out new ideas that have the potential to deepen student learning and improve the teaching experience of faculty. Each of these ideas has the potential to reinvent the university’s model. That is, ideas have to be more than just enhancements to the curriculum. They must push against and reimagine one or more formal boundaries of the way we make the curriculum work.

This is, then, the second critical role that the Red House plays. As an arm of the provost office, and led by the vice provost for education and the director of academic affairs, it is a creative space with convening power. That is, as the design process unfolds, the Red House brings together faculty creative teams with the process stakeholders (registrar, deans’ offices, financial aid, state authorization) to help shape radical ideas into achievable experiments – without losing their essential boundary-pushing character. By late spring 2015, nearly 20 curricular projects were being incubated through the Red House, all in different stages of development. The first of these have already gone to faculty governance groups and curriculum committees for approval.

## ***A Sustainable Transformational Education***

There is a distinct feeling of urgency in the Red House that the next 2-3 years are crucial in shaping the Georgetown of the next 20 and beyond. We believe that in 5-10 years, all universities – especially private ones – will be out-competed on costs and convenience for anything that looks like the delivery of information and simple content. We also believe that it is likely that market norms will push for a shorter time to a residential degree as the options expand for doing what looks like a “first year” or “introductory courses” online and elsewhere.

Other models will also keep pressing in on us, including competency-based education and the rise of microcredentials and alternative degrees.

In this emerging context, we believe that there are really only two kinds of education that a university like Georgetown will be able to offer, say, by the middle of the 2020s that will be distinctive from what students will be able to get on the Web. We might call these two kinds of education mentored learning and the arc of learning. By mentored learning, we don’t mean 1:1 mentoring but much more broadly to mean the kind of learning one gets thinking critically and working on unscripted problems in conditions of uncertainty, with people who know more than you guiding you. By the arc of learning, we mean that education is a whole journey greater than the sum of its parts. In this journey, place and community matter, as does the idea that you are engaged in work on complex problems with a diversity of individuals, many of whom might be people you would never have worked with so closely.

**E**very Red House project is designing some new version of educational experience that maximizes our ability to offer a sustainable version of an education that centers on the kind of learning that universities will be able to do distinctively into the future: reimagining credit-bearing experiences to enable more students to do sustained project-based work across semesters; breaking down boundaries – through credit, cost, and load – to make it possible for more courses to move inside and outside the classroom and between theory and practice; reimagining how courses and course modules could be linked and combined in order to give students earlier and substantive engagement with interdisciplinary approaches to complex global problems.

Of course, all of these kinds of learning are potentially expensive and resource-intensive parts of our model. Therefore, we must take them up in the context of creative rethinking of the core elements of the business model, such as one-size-fits-all course structures, variable credit and modular course design, separating credits from seat time, finding new ways to mark progress-to-degree tied to outcomes rather than courses, and new ways to count faculty load and measure what we might call “instructional productivity.”

This combination to enhance the formational learning we most value with a drive to break open the constraints of our business model has led to set of first-wave pilots. Here are five of the most promising ideas that are moving toward implementation in academic year 2015-16:

- Project-based degrees: developed first as a set of project-based minors where some or most of the credits

for a minor are awarded for projects and achievement rather than through courses, these experiments help pose whether some portion of every degree's credits should be based outside the classroom through experiences with integrative practice.

- Post-course studios: several pilots underway are testing ways to expand guided learning outside the classroom, where students who become interested in a project in a course can continue that work in a credit-bearing context. These are not independent studies but studios where teams of students continue learning through authentic projects, typically with external partners.
- Signature semesters: we are seeking to completely reimagine the first and last semesters of the college degree. How could the first semester on campus be an entirely different integrative experience, plunging students not into a set of courses but into collaborative projects on complex problems, mixing critical thought with skills-based learning, often in local community-based settings? How could the final semester be reimaged as truly integrative of the entire education and a better launching pad for entering a globalized world?
- Four-year integrated bachelor/master's: is it possible to give students both a bachelor's and a master's degree for the same four years of tuition? By next year, we intend to launch the first of these interdisciplinary degrees, where the learning goals and pathways to degrees have been completely reinvented to create degrees with a focus on outcomes, variable pathways, and a 12-month curriculum that makes different use of summers, practica, and short intensive course modules.
- Experience wrapped by credit-bearing online learning: in summer 2015, we are launching the first of our experiments with wrapping online learning around immersive experience. The pilot, "Social Justice Intersections," enables students who are engaged in social justice immersion experiences all over the globe to take part in a variable credit online experience, giving them a reflective space, a community and a series of one-credit skills modules aligned with their summer experiential learning.

## ***Toward a More Integrated University***

When we launched the Designing the Future(s) Initiative, President John J. DeGioia delivered the inaugural talk, in which he argued that universities were distinctive in their engagement in three interrelated kinds of activities.

- The formation of men and women, prepared to contribute as informed and inquisitive global citizens.
- The creation of knowledge through scholarship and knowledge inquiry, by providing a place for faculty and students alike to come to a deeper understanding of our world and its complexities.
- Serving the common good, aligning our work as a university community with local, national, and global needs and supporting the betterment of humanity.

President DeGioia's argument is that universities engage in these three activities in ways that are deeply interrelated. Universities are the only institutions where formation is done in the company of people who are spending their lives inquiring into the world's most important questions. And universities are one of the only institutions in our society that engage in research for the common good. And, in turn, the fact that universities create knowledge and serve the common good has everything to do with the ways that we provide a context for the formation of young people.

The purpose of the Designing the Future(s) Initiative, and the Red House, is to see this moment not as one of disruption but of opportunity, the opportunity for us to be a yet more integrated university that optimizes for formation, knowledge-creation, and serving the common good.

For us to be able to afford to be that university into the future, we need not only to be driven by a sense of values, a sense of mentored learning, and a belief that education is a whole greater than the sum of the parts, we have to imagine new ways to integrate all of our pieces affordably. We have to figure out how students will spend less time in classrooms and more time out being mentored in the field. We have to imagine how we can link curriculum and cocurriculum together, in the context of big, global issues and challenges. We have to imagine how we can help students move much more purposefully through their education. We have to connect better the impact we have on students with the impact the university seeks to have on the world. These are the things we're after in the Red House at Georgetown. ■

For more information about the Designing the Future(s) Initiative see, <http://futures.georgetown.edu>.

For a brief WGBH-FM / NPR story on the Red House see the On Campus series: <http://blogs.wgbh.org/on-campus/2014/12/23/georgetown-explores-whether-it-can-reinvent-itself/georgetown-explores-whether-it-can-reinvent-itself/>.

# Student Debt Narrows Choices

By Sarah H. and Martin M.

**F**or seven consecutive years, I was a nursing student, first at Loyola University Chicago's Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing (undergrad) and then at the University of San Diego (master's in nursing). My fiancé and I worked throughout those years, but it was still impossible for us to pay for everything and get through school without student loans. We ended up with a lot of debt. Instead of taking job offers in Chicago after graduating from Loyola's nursing program, we decided to move to California. I spent three years finishing my master's in nursing at the University of San Diego. We worked as registered nurses during this time but only earned enough to pay our living expenses. The cost of my master's education was entirely loaned out: approximately \$100,000. Each day, the balance accrues about \$10 in interest. The biggest advice I can give to anyone who accrues this much debt is to pay off their interest while they are still in school. Going into my master's education, we both hoped to one day receive assistance paying our student loans off. With time, we found an opportunity to work with an underserved rural community and then be able to apply for federal and state loan repayment programs.

We moved from Southern California to Southern Iowa in the

fall of 2014. We definitely took a leap of faith for two reasons. One, already listed above, was to be eligible to apply for a loan repayment program (such as the ones offered by HRSA/Nurse Corps and PRIMECARRE, which also offer scholarships if you are still in school). The other reason for our move was to be closer to our families in Illinois, an area of life we mutually value.

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hen we lived in California, we always earned enough money to meet our immediate financial needs but never extra money that could be saved to start a family or purchase a house. Being in Iowa now, we believe that living in a calm and rural area is the right choice for us at this point in our lives. Even after our expenses are paid, for the first time in our lives, we have extra money that we can save. Surprisingly, a dollar goes much further when you leave a city. It

seems that what would be considered a low-paying job in Chicago could raise a family and afford to pay a mortgage in Iowa. Clearly, this is not the right choice for every Loyola graduate, but it is a practical option worth considering for certain individuals. We feel that for a young couple planning on starting a family together and having a fair shot at financial security, there is no better place than living in a rural setting (especially for healthcare workers). Truth be told, it is much harder to spend money when you live in a place with few stores or restaurants, but the tradeoff includes peace, quiet, and plenty of time for each other and our families.

Most importantly, this month, we both find out if our loan repayment applications were accepted. It is true that programs are highly competitive; they receive a plethora of applications for only a few spots. However, preference is given for communities in need, and living in rural Iowa, the health needs of underserved populations are significant. Please keep your fingers crossed and us in your prayers. ■

*Sarah H. and Martin M. are graduates of Loyola University Chicago.*



## On the Brink of Employment

By Beth Harlan

*"I hear you saying that you're scared – that you expected to have something lined up by now, and the goal of having a job by graduation is looking less and less likely. I wonder, though, whether it's possible to both make some concrete progress on your search and also to be intentional as you do so."*

It's springtime once again. From my perch on Georgetown University's hilltop campus I notice a familiar rhythm of conversation in my career counseling appointments. It's normal not to have a job by May; though hiring of new college graduates will be up at least nine percent over last year's numbers, only a third of the nation's class of 2014 had a job lined up at graduation. College unemployment spikes every summer with the arrival of recent graduates and drops in the fall as the market creates space for new professionals. Accordingly, some of my students have a clear sense of what they're looking for but just haven't yet sealed the deal.

Others will simply tell me that they're lost – that they're not sure how to apply their learning in and out of the classroom to a professional setting, nor are they able to articulate what sort of

### Helpful Ideas

A student who is thinking about next steps should consider which of the following ideas to try:

- Make a list of nine lives – job titles or more general descriptors – that you would be drawn to if you had the necessary training, enough money, and the blessing of those most important to you. What themes do you see? Which ideas are you most drawn to? What holds you back from pursuing these things unabashedly? What information do you need, and who can provide it?
- Consider what or who has been helpful to you during other seasons of uncertainty or transition. How could you employ similar strategies or connect with supportive peers or mentors? As you connect with people to ask for their insight and help, use the themes you identified in the nine

lives exercise to tell your story: "I enjoy researching, writing, and problem solving, and I like being in small-group environments. Where can I see opportunities like this?"

- Connect with your university's career center to learn how it supports young alums. Our center at Georgetown provides access to a job database, connections with alumni, individual appointments to facilitate reflection and action plans, and continued admittance to most career-related programs – all helpful things.
- Find at least one friend who is also searching and connect regularly to share encouragement, strategies, and accountability.
- Set up a routine to provide structure for your job search and breaks from the grind. For some students, this will look like mornings spent on research and afternoons on applications and conversations. For others, it means that Sundays will involve no job searching whatsoever.

# STORIES OF DEBT AND SERVICE

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setting would be a good fit. Often these students are pursuing the combination of “as perfect as possible” and “as soon as possible.” Conflicting narratives of “perfect” or “success” swirl around them, informed by a board room of peers, professors, family, cultural and gender norms, faith traditions, or financial pressures; and it can be easy to lose one’s unique story or sense of direction in the noise.

I also notice a heightened expectation among students that their first job will define their professional identity in a permanent way. If they don’t get it right, they imagine long-lasting negative consequences. And as they try to get it right, students can experience paralysis centered on the convergence of endless information about options and the sense that no job description seems

to fit their interests and skills exactly. They constantly feel behind.

I wonder, though, whether it’s possible both to make some concrete progress on your search and also to be intentional as you do so. My words find their roots in the Jesuit idea of contemplation in action. While it’s tempting to shoot from the hip when one’s graduation date is looming or is past – ten applications a day, no, twenty if I don’t write a cover letter – the wisest and most productive steps forward will usually be informed by intentional reflection.

Progress and intentionality look different for everyone. There are a number of possible next steps to fit different individuals’ needs. I suggest some helpful ideas in the accompanying boxed text.

Meanwhile, what about your bills? Signing up to work for a temp

agency or finding another stopgap option can provide stability as well as a professional experience that could further inform your reflection process. St. Ignatius encourages us to pray the Examen consistently, whether we feel completely lost or as though we’ve arrived. As contemplation forms your next steps, those steps will give you new ideas and experiences upon which to reflect. Soon enough you may come to value the ongoing journey as much as or even more than the first destination. Hang in there! ■

*Beth Harlan is the associate director of the career education center at Georgetown University; she does career education and counseling.*

## Wheeling Jesuit Mojo

By Wheeling Jesuit Students

Every Friday evening at 5:15pm, around 30-40 people leave the campus of Wheeling Jesuit University to travel to the “rough part of town,” where members of the Mother Jones House have prepared a community dinner. Professors, campus ministers, neighbors, and fellow students gather together for weekly fellowship and a shared meal, while the six house residents ensure people feel welcomed and well-fed. First glance would show amateur cooks bustling around, but if you stay long enough

you will see the rich community that has formed around six friends who have chosen a distinctive way of living out our Jesuit mission.

We are the Mother Jones House, an intentional community of undergraduate students whose everyday life is focused around six pillars: faith, community, simplicity, social justice, learning, and service. The house is a close partnership between Wheeling Jesuit University and Laughlin Memorial Chapel, an after-school program for neighborhood students. We also work closely with Catholic Charities Neighborhood

Center to deliver meals to homebound individuals. Our service sites and neighbors have become just as familiar to us as our campus and classmates.

We have chosen to live in community at “MoJo,” as we affectionately call it, for a variety of reasons. MoJo offers a chance to get away from the chaotic atmosphere of campus and serves as a home away from home. Our interest in MoJo partially stemmed out of a restlessness acquired from our Jesuit education. Immersing ourselves in the reality of our neighborhood has inspired us to

# STORIES OF DEBT AND SERVICE



Members and friends at Mother Jones House pray together in community.

continue our search for social justice. By living together intentionally, we are fostering the communion between college students and East Wheeling, while committed to a lifestyle of service can be both fulfilling and draining.

**M**ojo provides opportunities that living in a dorm never will. While we learn about solidarity and critical social reflection in our classes at WJU, here we have the opportunity to put them to use in our interactions with housemates and neighbors. One of the most important things we

learn is the value of community and our place within it. We learn about passion and dedication from our neighbors, the difference makers in this city, and how a shared vision can transform a group of people into a beautiful community.

While we all agree that Mojo is an incredible and unique opportunity for which we are immensely grateful, our time here has not been without challenges. As housemates, we find that some uncomfortable conversations are unavoidable and conflicts are nearly impossible to prevent; and our busy schedules leave little time for impromptu hangouts. Within the house, we attempt to resolve issues as soon as they arise, but our neighborhood offers its own set of concerns that are more difficult to confront. Sometimes we cannot assist our neighbors in the ways they would like – such as monetarily – but we are learning to accept that our mission has its limits.

We have all come from different backgrounds, with different paths for our

future, but we have all found a home here in East Wheeling. Whether it is for ourselves or any of our beloved guests throughout the year, the Mother Jones House is a meaningful presence in this community and in our lives. What we have learned here we will take with us throughout our lives, especially the desire to make a difference no matter where we are. In the words of our namesake, Mary Harris Jones, “Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living!”

If you are ever in Wheeling, West Virginia, on a Friday afternoon, please stop by for dinner. There is always room at the table. ■

*Wheeling Jesuit students involved with Mother Jones House: DJ Currence (senior, accounting); Brady Kukawka (senior, nursing); Elizabeth Nawrocki (senior, theology); Sarah Sleevi (senior, psychology); Wolfgang Zober (senior, physics); and also Tom Weinandy (house mentor)*

# On Loan to the Poor

By Allen Elzerman

**B**ack in the late 1990s, I was nearly ten years removed from earning my undergraduate degree and on what was easily my third or fourth career path. I accepted a low-paying job at a law firm only because, well, I needed some type of income. The more I worked there, the more I became interested in the legal profession and what I could possibly do in it. I knew my undergraduate grades would mean I did not need to spend effort applying to any of the Ivy League law schools or most of the public law schools in Michigan, for that matter. Although it left me with limited options – all of which would be expensive – I had to focus on what would be the best value. I spoke to friends who graduated from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law who raved about personal attention from professors, how even top-level administrators had a true open-door policy. They spoke about how a Jesuit education gave not only a legal education but also focused on how the law applies to people.

I took a chance and submitted my application to UDM. I could have applied to other law schools in the area, but I wanted a law school experience that emphasized actual teaching and did not see me as just another student number (or worse, just accept me for my first year money and then fail me out of the school). I was horrifically shocked when I received my letter of acceptance. Once accepted, the staff at UDM was extremely helpful in navigating me through the financial aid

programs and packages. Although it appeared that each term I was piling on debt that I might never be able to repay, I was taking on the debt as an investment in myself.

With the state of the economy, I sadly found myself unemployed immediately after graduation. After some time, and quite a few deferments later, a friend persuaded me to move to Arizona and become a public defender. No part of moving to Arizona or doing criminal law was appealing to me, but it was certainly better than the option of having my loans come out of deferment and not be able to make payments. I found myself in a job in the public sector doing something I never envisioned myself doing just to make sure I could make my student loan payments.

**P**aying off my loans continues to be a challenge, as does the knowledge that my friends who work for private firms get annual bonuses which are nearly half of what I make in an entire year. There are assistance programs available to me, including a federal program that

encourages people to choose a career in the public sector in exchange for some portion of their loans being forgiven. I've also been fortunate enough to work with an employer who is able to pay the employees slightly better than the national average for public sector work.

I truly enjoy what I do and why I do it. Every day I am in a courtroom helping people who truly need it. These are people who may have made poor decisions in their lives; many have addiction or mental health issues, maybe both. All of my clients are of limited income and, generally, are poorly educated. Many are terrified that they may be sent to jail or prison, lose their jobs or their homes, or be separated from their families and deported. I have to explain complicated legal principles to people whose primary exposure to criminal law is watching "Law & Order," while counseling them and their families through one of the more traumatic experiences of their life. I highly doubt I would be able to do my job as well as I do had I gone to a law school that did not value the work of social, as well as criminal, justice. I may not make the most money of my attorney peers, and I certainly struggle with budget issues due to my student loan debt, but there is a certain level of fulfillment that I get that cannot be measured by a paycheck. ■

*Allen Elzerman graduated from UDM Law in 2003 and is a deputy legal advocate for the Maricopa County (Arizona) Office of the Legal Advocate.*

# Pathway to Prosperity

## *Collaboration and Innovation*

By Sharon Kinsman Salmon

It is sometimes difficult to take a step back and view one's institution with a fresh pair of eyes in the midst of turbulent economic times and in the face of challenging print and on-line articles questioning not only the cost of higher education but also the need for that education. Yes, we live in challenging times, and economics and demographics are working against us. But with great leadership we can nonetheless thrive if there is a willingness on the part of a supportive board to encourage their president in the pursuit of collaboration and innovation. This is not only the formula for survival, but it is also the path to prosperity.

Le Moyne College is at a turning point in its relatively short history. We have new leadership in President Linda LeMura. We have an engaged and committed board of trustees; and we enjoy an amazing community of faculty, staff, and administrators who are excited about this new leadership. Of course, we also have a rich, nearly 500-year-old Jesuit tradition to build on and a

tradition of excellence here at Le Moyne in preparing students for a changing world through our arts and sciences-based curriculum. This combination of thoughtful innovation and a timeless foundation, harnessed by new leadership, makes us hopeful for the future of our college.

As part of a nontraditional leadership change about a year ago, the board began to engage in conversation at all levels of the organization – with faculty, staff, administration, students, and the broader Syracuse community. This leadership change provided a unique opportunity for all constituencies to have open and honest dialogue, not only about leadership,

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but also about the future of the institution. That dialogue was the start of a new strategic planning process which is currently underway and which will determine our institutional priorities for 2015-20. It will be smart, nimble, focused on the future, and flexible. It also recognizes the importance of including community leaders in the discussion. As a school located in an economically challenged community, it is imperative that we continue to be a strong partner with the community and work toward rejuvenation of the economy in which we live.

## ***Collaboration***

Even as we are engaged in our strategic planning process, President LeMura has hit the ground running. Prior to her elevation from provost to president in July 2014, she was well known and respected in the Syracuse community. She recognized the importance of collaboration in these challenging times with the local community (city, county, and state), with local higher education institutions, and with the global Jesuit network. Dr. LeMura has been at the forefront of groundbreaking articulation agreements and collaborations with local institutions including Syracuse University, Cornell University, and Onondaga Community College, as well as with several Jesuit institutions in the U.S. – and these types of agreements are poised to expand.

Le Moyne is also deepening its relationship within the broader Jesuit network – 28 Jesuit institutions in the U.S. and 189 institutions around the world. According to the AJCU, our Jesuit network has the singular distinction of being local, regional, national, and international. No other group of higher education institutions that I am aware of can make this claim. Moreover, Jesuit institutions offer students a very special and distinctive type of education. Le Moyne's Madden School of Business has been globalizing rapidly with a focus on establishing creative partnerships within the international Jesuit network. We currently have partnerships with Jesuit universities in Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Spain, India, and Taiwan, and more are on the way. Why is this creative and unique? These partnerships focus on what Le Moyne calls "formation abroad" – a new model that is smarter and more comprehensive than the typical study abroad program. Students study in the Jesuit institution in the mornings, work in global companies in the afternoons, participate in community service on the weekends, and are immersed in the culture by living with a local family. Such programming reflects our commitment not only to expanding our collaborations with our international partners but also our intention to produce global-minded, service-oriented, creative, and prepared leaders for the future.

## ***Innovation and the Third Revenue Stream***

Given the rapid pace of change and middle-class wage stagnation, there is immense pressure for all of us on the discount rate. Le Moyne is a young school, so while we have a strong endowment fund for a school of our size and age we cannot rely on philanthropy to make up the financial gap. The board clearly recognizes the importance of developing a third revenue stream, a need that our new president fully understands. She stresses the need to be innovative and explore "big ideas" while maintaining the strength of our pedagogical tradition, and so the higher education/business collaborative model is being aggressively pursued. In economically challenged communities, these initiatives give our students opportunities to study, to innovate, and to work, and they help reinvigorate the local economy.

The New York State "Start-up NY" initiative is just such a model. We will find the appropriate business to partner with that meets the criteria of this model, syncs with our mission, provides faculty research opportunities, offers internships, mentoring, and job opportunities for our students, and provides occasion for potential revenue sharing and faculty endowment opportunities. In addition, Le Moyne is working closely with the city, county, and state regarding a state-funded economic development program that could potentially include economic revitalization grants.

This collaborative model is one of the hallmarks of the Jesuit tradition; having the conversation, widening the circle, and including everyone who is important to the conversation are key. We need to ask the tough questions, have a true dialogue, and develop new groundbreaking solutions for the betterment of our Le Moyne community and the broader community in which we reside.

In today's complicated world, a Jesuit education and all that it stands for offer our students a distinct advantage. In my opinion, we have been too reticent about marketing the advantages our students have over graduates of non-Jesuit institutions. We are educating our students so that they are not only good citizens but so they can also be flexible and adaptable in meeting an uncertain future. I may be overly optimistic, but I believe that we are at a point in history where all of us in this incredible, global Jesuit network have the opportunity to be bold and to help craft solutions to higher education challenges and to the challenges facing our surrounding communities. With vision, strong leadership, creativity, and cooperation and with the Jesuit model of conversation, discernment, and debate, we can thrive as we continue educating young people to be better citizens for others. ■

# “Signs of the Times” in Intercollegiate Athletics

By Patrick Kelly, S.J.

**T**here is currently a crisis of meaning in sport in the United States, and it is related to the emergence of what Harvard political philosopher Michael Sandel has called a “market society.” According to Sandel, the shift from having a market economy to being a market society began in the early 1980s when there was a new emphasis from political leaders in England and the U.S. on the free market and deregulation as essential to prosperity and freedom. In a market society, we regard an increasing number of human activities in terms of their market value. The problem, according to Sandel, is that sometimes market values “crowd out non-market values worth caring about.”

Such a trend is clearly evident in U.S. sport and in intercollegiate athletics. While intercollegiate athletics have had a commercial component ever since they were first sponsored by schools, their market orientation has now reached unprecedented levels. The advent of 24 hour cable television coverage of sports played an important role in this process. ESPN began its 24-hour coverage in 1980, and several other cable channels have been added since then. In large part due to increased television coverage, intercollegiate athletics has become a much more significant part of the entertainment landscape in the United States than ever before. These developments led to the recent massive conference reshuffling which was driven by the desire of universities to form strong football conferences that could obtain lucrative television contracts. In the process several long-standing rivalries and geographical ties were abandoned. Student athletes in many conferences now must travel further to compete, which has led to an increase in the number of missed classes and is more costly to the universities.

In this context, there has been an arms race in spending on athletics. According to the Knight Commission, spending on athletics at Division 1 public universities has recently been increasing twice as fast as spending on academics. This spending is for such items as larger stadiums and exorbitant coaches’ salaries, which will help schools recruit the top ath-

letes in order to *win*. The thinking is that winning teams fill the stadiums and open the door to television dollars, which will lead to increased revenues. Of course, a winning team will come about only if there is a year-round, professional-style training regimen which leaves student athletes with less time for academic pursuits and no chance of internships, study abroad experiences, and the like.

Given all of these developments, much discussion is occurring about the fact that student athletes are the only ones not benefitting financially. In 2014 a regional director of the National Labor Relations Board declared that football players at Northwestern were employees of the university and could form a union. In the same year Ed O’Bannon won a lawsuit against the NCAA challenging the use of images of former student athletes for commercial purposes. Jeffrey Kessler has filed a lawsuit which challenges the ceiling on compensation paid to student athletes for their “services to the big business of college sports.”

In an indirect response to such issues raised by current and former student athletes, universities in the Power 5 conferences (ACC, SEC, Big 10, Pac 12, Big 12) declared themselves autonomous from the NCAA to make up their own rules with regard to areas such as providing more financial support to student athletes, flying families to tournaments, recruiting, and so forth. While the autonomous ruling might keep student athletes and attorneys at bay temporarily, it was short-sighted because it did not address fundamental issues related to commercialization and professionalization. In fact, the Power 5 conferences put a new distance between themselves and other athletic conferences, and this means they will now be getting more of the best players and the most lucrative television contracts and corporate sponsorships. In other words, the rich will keep getting richer.

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*Patrick Kelly, S.J., is associate professor of theology and religious studies at Seattle University. He is the author of Catholic Perspectives on Sports: From Medieval to Modern Times (Paulist Press, 2012).*



Saint Joseph University goes up against University of Connecticut.

The framework within which we are thinking about problems in intercollegiate athletics and higher education is inadequate. And the resources we use to reflect on the problems can't extricate us from them. For example, our understanding of freedom in a market society tends to be limited to democratic traditions and the free market. Within this framework, it makes sense that schools and conferences should be able to find the best television market for themselves and try to raise as much money as possible. We recognize that they are free to spend as much as they like to build winning programs, looking for a return on their investment. Even the NCAA, which is supposed to be safeguarding the integrity of college sports, is free to sign lucrative television contracts. Most reformers don't question this framework and argue instead for a different distribution of revenues.

What is missing is any acknowledgement of what Ignatius of Loyola refers to as "interior freedom," namely freedom from "disordered inclinations." For Ignatius, the most problematic of these disordered inclinations is to wealth. In his view, persons and societies get off track by being ensnared by money, which leads to the honor and esteem of this world, culminating in surging pride. From this dynamic flow all other vices. This lens provides us with a very accurate description of what is happening in intercollegiate athletics at the moment. But because we don't acknowledge interior freedom as a category, these dynamics remain largely out of our awareness.

The recent developments in intercollegiate athletics have impacted and will continue to impact Jesuit universities. For example, shortly after Seattle University returned to Division 1 status and joined the Western Athletic Conference, most of

the schools exited the conference to join large football conferences. Because the schools that subsequently joined the conference were located at a much greater distance, Seattle University student athletes now must travel further to compete. The increased travel results in students missing considerably more classes, and costs to the university are higher.

The Power 5 autonomy ruling will have the most impact on Jesuit universities such as Marquette, Georgetown, Creighton, and Xavier in the Big East conference and other universities like Gonzaga. They are the Jesuit schools that can currently compete with the national powers in men's and women's basketball. The schools in the Power 5 conferences will now be able to offer recruits deals that Jesuit schools will have a hard time matching, at least from a financial perspective.

In the next article I will discuss how Jesuit schools in Divisions I, II, and III are uniquely positioned to offer a critique of the current state of intercollegiate athletics and help us begin a deliberation of what the "non-market values worth caring about" are in college sports and how these values are related to the ends of higher education. I will write about the role that coaches, athletic directors, academics, presidents, and boards of trustees at Jesuit universities and athletic conferences such as the Big East and the West Coast Conference can play in this process. ■

This article is the first of two articles about intercollegiate athletics in higher education by Patrick Kelly. The second article will appear in the online edition of *Conversations* in September 2015.



# TALKING BACK

*Life and Writing in Jesuit Education*

## Three Rules

By Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

### **Experience**

**W**hen I was student at St. Joseph's Prep in Philadelphia my summer camp counselor, a professor at Hamilton College, advised me: If you want to be a writer, do not go to a Catholic college. The experience, he warned, would be too narrow, not free and challenging enough to provide the inspiration every good writer needs. When I graduated I took the spirit of his warning and went to Alaska for a harrowing job repairing the railroad tracks between Anchorage and Fairbanks, living with fellow laborers in bunks stacked three high in box cars. After two weeks I was fired for being too young to work overtime (17), and I made my way home by bus across the South, where water fountains were marked for white and black and one bus rider shouted that he would not sit next to a Negro.

That summer set the tone of my travels for years as I taught journalism at a series of Jesuit universities, meanwhile determined to visit sometimes dangerous places, survive, and write about it. As a Fordham student, my year in Paris let me live with a family in Toulouse, see a bull fight in Spain, join a jackal hunt in Tunisia, spend a week in a monastery in Belgium, and stand awestruck in the churches of Rome. In following years, including two in the army in Germany, I stood where Hitler had stood in the stadium in Munich, and in a park in New Orleans at the high altar constructed for the visit of John Paul II.

I swam in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Adriatic Sea, the Red Sea, the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee. I ran the streets of Cairo and Damascus and climbed Machu Pichu in Peru. With a Johannesburg stadium full of South Africans I welcomed Nelson Mandela home from prison as apartheid ended and visited a Peace Corps friend in the remote jungle of Gabon. In Vietnam and China I paid my respects to the

corpses under glass of Ho Chi Minh and Mao Tse-thung. Because I spent a month in Syria and Jordan, as well as an earlier visit to Israel, I cannot read the news today without welling anger and helpless frustration as the body counts mount and every proposal to rescue the suffering faces evidence that it would not work.

### **Reading to Write**

In 1902, Fr. Francis P. Donnelly, S.J., introduced a series of text books based on "model English," an exercise where the students would study the structure of a brief essay, often by Washington Irving, and then use the same structure on another topic. He had us read a

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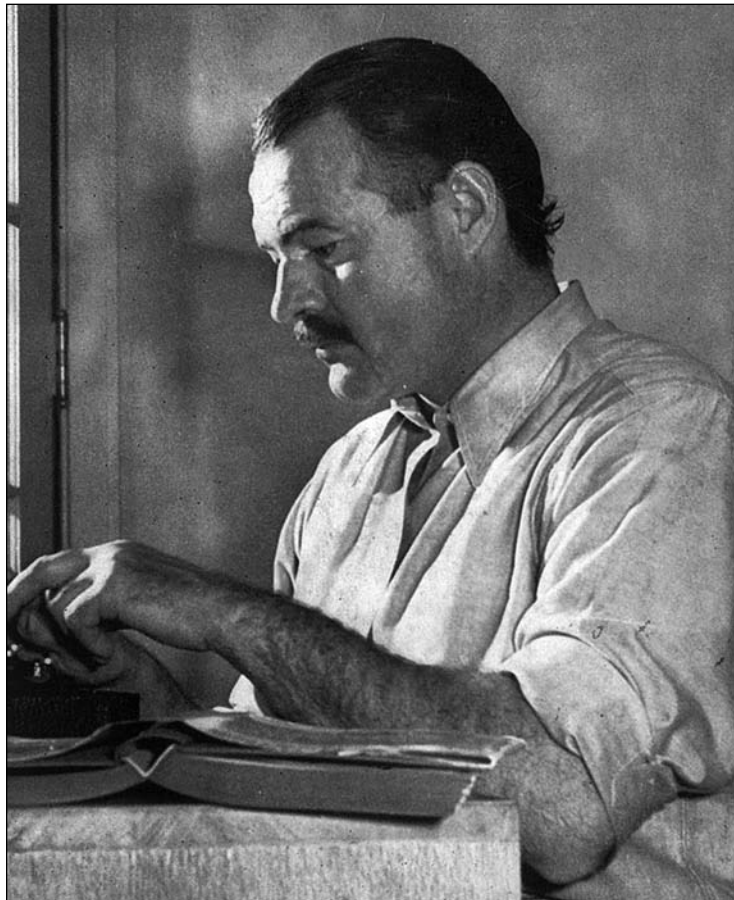
*Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., literary editor of America magazine, is a former editor of Conversations. This essay was delivered at the Future of the Catholic Literary Imagination Conference in February 2015.*

**"Listen now.  
When people talk  
listen completely. ...  
Most people  
never listen."**

*Ernest Hemingway*

description of morning and evening in the English countryside and write our own paragraph comparing yachting in a "gentle breeze and in a stiff wind." Because imagery and compact brevity are the heart of poetry, my Jesuit mentor, Fordham's Fr. Joseph R. Frese, advised me to read poetry before writing prose.

In 1935 a young writer visited Ernest Hemingway at Key West for advice. "Good writing is true writing," Hemingway said. The writer's story "will be true in proportion to the amount of knowledge of life that he has and how conscientious he is." The writer's life is like an iceberg: his experience is the huge part hidden below; the top is the memory he will put on paper. What books should the writer have read? "He should have read everything," says Hemingway, "so he knows what he has to beat." He lists over 20 authors, including my favorites, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* and Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamozov*. I would add Dickens's *David Copperfield*, the essays of E.B. White, and the pioneers of the "new journalism" in the 1960s, which combined human observation with the novelist's narrative skill and structure: Joan Didion, Gay Talese, and Norman Mailer. Hemingway concludes: "Listen now. When people



talk listen completely. ... Most people never listen."

### **Commitment**

How well we write can depend on why we write. George Orwell, in his essay "Why I Write," lists *sheer egoism*, *aesthetic enthusiasm*, *historical impulse*, and *political purpose* – his "desire to push the world in a certain direction." His five years as a policeman in Burma made him hate authority, and his awareness of the working class gave him an understanding of imperialism. After the Spanish Civil War he worked to make political writing an art. I traveled to Baghdad the year after the Persian Gulf War and found my way to Amiriyah, the suburban site where on February 13,

1991 Americans had sent two laser-guided "smart bombs" smashing into what they said was a military target but was really a civilian shelter. At least 400 civilians were killed. Pictures of the dead children line the walls. I climbed up on the roof to the hole the rockets made and scooped up 3 stones as memorials. I have lost the stones, but not the memory.

James Baldwin, summarizes why Jesuit students and faculty should write. "You write in order to change the world, knowing perfectly well that you probably can't, but do so knowing that literature is indispensable to the world. ... The world changes to the way people see it, and if you alter, even by a millimeter, the way people look at reality, then *you* can change it." AMEN! ■

# Risks Worth Taking

## *The Moral Formation of Business Professionals through Jesuit Business Education*

By Kathleen McGarvey Hidy

**T**he moral formation of business professionals in business education can no longer be ignored. Recent history records the devastating economic and societal consequences wrought by unethical behavior perpetrated by and through the activities of business. Empirical data suggests these impacts will worsen if, as studies suggest, the next generation of young business leaders possesses a broken moral compass.

With this urgent need, Jesuit business schools have a unique, mission-driven opportunity and, arguably, a responsibility to mold and to mentor future business leaders in ethical excellence and to provide both undergraduate and graduate business students with a moral compass as well as to cultivate in these students the courage to follow that compass's course.

### *The Perfect Storm*

On the eve of the fifth anniversary of Wall Street's 2008 economic meltdown, a survey of 250 financial services industry insiders revealed a startling finding:

Wall Street's future leaders – the young professionals who will one day assume control of the trillions of dollars that the industry manages – have lost their moral compass, accept corporate wrongdoing as a necessary evil and fear reporting this misconduct.

The report by Labaton Sucharow, *A Wall Street in Crisis: A Perfect Storm Looming*, examined the ethical mindset of an industry five years after it weathered a financial crisis with worldwide reverberations. The report concluded that destructive forces threaten to envelope Wall Street again in a "perfect storm" of greed, weak leadership,

and fear. Disturbingly, the report uncovered an alarming mindset among those with 10 years or less experience in the financial services industry. This next generation of leaders, when compared with those with more than 20 years of experience, were twice as likely to believe that financial services professionals have to engage in unethical or illegal activity in order to be successful. They were more than four times as likely to engage in illegal insider trading if they knew they would not be caught. They were more than twice as likely to believe that their

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Most of the AJCU institutions have business schools. Saint Peter's, as elsewhere, is intent on educating business students for whom human values and needs are of prime importance.

organization's leadership would ignore suspicions of a top performer's illegal insider trading if large profits resulted from this activity, with one in five believing that leaders would not report such a crime to authorities. And they were almost three times more likely to fear retaliation for reporting wrongdoing in the workplace.

This empirical data suggests that the next generation of business leaders in the financial services industry may have lost its moral compass. Corrupted by the belief that unethical and even illegal behavior is a passport to climbing the corporate ladder, these young

professionals are also cowed by a culture of fear that intimidates into silence those who witness corporate malfeasance. Is this perfect storm, this ethical crisis, limited to Wall Street, or are the young business professionals of Main Street (or Madison Avenue or Silicon Valley) also ethically challenged?

An answer is suggested a study published in 2011 by professors at Harvard University and Northwestern University which examined students with an "economics education" and identified the role this education may play in attitudes toward greed and related immoral or unethical behavior. Specifically, the study found a

correlation between an "economics education" and "positive attitudes towards greed." The authors wrote that the "uncontested dominance of self-interest maximization as the primary (if not sole) logic of exchange, in business schools and corporate settings alike, may lead people to be more tolerant of what other people see as morally reprehensible."

This study raises an alarming issue: does business education have a morally neutral impact on students or, worse, does business education corrode the ethical decision-making of students?

## ***Moral Formation and Jesuit Business Schools***

Whether Jesuit business school education should undertake the moral formation of its students invites educators to consider two fundamental questions. Is the moral formation of its business students central to a Jesuit business school's mission? If so, how can this moral formation be achieved?

Every Jesuit business school must answer the first question affirmatively – yes, the moral formation of its students is central to its mission. To ignore this question or, worse, to see character-building and ethical training as beyond the province of a Jesuit business school renders the mission statements of the Jesuit universities and their business schools as meaningless words or slogans used on brochures or plaques or even syllabi to create an image or impression of a brand – the Jesuit legacy – without an authentic institutional commitment and plan to deliver on that mission statement.

Both the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and the Jesuit Superior General, Adolfo Nicolás, have issued public statements in the past year and a half about the vitally important role Jesuit universities and colleges have in the transformation of individuals and, ultimately, society. Speaking in October 2013 at an unprecedented meeting with the board of trustee chairs and the presidents of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, Father General noted that “Jesuit institutions exist only because of the particular, scripturally based faith perspective that led to their establishment.” This faith perspective, which distinguishes Jesuit institutions from secular ones, carries a claim about what happens to an individual through the work of a Jesuit institution: “In the Ignatian concept of

service, growth leads to transformation. If there is no transformation, then the school or the parish is not Jesuit. The ultimate objective is an individual's transformation and, through individuals, the transformation of society.”

In 2013, the AJCU issued *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument*. This document specifically raises the issue of the moral formation of students in Jesuit professional schools, asking those schools to assess whether they “share a common commitment to the joining of professional, technical training with personal and moral formation of their students as persons rooted in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition?” The document further underscores that the focus of a Jesuit university or college should be to build a university culture committed to “relationality and responsibility” measured, in part, by whether the university helps “to foster a culture for students that draws attention to their actions as moral agents. Does the university assist students in cultivating virtues that will serve them over the course of their lives?”

This mandate for Jesuit business schools to engage in the moral formation of its students is clearly rooted in the Jesuit centuries-old pursuit of using schools to, literally, change the world. In his book *Heroic Leadership*, Chris Lowney explains that Jesuits have, throughout their

history, chosen formal education as “an extraordinarily valuable instrument for the work in the development of human potential.” And William J. Byron, S.J., in his *Jesuit Saturdays: Sharing the Ignatian Spirit with Lay Colleagues and Friends* writes that the Jesuit purpose in higher education is to “move” (or to borrow Father General's word, transform) students' “minds and hearts” in a “Godward” direction. Father Byron explicitly sees a Jesuit education as cultivating reflective students capable of “ethical deliberation,” students whose “character is shaped by the Jesuit educational experience.” Later, Father Byron notes that “virtues are essential ingredients of a Jesuit education” and that a “Jesuit education is the education of the heart, cultivation of the will, development of the mind.” If the moral formation of their students is the mission of Jesuit business schools, the question of how they should undertake this task must be examined and debated.

### ***The ABC (and D) of Moral Formation***

The moral formation of a business student is a multidimensional undertaking that seeks to transform students, not simply to transfer information to students. Reflection and debate should center on what such an undertaking involves in practical terms as well as how the approach at the graduate level might differ from the undergraduate level. That said, the moral formation of a business student should begin with the following “ABC and D” of character training:

**A**waken in a student the ability to apprehend and appreciate ethical issues which arise in business;

**B**roaden a student's knowledge of frameworks and principles of how these ethical and moral questions might be addressed;

**C**ultivate the student's will to seek ethical and moral outcomes as a business professional; and

**D**eepen a student's sense of belonging to a community committed to pursuing ethical outcomes in and through business pursuits.

The first aspects of moral formation – the pursuit of knowledge in the realm of ethics and morality, the capacity to reflect on ethical or moral dilemmas, and the refinement of a student's ability to perceive such issues embedded in business scenarios – are presumably the stock and trade of what a Jesuit university education, graduate and undergraduate, provides. To some degree, these are already incorporated into business curriculums at both secular and faith-based universities throughout the United States.

Cultivating a student's will to seek ethical and moral outcomes as a business professional and deepening a student's sense of belonging to a community committed to pursuing ethical outcomes in and through business pursuits are not items easily reduced to an action plan, or learning outcome, or pedagogic approach.

They involve engaging the student at a level deeper than the intellect; they seek to develop a student's will. Shaping a student's desire and will to seek ethical outcomes as a business professional, activating her conscience, strengthening a student's moral resolve, developing the virtues of courage

and prudence ... these are the real challenges of moral formation in business education and this is where the discussion and debate should be centered.

**W**

here to begin? Expose business students to business professionals and business professors who model good character and who have weathered ethical storms in their professional lives. Mentor the students on these issues. Make those conversations the centerpiece of the interactions. Allow students opportunities to consciously create a moral compass for use in their professional lives and encourage them to "test drive" their compass, to see how it will guide them in ethical dilemmas. Create a sense of community through the student's education and beyond graduation, and anchor the business school community's identity in ethics, character building, moral formation. Make the school community the incubator of ideals, aspirations, and goals centered on moral formation; make it a safe harbor for students and graduates to explore the ethical and moral challenges presented in their careers.

None of this will be accomplished without institutional buy-in. Administrators, faculty, staff

must not only approve of moral formation as a legitimate undertaking but, more important, must purposefully work to advance this goal. The culture of an organization depends in great part on the cohesiveness of a community's shared vision and the degree to which that community seeks to integrate that vision in every aspect of its shared life. A Jesuit business school which seeks to cultivate the moral sensibility of its students and works to empower them to act on this sensibility in their professional endeavors must develop a culture which reflects that vision.

Culture-building is an art form, not an agenda item. It requires leaders who are not technocrats but persons of vision and passion and persuasion.

Think St. Ignatius. It requires faculty who dedicate themselves to a calling higher than careerism, who seek to inculcate in their students both the rigors of their disciplines and the desire to respond morally to a problem arising from that discipline. It requires staff who embrace the ethos of moral formation and work to create an environment mirroring that ethos.

The work of moral formation by a Jesuit business school involves creativity, imagination, resource allocation, leadership, and risk. The main risk is that moral formation will be misunderstood and miscommunicated as antithetical to the goals of diversity and inclusivity, as weakening the intellectual underpinnings and rigor of the academic program, or as threatening the marketability or broad appeal of the Jesuit business school. These are risks worth taking. The mission depends on it. ■

# The National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education

The goal of the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education and its publication *Conversations* is to strengthen the Jesuit identity of our 28 colleges and universities. First, each issue is written to stimulate the campus dialogue – through departmental discussions or faculty symposiums – on the pursuit of various ideals. Second, through our various departments – feature articles, forums, book

reviews, reports, and Talking Back – we want to keep the conversation going to build on the progress we have made. Our members, representing various institutions and disciplines, visit three colleges and universities a year and listen to groups of faculty and students in order to decide the themes for each issue.

## Members of the Seminar

**Mark G. Bosco, S.J.**, is the director of the Hank Center for Catholic Intellectual Heritage and joint professor of English and theology at Loyola University Chicago.

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## Writing for *Conversations*

Most of the articles are commissioned according to a certain theme for each issue, but we welcome unsolicited manuscripts. Ideally they should explore an idea that will generate discussion. Try to avoid articles that simply describe a worthy local project. Guidelines.

- Please keep unsolicited submissions to 1000-1200 words. We may ask for reductions depending on the topic.

- Do not include footnotes. Incorporate any needed references into the text.
- The *Conversations* style sheet is available on request.
- We welcome photographs, fully captioned, preferable of action rather than posed shots.
- Send the manuscript as a Microsoft Word attachment to [conversamag@gmail.com](mailto:conversamag@gmail.com)

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**COMING UP** Issue #49 (Spring 2016) Globalization of Jesuit Higher Education.



## FUTURE JESUIT EDUCATORS?

Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles played host in June to a gathering of all the U. S. Jesuits in formation. Here they stand on a lawn in front of the campus Sacred Heart Chapel.

Georgetown University  
*Washington, DC, 1789*

Saint Louis University  
*Saint Louis, 1818*

Spring Hill College  
*Mobile, 1830*

Xavier University  
*Cincinnati, 1831*

Fordham University  
*New York, 1841*

College of the Holy Cross  
*Worcester, 1843*

Saint Joseph's University  
*Philadelphia, 1851*

Santa Clara University  
*Santa Clara, 1851*

Loyola University Maryland  
*Baltimore, 1852*

University of San Francisco  
*San Francisco, 1855*

Boston College  
*Boston, 1863*

Canisius College  
*Buffalo, 1870*

Loyola University Chicago  
*Chicago, 1870*

Saint Peter's University  
*Jersey City, 1872*

University of Detroit Mercy  
*Detroit, 1877*

Regis University  
*Denver, 1877*

Creighton University  
*Omaha, 1878*

Marquette University  
*Milwaukee, 1881*

John Carroll University  
*Cleveland, 1886*

Gonzaga University  
*Spokane, 1887*

University of Scranton  
*Scranton, 1888*

Seattle University  
*Seattle, 1891*

Rockhurst University  
*Kansas City, 1910*

Loyola Marymount University  
*Los Angeles, 1911*

Loyola University New Orleans  
*New Orleans, 1912*

Fairfield University  
*Fairfield, 1942*

Le Moyne College  
*Syracuse, 1946*

Wheeling Jesuit University  
*Wheeling, 1954*

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#49 Globalization of  
Jesuit Higher Education.**