The Core of the Core:
Reflections on the Core Curriculum

2001 Summer Seminar
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Proceedings of the
Center for Catholic Studies

THE CORE OF THE CORE:
REFLECTIONS ON
THE CORE CURRICULUM

Summer Seminar 2001

Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey
Dedicated to the memory of the many faculty who have gone before us and whose creative efforts opened this window for us to envision ways in which a Seton Hall education can nurture the minds, hearts and spirits of our students.

particularly, we remember those faculty who have died during this last year:

Francis Thomas Crawley, College of Arts and Sciences
Anthony D’Amato, Stillman School of Business
Monsignor Francis A. DeDomenico, Immaculate Conception Seminary
Monsignor William Noe Field, University Libraries
Anthony Infante Jr., College of Education and Human Services
Stanley P Kosakowski, Stillman School of Business
Herbert C. Kraft, College of Arts and Sciences
Donald N. Lombardi, College of Arts and Sciences
Nicholas Menza, College of Education and Human Services
Fred V. Morrone, College of Education and Human Services
Vincent V. Mott, Stillman School of Business
James Romito, College of Education and Human Services
Leonard Volenski, College of Arts and Sciences
Monsignor Aloysius J. Welsh, Immaculate Conception Seminary
Russ Zappulla, School of Graduate Medical Education

We also remember all the victims of September 11, 2001.

May they rest in the Lord’s loving presence ...
FORWARD

My own part in the discussion about the Seton Hall core curriculum in the late spring of 2001 was very minor. I served as facilitator of the faculty seminar that eventually generated the articles that appear in this volume. As an outsider, I did not know exactly what to expect. I was aware, of course, that the topic of curricular change almost always generates a significant amount of friction, and I assumed that our conversation would have its share of heated debates, turf skirmishes and ruffled feelings. I prepared myself to play the role of referee, but, as it turned out, there was no need.

Very quickly it became apparent that I was dealing with a group of people who, despite not seeing eye-to-eye on every issue, were united in their conviction that the particular challenges of the times we live in require changes in the core curriculum. As they carefully examined the current situation and weighed possible courses of action, the strength of this shared conviction became more apparent. By the end of the seminar, the participants had become a community of purpose and hope. Within days, they began taking concrete steps to bring the matter before the University community for serious consideration.

It was evident to me that this coming-together happened fundamentally at the level of the heart. What the seminar participants had most in common was love — love for the great past and present achievements of the human mind and spirit; love for the transformative event of learning; love for Seton Hall and all the good it represents; and love for the students whom the University seeks to serve. That multifaceted love, whose range and depth find expression in these articles, is a key resource on which the Seton Hall community can continue to draw during the long, arduous process of redesigning the core curriculum. It will also allow the process to be seen as a matter not so much of solving a problem as of seizing an opportunity.

Your efforts are a sign of hope. May they meet with great success!

J. Michael Stebbins
Director, Gonzaga Institute of Ethics
Gonzaga University
Spokane, Washington
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Cover Artwork by Dawn Williams

Unless otherwise indicated, all participants are from Seton Hall University.
TWELVE PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Simply stated, our answer to the questions about strong foundations for general education is contained in one overarching meta-principle:

A strong general education program articulates a compelling vision and forms an evolving community based on that vision.

Association of American Colleges, 1994

Part One:
Articulating a compelling vision for general education

Strong general education programs:

1. explicitly answer the question, "What is the point of general education?"
2. embody institutional mission
3. continuously strive for educational coherence
4. are self-consciously values-based and teach social responsibility
5. attend carefully to student experience
6. are consciously designed so that they will continue to evolve.

Part Two:
Forming an evolving community based upon a vision of general education

Strong general education programs:

7. require and foster academic community
8. have strong faculty and administrative leadership
9. cultivate substantial and enduring support from multiple constituencies
10. ensure continuing support for faculty, especially as engaging in interdisciplinary dialogue
11. reach beyond the classroom to the broad range of student co-curricular experiences
12. assess and monitor progress toward an evolving vision through ongoing self-reflection.
PREFACE

Mel Shay
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

In 1994, the Association of American Colleges published a booklet titled Twelve Principles for Effective General Education Programs. The first of the 12 principles was the following: “Strong general education programs explicitly answer the question, ‘What is the point of general education?’” Hence, the present collection of essays by our faculty and members of our Seton Hall community. The faculty members represented here embody many years of teaching and service in this University. They bring their long experience to raising the question, “What is and should be the point of our core curriculum?”

Recently, the nature and structure of the core curriculum have been the subject of discussion among our faculty, including the faculty who gathered last summer under the sponsorship of the Center for Catholic Studies and whose reflections are contained in this booklet. This very workshop exemplified two of the 12 principles mentioned above: “Strong general education programs require and foster academic community,” and “Strong general education programs ensure continuing support for faculty, especially as engaging in interdisciplinary dialogue.” The summer seminars of the Center for Catholic Studies during the last several years have aimed at fostering such academic community and interdisciplinary dialogue.

The faculty represented here are mostly academic faculty, but other areas of the University are represented as well — two administrators, one person in Student Affairs, and one finishing his doctoral degree in education. As the AAC principles articulate, strong general education programs “cultivate substantial and enduring support from multiple constituencies” and “reach beyond the classroom to the broad range of student co-curricular experiences.”

Obviously, as the second principle enunciates, the present discussion of the core curriculum embodies Seton Hall’s mission to foster “servant leaders for a global society.” A major question is “How?” Far from being a mere fragmented list of distribution requirements, the rationale for which few students or even faculty can explain, it is very important that our core curriculum “be self-consciously values-based and teach social responsibility” (Principle 4). This is especially important for a Catholic university. It is important for all of us to know how our curriculum instills values so that students graduating from Seton Hall become responsible members of our contemporary world.

Because our contemporary culture has changed dramatically since the present “core” was put in place in the early 1980s, it is very important that our central academic experience here at Seton Hall — our “signature experience” — “attend carefully to student experience” and be “consciously designed so that it will continue to evolve.”

Perhaps none of the 12 principles is as important as the third: “Strong general education programs continuously strive for educational coherence.” As Mark Van Doren, the great educator at Columbia University, once wrote: “The one intolerable thing in education is the absence of intellectual design.” This is the point of our present discussions.

In other words, the students who attend Seton Hall University should know why they are here. Graduates should be able to articulate what their undergraduate education aims at imparting. As Cardinal Newman put it in the classic work on university education, The Idea of a University, a university
education teaches a "circle" of subjects so that, even though students "cannot pursue every subject which is open to them, they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle ..." The circle itself teaches:

[The student] profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and shades, its great points and little ... Hence it is that his education is called "liberal." A habit of thought is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom.


Hence, our present discussions on the Core Curriculum of Seton Hall University. In a recent publication, *Choosing the Right College* (Eerdmans, 2001), we at Seton Hall were praised for many of our achievements. To the question is there a core curriculum at Seton Hall University, the author responds "No." It is time for us to begin to address this lack. It is for that reason that, as provost, I wish particularly to support the seventh principle mentioned above: "Strong general education programs have strong faculty and administrative leadership." I call on the Faculty Senate and its Subcommittee on the Core Curriculum to come up with an enduring vision of an ideal core for Seton Hall University at this time in the University's history and concrete suggestions for how we can embody that vision. It is this process initiated by the Faculty Senate that will institutionalize the last of the 12 principles:

"Strong general education programs assess and monitor progress toward an evolving vision through ongoing self-reflection."

Our last discussions on the core curriculum ended inconclusively some years ago. It is about time we begin again and bring the task to completion.
INTRODUCTION

by Richard M. Liddy

These proceedings, The Core of the Core: Reflections on the Core Curriculum, are the results of the fourth summer seminar for faculty sponsored by the Center for Catholic Studies at Seton Hall University. The purpose of the seminars is to provide a forum for interdisciplinary conversation regarding the central themes of our lives as university professors. The first seminar in 1998 dealt with Knowledge and Wisdom; the second, in 1999, was titled Divine Madness and the Intellectual Life: Exercises in Appreciation; the third, in 2000, was titled I Have Called You by Name: Spirituality and the Academic Vocation.

One result of these seminars has been the formation of deeper intellectual community among the participants. Faculty members who hardly knew one another discovered resonances of their own deep concerns in faculty members from other departments. Those deep relationships have continued and deepened after the seminars.

Each of the seminars is guided by a facilitator who brings his or her own expertise to the discussion. Most of all the facilitators have "eased" the growing self-knowledge of the participants as well as the growing self-knowledge of ourselves as members of the Seton Hall community. It has been amazing how wise and gentle "facilitation" can truly "ease" our growing knowledge of ourselves and how we fit into the humanistic and religious mission of this University. Last year's facilitator, Dr. J. Michael Stebbins, director of the Institute on Ethics at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, took us gently through Bernard Lonergan's method of moving from our own experience to insight and wise judgments about our core curriculum.

As is evident from the essays contained in this volume, we raised a lot of questions. Many of the questions were historical: How did we get here? How did we arrive at the present core? What, in fact, is the present core? What is its meaning? What is its purpose? These are questions that neither students nor faculty tend to ask. We take what we are doing for granted. Thus, the essays in the first part of these proceedings, "The History of the Core at Seton Hall," by Walter Debold, Alan Delozier, George Browne, Gisela Webb and Al Hakim, bring us out of the past into our present.

But what should we be doing? What "shape" should a core take? What mission or ideal should it seek to embody? And could we explain that ideal to incoming students, their parents and society at large? Is it truly about "the best that has been read and thought?" In our own culture or in the various cultures of the world? How can an "ideal" of a core be squared with the historical and multicultural realities of our present world? These are some of the questions treated in the second section, "The Ideals of a Core," and it is in regard to these questions that Mel Shay in his Introduction quotes Mark Van Doren: "The one intolerable thing in education is the absence of intellectual design." It is that absence of intellectual design or "fragmentation" that seems to characterize our present distribution requirements of 175 possible courses. Distribution requirements — "a little of this and a little of that" — does not, without qualification, educate in the value and meaning of a core and in the mission of our Seton Hall education.

Marta Deyrup brings a mother's perspective to the search for a superior university education. Beth Bloom talks about the contemporary role of information literacy and Dick Liddy writes about developing the skill of "reading well." James VanOosting points to the importance of developing the notion of "vocation," and Dawn Williams seeks to bring Academic Affairs into a closer union with Student Affairs. Roseanne Mirabella points beyond the curriculum, and indeed beyond the university, to the goal of "building caring communities." Stephen Martin brings forth a concrete example of another university constructing a contemporary core curriculum, and Nicholas Mazza writes about the challenges and pitfalls of Catholic universities adapting to change.

Finally, there is the future. What should we do? What concretely would be best core experience for our students? And how do we get from here to there? George Browne makes one concrete suggestion, and Anthony Haynor points to the influence of "futures studies." Joseph Malloy suggests the need for a concrete administrative unit to work on constructing a genuine core, and Marian Glenn uses her imagination to envision "a signature experience for Seton Hall."

Before ending, I want to thank, in a special way, all those who contributed to this collection of essays on the core curriculum. In particular, I want to thank the president of Seton Hall University, Monsignor Robert Sheeran, and our provost, Mel Shay, for their support in this endeavor. I want to thank Gisela Webb for publicizing
and organizing the faculty seminar in June. I want to thank Beth Bloom for her tireless and very meticulous work in editing these papers. I want to thank Roseanne Mirabella for her work in making these papers available to the Faculty Senate subcommittee on the core curriculum. It takes many people cooperating together to create something of enduring human significance. We hope that these proceedings can be such. Certainly, these pages do not contain all the answers we need. But they can at least help us on the way to asking the right questions.
History of the Core
at Seton Hall
WHERE WERE WE?
REFLECTIONS ON THE CORE CURRICULUM
by Reverend Walter DeBold

These reflections on Seton Hall's core curriculum will include, first, an historical note, then a reminder of the idea of a university, a look at the present situation in which the modern university finds itself and, finally, some recommendations.

Where Were We?

If the Class of 1938, my class, were to come back to the Seton Hall campus for a visit, they would find it difficult to orient themselves amid the buildings of today. They would recognize Presidents Hall and the chapel as the center of things, and then Mooney, Bayley and McQuaid clustered around them, but everything else would appear new to these old timers.

If these visitors found their way to the University Archives on the ground floor of Walsh Library, they might be amused to read in the catalogue of 1861 that room, board and tuition were $225 with an extra $5 for a doctor's services. Those early catalogues were serious about education: In fact in those days a student was not permitted to leave the campus unless a teacher accompanied him!

A young man — no women, remember — entering from high school in 1934 found that he had to complete 130 credits in required courses. Science majors had a few more in view of laboratory hours in chemistry, biology and physics. The catalogue mentions a few electives, but it was clear that the planning for the student's formation was in the care of a paternalistic institution. The end result may not have been all bad because at the 50th anniversary it was jokingly observed that the graduates had largely turned out to be doctors, lawyers or priests.

Over the years, all universities have preserved a reverence for the ancient Greek trivia and quadrivia, grammar, rhetoric and logic, math, geometry, astronomy and music. But, since we are living on the treadmill of history, our educators have had to adapt continually to the needs of an ever-evolving society. The result is that today's catalogue is much larger and reflects that growing specialization in all fields of study. The 1938 graduate would be quite confused by the catalogue of today with its many offerings. Moreover, the faculty to teach these courses has also grown in numbers and in competence.

An Introduction to Thinking

As it strives to offer truth to an ever-changing world, a university must remain true to itself. One would like to hope that the graduates of the 1930s would be able to discover consistency in their alma mater. They can still recall that in their student days the name of John Henry Newman was revered with his idea of a university:

"It is a place to which a thousand schools make contributions, in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonist activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth.

It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward and discoveries verified and perfected, rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed by the collision of mind with mind and knowledge with knowledge."

Written in the 19th century, these words seem every bit as clear and hopeful to the educators of today. In our own days, Newman's thought gets reinforcement from Pope John Paul II who insists that a Catholic university is, first of all, a university, which means that "it has a capacity for conducting an impartial search for truth, a search that is neither subordinated to nor conditioned by particular interests of any kind."

A Catholic university is a place of research where scholars scrutinize reality with the methods proper to each academic discipline and so contribute to the treasury of human knowledge. Each individual discipline is studied in a systematic manner; moreover, the various disciplines are brought into dialogue for their mutual enhancement.

Both Newman and the Pope would have endorsed the effort of Robert Hutchins, who, as president of the University of Chicago, struggled to maintain a liberal education in the face of the growing specialization of the 20th century. He lamented that "what is missing is education to be human beings, education to make the most of our human powers, education for responsibilities as members of a democratic society, education for freedom."
A free society is a society composed of free men. To be free you have to be educated for freedom. This means that you have to think, for the free man is one who thinks for himself.  

To gain a diploma, our contemporary students must amass 132 credits of which 54 constitute the core. That compares with the student of 1938 who fulfilled 130 “required” credits. The B.S. degree had only slightly different demands. What this adds up to is that the young person of today has much more liberty to design his or her own program. The university is yielding some measure of its paternalistic supervision to the pressure of a society that demands independence. Perhaps some might see the youth of today as “burdened with freedom.” But this freedom results also in an awareness of his own responsibility. From both the religious and the psychological perspective that is a good thing. 

The dignity of the human person also requires that every man enjoy the right to act freely and responsibly. For this reason, in social relations especially man should exercise his rights, fulfill his obligations and, in the countless forms of collaboration with others, act chiefly on his own responsibility and initiative. This is to be done in such a way that each one acts on his own decision, of set purpose and from a consciousness of his obligation without being moved by force or pressure brought to bear on him externally. 

The Situation, Now and Here 

Where were you the day terrorists destroyed the World Trade Center? Everyone will always remember that day. The horrifying experience will forever color the memory of modern mankind. Creativity was conquered by destructiveness, love by hate. Those towers were the product of great ingenuity and collaboration. They gave evidence of the great technological advance of modern society. A great achievement materially, they were a spiritual accomplishment as well. Architects, steelworkers, stone workers and decorators were orchestrated over many months to bring plans to reality. Hatred reduced them to dust in minutes. As symbols of democracy those buildings were anathema to the fundamentalist mind. Totalitarian thought wants to unify politics and religion. It will not tolerate the idea of a pluralistic society.

We are mystified by the extent of violence in our age. Hollywood wrestled with it in the film, Space Odyssey 2001. In the opening scene, baboons had found some bones and they began to play with them. They discovered that since most of the bones were curved they could bounce one against another and make them jump in the air. Their next discovery was that the bones could be used as weapons to strike one another. The filmmaker was trying to portray the dawn of rationality and, then all too quickly, the thrust of violence into the world of man.

But what does all this have to do with our educational concerns and the shape of our core curriculum? Seton Hall, as every university, strives to serve the actual world in which we find ourselves. This present world is characterized by change, accelerating change. The alumni of 1938 might feel pride in the fact that their alma mater is now ranked in the Top 10 of universities that are technologically "wired."

We, here, have learned, at least to some extent, to adjust the rhythm of our lives to the forward flow of modern material development. But suddenly, with the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, our thinking and our dreams are severely wounded. It becomes difficult to assimilate the reality of this shocking experience. Many people are heard to say, “Nothing will ever be the same.” Perhaps in some ways education will be affected. If the evil we witnessed sprang in some way from a fundamentalist mentality and, if that mentality is pervasive in our age, then that has a great deal to do with the mind of mankind and a person’s freedom to think. Educators have a responsibility to liberate.

In a world susceptible to totalitarian thought control, we must defend the conscience of the individual. In a world of growing pluralism, we must cultivate tolerance and reverence for diversity.

Conclusions 

Our “core” as is presently constituted is a good one, even if it is a little overcrowded. The alumni of the ’30s might wish that we had such a one “way back then.” If it were to be modified in any way that change ought to be in the direction of fewer courses, not more.

Whatever path is followed, it would seem that since we have four years with a student we should do a better job in encouraging imagination, creativity and an aesthetic sensibility. These things will be a principle defense against the mass mind. Such a goal is not to be achieved by adding courses but by influencing the whole college experience.
Finally, our faculty should be impressed with the fundamental importance of the question raised at the convocation of 2001:

“What is it that we want our students to become?”

Apart from the hope that they will turn out to be men and women of integrity, it would seem that we could respond, “I hope that they will step into life as thinking human beings.”

From the very start the teacher must respect in the child the dignity of the mind, must appeal to the child’s power of understanding, and conceive of his own effort as preparing a human mind to think for itself. 41

Those words were part of a lecture by Jacques Maritain at Yale in 1940. They were published under the title, “Education at the Crossroads.” We may still be at a crossroads.

Notes

2. The Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, Pope John Paul II, Cf. ORIGINS, Oct. 4, 1959
A HISTORY OF THE
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM, 1856-1968
by Alan Delozier

Introduction
From classical studies to computer technology, the Seton Hall University Core Curriculum has undergone a series of changes from the school's founding days in the town of Madison during the fall of 1856 — and the subsequent move to South Orange four years later. Over the next century, the undergraduate core curriculum underwent a series of changes in terms of major disciplines of study, course requirements, optional electives and credit-hour standards. Within this time span, the identity of Seton Hall essentially remained that of a liberal arts institution. But with the introduction of schools of business, science and nursing in the mid-20th century, and a number of other significant developments, such as increased attention to interdisciplinary studies, and the advent of co-education, the scene was set for the foundations of the modern day curriculum.

As the Catholic university of New Jersey, Seton Hall has followed closely in the tradition of other Catholic institutions of higher education, which featured a solid liberal arts core curriculum based on a standardized set of classes that included healthy doses of theology, philosophy, Latin, Greek, English and similar course offerings. In this respect, the early years of college trained young men for a white-collar profession — whether it be that of a lawyer, teacher or priest. Since the clergy were administrators in control of operations at Seton Hall, the religious-themed curricula naturally fell in line with Church teachings. But at the same time there was flexibility in terms of structural approach from the earliest days onward.

Catholic colleges passed through different periods of curricular and methodological development. Throughout the nineteenth century, however, whatever the general curricular developments in the United States tended to be, Catholic colleges adhered to the basic theory that the purpose of higher education was mental discipline. When practical studies were included in the curriculum of the early colleges, they were placed on the same level as the rudimentary classes; they were never thought of as being part of higher education. The first or the formative period of curricular development in Catholic colleges is distinguished by a course of studies which was often more secondary than collegiate and sometimes more elementary than secondary (Power, 53).

Even with the variance in level and type of education offered from 1856 forward, the particulars of core curriculum development were actually a constant source of debate and consideration in general at Catholic academies in America. A common theme that emerged in the development of core curriculum standards within the realm of Catholic higher education was that of balancing between the practical and ideal vision, or in other words — temporal versus the sacred studies. As John J. Ryan wrote in 1945:

... the two main courses in the outline of studies here proposed are: practical theology (ascetics); and practical philosophy (technics). All other subjects are to be regarded as purely tributary to one or other of these main courses. This curriculum, it should be observed, is remedial as well as perfective: neither one nor the other alone, but both. Its courses have been chosen and designed, in part at least, to aid the student to regain the integrity lost at the Fall, through training the intellect not to be imprudent, the will not to be malicious ... (Ryan, 25).

This might be considered an extreme example as viewed in a modern context, but it was part of a traditional outlook that has its roots in the earliest days of Catholic higher education in this country.

Origin of American Catholic Education — The Georgetown Model, 1700s-1800s
In essence, the first colleges founded in America were church-affiliated institutions in the Protestant tradition that represented the viewpoints of various religious sects. Such well-known institutions as Harvard and Yale (Congregationalists), William & Mary and the University of Pennsylvania (Episcopalians), Queens College-Rutgers (Dutch Reformed), along with others established during the 17th and 18th centuries, were created for the primary purpose of training young men for the ministry. The core curriculum found in each college was centered mainly on the study of Latin and Greek in order to bring about a "polite education of the gentlemen" who would convey
their education to their congregations from the pulpit or out in the missionary field (Power, 50). Not for the sake of knowledge alone, but social polish and prestige associated with a college education marked the typical student of this era.

As a minority group, the Roman Catholic population living in Colonial America was subject to discrimination on a social, economic and political planes, and, as such, they were unable to gain much headway on the educational scene until after the Revolutionary War. Conversely, the spirit and substance of higher education in the Catholic tradition was alive throughout Europe prior to the first school that opened in the American Colonies at Newtown, Maryland, around 1640. Even though this particular academy was short-lived, another "school of humanities" was opened 37 years later and both served as a prelude to Catholic higher education in this country (Ward, 279). This particular brand of academic establishment was built up and sponsored by the Society of Jesus from its earliest years onward. The "Jesuit" influence was renowned for its intensive and comprehensive teaching focus, which was based on the Ratio Studiorum or "Plan of Studies." The importance of the Ratio Studiorum cannot be underestimated as indicated by Catholic historian, Edward J. Power, who wrote about its far-reaching influence on the core curriculum for countless religious institutions. "Since the influence of the Jesuits on Catholic higher education in America was impressive, one may suggest that the spirit of the Ratio was felt on the methods used at all of the Catholic colleges" (Power, 77). A prime example of this system of teaching in action came with the founding of Georgetown College during the late 1700s.

Georgetown College and its Impact on Catholic Higher Education

Any historical study that centers upon Catholicism and higher education in American history commences with the story of Georgetown, which remains the oldest existing Jesuit-administered school in the United States. Founded in 1789 by the first American prelate Bishop John Carroll, Georgetown was dedicated to upholding the principles outlined in the Ratio from the very beginning. Therefore, the Jesuit faculty at the time taught "such subjects as Latin, Algebra, history, and ... Greek ...," and incorporated these disciplines into their very first core curriculum (Ward, 280). These components became part of a larger set of educational objectives designed to provide a solid foundation for young students and build upon fundamental concepts during subsequent semesters. "Georgetown's curriculum was a combination course, it was an attempt at compromise between terminal and preparatory curricula ... with the exception of navigation and surveying, the Georgetown curriculum was typical of most Catholic colleges during the years they operated as Latin grammar schools or academies" (Power, 62). The school featured a traditional "classical" liberal arts approach, which entailed a six or seven-year plan of study instead of the four that is commonplace today. This initial foray into systematic and required course offerings became the model curriculum in Catholic higher education for the remainder of the 18th century.

Georgetown remained the lone Catholic college for more than a decade. (Mount Saint Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland — the oldest school without a religious order affiliation and second oldest overall — began operations in 1808.) Throughout this early period, the non-flexible, non-experimental, non-secular curricular status quo held firmly intact. However, 1820 became a watershed year in terms of bringing a more logical and identifiable look to the Georgetown core as six distinctive courses were established on a per annum basis. A student was required to master the rudiments (reading and writing basics) of a subject that encompassed grammar, rhetoric and the humanities before they were presented for graduation. Some years later, this basic core pattern was expanded to include English, Latin and Greek grammar, Old Testament history and geography (Power, 65). Even though it was a more prolonged and refined system than before, the student body and faculty were typically small in number so a plan of study could be followed in a relatively structured manner. A particular priest-teacher remained with a particular class of students from year one and beyond — an integral part of the Jesuit instructional method of the day. Each of the aforementioned characteristics associated with academic coordination marked the first era of Catholic higher education and such curriculum developments were readily adopted by such schools as Fordham, Villanova, Holy Cross and Notre Dame — all chartered prior to 1850.

The Core Curriculum at Catholic Colleges, 1850-1860

American Catholic education continued to endure, but the first waves of revision were occurring as English was beginning to be a curricular centerpiece along with such traditional staples as religious studies and Latin, which were so closely identified with parochial schooling during the 19th century. In part, learning English helped those from a lower socioeconomic background to greater
white-collar employment opportunities than ever before. Along with language and grammar, the core curriculum at many Catholic colleges was slowly shifting from a totally classical education to one in which more professional-oriented courses were added to institutional catalogues. This development tied into a changing dynamic whereby students still had to follow the core curriculum in full, but they had somewhat more flexibility and had “…at their choice English, French and Spanish, geography and the use of globes, practical arithmetic, mathematics in their branches, and natural philosophy” (Ward, 281). In addition, the learner fell into line with administrative goals that offered “…to the young people all the advantages of a Christian education, and at the same time of solid instruction preparatory to commerce and arts …” (Ward, 281-282). Each of these course titles became commonplace within the curricula at most Catholic schools by mid-century.

The prototypical Catholic school student of this age was typically a second-generation, or third-generation male of English, Irish, French or German immigrant parents who attended school for only a term (or a few years at most) often from middle-class circumstances. The cost, time factor and need to sustain economically were factors as to why there were few undergraduates and even fewer graduates of Catholic schools during the 1800s. The college was in essence a haven for the “academic man,” but the experience also led to some basic, practical knowledge for those who chose to attend for a short period as well. This would be the equivalent of a basic high school education today. Regardless of the duration, the core proper as it applied to the student of the 19th century followed a common scenario in regard to his or her place in the academic universe.

The curriculum of the Catholic college during its formative years did not contain what the educated community considered to be of most worth. It was a curriculum offered not to students of divinity, but to candidates preparing for that study … There was little stress on intellectual development beyond those skills which a preparatory school was compelled to offer … Every Catholic college went through a formative period of some length and during this time its curriculum was subject to experiment and change … (Power, 54).

A mix of scholarship and practicality was therefore the prime factor inherent in Catholic higher educational experience after 1850, but to varying degrees. These characteristics held true to form at other Catholic schools, including Seton Hall during the 1850s and 60s as well.

The Core Curriculum at Catholic Colleges, 1860-1900s

During the Civil War era, Catholic higher education was still going through a period of slow transition, and, in some cases, Latin and Greek became passe at least in terms of popular interest. However, the separation of high school/prep divisions from the college itself became a major development in Catholic educational circles during the late 19th century. The value inherent within this move resulted in refining the academic quality, professional needs and separate identity for higher education. The four-year program was thus adopted, and has since become a staple of the core curriculum found in all types of undergraduate institutions. This development came to be known as the “St. Louis Plan,” and originated at Jesuit-operated St. Louis University.

In 1887 the names adopted for the college classes at St. Louis were: Philosophy, Rhetoric, Poetry, and Humanities. These classes corresponded to the senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman classes of the non-Catholic colleges. Some Catholic colleges, although approving the St. Louis Plan, found it impossible to offer more than a two- or three-year college program. Whatever in length, it was clearly separated from secondary instruction … As before, it was one of marked rigidity; no electives were allowed. Although the curriculum at this time may not have been classical, Latin and Greek were not generally dropped from the requirements for a B.A. until 1919. In addition to the rigidity, there was a lock step that did not permit a student to advance more rapidly than the other members of his class. Four years came to be the length of the college course, no more and no less (Power, 84-85).

Even with a change in the overall core curriculum length, a liberal arts ideal was not abandoned at Catholic colleges altogether. This would have been both a novel and radical concept that did not undergo scrutiny until the 20th century. For example, candidates for the priesthood (which were larger in number during the 1800s) still held an esteemed place in the scheme of a parochial institution and were model devotees of a classical, religious-centered education whether it be within the framework of an open college or a seminary setting. In addition, Bachelor of Arts or Science diplomas
were typically not issued in any "practical" course of study such as stenography, bookkeeping or art, which were only considered worthy of a certificate-level acknowledgment. With "humanities" or "academic" coursework, as it was termed at the time, now belonging solely within a high school curriculum, the college work for students became more challenging as new vistas opened up for the budding professional and scholar alike.

"However great the adherence of the colleges to classical education, it was not the only diet which the colleges were called upon to offer. Some years before 1850 it had become evident that not all students had the capacity, interest, or need for a classical education. After the Civil War, when the sciences began to invade the curriculum of non-Catholic colleges, Catholic colleges instituted courses that were partly classical and partly scientific. By maneuvering the various elements of the curriculum, it was possible sometimes to have two courses—classical and scientific" (Power, 85).

Growth and tradition went together at Catholic institutions such as St. Joseph's, LaSalle, St. Bonaventure, Marquette and Boston College, all founded around mid-century along with Seton Hall. From the start, and well after each of these schools became established, such course offerings that distinguished the Catholic educational experience remained a true standard. These subject areas included among others—religion, logic, Latin and choral singing, philosophy, the art of studying, physical training, literature, mathematics, crafts, Greek, natural science, psychology, economics, the Old Testament, Christian courtesy, biology, politics (Ryan, 29-49). After this broadening of course offerings, class year designation and major course of study options became more commonplace. The last component of the college curricular structure was the development of distinctive schools such as Arts and Sciences, Letters, Natural Science, Engineering, Law, and Business among others that became a popular phenomenon after World War I. These were the basic characteristics of the Catholic college and university (a designation attained by many religious schools after World War II) that have endured in a contemporary academic setting and, at present, mark the curriculum found at Seton Hall.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1856-1869

With the founding of the Archdiocese of Newark in 1853, Seton Hall's emergence three years later not only signified the first significant center of Catholic education in Essex County, but a commitment to higher education for Catholics of New Jersey, and eventually those beyond state or national borders. Beginning with five students in September 1856, the student body grew to five times that number by October and rose steadily thereafter. Official recognition came in 1861 when Seton Hall received a charter from the New Jersey Legislature, but it retained its own unique identity as a private religious-affiliated institution, rather than that of a state-run public university. After its first decade in existence, the development of Seton Hall and its core curriculum followed in the tradition of American Catholic higher education.

The earliest school catalogue found in the University Archives from the school year 1861-62 featured a very conservative and structured atmosphere not only when it applied to academics, but also student life and social expectations, which were wholly traditional in focus and application.

The object of the institution is to impart a good education in the highest sense of the word—to train the moral, intellectual, and physical being. The health, manners, and morals of the pupils, are an object of constant attention. The system of government is mild and paternal, yet firm in enforcing the observance of established discipline. No pupil will be received from another college without unexceptionable testimonials, and none will be retained, whose manners and morals are not satisfactory. The better to carry out the design of the Institution, to maintain strict discipline with kind and gentle treatment, and to devote constant and special attention to each individual student, but a limited number is received. All are thoroughly instructed in the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and trained in its practices (Seton Hall Catalogue, 1861-62, 6).

Seton Hall College featured this particular mission statement in most of its promotional literature published during the 19th century and was followed with military-like precision. More importantly, this theme fell in line with the core curriculum of the college it represented. The original core was broken down into four different "courses," which included the classical, English, French and mathematical. Each of these disciplines was required of each student counted among the all-male student body found on campus at this time. Once it was established, the curriculum held true to form in transition from Madison to South Orange through the late 1860s.

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Within the framework of an academic year that was based on a two semester, 10-month calendar, weekly reports were prepared for each student and professor along with a monthly one for parents. In addition to required coursework, the following subjects and "electives" were also offered in the Seton Hall catalogue during its earliest years of operation. The core curriculum and required texts were loosely described as ones in which:

Logic, Metaphysics, and Ethics, are studied during the Sixth and Seventh years of the Classical Course. Candidates for the degree of A.B. must undergo a public examination in the full course of studies pursued in the College. The Spanish and German languages, Music, Drawing, and Oil Painting, are optional studies. The course of instruction in Christian Doctrine will consist in the study, in regular succession, of the Small Catechism, Butler's Catechism, Collet's Doctrinal and Scriptural Catechism, and in Lectures on the Doctrines and Evidences of the Catholic Church (Seton Hall Catalogue, 1861-62, 9).

The core was in line with the "old school" approach of the Seton Hall system, administered by a diocesan priesthood that made up more than 90 percent of the faculty roster throughout most of the 19th century. Therefore, a set of moral and spiritual values were seen as a vital factor to instill in the student body in tandem with a solid course of studies that fit into the intellectual life of the institution.

Fundamental Rules of Discipline ... No books of any kind can be held by the Students, unless by permission of the President. Students are not allowed to receive newspapers, except for their Reading-room, which is under the direction of the President ... No Student of low and vicious habits will be retained in the College. Students coming from other Colleges must bring satisfactory testimonials of character (Seton Hall Register, 1865-66, 17).

This statement taken from the book of rules and regulations is one that remained in vogue at the school during the Civil War-era and for several years thereafter.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1870-1880

During the 1870s, the study options found in the Seton Hall curriculum did not differ greatly from those offered a decade previous. Most students attending the school graced the attendance rolls for a year or so, but those who graduated (it was not until 1862 when the first student earned a diploma) had to complete the prerequisite seven-year program in full. Examinations were conducted during the last week of each term and, like today, if a student did not satisfactorily complete/pass the test, he could not advance to the next class level. The school catalogue of this period features a listing of the exact texts that each priest-professor used in the classroom. For example, the following titles were assigned to those in the senior class who were required to take advanced Latin:


The Seton Hall student of 1870 had a choice of electives, but only when it came to modern languages or some special alternative as outlined in the class description section of the school catalogue. "The regular course of study requires each student to acquire at least one modern language before graduating. The French language is preferred, except in cases where, for urgent reasons, and with the consent of the President, another is substituted. The Spanish and German Languages, Vocal and Instrumental Music, Drawing and Oil Painting, are elective studies. Students are advised not to take these studies out of course, or in years when their time is fully occupied by the studies regularly prescribed" (Seton Hall Register 1870, 24). These particular titles reflected the switch to a more practical and creative trend in curricular development.

In line with the first two decades of Seton Hall’s growth as a liberal arts institution, the school catalogue of 1875 closely mirrored that of the one issued five years earlier with only a few slight variations. For example, the Senior Class schedule of classes was outlined in the following manner:

This particular listing was enhanced with the inclusion of mental philosophy and the history of European civilization, which were brand new features of the curriculum. A course in civil polity became an option for those in the junior class, as history was for sophomores and freshmen alike. Arithmetic, writing and a class titled Science of Common Things could be undertaken by those enrolled in the First Preparatory Second Term (Seton Hall Catalogue 1875, 18-25). Additional modules were offered under the commercial course path in which bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, natural science, commercial law and the usual English studies were part of the Seton Hall academic scene at this time.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1880-1900

The course of studies in 1880 was basically the same as a decade previous with few variations on class selection and textbook requirements evident. An outline of class offerings and required texts kept to a standard format and relied on classic works of literature and printed primers to accentuate the information contained in lectures alone. Along with following the core curriculum to the letter, a student had to tow the line in terms of behavior in the study hall and dormitory room, following the same rules of discipline outlined in 1865.

Part of the student’s study habits was effected by restrictions on Independent research. These limitations were made in part to keep the young men in the school’s care academically focused and in tune with the educational mission of Seton Hall. In the 1890s, Seton Hall remained true to form in all areas of mental and procedural deportment for its entire student body. The academic expectations outlined by the school involved broadening the professional curriculum along with advanced degree options for those who qualified.

Practical methods of teaching are employed, and with such favorable results that students of the Institution have been noticeably found in the foremost ranks of those who have successfully passed examinations for admission into schools of Theology, Law or Medicine. Candidates for the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, of Science, or of Accounts, are required to follow the studies of the respective courses and to pass satisfactory examinations in them. Graduates in the Classical Course may, on application, receive the degree of Master of Arts two years after they have finished the course of studies. The rules of the College require of all students a manly bearing, and kind, courteous deportment toward one another at all times; application to study during the hours of study, and the thorough preparation and recitation of the lessons assigned. Applicants for admission must bring satisfactory testimonials of character (Seton Hall Catalogue 1893, 8).

Seton Hall not only endorsed the mental development of its students, but their moral character as well. The St. Louis Plan also made its impact felt in 1897 as Seton Hall Preparatory School was founded and separated from the college proper. Just prior to this move, the core curriculum itself changed only slightly when viewed in comparison to the 1880s version.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1900-20

After the turn-of-the-century, the Seton Hall College core curriculum became more intensive as the 1902 catalogue featured not only the core curriculum outline, but also a statement on how the student should act and grow as a person.

The aim of Seton Hall is to impart a good education in the highest sense of the word — to train the moral, intellectual and physical being. The mere imparting of knowledge is looked upon as but a small part of the work of the institution. The training of the heart and the formation of character under the guiding influence of Christian principles, the awakening of the intellectual faculties, the arousing and strengthening of laudable ambition, the acquiring of habits of logical thought, correct methods of study, self-discipline and refinement, the realization, in a word, of the highest ideals of excellence in the cultured Christian gentleman — these are the ends that Seton Hall keeps steadily in view in the arduous and sacred office of educating youth (Seton Hall Catalogue 1902, 14).
In 1906, Seton Hall College was in the midst of celebrating its 50th anniversary. At this juncture, the number of credit hours required for graduation had to total 124 through four years of full-time study. The breaking point was 75 percent, or "C+" average was needed for a passing grade by this time. The school also had a tradition of rewarding academic excellence as a system of "premiums" were bestowed upon students who attained very high grades or finished first in their particular course. Along with public recognition, routine was a constant as weekly personal status updates for all classes were read aloud to assembled students and individual reports were also sent home to parents or guardians on a monthly basis (Seton Hall Catalogue 1906, 16). Each of these incentive factors helped in part to develop the whole student, who by this time on average was spending more years in school that ever before. An increase in enrollment was also an encouraging sign even though the student register was still limited to a few hundred between each of the four class years. The modern era of Seton Hall College was at hand once the school reached the post-World War I era.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1920-1940

The University Archives does not possess any school catalogues between 1907-1925, but documentation of core curriculum requirements does resume with the 1926 academic year. The section, which outlines the overall objectives, is essentially the same as earlier editions, but this particular missive captures the essence of Catholic education between the world wars.

The aim of Seton Hall is to impart a collegiate education in the highest sense of the word – to train the moral, intellectual and physical being of the students. The mere imparting of knowledge is looked upon as but a small part of the work of the institution. The training of the heart and the formation of character under the guiding influence of Christian principles, the development of the intellectual faculties, the encouragement and guidance of laudable ambition, the acquisition of habits of logical thought, correct methods of study, self-discipline and refinement, the realization, in a word, of the highest ideals of excellence in the cultured Christian gentleman, destined for positions of leadership—these are the ends that Seton Hall keeps steadily in view in the arduous and sacred office of educating youth (Seton Hall Catalogue 1926, 12).
Along with this aim, components of the Seton Hall Core Curriculum were included in the very fabric of the institution at-large. "Curricula. Seton Hall College presents three curricula, Classical, Scientific and Pre-Medical. Courses in Education, recognized by the New Jersey State Board of Education, are also presented in the Junior and Senior Years" (Seton Hall Catalogue 1926, 24).

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum — 1926

Classical. The studies in this curriculum lead to the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Although Greek is a prerequisite for entrance to the Arts Course, nevertheless, students who have otherwise satisfactory High School credentials will be given an opportunity to remedy this deficiency. The Arts Course is especially recommended as furnishing the highest and broadest mental culture, and as providing the best training for any special scientific, professional or literary work that may be subsequently undertaken. Moreover in its presentation of the principles of scholastic philosophy as applied to present day problems, together with its course in Sociology, based upon principles for which Catholicism has always stood, it equips the student with a correct viewpoint and prepares him for the work of life.

Scientific. The Scientific curriculum leads to the degree of Bachelor of Science and is intended for those who have pursued a scientific course in an accredited High School and who are reflecting either on pursuing scientific work in later life or, not having had the advantages of a classical training, nevertheless, desire to secure that general knowledge and culture which can be derived from the study of the natural sciences, modern language and sound philosophy. The total number of credits for graduation is the same as that in the Arts Course.

Pre-Medical. The Pre-Medical Course as such is not something distinct and apart from regular collegiate work. Practically all Medical Schools today prefer to receive students who have completed their undergraduate studies and have secured their Baccalaureate. Students reflecting on medicine should pursue in their courses, definite studies in Chemistry, Biology, Physics and Modern Languages, preferably German or French. Seton Hall will endeavor accordingly to satisfy the requirements of students seeking admission to Medical Schools either by way of the regular B.S. course or through intensified scientific training in Freshman and Sophomore. (Seton Hall Catalogue, 1926, 24-26)

As was the case in 1926, the Seton Hall student in 1930 had to satisfactorily complete 130 credit hours with 18 hours in his major to receive an A.B. or B.S. degree from the school. For promotion to the next class, a general average of 72 percent in all recitation and examination marks was required. The core curriculum itself became more structured as well during the 1930s era.

Later in the decade, the educational policy endorsed by Seton Hall featured the chance for students to pursue and earn a wide-range of degrees. The most popular choices for the students included a Bachelor of Science in Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental, business administration, Certificate in Pre-Legal, physical education, education (with State Teacher’s Certificate), or a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Philosophy in a more liberal arts-centered major (Seton Hall Catalogue 1937-38, 16). Overall, the academic viewpoint of the school during the late 1930s could also be summed in the following passage:

In spite of that diversity of courses and the progressive, liberal views of her faculty, Seton Hall has consistently sought to preserve a general cultural education. It opposes the pragmatists who look upon colleges as training schools to supply industry and commerce. Seton Hall seeks first to fit a man for the universal job of living and then for specific jobs; to teach men not only how to earn a decent living, but how to live decently, not only how to live, but why we live. For this she has rounded out a complete system of developing the entire individual, intellectually, physically and morally. Her education is not a storing of memory with facts, but a training of mind in habits and principles of right thinking; it supplies not only information, but also character, developing the will as well as the intellect. To properly educate, Seton Hall seeks to maintain the closest contact between professor and student, believing that a teacher’s best work may frequently be done outside the classroom in consultation and guidance work. Systems of student guidance, faculty advisers, a student counselor and departmental conferences on individual students have been devised to provide a personalized and individualized system of education that is outstanding (Seton Hall Catalogue 1937-38, 16).
Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1940-1950

Educational opportunities offered by Seton Hall were effected by the demands of World War II on its faculty and students. In many cases the curriculum was adapted and courses were taught on an accelerated basis due to military commitments that loomed on the horizon. The full-time, matriculated student also dropped in number as the pool of young, college-age men volunteered or were drafted into the armed forces. As the school catalogue of 1942 noted:

The College and the War. During the period of the war, the College is prepared to offer a three-year program of study (to include Summer sessions) leading to the Bachelor’s degree. The offer is contingent upon an adequate number of applicants. The purpose of the plan is to enable young men of suitable age to complete their college studies prior to induction into military service. No substantial changes in degree requirements will be made in pursuance of the three-year program. The traditional four-year course of study will be maintained for the benefit of those who may be able to follow this preferable program. The College reserves the right, upon the cessation of hostilities, to discontinue the three year program and to return students to the four year course of study (Seton Hall Catalogue 1942-43, 7).

The actual core curriculum during this period was outlined in the following manner.

The College offers enough courses to satisfy the demands of students seeking a general cultural education, as well as a basic training for future work in specialized fields. The curricula are not so prescriptive as to ignore the demands of an individual's special interests. The courses are not so advanced and specialized as to produce in the undergraduate only narrow, intellectual mediocrity, neither are they made too easy by an unrestrained choice of many electives. Basic courses in English, Modern Languages, Social Studies, and Philosophy, are required in both the Arts and Scientific curricula. In addition, a student must complete a course in concentration on a major subject (Seton Hall Catalogue 1942-43, 18).

The requisite 130 semester hours were in place along with 30 credits in a major field of study were typical as biology, business administration, chemistry, classical languages, English, history, mathematics, modern languages, philosophy, physical education and social studies became optional study choices for the wartime student.

By 1946, the school core curriculum policy was designed to accommodate not only young freshman and the existing student population, but also returning veterans. This academic system was outlined in order to encourage students to make the most of their educational experience.

In the post-war era, a large number of G.I. Bill recipients (education for veterans was paid by the U.S. government) exploded onto college campuses across the country. Interestingly, Seton Hall became the most attractive institution among ex-servicemen in the entire nation as the student body experienced a record 95 percent population increase from 1945-46. This became a more pronounced era not only in student body, but also curricular diversity. All students were subjected to the following goals upon entering the program.

Seton Hall believes that education is a specific process whose purpose is to develop men trained in the art of thinking and living. Its ideals are those of a Catholic Liberal Arts College. It strives to give that synthesis of information and training whose assimilation will transform the student, give him standards of taste and judgment, and create that balance which will enable him to face the facts and problems of his own life in a modern world. Seton Hall opposes the view of the pragmatists who look upon colleges as training schools to supply industry and commerce. The College seeks first to fit men for the universal job of living and then for specific jobs; to teach men not only how to earn a decent living, but how to live decently; not only how to live, but why we live. For this it has round out a complete system of developing the entire individual intellectually, physically and morally (Seton Hall Catalogue 1942-43, 18).

Unlike the early years when Irish, English, and French names predominated the attendance register, the 1940s and '50s featured an important period in which Italian, Slavic, African-American, Hispanic, Asian and international students came to South Orange in greater numbers than ever before.
Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1950-1965

In 1950, Seton Hall officially became a university six years before the school's centennial was celebrated. The goals established in the beginning years and through the first century remained true to form in basic structure and spirit as well.

Seton Hall believes that education is a specific process, the purpose of which is to develop men trained in the art of thinking and living. As a liberal arts college, it strives to cultivate in its students the broad cultural growth that comes from familiarity with the literature, history, philosophy, and science that comprise our heritage. To this end, all curricula, both of Arts and Sciences, contain required basic courses in English, Modern Languages, Social Studies, Physical Sciences, and Philosophy. These courses provide well over half of the credits needed for graduation. Within the limits of its liberal arts character, the College permits such specialization in the fields of business, science, and education as has been demanded by the urban, industrial, and commercial nature of the community that it serves. This specialization is achieved by the completion of work in a major field of concentration, adapted to the needs and future plans of individual students preparing for careers in business, law, medicine, education, etc.” (Seton Hall Catalogue 1950, 25-26).

Around the 100-year mark, the core curriculum still featured a strong academic foundation.

Seton Hall College Core Curriculum, 1950

University Core Curriculum. Because Seton Hall recognizes the importance of the early formative years it prescribes a core of studies for all undergraduates in every school, to ensure the attainment of these general aims. The courses comprising this core are given by the College of Arts and Sciences; they are: in the Department of Religion: Apologetics ... The Life of Christ or Religion and Reason ... Christian Marriage ... God and the World ... The Incarnation and Redemption ... Moral Guidance ... The Sacraments of the Church ... in the Department of Philosophy: Epistemology ... Logic ... Metaphysics ... Moral Philosophy: Applications ... Moral Philosophy: Elements ... Rational Psychology ... in the Department of English: English Grammar and Composition ... or the Principles of Rhetoric ...

Literature of the Western World ... Traditional Western Literature ... in the Department of Social Studies: History of Europe ... or Survey of European Civilization ... in the Department of Communication Arts: Voice and Diction (Seton Hall Catalogue 1950, 32-33).

In addition to the core, the 1950s progressed forward in terms of professional development as the choice of career options, including lawyer, teacher, priest were leading into other avenues of expression such as medicine, biology and various unique occupations. Women were also enrolling at the school around this time, but they were only admitted to the nursing program and evening school in limited numbers. Non-traditional undergraduate students were part of the makeup at Seton Hall's satellite campuses found in Paterson, Newark and Jersey City, but each individual still followed a distinctive core curriculum before attaining a diploma or certificate in their respective field of study. This was where the core curriculum kept traditional studies in place, but the choice of electives helped to supplement the whole educational outlook of the Seton Hall student body.

To this basic core of studies are added the courses required by the more specific aims of the several schools, in which are offered the particular forms of training that meet the needs of those who are preparing for a professional career, as well as the community needs created by the urban, industrial, and commercial area which the University primarily serves. More specifically, Seton Hall provides for the following types of students: 1. the high school graduate who desires a sound general education; wishes a proper pre-medical, pre-dental, or pre-legal training; plans to enter the teaching profession; desires to enter the business world; desires to become a professional nurse; desires to enter a semi-professional field; 2. the aspirant to the Catholic priesthood; 3. the graduate nurse who wishes to improve her professional preparation. 4. the teacher or school administrator who desires to improve his or her professional competence; 5. the college graduate who wishes to enter the legal profession; desires advanced work in one of several areas; 6. the mature person who desires to study for cultural development or for professional improvement without matriculating for a degree (Seton Hall Catalogue 1955-56, 33).
During the 1960s, Seton Hall could be classified as a growing university with a solid undergraduate program in place, but was looking to the future in terms of building a modern institution towards the end of this decade.

Seton Hall University is a Roman Catholic institution of higher learning located in South Orange, New Jersey, within twenty miles of New York City. It is chartered by the State of New Jersey and is under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Newark. It is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The University accepts all qualified students without regard to race, color, or creed. A wide choice of undergraduate and graduate programs is offered on the campus by the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, and the School of Business Administration. In addition, the University maintains undergraduate divisions of its schools in Newark and Paterson, as well as the School of Nursing and the School of Law in Newark, and the College of Medicine and Dentistry in Jersey City. The enrollment of the University, as a whole, is at present approximately 10,000 students. Men only are admitted as resident and day students to the undergraduate programs offered on the South Orange campus. Both men and women are admitted to other divisions of the University for daytime and evening courses (Seton Hall Catalogue 1963-64, 7).

Seton Hall University Core Curriculum, 1963

University Core Curriculum. The University prescribes a core of studies for all undergraduates in every school to ensure the attainment of its general aims. The courses comprising this core are given by the College of Arts and Sciences. For students matriculating after September 1, 1961 they are listed by departments as follows: Department of Theology + Christ in the Church ... God in Revelation ... Divine Life in Man ... Christian Living. Department of Philosophy. Philosophy of Human Knowing ... Philosophy of Being ... Philosophy of Human Nature ... Moral Philosophy. Department of English. Freshman English ... The Principles of Rhetoric ... Traditional Western Literature ... Literature of the Western World. Department of History and Political Science. Survey of European Civilization ... History of European Civilization. Department of Communication Arts. Voice and Diction. (+ The non-Catholic student will substitute ... He will not be required to take the other courses in Theology listed. He must, however, make up in approved electives the six credits allocated to Th 12 and Th 13 required of the Catholic student.) To this basic core of studies are added the required courses of the several schools in which are offered the particular forms of training necessary to those who are preparing for a professional career, as well as those who are preparing for a professional career, as well as those planning to meet the community needs created by the urban, industrial, and commercial area which the University primarily serves. In further detail then, Seton Hall provides for the following groups of students: High school graduates who seek a sound general education, pre-medical, pre-dental, or pre-legal training; plan to enter the teaching profession, the business world, a semi-professional field, become a professional nurse, or enter graduate school. Aspirants to the Catholic priesthood. Graduate nurses who wish to improve their professional standing. College graduates who desire to enter the legal, medical, or dental profession, and those who seek advanced work in one of several areas. Teachers and school administrators seeking to improve their professional status. Mature persons wishing to study for cultural development, or professional improvement, without matriculating for a degree (Seton Hall Catalogue 1963-64, 8-9).

The core curriculum of the school stayed fairly close to form between 1963 and 1968, but the truly modern era of Seton Hall University's academic development came in a more pronounced manner between the late 1960s and the present day. With the advent of full co-education in 1968 and a post-Vatican II spirit of ecumenism in place, Seton Hall entered into a period of curricular experimentation. This laboratory approach was still in line with the school's Catholic mission, but it also allowed for great choice.
Conclusion

The history of Seton Hall University's core curriculum has evolved from its first stage after the model of the Ratio Studiorum, which leaned heavily on the liberal arts, entailed a seven-year class structure and featured few professional electives. This curricular development evolved to one with a number of different major choices and practical studies of a professional nature. Seton Hall has grown from five students to more than 5,000 undergraduates alone, and over the past 140 years the school has undergone a number of important changes. We have entered the modern – and even “postmodern” era, but the legacy of the past is not a distant memory. The foundation and tradition that served as a prelude to the present curriculum should be kept in mind as the curriculum is rewritten to benefit students of the 21st century and beyond.

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GENERAL EDUCATION AT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY: AN HISTORICAL REVIEW

by George P. Browne

The history of general education at Seton Hall University is one of evolution. Over the past 30 years, the idea of a “core” curriculum, which would mark a common liberal arts experience for all undergraduates, has changed dramatically. Prior to 1970, the University Core reflected the idea that a set of specific courses and content could provide the essential foundation for the educated individual. That core required all undergraduates, regardless of school or major, to complete the following courses:

**The University Core before 1970**

*"University Core," Undergraduate Bulletin, 1969-70, p. 18*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Essays &amp; the Short Story</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Novel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>The Christian Church</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Christian Conscience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TH 31-34 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TH 41-44 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Introduction to Philosophy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH 21-23 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH 31-33 Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PH 41-43 Elective</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Western Civilization I &amp; II</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To this common core of 44 credits, individual colleges added requirements, which ranged from a low of 6 liberal arts credits for B.S. programs to as high of 34 credits for B.A. programs in the College of Arts and Sciences. In between were the requirements of the schools of Business Administration (15 credits), Education (9-18 credits) and Nursing (29 credits). Among these requirements, there was one common to all programs, save Nursing: United States History I and II (6 credits). The resulting 50 credits constituted the common educational experience for virtually all Seton Hall University undergraduates.

The academic year 1970 marked the end of consensus on a common general education program at the University. While this change reflected educational and social upheavals in U.S. society, the decision of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences to dismantle the University Core also resulted from the growing belief that a prescribed set of common courses could not contain and deliver the content necessary to ensure a liberal arts education in a world where information expanded and changed at an accelerating rate. This decision effectively freed the faculties of the other colleges to pick and choose from the offerings of the College of Arts and Sciences in developing their own “general education” requirements. Consequently, the University’s Undergraduate Bulletin, 1971-72, referred all users to college-specific general education requirements [p. 21].

Over the decades that followed, the colleges have gone their own way and determined their own schedules for review and revision of general education requirements. Often these revisions have been driven by external audits, as for accreditation, or by the development of national standards in pre-professional fields. The remainder of this paper will focus on the two models of general education chosen successively by the College of Arts and Sciences, and some general considerations of the styles of general education pursued by the other colleges, including the recently added School of Diplomacy and International Relations.

By 1973, the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences developed a college “core” structured on disciplinary groupings and the concept of “ways of knowing.” College English I and II were the only courses required of all students in the College. Otherwise, any courses offered by the respective departments would fulfill the requirements. “This minimum distribution of courses reflects the College’s concern that an undergraduate education be as broad and liberal as possible, exposing the student to the wide variety of areas of human knowledge and understanding” [p. 42]. One effect of this new “core” was to give every department in the College a share in the general education requirements and a stake in maintaining that share as a foundation for attracting students, especially majors.
1970s, The Minimalist Core
College of Arts and Sciences Core, Undergraduate Bulletin, 1974-76, pp. 41-42
Area of Human Knowledge
Department | Credits required
--- | ---
Art and Music | 6
Literature and the Arts | 6
English Communication | 6
Math and Physical Sciences | 6
   Biology | 6
   Chemistry | 6
   Mathematics | 6
   Physics | 6
Social Sciences | 6
   Government Psychology | 6
   Sociology/Anthropology | 6
Non-English Language and Culture | 6
   Asian Studies | 6
   Classical Studies | 6
   Modern Languages | 6
Tradition of Ideas | 9
   History | 9
   Philosophy | 9
   Religious Studies | 9

By the end of the decade, the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences became increasingly dissatisfied with the "minimalist core" put in place in 1974. A faculty committee labored for some time to produce a general set of principles and "aims of a college education" and a preliminary structure for fulfilling those aims. The faculty of the College endorsed the principles and, after protracted negotiation and amendment, adopted the "core" structure that is still in place. This structure identified areas of competence students should achieve — written, oral, mathematical and linguistic — and provided that students who could demonstrate competence as they began their undergraduate careers might be excused from the courses through testing. Beyond competence, all students were to select from a limited menu of courses reflecting broad areas of knowledge.

The Educational Policy Committee of the College was directed to select courses that would fulfill each element of the core, to be ratified by the faculty of the College.

The 1984 Arts and Sciences Core
Undergraduate Bulletin, 1984-86, pp. 48ff and 2001-02
Undergraduate Catalogue, pp. 61-62
Area of Study | Credits Required
--- | ---
Courses fulfilling requirement
(or departments offering courses which fulfill requirement)
A. Written Competence | 6
   College English I & II, 2 courses
B. Oral Competence | 3
   Oral Communication, 1 course
C. Mathematical Competence | 3
   Statistics, Calculus, Mathematical Perspectives,
   Mathematical Models for the Social Sciences, 6 courses
D. Natural Sciences | 6
   Biology, Chemistry, Physics, 20 courses
D. Social Sciences | 6
   Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology/
   Anthropology, Social Work, 16 courses
E. Western Civilization | 6
   Art and Music, English, History, Philosophy, 8 courses
E. Foreign Language/Intermediate level | 6
   Asian Studies, Classical Studies, Modern Languages, 23 courses
E. United States/Third World Culture | 6
   African-American Studies,
   Art and Music, Asian Studies,
   Classical Studies, English, History, Modern Languages, 71 courses
F. Ethics | 3
   Philosophy and Religious Studies 3 courses
G. Philosophy and Religious Studies | 9
   African-American Studies, Asian Studies, Philosophy, Religious Studies, 15 courses

When this core went into effect in 1984, approximately 140 courses had been approved to fulfill requirements. During the years that followed, courses were added, a few were replaced, none were subtracted, and, today, the total number of courses that may be taken to fulfill one of the requirements stands at 165. While each of the requirements established in the core is justifiable as a contribution to a student's education, the plethora of options ensures an absence of commonality or coherence in the degree programs of undergraduates in the College of Arts and Sciences. There have been periodic efforts to reform or rationalize the core; they have uniformly floundered on the fears of academic departments that any change would undermine their marketability and the status of their faculty.
General education philosophies in the other colleges are usually driven by pre-professional concerns or requirements. Wherever specific goals can be identified with specific courses, the schools tend to require these courses. Elsewhere, the tendency is to identify general areas of knowledge and to accept any courses that cover those areas in fulfillment of a requirement. For example, the School of Business requires Quantitative Methods for Business to fulfill the mathematics requirement and accepts a broad variety of courses to fulfill the requirement in world culture. Similarly, the College of Nursing requires Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II to fulfill science requirements and electives in such selected departments as religious studies and history.

The curriculum of the School of Diplomacy and International Relations followed a different path. Designed to stress global issues and the development of skills compatible with linkages to the United Nations, courses were selected or fleshed out with competencies and international perspectives in the foreground. The curriculum of this school is very tightly integrated, and the nine required courses from the School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences are carefully specified.1

References

1 See 2001-02 Undergraduate Catalogue, pp. 168-169, 189, 196-197, 199-200, 205-208, 214.
THE CORE OF HONORS
by Gisela Webb

The Question of the Good Core

My hope here is to communicate my thoughts on the idea of a University Core by way of looking at developments in the University Honors Program, which I have directed for the last five years. I have long wished that the kind of approach to education available to Honors students was available to the larger student body. The discussions that took place during last summer’s Faculty Seminar on the University Core reminded me of this desire. I particularly liked the way we framed the overarching question of a good University Core not in terms of, “What do we want our students to study?” but rather, “What do we want our students to be?” I am still a true believer in the value of the humanities — the tradition of education in which the search for truth, through the variety of modalities of knowledge available to us — from the physical sciences to the social sciences to the liberal arts — is seen as the key to the life worth living.

As I describe the development and goals of the current Honors Program (particularly the “core” of the program), I believe the reader will see that while I am convinced of the value of creating a University Core that reflects these goals, it will take some very creative strategies to find ways to translate and integrate what we do in the smaller Honors Program into the larger University setting. I appreciate Provost Mel Shay’s “faculty research” approach to the core, with its affirmation of both the importance and challenge of the venture.

Having said this, I believe that looking at the changes — and their rationale — that have taken place in the curriculum and pedagogy of the Honors Program over the last 10 years could serve as a model in University Core efforts. Moreover, I believe it is the “core” of our humanities program, that is, the series of four 6-credit, interdisciplinary, intercultural, team-taught seminars on global civilization (“from the ancient world to the contemporary world”) that might provide clues as to the content and methods of a curriculum that can help the student be most present to — and equipped to address — the realities of their inner and outer worlds. This challenge is all the more critical for this generation of students who will probably look back to “9-11” as the horrific rite of passage that would inadvertently thrust them into the realization that there is no personal

Development of the Honors Program: From Western Civilization to Global Dialogue

I have been involved in the University Honors Program since my first year at Seton Hall University, 1989, when Judith Stark was director of the program. I now know the history of the program before that time. I know that it began in 1959 with the work of Father William Keller of the history department and John Harrington of the English department, who conceived the program as a rigorous interdisciplinary study of western civilization. As it evolved through the 1980s, there were two elements that remained consistent, one structural and one pedagogical: 1) a series of four 6-credit courses in the student’s freshman and sophomore years, designed to look chronologically at the development of civilization from the ancient world to the modern world (although the use of the term “civilization” has been rethought), followed by two upper-level seminars and a senior thesis; and 2) an expression of awareness of the value of interdisciplinary team teaching.

When I joined the team of Peter Ahl and John Sweeney in the Colloquium on the Middle Ages and Renaissance, I had been asked to infuse something of the world’s religious traditions, particularly the intellectual and political encounter of Islam and Christianity in the Middle Ages. Peter and John, of course, brought the wealth of religious, philosophical, artistic and literary traditions of Christianity. What became clear to me during those long weekly planning sessions — where Peter, Jack, and I sought ways to coordinate our particular skills, disciplines and ideas of the appropriate content for the course — was that we were in the midst of remodelling what a humanities studies program ought to look like in an American and Catholic university of the 21st century. We were facing the wonderful challenge of addressing the academic and personal developmental needs of an increasingly culturally and religiously diverse student body, while harnessing the strengths and intellectual legacies of those cultures represented by our student body. I do not know whether it was Judith Stark’s intuition of which teachers would be compatible in working together, or whether it was sheer luck, but I have
always felt fortunate to be compatible with my teammates, both in terms of disciplines and temperament. We expanded the colloquia — the core of the Honors Program — to include studies in the literature, history, philosophy, religion and art, not only of "western civilization," but also those of non-western and non-Christian cultures, such as those found in Africa, Latin America, China, India and the Islamic world. We have regular colloquia teachers (two or three per colloquium) and a wonderful list of faculty guest lecturers and seminar teachers who give our program the breadth of disciplines needed to fulfill our multicultural, interdisciplinary goals.

Marks of the Honors Program

I cannot speak for every faculty member in the Honors Program, but in my experience as teacher and director of the program, there are particular "marks" of the program that have contributed to its value and success. These are also, for me, the marks of a good teaching-and-learning regimen for today's student in today's Catholic university in today's multicultural America in today's global society. In summary, it is, in fact, the unique combination of philosophical and pedagogical goals of the program, formulated in consideration of what has been constant and what has been changing in the academy and in our student body, that have made the program. (I should also add that my own philosophy of teaching "systems of meaning" is very much influenced by the academic/epistemological/ethical goals of my religion studies program at Temple University, where studying religion — and other loci of meaning — meant an intentional encounter with what is deepest and most profound to oneself and one's culture as well as what is deepest and most profound to "the other." The process also necessarily involved taking a critical look at the distortion, violence and alienation — the "shadow side" — of religious — indeed, human — history.)

- We recognize the reality and value of the fluctuating canon. We cast a wide net as we decide on the "great texts" of civilizations we will study. We look to texts that have been important to traditions and cultures, but we necessarily limit the choices of texts to ones that lend themselves to evocative thematic and historical comparison. This strategy preserves what is unique to cultures and peoples, and it illuminates elements — historical, psychological, social, and religious forms, patterns, and tendencies — that are shared by individuals and cultures globally. I cannot help but feel that our students were better prepared to think maturely through the recent global events by having been exposed to intellectual/religous commonalities among the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) as well as to elements of inter-religious and intra-religious demonization of "the other" and violence among and within these religions.

- We value the diversity of perspectives and historical legacies that our students bring to our University and to the Honors Program. In line with cognitive and moral developmental theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, Fowler, Erikson and others, I believe that cognitive and ethical growth occurs in a learning environment in which the encounter of "self" with "other" occurs in a safe and trustworthy environment. There is also a kind of corrective to mere theories and superficially "received" histories of peoples and cultures when we speak in the presence of representatives from the cultures we study. It is one thing to speak of Muslims or Hindus as "them"; it is another thing to speak with Muslims or Hindus in the context of "one of us" (learners). We, students and teachers, become more conscious of the ways in which we speak and how the discourse itself reveals to us much about our views of history, peoples, power and community.

- We see this ethical mandate to instill understanding and to cultivate a dialogical relationship with others as part of the ethical and intellectual tradition of the Church itself, particularly in light of the ecumenical mandate of John XXIII.

- We have found team teaching to be valuable modeling for students and an entry into new and challenging intellectual discourse for faculty. Students see teachers — as they discuss and disagree with each other — as inviting them to participate in and learn the art of rational, critical, yet respectful academic discourse. Moreover, the students see their teachers as intentionally bringing differing perspectives and methodologies with which to study human cultures and civilizations. We hope to instill a sense of what is most characteristic of academic discourse in this post-modern, post-colonial, "globalized"
world, namely being conscious of one's own positionality (our underlying assumptions/prejudices based on such dynamics as history, culture, gender and class) when approaching a text or task. A critical degree of self-understanding is a skill that students will need whether in graduate programs, in the globalized business world, or in social service/social justice work and art. Certainly, any skills that lead to self-awareness and self-scrutiny are to be valued.

- While we affirm the value and necessity of bringing students to see the (relativizing) historical, social and political contexts in which notions of canon, truth and meaning develop, we do not abandon students in that sensitive moment when they express despair or cynicism toward human institutions over the often disillusioning historical realities that underlie their development. We try, in fact, to choose readings that expose students to the universality of the quest for truth and the sacred, as well as to literary, philosophical and religious texts that criticize social injustice. We hope that students will learn that they may, and indeed ought to, criticize instances of ignorance and injustice as well as recognize those instances of truth, justice, beauty and regeneration that exist in our cultures.

Is This Consistent with Catholic Mission?

One theme that necessarily emerged in our faculty seminar on the core was the relationship between core and Catholicity. Given the reality that the history of the Church itself consists of both triumphalist/exclusivist and justice-oriented/inclusivist expressions, we must ask ourselves the question, what expression do we wish to embrace and cultivate at this moment in history where the legacy of more recent forms of domination and alienation — colonialism, nationalism, consumerism — are playing themselves out globally? One approach to this question would be to look at recent moves from within the Church itself — toward the prophetic spirit of self-criticism and repentance: toward interreligious dialogue and reconciliation; toward the insistence of global, social, economic and environmental justice; toward inclusion of the marginalized "other": toward affirming that all modes of knowledge, despite their inherent limitations, are reflections/refractions of some well-spring of knowledge that transcends us all. If we go back to the question of what do we want our students to become through a core, and what sort of core could facilitate that experience, it seems that the Honors Program philosophy offers some possibilities for consideration. It affirms Catholicity in its broad, deep sense. It strives to bring students into the historical stream of intellectual, theological, philosophical and artistic conversations, knowing that the conversations that have taken place externally will become their own internal conversations, their own sense of interiority — their own search for deeper and more mature faith and a vocation that will express it.
THE CORE CURRICULUM: CONTINUITY-IN-CHANGE

by Albert B. Hakim

In the view that any ongoing enterprise has to evaluate itself regularly as to its goals and the means required to achieve them, the university must ponder its role in the handling of knowledge in the past and how it will do so in the future, if it is bent on discerning its continuous identity in the context of change. Continuity-in-change is central to the life of the university as it searches out ways to gather, develop and impart new knowledge. The university must welcome changes that befit its mission.

Today's university, despite its complex structure and grand marketplace of course offerings, is still an inheritor of the simpler medieval university, but there is a distinction found among universities today impossible to find in medieval times: the distinction between secular and religious. The medieval university had a religious texture because it naturally emerged from a Christian society, while in the West today there is no similar society from which such a university could emerge, indeed the secular society spawns a secular university. As a consequence of the devolution of the religious orientation of the early colleges in our country into the secular, pressure is always on those colleges and universities today that, having been founded on the imperatives of religion, want to continue in the same spirit. And so it is with Catholic colleges and universities.

It would be historically inaccurate to suggest that Catholic higher education has been disinterested in its own identity across the years, but it is accurate to say that a ferment over identity has been felt in Catholic higher education in the past 25 years as never before. Seton Hall is an example. In its early years, it settled into an academic style and statement of mission that appeared to be imperturbable, with occasional changes made without needing to take a deep breath. In the earliest catalog from 1856, we read that the seven priests and nine laymen had as their objective:

to impart good education in the highest sense of the word . . . to train the moral, intellectual and physical being . . . . All are thoroughly instructed in the doctrines of the Catholic Church and trained in its practices.

In 1870, this ominous note was added: "No books other than textbooks required by professors are permitted unless by permission of the President."

For almost 40 years, the statement of aims was the same, but, in 1899, we read an expanded version:

The aim of Seton Hall is to impart good education in the highest sense of the word to train the moral, intellectual and physical being . . . The mere imparting of knowledge is looked upon as but a small part of the work of the institution. The training of the heart and the formation of character under the guiding influence of Christian Principles, the awakening of the intellectual faculties, the arousing and strengthening of laudable ambition, the acquiring of habits of logical thought, correct methods of study, self discipline and refinement, the realization of the highest ideals of a cultured gentleman . . . these are the ends Seton Hall keeps steadily in view.

And as a statement of religious aims, we find the prevailing apologetic tone.

Religious instruction is thorough and is continued throughout the entire course: it aims at making the faith of the students an intelligent faith, enabling them to withstand and repel the manifold attacks that their religious belief will probably encounter after their college days are ended.

The catalog of 1937 exhibits an interesting demurral on the "liberalism" of the faculty:

In spite of the diversity of courses and the progressive liberal views of her faculty Seton Hall has consistently sought to preserve a general cultural education. It opposes the pragmatists who look upon college as a training school to supply industry and commerce. Seton Hall seeks first to fit a man for the universal job of living and then for specific jobs.
The requirements in philosophy and religion weighed heavily in the students' program, continuing in the 1930s and 1940s with 26 semester hours in philosophy for the B.A. and 18 for other degrees, along with eight semester hours in religion for which two class hours were required for one semester hour to acquaint the student with the art of thinking and "the nature and destiny of his spiritual soul."

The catalog for 1946 shows a curious drop to 20 credits in the philosophy requirement, out of 94 distributed credits overall, for the B.A. but an increase to 20 credits for the B.S., out of 80 distributed credits overall. Religion requirements remain at eight. But in 1951, employing the term "core curriculum," now becoming regularly used, 45 credits are required for all undergraduates, with 12 each in philosophy and religion. In 1960, the core still requires 12 credits in each of these two disciplines, philosophy and religion, now called theology.

Without trying to detail the fortunes of philosophy and religion, it is sufficient to point out that the requirements in these areas, in the effort to accommodate the expanding demand for credits from other areas, have become fewer and fewer until they reach the bare bones minimum today. A statement, with more than a bit of pique, occurs in the catalog for 1976 under the bold caption of "A Changing Philosophy":

Reflecting the profound changes in American society, in education and in Roman Catholicism during the past 10 years, Seton Hall, while remaining a Roman Catholic educational institution, has moved away from the traditional isolationism and paternalism that marked institutions of its type for so many decades.

In the recent past, however, many efforts have been made, both official and grass roots, to hone a sharper definition of Catholic identity. Witness the work of several task forces since 1978 that produced the impressive Seton Hall A Catholic University, or the formulation of Seton Hall's current mission statements, or the academic retreat eight years ago on the question of "What is a Catholic university?", not as though it were being asked for the first time but as a testimony to the ongoing need of revisiting self-identity. A far earlier testimony to this need can be seen in the Dean's Committee on Educational Goals of 1965, prelaced by remarks from the dean of arts and sciences, including "You see how large this question is. It may finally eventuate that the committee will say, let's throw out everything we know about our traditional college and let's somehow, Cartesianwise, start over."

Let's be wild in our thinking. If we said this is a curriculum committee, it would presuppose that all of us knew precisely what we wanted to do. We don't. That's why we are meeting.

An essential part of this ongoing re-examination is the matter of the core curriculum. The core curriculum can never be thought of as shouldering the burden of Catholic identity, as the brief history above shows sometimes happens, especially in the emphasis placed upon courses in philosophy and religion. The main factors, however, of Catholic identity are the unspoken corollaries of a religious-inspired university: committed faculty, understanding administrators, meaningful ministry, wholesome student life and a friendliness that makes for a large human spirit within the academy. That said, the core curriculum remains an indispensable feature of self-identification and a never-failing candidate for further scrutiny. No one has to ask "why now?" because any time is the right time. nor "by whom?" because any person or group is the right one.

The first question to be asked about the core curriculum is, "What is it supposed to be?", or "What is it supposed to do?" If we take it for granted that there are particular matters and general matters for consideration in university education, then the core curriculum would address the general: That is, those areas of knowledge that are basic for a young person's education toward leading a meaningful life in today's world. The principles at work can be laid out any number of ways, but one such way, framed for discussion at the seminar, follows:

Enriching the Mind, the Heart and the Spirit for a Meaningful Life in Today's World

Based on Seton Hall University's faith tradition, the core curriculum embraces principles that would help students become:

Reflective in Mind

Attuned to ideas that shape cultures, informed by awareness of the historical stream of discourse on what it means to be a human being

Disciplined in search for knowledge

Engaged in reading, writing, observing, listening, speaking, meditating, praying, designing, composing, singing, acting, dancing and all other undertakings that enlarge one's humanity

Open in Heart

Inspired by a vision of service on the part of the shapers of humanity in the course of history
Engaged with goal-directed action, informed by understanding of economic, political and technological ideas
Confident in modes of communication and creative despite the odds
Loyal to principles in the face of betrayal and courageous in defense of the good, anchored by faith in God's Grace

Generous in Spirit
Open to the critical examination of culture and ideas, informed by self-understanding
Engaged in dialogue bridging cultural divides, moved by compassion and love for others
Dedicated to sustainable use of natural resources out of respect for life

Toward a Suggested Core Curriculum for All Undergraduates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>Colloquium on Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colloquium on Philosophy</td>
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<td>Colloquium on Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics in Art and Music</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Quotidian Economics and Finance</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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The Ideals of the Core
THE CORE CURRICULUM — A MOTHER’S PERSPECTIVE

by Marta Mestrovic Deyrup

As a parent of a high school junior, I have begun to think about what kind of an undergraduate education I would like my daughter to have. I am using education here in its broadest and most liberal sense to encompass those attributes we have always ascribed to the educated American citizen — an understanding of the modern world in all its forms and the ability to use that knowledge to participate actively in a democracy. At the high school level, the core curriculum primarily consists of distribution requirements that often include a public service or work component. Education thus involves both subject mastery and some kind of engagement with the broader world. It is essentially prescriptive, its goal being to provide a core understanding of history, sciences, languages and so forth. But an undergraduate experience is quite different than that of a secondary school, and, as my daughter and I look at college catalogs, I think about what this next step in the educational process should or could be.

I went to a university that had no core curriculum and almost no distribution requirements. This was in the late 1970s, a time when the educational system was redefining the notion of what it meant to be that “educated American citizen.” While many of my courses were quite rigorous, there was no sense of social or intellectual cohesion to my college experience, to a large degree because the institution did not know what kind of an education it wanted to provide. This total lack of structure, which represents one extreme of the educational pendulum, is not something that I would wish for my daughter, and I have told her so. The other end of the pendulum, of course, is an education that is so restrictive that it allows no opportunity for curiosity, experimentation — and failure. I will encourage my daughter to take undergraduate coursework that not only has a cohesive structure, but that also provides a stepping stone to a career — for example, courses in education, government and business. This is particularly important, I think, for women of my generation, who struggled to define what it meant to have a family and meaningful work, though it may not be so for women of her generation. But I also would wish for my daughter some of the positive, intangible things I received from my undergraduate education — a love of learning for its own sake and the ability to take intellectual risks. I will tell her that the most satisfying reward of a liberal undergraduate education is not financial, it is the ability to learn. This can take many forms throughout life. It can be the practical mastery of a set of job skills, but it can also be the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake — reading in philosophy or history or literature for no other reward than intellectual engagement. There is, for example, the poignant, even defiant story of I.F. Stone, a radical American journalist, who in his 90s decided to learn Greek in order to understand more fully the writings of Socrates. Although this led to a best-selling critical work, what was most affecting was I.F. Stone’s desire to know. If my daughter receives from her undergraduate experience some of this sense of passion, adventure and excitement about learning, I will deem her education a success.

In thinking about a new core curriculum for Seton Hall, I would like to posit that there should be a difference between a core curriculum and a “capstone” experience at Seton Hall. While I believe that there will be extensive discussion of the former, I also feel there will be very little disagreement about the latter.

In its efforts to produce a new core curriculum for undergraduates, the faculty’s first challenge is to establish the criteria for deciding what can be core and what cannot be core. With those criteria accepted, distinguishing the core from the non-core should be, one hopes, relatively easy. But, of course, getting agreement on the core criteria will be difficult. Some things in the whole realm of human knowledge cannot be in the core; in fact, most things in the whole realm of human knowledge cannot be in the core — for the obvious reason that there would be no time to teach them all. Some things in the core might be special to Seton Hall as an institution. Other things in the core certainly must be common to the whole universe of American higher educational institutions, to which Seton Hall belongs. Why is this certain? It is because Seton Hall competes with all the other institutions for students and faculty. Establishing a core that is completely at variance with this universe of institutions would in the end damage the University, because few or no students would want to come to Seton Hall in that case. Furthermore, since a major point of difference between Seton Hall and most other American higher educational institutions is its Catholicism, there must be parts of the core that are moral or religious and are special to Seton Hall.
Probably, the best approach for Seton Hall, as an institution that wants to attract a wide range of students, would be to adopt a core curriculum that recognizes that there is some irreducible number of skills that are necessary if one is to call oneself an educated person, and that a student needs to have acquired knowledge of an irreducible core of subjects to have successfully completed an undergraduate education. As the faculty begins to address this, one would hope that it considers these broad guidelines:

1. Students should acquire a basic understanding of our culture, as it appears today, i.e., as a technologically adept capitalistic democracy.

2. They should have a knowledge that what it is now is the result of a historical process that continued for some three millennia.

3. In order to grasp what the culture is, they will have to acquire an appreciation of modern technology and social structures, as well as the millennia-long process that led to their existence today, and an acquaintance with some of the artifacts it generated over those thousands of years.

This core curriculum will have to include the tools for dealing with this culture: the ability to communicate, the ability to reason and the ability to compute. How this is to be implemented is primarily the responsibility of the teaching faculty, at both the interdepartmental and the intradepartmental levels.

As I stated earlier, there is a second part of the core curriculum discussion that will. I believe, be less contentious among the faculty. This is the development of what is sometimes called a "capstone" or "signature" university experience. This experience could come from what makes Seton Hall unique—its position as a Roman Catholic educational institution. This capstone experience could emphasize intellectual engagement, service, a sense of community, and a sense of moral and ethical conviction. It could be provided through a series of lectures, seminars and community activities that the students could follow throughout their academic career.

I would like my own daughter, whatever institution she attends, to come out of her college experience with a connection to that institution, a sense of service to the larger community, rather than entitlement, and a conviction of her own ethical or moral positions. These are attributes that could well be handled by a college capstone experience, which I would support and, I believe, most parents would support without hesitation.
WHY INFORMATION LITERACY IN A CORE CURRICULUM?

by Beth Bloom

Knowledge is happiness, because to have knowledge — broad, deep knowledge — is to know true ends from false, and lofty things from low. To know the thoughts and deeds that have marked man’s progress is to feel the great heart-throbs of humanity through the centuries; and if one does not feel in these pulsations a heavenward striving, one must indeed be deaf to the harmonies of life.

— Helen Keller

The Library as Metaphor for the World of Learning.

As I attended the sessions last spring, I kept thinking about the possibility of really infusing knowledge into students’ academic experience. What makes them commit to the learning process, rather than simply do what the professor wants, in order to get a good grade and get out of school into the “real” world? What is it that sparks the desire to “know” and to find out more?

What are some of the obstacles that prevent this process? I wonder if it isn’t actually a fear students have that someone will actually discover their weaknesses — that they don’t know as much as they should. In my experience as librarian, I have found that often students expect themselves somehow to know what they don’t know. Countless times, students come to me at the reference desk saying to me “I know this is a stupid question, but...” Some even exhibit shame that they don’t know their way around the library and intimate to me that their friends are also intimidated by the size of this library. It would seem that the lack of control they feel in this atmosphere is often overwhelming. I have actually heard students rejoice that they got through most of their college career without having to go to the library!

And yet, many of these same students will approach the internet with abandon, labeling themselves as “expert searchers;” when, in fact, the Internet has disparate kinds of information, often of questionable origin, and with finding aids that are at best primitive. Actually, it is as if they are willing to walk into a building filled with writings, books, opinion pieces, magazines, newspapers, in many formats, all thrown together, pick up the first few that catch their eye on a topic, and feel satisfied that they have met their needs.

But, here they are in control, because they feel they need not rely on an intermediary in the form of a librarian or system with which they are unfamiliar in order to help them find the information they need. Instead of going to a place to get information, the Internet promises a world of information to them, and whatever choices they make, it would seem, are good enough. They do not have to understand how the information out there is structured or its provenance. There is no need to understand libraries; how others have gathered, evaluated, organized, stored and made accessible information such that it be turned into knowledge. Information that has been overlooked, ignored or lost in the research process is not a priority.

What about the library is so intimidating to so many? According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the definition of a library may range from “a place set apart to contain books for reading, study or reference; ... a public institution or establishment, charged with the care of a collection of books, and the duty of rendering the books accessible to those who require to use them” to “a great mass of learning or knowledge; the objects of a person’s study, the sources on which he depends for instruction.” Is it the vastness of this “place set apart” or is it the “great mass of learning or knowledge” that is intimidating? Or is it the fact of accessibility itself and the confusion that imparts? Could it be that students ask themselves the self-deprecating “Why don’t I know this?” rather than the comforting “How can I know what I don’t know?”

A library, in many ways is a metaphor for knowledge. Its organization and finding aids are strong indicators of such. When a library book is catalogued, many factors are taken into account. The cataloguer has to determine the major subject area, in order to determine exactly where in the library a book should reside. But few books can be classified in simple terms. Books are often products of a lifetime of research and/or thinking, and thus contain information representing many disciplines of thought. Thus, cataloguing a book such that it can be represented in a library catalog accurately and made as accessible as possible is an extraordinarily complex cognitive process. A cataloguer has to apply a specific set of rules to his/her own understanding of the scope of a book in order to create a catalog record. Shades of meanings have to be taken into account, and then specific rules must be applied and translated into the catalog record. Thus, the very placement of a book in a collection involves an understanding of and contribution to the
development of knowledge structures. As each item in
the collection in itself can represent a lifetime of learning
and knowledge, each in turn also becomes a contributor
to a larger universe of knowledge.

Information Literacy in the Core Curriculum

In our discussions last spring, we spent much time
and effort attempting to describe the ideal Seton Hall
alumni/a. Many of us agreed that the model Seton Hall
curriculum would produce a student who would learn to
be “reflective in mind, open in heart, and generous in
spirit.” It was further suggested that those who are
“reflective in mind” must be “disciplined in the search
of knowledge;” those who are “open in heart” must be
“inspired by a vision of service on the part of the shapers
of humanity in the course of history” and “informed by
understanding of economic, political and technological
ideas;” and those who are “generous in spirit” must be
“open to the critical examination of culture and ideas,
informed by self understanding.” Knowledge and the pursuit
thereof lie at the heart of all three major qualities.
Libraries, as centers of information and disseminators of
knowledge, must therefore play an integral role in the
ideal curriculum.

But the presence of the library as the storehouse of
knowledge is not sufficient to support a successful core
curriculum. Information literacy skills are just as
important in the quest and attaining of knowledge. They
“form the basis for life-long learning … enable users to
master content and extend their investigations, become
more self-directed, … assume greater control over their
learning … and develop a metacognitive approach to
learning, making them conscious of the explicit actions
required for gathering, analyzing, and using information.”
Such skills are:

- “[determining] the extent of information needed;”
- “[accessing] needed information effectively and
efficiently;”
- “[being able to evaluate] information and its
sources critically and Incorporating selected
information into [the student’s] knowledge base
and value system.”
- “[using] information effectively to accomplish a
specific purpose” and
- “[understanding] many of the economic, legal
and social issues surrounding the use of
information and accessing and using the
information ethically and legally.”

For many incoming students, the only library
orientation is a brief walk-through, of sorts, of the library’s
second floor. Sometimes brief tours that indicate where
the books or journals or microforms are may be given.
There is no other formal library instruction — no real
dialogue on the information contained in these formats,
which students often view as just a collection of abstract
objects, either stored on shelves or transformed into some
other format. Many teaching faculty encourage students
to ask the librarians if they have any problems locating
their materials, but librarians can only give novices triage,
and do not have time to explain the complexities of
information structures to students on a one-to-one basis.
The only further library orientation is their professor’s
request that they go to the library and find a book or article
on a given topic.

Subsequently, students come to the library with the
expectation that this initial research task is simple and
will be completed in just a few minutes. They either ask
for a “book” on their exact topic or place a keyword in the
catalog, fully expecting existing retrieval systems to
understand their keyword in the specific context that they
are researching. They have only a rudimentary
understanding of how metadata or finding aids operate.
In their initial search for magazine or journal articles,
novice students indicate the perception that there are
distinct “sections” of topics in the library. They might ask,
for instance, “Where are the journals on English as a
second language?” As students work on their
assignments, they find out that they can search in an index
to find periodical articles on specific topics, but soon
discover that it is very difficult to articulate their search
query. They still have problems establishing exactly where
information on a topic might reside. As often as not, when
their searching leads to no or insubstantial results, they
leave in frustration.

What the students don’t understand is that they are
perceiving library holdings only in the context of what
they know or need. Here is a perception of library as
extension of self (or self needs). Indeed, a library that
supports a curriculum must serve the needs of the
students. However, the understanding of the library as
a place of knowledge — as a combination of universal
human thinking and synthesis of self — is not reflected
in this behavior pattern. When students begin their
college experience by thinking that there is one place in
the library for books on any one topic, they do not know
that seeking out books on a topic in one location of the
library may restrict them to only that point of reference,
and that bits and pieces of the knowledge they are seeking
reside in many parts of the library.

The library is a place that can be a projection/reflection of the mind of anyone who enters. To many, it can range from just a bunch of inanimate items: books, magazines, newspapers, indexes to a compilation of the facts contained therein. At its best, however, it can effect a “dynamism of wonder” as both influenced by and resulting in a love of learning; i.e., the cyclical process of situation — experience — exploring/understanding — verification — evaluation, and decision making; i.e., synthesis — the forming of knowledge out of the exposure to information. In achieving this, the student realizes that she/he must transform this information into a part of his or her own essence — or the process of synthesis — and then the knowledge, thus attained, becomes a part of themselves.

In order for students to make the leap away from self to the universal “knowledge” back to self understanding, they must further their university experience. And that experience should stress information literacy. Information literacy instruction forces the student to define his or her information need or question. Librarians are uniquely trained to understand how information is structured and stored, and how to locate it. Where better than the library should students learn some of these skills and how to use them to improve the accuracy and quality of their own research? Information literacy will help students develop the understanding that information — hence, knowledge — cannot be held to one area or place in a library — that most knowledge involves interdisciplinary thinking. Understanding this is no mean feat. It represents a willingness to think beyond the treasured “book on their topic” and dare to look further to see information handled by a different knowledge expert.

I believe that understanding the complexity of thought as symbolized by the organization of a library leads to an intellectual self-awareness and an understanding of one’s own learning process. Learning how to learn takes courage, as does confronting learning itself. One must understand that knowledge is a process of synthesis, and that those who have synthesized knowledge for themselves, and thus have added to the canon of works that a library holds, will contribute to the new knowledge that students must discover for themselves.

References

1 Keller, Helen, The Story of My Life, (1903), Pt. 1, Ch. 20.
"Taking my own pulse, and watching the students struggle, fail and succeed, I came to a conclusion that surprised me: The core-curriculum courses jar so many student habits, violate so many contemporary pieties, and challenge so many forms of laziness that so far from serving a reactionary function, they are actually the most radical courses in the undergraduate curriculum."

David Denby

One summer day as I was walking across our campus, a student caught up with me in front of Presidents Hall. He had been in one of my classes the previous semester and, as we walked along he said to me: “You know, I just finished Crime and Punishment — I loved it.” I had spoken about Dostoyevsky’s classic work the previous semester and given out some excerpts, but certainly not many students followed up and actually read that great work. This student did. It would be hard to express the joy I felt as we walked along talking about that book.

On the other hand, there are the many students who find no joy at all in reading. At the beginning of each semester, I hand out a sheet asking the students for basic information about themselves, and I always ask about their “Favorite Books.” Through the years I have gotten the old standards, To Kill a Mockingbird, Of Mice and Men, Catcher in the Rye, etc. Occasionally I’ll even get “the works of Hemingway” or some work of Shakespeare or Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina. Committed Christians sometimes put down the works of C.S. Lewis or J.R.R. Tolkien. African-American students, and occasionally others, will include The Autobiography of Malcolm X or The Color Purple. Mostly I’ll get the novels of John Grisham or Danielle Steele or “writings about serial killers.” But, in general, I must admit that through the years I have been saddened at the numbers of students who leave the question blank or write “NA” or even “I don’t like to read.”

And so I have been led to the conviction that we face a serious problem here — a basic educational problem and, on a deeper level, a human problem. It is a problem of basic literacy that translates into the lack of a deeper understanding of human life and a broader vision of the world.

Initially, it is a question of missing out on a good thing. Not having the profound experience of seeing the world through the eyes of another. Not “understanding” what learning can be. Not having the “joy” of reading, a joy that engenders “the love of learning” as in the title of Jean Leclercq’s work, The Love of Learning and the Desire for God. But fundamentally this lack constitutes, I believe, a serious cultural problem. In this article, I would like to focus on reading as the key to a general education and the core curriculum. The first part, "Reading Well — the Skill," will outline Bernard Lonergan’s understanding of a general education as the development of what Jean Piaget called “the assimilative power.” The second part, “Reading Well — the Great Books,” will endorse David Denby’s pitch — in spite of critiques of “the canon” — for including in the central content of the core curriculum the classics of human culture.

“Reading Well — the Skill”

In lectures on the philosophy of education given in 1958 at the University of Cincinnati, Bernard Lonergan linked his own views on a general education to those of the developmental psychologist, Jean Piaget. According to Piaget, human development is the complex process of moving from initial global operations of low efficiency, through differentiation and specialization, to the integration of specialized operations. The infant gradually moves from fumbling around to being able to hold onto things with her hands and to place them in her mouth. The child moves from being able to stumble across the room by combining the innumerable skills involved in walking, to being able to group those skills with another group involved in “turning around” and going back to where she started.

According to Piaget, this process of development, occurring through adaptation to the changing environment, involves two parts: the “assimilation” of new experiences to already existing operations; and the “accommodation” or modification of existing operations to deal with new situations. Assimilation opens one up to new experiences; accommodation refines one’s abilities to deal with these new experiences.

Piaget’s detailed analysis of groups of linked operations and “the grouping of groups” enabled him to differentiate the types of learning characteristic of children at various levels of development. In a first “sensorimotor” stage — from birth to about 2 years --- intelligence develops through sensory experiences and movement. In the “pre-operational stage” — 2 to 6 years —
intelligence includes the use of symbols such as pictures and words to represent ideas and objects. Lonergan describes this stage:

Next there is the insertion of language and symbols into these operations. Here there are operations of a different kind, operations with words, moving toward a group of operations with words. Children from two to six cannot carry on a conversation. If two children of this age are together, they will both be talking, but they are not talking to one another. Nor can they give an explanation or tell a story. They have not mastered talking as a group of operations. Piaget is satisfied that, with concrete operations, the grouping will brusquely emerge by the time the child is seven or eight years of age ....

In the third stage, the "concrete operational" stage — ages 7 to 12 — a person can do formal or "abstract" mental operations but only against the background of concrete objects, events or situations. He or she needs to have apples and oranges at hand. At this stage, concrete experiences or representational images are needed in order to learn.

Finally, in the fourth stage, the "formal operational" stage — emerging around the age of 11 or 12 — the person can begin to think abstractly without actually manipulating concrete objects. When more adept, the person can test hypotheses. The formal operational thinker can generalize from one kind of real object to another and is able to think ahead to plan solution paths. At this point, the person is also capable of "meta-cognition," that is, thinking about thinking.

This distinction between immediate and mediate operations has quite a broad relevance. It sets off the world of immediacy of the infant against the vastly larger world mediated by meaning. Further, it provides a basis for a distinction between lower and higher cultures. The lower regards a world mediated by meaning but it lacks controls over meaning and so easily indulges in magic and myth. The higher culture develops reflexive techniques that operate on the mediate operations themselves in an effort to safeguard meaning. So alphabets replace vocal with visual signs; dictionaries fix the meanings of words; grammars control their inflections and combinations; logics promote the clarity, coherence, and rigor of discourse; hermeneutics studies the varying relationships between meaning and meant; and philosophies explore the more basic differences between worlds mediated by meaning.

The point of Piaget's analysis is that a person who has reached the level of a formal operational thinker is able to "concentrate" on an intricate problem in such a way as to arrive at an answer. She is able to enter into what Lonergan calls "the intellectual pattern of experience" in such a way as to allow the complexities of the situation into her consciousness. She is able to focus on an issue for a significant amount of time without falling asleep.

This corresponds with what Simone Weil called "attention" in her famous essay on "The Use of School Studies In Relation to the Love of God." In that article, Weil emphasized the importance of growing into this habit of "attention."

Although people seem to be unaware of it today, the development of the faculty of attention forms the real object and almost the sole interest of studies. Most school tasks have a certain intrinsic interest as well, but such an interest is secondary. All tasks which really call upon the power of attention are interesting for the same reason and to an almost equal degree.

Twenty minutes of concentrated, untired attention is infinitely better than three hours of the kind of frowning application that leads us to say with a sense of duty done: "I have worked well!" But, in spite of all appearances, it is also far more difficult.

But not everyone succeeds in attaining this development. Although Piaget thought that the concrete operational stage ended at age 11 or 12, commentators have noted evidence that many adults remain in this stage throughout their lives.

There is now considerable evidence that these ages are the earliest that this stage ends and that many adults remain in this stage throughout their lives. Most current estimates are that from 30 to 60 percent of adults are in the concrete operational stage (Pintrich, 1990). Thus, many college freshmen are concrete operational thinkers; however, the number in engineering is small and is probably less than 10 percent (Pavelich, 1984). Concrete operational thinkers have difficulty in an engineering curriculum.
Piaget's analysis, therefore, proceeds from the analysis of groups of sensorimotor operations to the child's ability to use imagination, words and language as a medium for dealing with reality that is not only physically present but also absent—in space and in time. Gradually the person's actions are "mediated" by the meaning of words and language.

As the child learns to speak, he moves out of the world of his immediate surroundings towards the far larger world revealed through the memories of other men, through the common sense of community, through the pages of literature, through the labors of scholars, through the investigations of scientists, through the experience of saints, through the meditations of philosophers and theologians.

It is here that Piaget's Investigations meet Lonergan's interest in analyzing our ability to understand—not only in a rudimentary way, but also in a quite developed way. Such sophisticated understanding and reasoning moves beyond appearances and beyond "what things feel like." Even though it seems and feels strange, gradually one can come to the conviction—one can accept as true—the fact that the earth is indeed round and people on the antipodes are not walking "upside down" or "falling off." One begins to judge, to judge truly, and to attain reality, not on the basis of one's spontaneous feelings, but on the basis of the evidence for a true judgment. To reach such truths one has to "reason."

Nor does human development stop. In several pages from his Topics in Education Lonergan analyzes what is called a general or "liberal arts" education by invoking Piaget's notion of the "assimilative power," that is, the initial adaptation of previously rudimentarily developed skills to new situations. This assimilation of new experiences is initially global and approximate, but it is a necessary step on the way to a refined and smooth accommodation of skills to new experiences. According to Lonergan, a general education is primarily a literary education that develops one's "assimilative power," that is, one's ability to read.

In other words, you are educating, in the sense of developing assimilative power, by the study of language, by teaching people to read, so that they are able to read, not merely comic books and the titles under the pictures in Life, but anything. If you spend long hours reading Thucydides and Plato, you do not find much that has been written since heavy reading. You are in training, and when you sit down with a book you have not got an irresistible tendency to go to sleep, or to get out somewhere and move around.

There is a development in assimilative power in the study of languages and literature...

So a general education consists in exposing young people to the experience of serious reading that develops their ability to "read" the human person, themselves and the world. The serious study of languages and literature develop one's ability to be open to the vast stretches and complexities of the human world beyond the world to which one has been exposed. Good literature helps one to "read" this world, if only in an initial and approximate way. One will have the rest of one's life to refine these perceptions through the refined accommodation of one's skills of understanding.

Although Lonergan basically conceived of a general education as literary, he was also intensely interested in the development of the modern sciences and in the basic "assimilative power" for doing modern science, that is, mathematics. In fact, he recommended the study of mathematics in place of the premature study of the natural and social sciences.

Similarly, the study of mathematics rather than natural science, of philosophy and history rather than the human sciences, are all cases in which you are developing the assimilative power of the pupil or student, enabling him to do whatever he may choose to do in any particular field.

He recounts a personal anecdote concerning his own education and the attempt to teach physics without having first mastered the mathematics.

Since I am addressing educators, I would like to add a final note. It's about something I suffered from. Teaching physics without the students knowing the relevant mathematics is not teaching physics. If they know the mathematics, there is nothing difficult about the physics... the teaching of physics without a proper account of the fundamental notions — namely, doing the mathematics... gives an illusion of knowledge, a false idea of what the science is. And it clutters the mind.

It is interesting to note that Lonergan felt that a premature specialization in the social sciences can also "clutter the mind." With a background in the more general
studies of literature, history, mathematics and philosophy — corresponding to more general questions about the human person and reality — one can then go on to master the various specialties of human intelligence, the various natural and human sciences. Without that previous development, one's mind can easily contract into the horizon of one particular specialization.

General education, then, aims primarily at the development of assimilative power. If a man learns to know man, through the reading of literature and the study of history, he will have a basis for stepping into the human sciences that is much more useful perhaps than the study of the human sciences.¹⁴

The point here is that the social sciences are, to a great extent, at the mercy of changing trends and styles. Overemphasis on such subjects at a young age can "clutter the mind" and interfere with the development of the student's assimilative power.

If he spent all that time studying the human science, what would he know? He would learn what his professor knew of what the bigger men had figured out five years ago, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 30 years ago. By the time he set about working in the field, he would have something to do to keep abreast, and ten years later all of his stuff might be out of date. And would he have the capacity to judge the new, to jump with it or stand against it? If he has had this more general development in assimilative power, this more intimate communication of what it really is to be a man, the development of the human touch that comes through the traditional classical education or the literary education as opposed to the scientific education, he would have a basis within himself that would enable him to judge about men, and not become a crackpot. It is easy to produce crackpots by premature specialization.¹⁵

Later on, in Method in Theology, Lonergan will analyze various types of specialization, among them the "field specialization" that focuses on a particular area to be investigated by dividing and then subdividing the field of relevant data so that the specialist is one who knows "more and more about less and less."¹⁶ Without the broader viewpoint that comes from the development of one's knowledge of one's self and the world, it is easy for such a specialist to become a "crackpot." The point of Lonergan's distinction of various "functional specializations" in Method in Theology is that they allow us to know what we are doing as we move from such specialization to communicating to others the results of our investigations. They also allow us to begin to penetrate into the basic foundational issues beneath all knowledge. "What is the good of learning itself?" "What is worth living for?" "Hoping for?" "Who are we?"

To do this well, of course, requires the widest development of our assimilative powers. Ultimately it requires a type of conversion. Such conversion is "a shift in a person's center of gravity." It is a move from being caught up in "one's own little world" to being interested in "the world." It involves allowing one's being to be overcome by "the intellectual pattern of experience," a conversion from one's normal feelings and reference frames to the reference frames of intelligibility, truth, value and goodness.

What is geometry? To the boy in high school, geometry is what is in the book. But the experience of studying and doing geometry gradually forces a transformation of the notion of geometry from 'what is in the book' to an intellectual habit that is independent of the book.¹⁷

Such conversion eventually leads to a personal philosophy that enables us to discern and critique the prevalent philosophies of the culture around us — whether those philosophies be explicit or "implicit" — as in advertising, popular music and soap operas. It allows one to move beyond one's own restricted world, even one's own traditional world, to accurately assess the currents, theories and philosophies of the world around us.

The importance of a theory of philosophic differences is that, if one gets a sufficient grasp of it, one can read fruitfully all sorts of material without losing one's way. If one is limited in one's reading and inspiration exclusively to the works written by Catholics that have been approved as safe, one is cutting down enormously one's field of study, one's sources.¹⁸

This "theory of philosophic differences" could be said to be the aim of all Lonergan's writings. It is a development of the assimilative power to a heightened consciousness of what it means to be a human being and how the various disciplines are related to each other and to the whole of human knowing.
Reading Well: "Great Books"

In his great book, Great Books, David Denby, film critic for New York magazine, recounts his experience of taking a year off to retake his core curriculum courses at Columbia University — courses he had taken 30 years before. As he read through "the great books" again, he was conscious of the academic opposition to this approach. He recounts a conversation he had at one point in his year of reading with Siobhan Killeather, a young Irish professor opposed to such a curriculum focused on the "great books." As she put her objection:

This is very difficult material to be read quickly. It's hard to absorb the Iliad at high speed. They're all being asked to make a very real stretch when many of them can't read a modern novel easily. When I taught Lit. Hum., people had substantial difficulties reading the texts; they couldn't sort out the information and handle it: what it meant for books to come from different periods; what it meant to move from one culture to another. It was water off a duck's back.... You're taking things out of context. In literature no argument is ever made in a vacuum. You water them down to your size."

While agreeing that a full understanding of any one of these books would require an extensive background in its historical context, nevertheless Denby reasserts the validity of the great books program:

But wasn't that the greatness of the course — that intelligent but untrained people hurled themselves at these gigantic works, struggled, made "errors," read parts of the books badly, learned something from their teachers and each other? They had to "stretch.""

This sounds to me similar to what Lonergan was maintaining through his insistence on the importance of developing one's "assimilative power" through a literary education. This is the reading of significant texts prior to their more definitive appropriation through refined historical study. The latter seems to be what Killeather is campaigning for. She continues:

Also, when people don't have highly developed reading and writing skills, the pleasure of the writing isn't coming through — the pleasure of the sentences isn't coming through. In the end the students were thrown back on their opinions, and their opinions had nowhere to go.

To this, Denby responds by saying that a good teacher can indeed provide sufficient context and can even introduce students to "the pleasure of sentences." Without all the contemporary literary apparatus, these books have been read and passed on down the centuries. What was it in them that attracted people? Their seriousness? Their "moral seriousness?""

Again, this was Lonergan's point. "Moral seriousness" comes through the great books. That's what came through my young student's reading of Crime and Punishment. This is what John Haughey was plumping for in his lecture to the Seton Hall faculty on September 9, 2001, when he called education the "schooling of the affections" through teachers who love what they teach. Teachers who love the classics can teach them and communicate something of their meaning to students who themselves are learning how to love. As Denby in his own words expresses the goal of general education: "Readers! That's what undergraduate curricula should be producing!"

With regard to "the canon," a list of "great books," Killeather felt that it was "a modern American invention." It has not always been fixed, and the notion that you could make a shopping list of great works and be on top of them seems to be some fantasy of control. To this Denby replies by asking about English, French and Italian secondary schools where students are required to read many of these books. "Americans, I was afraid, needed lists, particularly at the end of the twentieth century, or they might not read anything of great value. Later, they could dispose of lists, and read as they pleased. But when they were young, there was very little in their culture impelling them to read seriously at all.""

Later on in his work Denby concludes:

By the end of my year in school, I knew that the culture-ideologues, both left and right, are largely talking nonsense. Both groups simplify and caricature the Western tradition. They ignore its orneriness and difficult books; they ignore its actual students, most of whom have been dispossessed. Whether white or black, Asian, or Latino, American students rarely arrive at college as habitual readers, which means that few of them have more than a nominal connection to the past. It is absurd to speak, as does the academic left, of classic Western texts dominating and silencing everyone but a ruling elite or white males. The vast majority of white students do not know the intellectual tradition that is allegedly theirs any better than black or brown
ones do. They have not read its books, and when they do read them, they may respond well, but they will not respond in the way the academic left supposes. For there is only one "hegemonic discourse" in the lives of American undergraduates, and that is the mass media. Most high schools can't begin to compete against a torrent of imagery and sound that makes every moment but the present seem quaint, bloodless or dead.26

Conclusion

I must admit I wince when I hear it trumpeted about that ours is among the top "most wired" universities. Aside from the double-meaning, it seems to me that this is not what Seton Hall should be bragging about — not if it is to be true to its ancient mission to provide a very good liberal education in the Catholic tradition for as many students as possible.

And that certainly does not mean just reading "the Catholic classics." In fact, you cannot even understand the Catholic classics unless they are understood in the light of the other "great books." You cannot understand Augustine of Hippo unless you understand the tradition of Plato. And you cannot understand Aquinas unless you understand something of the tradition of Aristotle. And you cannot appreciate Newman and Hopkins unless you understand 19th-century English culture.

But, I would conclude by saying that the Catholic classics should be read at a Catholic university. Unless Augustine, Aquinas, Dante, Theresa of Avila, Newman, Hopkins, Edith Stein and Dorothy Day are privileged "classics" at a Catholic university, it is not living up to its mission. Classics not in a narrow "canonical" sense but as enduring partners in dialogue with contemporary culture about what matters most to the human spirit.

References

4 Lonergan, Topics in Education, 199.
5 Ibid.
7 Ibid. 111. Cf. also her words "The intelligence can be led only by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in the work. 'The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy.'"
10 Lonergan, Topics in Education, 205.
11 Cf. Lonergan's frequent use of Herbert Butterfield's quote.
12 Lonergan, Topics in Education, 205-206
13 Ibid. 145.
14 Ibid. 206.
15 Ibid.
16 Lonergan, Method in Theology, 129.
17 Lonergan, Topics in Education, 161-162.
18 Ibid. 177-178.
20 Ibid.
21 Cf. Robert Inchausti on what Thomas Merton learned from the scholar Mark Van Doren, "By eighteen or nineteen one probably has had enough experiences to read literature profitably." Also: "Merton was being invited to shed the veneer of his European sophistication and become 'an American scholar' - someone who 'resisted the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history.'" R. Inchausti, Thomas Merton's American Prophecy (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998) 12.
22 John Haughey, "Education as the School of the Affections." Talk given at Faculty Convocation, Seton Hall University, September 9, 2001.
23 Ibid. 204-205
24 Ibid. 459. My emphases.
BUILDING A CARING COMMUNITY: CIVIC EDUCATION AND THE CORE CURRICULUM
by Roseanne M. Mirabella

As an undergraduate on the Seton Hall campus in the early ‘70s, I struggled to find connections between my academic life and my personal life. The sense of belonging that I felt in high school had disappeared and, in its place, I found a confusing array of clubs, associations and coursework, with only my college catalog to guide me through the maze. This struggle was particularly acute during my first two years on campus when I was confronted with a smorgasbord of courses, one from column A, two from column B, finding myself at a loss to find connections or links between them. It wasn’t until I was totally immersed in political science and sociology classes as an upperclass student that connections between the academy and the world in which I lived began to crystallize. It was then that the campus community revealed itself to me, providing me with the guidance I needed to make sense of my academic and personal experiences. Unfortunately, as I look back on the first two years of my college experience, they are little more than a blur.

Looking back on my undergraduate career, I am certain that had there been a common core curriculum my transition from a secondary setting to the university setting would have been significantly enhanced. It would have helped me draw connections between my courses that I had been unable to see without a common core. As I was introduced to new ideas and approaches, a core curriculum would have helped me to organize my thoughts and form patterns and relationships that were little more than unrelated threads without a common core. Finally, the development of a “common language” on campus would have assisted me in engaging in a dialogue with others, enhancing learning for all of us on campus, a dialogue that did not take place without this common language.

Participating in the summer seminar on the core curriculum provided me with the opportunity to reflect upon my own experiences and become familiar with the literature regarding the creation of a common core experience for our students. As my current research agenda includes examining the relationship between community, mission and outreach programs on college campuses, I found myself drawn to writings that examine the development of community through the college experience and the relationship between the core curriculum and the university mission. James Loughran, has written on his involvement with core curriculum issues at numerous colleges and suggests several purposes for a core curriculum within a liberal arts setting. The following are among his suggestions:

- A major purpose of the core curriculum is creating a “shared learning experience” that can form the basis of an academic community for students on a campus.
- The core curriculum provides an introduction to the university and assists students in making the transition from high school to college.
- The process of creating the core curriculum will necessitate discussions of values and goals that will strengthen the connection between the curriculum and the university’s mission (Loughran, 1999, pp. 7-8).

These are the aspects of a common core curriculum that I would like to consider in this essay.

A Community of Learners

Learning is the “stuff” of a university. The faculty want to make certain that students learn the material in their courses. Students want to learn about ideas that are relevant, stimulating and connected to their everyday lives. Parents want their children to learn material that will serve them best in their lives after college, with a particular concern about the world of work. Those within student affairs would like the learning in the classroom to connect with and continue outside the classroom in co-curricular activities, in student life and in residence halls. Administrators want the learning that goes on in the university to result in a scholastic reputation that will retain current students and attract future ones. What should be the model that guides student learning on campus?

Benjamin Barber has identified two models of education that dominate in today’s universities: the purist model and the vocational model. The purist model is concerned with learning for its own sake, not for a career, or for life, or for community. This is the ivory tower model where learners are “insulated” from the outside world. In contrast to this model, stands the vocational model that
puts learners in “service to the market,” training students for their professional lives in the world. Material happiness and gain are the key principles of this approach to education (pp. 451-2). In his writings, Barber seeks to find the connections between the insulated world of the ivory tower and the “insistent” reality of society.

Education is a dialectic of life and mind, of body in spirit ... [The] university must at once stand apart from society in order to give students room to breathe and grow free from a too insistent reality; and at the same time it must stand within the real world and its limiting conditions in order to prepare students to live real lives in a society that, if they do not mold it freely to their aspirations, will mold them to its conventions. To live eventually as effective, responsible, critical and autonomous members of communities of discourse and activity, students must be both protected from a too precipitous engagement in them and acclimatized by responsible and critical participation in them (p. 452).

For Barber, the answer lies in recognizing the “communal character of learning, and giving to community the attention and the resources it requires” (p. 455). By creating a community of learners, we provide students with the connections they need to become caring participants in society, while at the same time providing them with the freedom and insulation they need from society’s tendency to prematurely claim them for its own. In this community of learners, knowledge and action learn to live comfortably together and draw strength from each other. Community grows from the interaction between knowing and doing. Thus, Barber concludes that the “university is a civic mission: the cultivation of free community; the creation of a democracy of words (knowledge) and a democracy of deeds (the democratic state) ... The point where democracy and education intersect is the point we call community. Community is the beginning and the end of education” (p. 455).

A brief examination of the early traditions of education shows us that not so long ago community played an important role in our educational institutions, one that continued until the advent of professionalism in the 1900s.

Leadership and Character Education

During the 19th century, as the responsibility for teaching shifted from the home to community institutions, so did the responsibility for character education shift from the home to schools. Derek Bok notes that during this time the “entire undergraduate experience reflected the overriding commitment of the nineteenth-century college to strengthen the character of its students and thereby produce an educated class committed to a principled life in the service of society” (p. 66). In this older tradition of the university, the moral character of the young was seen as the most important goal of the curriculum. Ernest Lynton also points to the connection between research, instruction and extension services as a hallmark of the educational system during this time (p. 5).

This type of character education was an “effort to transmit to future generations the values of a caring society” (Hall, p. 193). Character, moral and citizen education programs were designed to develop teamwork, shared responsibility, and good conduct among students. Peter Dobkin Hall notes a clear shift from teaching to learning, where students became active participants through projects, activities and group work (p. 207). All of these activities were pursued to enable young people to take their places as responsible members of the community.

During this time, faculty were also actively involved in the political life of the community. They participated in public forums, took part in community programs and worked with members of the community to develop solutions to public problems. There were strong connections between research on campus and life in the community, with a variety of extension services emerging during this time. The leaders in the academy took their place alongside leaders in the community, working together toward development of the good life for its members.

The Rise of Academic Disciplines

This tradition was short lived, however, as academic disciplines rose to prominence during the 20th century. The development of specialized knowledge and the rise of professionalism within the university resulted in a decline in civic education and a deemphasis on character education as a goal of the academy (Bok, Hall, Lampert, Lynton, and Walshok). “Whereas professors and universities participated very actively in civic culture and public life at the turn of the century through institutionally led and rewarded public lectures, forums, and civic action programs, by the 1950s the culture of the academy celebrated and rewarded almost exclusively involvement and achievements inside one’s own disciplinary communities” (Walshok, p. 226). Specialization and
professionalism became the distinguishing characteristics of the ivory tower with faculty rewards flowing from individual disciplines, and involvement in civic affairs actively discouraged. In his work on the intellect and Public Life, Thomas Bender concludes that the "emergence of the modern academic professions represented a reorganization of intellectual culture — from a civic foundation to a professional and academic one" (Bender, pp. xiii-xiv).

The result was a decline in moral instruction and civic education on campus. Universities abandoned the practice of grading students on their conduct and civic involvement (Bok, p. 69). Leadership activities were no longer designed to prepare young people for their roles as citizens within the larger community, rather leadership activities were designed to teach young people to take their places among the privileged class of society (Hall, p. 208). Civic education was no longer a priority within the university, and leadership education lost its status as an important source of preparation for citizens within the society. Noting the change in emphasis and purpose, the "Carnegie Commission on Higher Education was led to declare that "general education for citizenship" was clearly the least successful of the several principal purposes of American higher education" (Bok, p. 71).

Reconciling Academic Truth and Political Truth

While academic truth — that based in the disciplines — has dominated for the past century, there are a growing number of scholars concerned with the gulf between scholarship and the everyday lives of citizens. Bender explores "urban patterns of intellectual life and academic forms of higher learning" (Bender, p. xii) and maintains that the current arrangements that have been in place for the past 100 years are increasingly being challenged. Present disciplinary practices seem unable to provide adequate explanations for the social, political and cultural situations in our urban areas. And, as the current arrangements are increasingly questioned by those within the academy, academics are "losing the confidence of the public" as well (p. 141).

The general public ... does not appear as convinced as academics, intellectuals, and journalists that research universities play such a vital and central role in the life of the community. They do not see these institutions as the hubs of activity through which and out of which flows much of the knowledge essential to a complex modern society. This is in large part the fault of universities themselves. They have not only failed to communicate what they do, why they do it and how it serves the public good in a free market economy of ideas and innovations, but they also have not taken seriously the accelerating cycles of change affecting the society and have been reluctant to recognize the significance of the exponential growth of expertise and knowledge functions outside the university (p. 9).

The structure of knowledge within the university and its impact (or lack thereof) on the community is increasing problematic. The scholarly pursuit of truth by academic disciplines results in an incomplete understanding of the community. Homelessness is not a problem best understood within a sociological, political, economic or psychological frame. Rather, homelessness and its solution lies with the integration of these academic frames, the reality of everyday life within the community and the resulting influence of each on the other. Academic models and heuristic devices created through separatism and fragmentation will not be sufficient to understand the increasing complexity of social problems in the community. Politics and inquiry must converge "in a quest for better truths ... (making it) easier for us to be at once academics and citizens in a democracy" (p. 139).

In many ways, the current discussions about the core curriculum on our campus are an attempt to reopen the conversation between the academy and the community, as many of us search for a reconciliation between reason and values.

Combining the Traditions of Reason and Values

Why should American colleges and universities be concerned with education for citizenship or the development of civic consciousness in their students? ... (P)erhaps the most compelling reason is that energy and attention spent on educating students for citizenship will enhance liberal education more generally. Indeed, one cannot offer a liberal education in any meaningful sense without educating for citizenship (Jeavons, p. 5).

The arrival of community service programs and service learning on campuses about 20 years ago led the way for renewed discussions of civic education as part of the higher education curriculum. These programs emphasize the student's responsibility as a member of the larger community. Students build homes through Habitat for Humanity, volunteer at the local soup kitchen, and tutor elementary school children in reading and math. Through participation in these programs, college students
learn the virtues of sharing with and caring for others in the community. Furthermore, participation in these programs provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their own values and the values of the surrounding community. Through classroom discussion and reflection, students learn about the relationship between academic and political truths, thus combining the traditions of reason and values, significantly enhancing the value of their liberal education.

The core curriculum of the University should develop within our students the capacity for academic reason and civic responsibility. Thomas Leavon's identifies these as the two essential capacities of a liberal education, "the capacity for analytic or synthetic — or integrative — thinking and the capacity simultaneously to be personally engaged and, when needed, stand at a distance that allows objectivity on a subject or issue under study" (p. 12). The first capacity allows us to see the connections among issues and the dynamics of a problem in an objective fashion. More importantly for our purposes here, the second capacity recognizes our humanity and allows for subjective interpretation of data and events. He refers to this as "critical compassion, the ability to care about something — passionately even — and think rationally about it at the same time" (Ibid).

In the absence of critical compassion, academics are divorced from their own humanism. In his attack on intellectual professionalism, Rorty has taken academics to task for giving up their moral outrage in defense of the weak (Bender, p. 142). The model proposed by leavon modifies this isolated professionalism, allowing for the simultaneous embrace of reason and passion within the academy. By combining the traditions of reason and values, we can approach public problems with an objective mind and an empathetic heart. The politics of homelessness, child abuse and poverty are inextricably linked with our capacity to develop solutions to these problems. Lambert has examined the trend toward including democratic experiences as part of the college curriculum, referring to this as the democratic or humanistic approach to education. Within this approach, the purpose of education is to develop a human being capable of fulfilling multiple roles, teaching values as well as skills (p. 78). One of these roles is that of student as citizen.

Building a Caring Community

Lord, grant that I may not seek so much to be understood as to understand.

— St. Francis

In his work on community service and higher learning, Robert Rhoads suggests that involving students in community service provides the basis for creating a more democratic and caring form of higher learning (p. 2). The roles of caring and democracy take on new meaning for all of us after September 11th. The old ways and the old responses are no longer adequate. Academics can no longer insulate themselves from the complex problems of our world, nor can we insulate our students. Diversity is more than a trendy topic to be discussed and debated in periodic forums. It is very real, it is very complex, and there are no simplistic solutions.

To prepare them for life in a diverse world, our students must develop new models of caring that permit an understanding of the perspective of "otherness." We must prepare our students for their careers and for their lives as citizens in a global society. This must include intercultural learning and strategies for effective interaction in a world with multiple religions and ethnic diversity. To build the capacity of our students as "global servant leaders," they must learn to transcend the boundaries of their everyday existence and enter the world of others, those of different faiths, ethnicities and languages.

Students' involvement in community service is often an experience of 'border crossing,' where borders represent the different zones of cultural diversity ... [We] need to develop community service projects that help students confront otherness while challenging them to see the complexity and diversity of the other, without resorting to simplistic explanations that conceal cultural differences (Rhoads, p. 125).

And faculty as well as students must come to embrace the perspective of the other. We must cross the boundary into the world of the other and listen to the voices of diverse communities. Our research models and teachings must reflect these voices in all of their diversity. It has been suggested that we "need better institutional mechanisms for connecting the new knowledge [we] develop to the increasingly large and diverse publics who can use and contribute to that knowledge" (Walshok, p. 12). Academic truth, by itself, will not address the problems of life in the community after September 11th.
As academics, we must balance our objective truth with the political truth that arises from everyday life.

Building a caring community on the Seton Hall campus, begins with understanding. Understanding the perspective of other disciplines, understanding the perspective of students, understanding the perspective of administrators and, perhaps most importantly, understanding the perspective of those in our surrounding communities. In his writings on servant leadership, Robert Greenleaf encourages all of us to learn the “long arduous discipline of learning to listen, a discipline sufficiently sustained that the automatic response to any problem is to listen first” (p. 17). Listening is the beginning of understanding.

Civic Education and the Core Curriculum

As we embark on the creation of a core curriculum at Seton Hall, there will be many conversations about mission and its connection to the core. I propose that we include discussions about civic education as part of this process. As a major Catholic university, Seton Hall has a commitment to the ethical development of a caring community, one that extends beyond its geographic bounds. Our mission commits us to preparing our students to be servant leaders in their professional and community lives. By creating a core curriculum that combines the academic tradition of reason together with the political tradition of community values, we will move closer to our goal.

Mission Statement, Seton Hall University

Seton Hall University is a major Catholic university. In a diverse and collaborative environment it focuses on academic and ethical development. Seton Hall students are prepared to be servant leaders in their professional and community lives in a global society and are challenged by outstanding faculty, an evolving technologically advanced setting and values-centered curricula.

References


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I want to distinguish between two, radically different, approaches to making life choices. The first is a professional approach, and it's so familiar as to be a cultural commonplace. It has such primacy in personal power, economic currency and institutional warrant that it claims near monopoly status: Is there any other way to make a decision? This professional approach is based in logic and susceptible to quantitative analysis.

Imagine a college undergraduate deciding whether or not to pursue a career in medicine (or law or accounting). Using a professional approach to making this choice, she might begin by drawing a line down the middle of a legal pad, with a heading at the top of each column: Advantages/Disadvantages. In the left column, under “Advantages,” she lists all the reasons it would make sense to pursue a career in medicine — personal satisfaction, substantial income, social prestige and so forth. In the right column, under “Disadvantages,” she lists the drawbacks to pursuing such a career — difficult training, job stress and so forth. If the list of advantages accumulates to a much longer length than the list of disadvantages, the logic of a professional approach is satisfied. The student will have an easy time persuading her parents and teachers of the sensibility of her decision. It's rational.

Alternatively, rather than visualizing the decision as side-by-side lists of advantages and disadvantages, this hypothetical student might calculate the odds of making it in the proposed profession. “Doing the odds” is another methodology of the professional approach to decision making. “What are the odds that I’ll make it into med school?” “What are the odds that I’ll become Board certified?” And so forth. If the odds for success are high — say 75 percent or 80 percent — then the decision is approved: Go for it. Again, the student's parents and teachers will approve of a decision promising high likelihood of success.

There’s nothing wrong with this professional approach to decision making. It’s sensible. It’s rational. It receives such high societal endorsement as to raise the question whether any other approach is required.

Here’s the rub.

Imagine a second college undergraduate who wants to become a novelist (or actor or cellist). He tries using the conventional predictors for successful decision making. Drawing a line down the middle of a legal pad, he eagerly lists one “advantage” to becoming a novelist: I really want to do it! Every item that follows under this heading sounds like a variant of the same theme: It would be a blast. I’d love it. It would feel great. In the right-hand column, under “Disadvantages,” a longer list grows: unreliable income, no job security, no benefits, publication is difficult, dubious social prestige, no guarantees. When this student switches methods and does the odds, things look even worse. The odds against an unsolicited manuscript at a major New York publishing house are 18,000 to 1 — dubious even when buying a lottery ticket, much less as the basis for a major life choice. What's more, when this student shares his enthusiasm for becoming a novelist with parents or teachers, they're unlikely to support his choice. Responses range from the patronizing — “That would make a nice hobby” — to the anxious — “How will you make a living?”

This second student needs a whole other logic than the professional approach to validate his decision. The list of disadvantages to his preferred choice is exponentially longer than the single advantage of his passion. Likewise, the odds against his success are too long to contemplate. Using a professional approach, to become a novelist represents a poor choice, plain and simple. How, then, does anyone choose against the odds, ignoring a long list of disadvantages, and still experience validation of his or her decision?

“Vocation” represents a radical alternative to “profession.” The two approaches (paradigms) cannot compete with each other because they do not occupy the same field of play. They’re completely different, rooted in soils from different planets all together.

The word “vocation” derives from the Latin infinitive vocare, to call. The word also carries inside it the Latin noun voc or voice. The simplest English translation for “vocation” is “calling.” In common parlance, “vocation” and “profession” are sometimes used interchangeably. For my purposes, however, they must remain distinct because they are decidedly different. In the 1960s and 1970s, the word “vocation” was co-opted by a technical education movement, sometimes called “vocational education” or “vocational-technical education” (“voc-tech” for short). This label usually meant instruction in auto mechanics, refrigeration or electronic repairs. Again, for
my purposes, one must strip such connotations from the Velcro surfaces of the word. I'm aiming at a much older — actually ancient — understanding of "vocation."

In Hebrew Scripture, Moses had a vocation. In Christian Scripture, Mary had a vocation. There is no profession called "Liberator of Slaves" and, if there were, the list of disadvantages to such a career choice would be much longer than the advantages. Moses was no fool. Likewise, there is no profession called "Mother of God." Again, if there were, the odds against success would be infinite. Yet, Mary said "yes." Was this folly on her part? Neither Mary nor Moses subscribed to a professional approach when making their life-defining decisions. Each understood this alternative paradigm, although Moses initially confused the vocational and professional approaches.

Recall the story of Moses, whether from its Biblical text or from its Hollywood re-telling in "The Ten Commandments." Moses, a Jewish slave raised in cognito in the home of the Egyptian pharaoh, struggled with his own identity. As a young man, he became uncomfortable with the false entitlements accorded him within the Pharaoh's household. He experienced increasing empathy for his kin, the Hebrew slaves. One day, walking in the dessert, he encountered the famous burning bush. From the midst of the burning bush, a voice called out: "Moses, set my people free." Moses recognized the speaker as the God of his people, Yahweh. And his first response — after taking a respectful step back from the burning bush and removing his sandals — was to offer a minority report, a minor correction to God. "I believe you have my brother Aaron in mind for this job. He's the one who got straight As in Public Speaking, not I."

Interestingly, this initial reaction of Moses represented a rational, professional approach to the life choice facing him. He encouraged God to compare resumes, his own versus Aaron's. In Moses' opinion, his brother was better qualified, possessing the requisite skill set for the job. Or, to put it another way, Aaron had a better chance of succeeding than did Moses, better odds. Notwithstanding, Yahweh had not called the wrong guy. Moses was the one He had in mind after all, and Moses would have to choose whether to accept this calling on the basis of some other logic than career planning.

Mary, a mere teenager, faced a similar dilemma when called by an Angel of God to bear a child by the Holy Spirit. Mary didn't ask for this assignment. She never typed "Mother of God" at the top of a resume after "Career Objective." For Mary to pursue this destiny as a career option, rather than accepting it as her vocation, would have been presumptuous in the extreme, even blasphemous. It would have been unthinkable. For her to say "yes" to the Angel meant acceding to an idea that defied all odds. The logical disadvantages so outweighed any conceivable advantages that she couldn't expect even Joseph's endorsement, much less the approval of her community. To say "yes," Mary had to invoke the logic of vocation, not profession.

And one could cite other Biblical examples of vocation, including Samuel's responsiveness to God's calling or Saul's blinding epiphany on the Road to Damascus. Common to every story of vocation within the Biblical traditions, both Hebrew and Christian, are four characteristics.

First, a person is called for a special purpose. Moses was called to lead his people from captivity to the Promised Land. Mary was called to give birth to God's Son. Hearing a call includes acknowledging its purpose. Accepting a call means committing to its fulfillment.

Second, the person who is called has a special gift. This should not be confused with aptitude, skill or talent, which are more appropriate designators of the professional approach. A special gift associated with vocation cannot be claimed by self-assertion; it must be revealed to the individual.

Third, implicit to vocation is the presence of a Caller. In Biblical narratives, the Caller has a name — Yahweh, God, Jesus. In other cultural understandings, the Caller may go by different names (e.g., one of the nine Muses) or by no name at all. By whatever name, the Caller's voice is heard as something outside (different from) the person called.

Fourth, accepting a vocation leads to a life of sacrifice, faith and, often, darkness. Neither Moses nor Mary could have predicted what answering the call would mean, where it would lead. Each had to sacrifice other life possibilities in order to say "yes" to the Caller. Each had to exercise faith in order to accept the unknown. Each had to walk into darkness in order to find the light.

While highly personal, vocation is not self-centered. Rather, vocation focuses on obedience, accountability and faithfulness to the Caller. Vocation demands life-ordering disciplines to ensure responsiveness. And, especially, vocation requires silence in order to be attentive (available) to the Other.

Discerning one's vocation relies on a process quite different from choosing a profession. A vocation must be heard or felt with passion. This passion — to write, to paint, to heal, to teach — must be confirmed first by oneself. It needs to feel right. Second, it needs to match
one's gifts, which may or may not be measured by standard aptitude tests or reflected in school grades. And, finally, the calling needs to be confirmed by a community of others or by a mentor. This final step helps preclude mistaking a personal compulsion with a genuine vocation. The affirmation of significant others helps sustain the commitment to vocation.


If I develop one gift, it means that other gifts will not be used. Doors will close on a million lovely possibilities. I will become a painter or a doctor only if denial becomes a part of my picture of reality. Commitment at the point of my gifts means that I must give up being a straddler. Somewhere in the deeps of me I know this. Life will not be the smorgasbord I have made it, sampling and tasting here and there. My commitment will give me an identity. When asked who I am, I will be reminded that the answer lies in the exercise of my gifts (pp. 42-43).

For a secular discussion of gifts, see "Psychology and Literature" by the depth psychologist C. G. Jung in Volume 15 of his Collected Works. The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature.

Almost all the support systems for personal development in U.S. society favor a professional approach to decision making over a vocational approach. The professional approach, ratifying rationality and betting the odds, is safer. It's more predictable. It follows a trajectory that can be foreseen. Parents like it. Formal education — beginning at least with high school and continuing through college with its near exclusive emphasis on career planning — can hardly recognize anything other than the professional paradigm. It's not clear that students or their parents would pay the high cost of education for anything else.

My own profession is higher education; I am a professor and a dean. However, my vocation is writing; I am a novelist. I bootleg my vocation through my profession as, frankly, most artists have done throughout Western history. As an educator who orders his personal life according to vocation, I worry that university life — both curricular and co-curricular life — provides scant vocabulary for discussing vocation. I worry that the perceived urgency to build a student's resume leaves too little time for silence, for listening to the still, small voice of the Caller. I worry — to put it bluntly — that all parties to the educational enterprise (students, parents and teachers) have come to expect too little for their tuition and their time.

As dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, I speak to incoming freshmen and their parents. I say, "Please expect more of this University than merely whether you will obtain an entry-level job when you graduate. If you work reasonably hard at your studies, and, assuming moderate health of the U.S. economy, I can guarantee that all of you will obtain that entry-level job. To place the bar there is to place it too low, way too low. Personally, I won't be satisfied unless you, while an undergraduate, experiment rigorously and radically to discover your God-given gifts. I won't be satisfied if you don't develop the spiritual discipline and emotional maturity to go on 'internal retreat,' listening for the Voice of a Caller, hearing the possibilities of Vocation. I won't be satisfied unless your focus turns from the want ads to your own wants, and to the wants of your Creator. Anything less is not worthy of the name higher education."

Rainer Maria Rilke, late 19th-century poet born in Prague, corresponded with a young aspiring writer, and his advice is collected in a famous volume titled Letters to a Young Poet. It reads like a primer on vocational thinking. Listen to the counsel Rilke offers his prodigy, turning the young poet gently but firmly away from a professional approach to life and toward a vocational approach:

You ask whether your verses are good. You ask me. You have asked others before. You send them to magazines. You compare them with other poems, and you are disturbed when certain editors reject your efforts. Now (since you have allowed me to advise you) I beg you to give up all that. You are looking outward, and that above all you should not do now. Nobody can counsel and help you, nobody. There is only one single way. Go into yourself. Search for the reason that bids you write; find out whether it is spreading out its roots in the deepest places of your heart, acknowledge to yourself whether you would have to die if it were denied you to write. This above all — ask yourself in the stiller hour of hour of your night: must I write? Delve into yourself for a deep answer. And if this should be affirmative, if you may meet this earnest question with a strong and simple "I must," then build your life according to this necessity: your life even into its most indifferent and slightest hour must be a sign of this urge and a testimony to it (translation by M.D. Heiter Norton, The Norton Library edition, pp. 18-19).
For me, a core curriculum — a curriculum around which all else orbits — must be focused on vocation. Texts should provide vocabulary and history to enrich the discussion of vocation. Academic disciplines should testify to the intimate connection between personal identity and societal engagement.

There is nothing wrong with the professional approach to making major life choices. It's just not sufficient. Vocation offers a radical alternative, and a more ancient approach. Professional thinking may be necessary to ensure economic success. Vocational thinking is necessary to ensure personal fulfillment. I close with a somber warning extrapolated from Elizabeth O'Connor: Not to use one's gifts, regardless of excuse, is to live an anguished life apart from creativity. Look around, and see if it isn't true.

* James VanOsling, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Seton Hall University, has published five books on aspects of language and culture, plus three novels for young readers.
THE CORE OF A LEARNING COMMUNITY: 
MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN STUDENT AFFAIRS AND 
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS 
by Dawn L. Williams

I invite you, the reader, to reflect for a moment, to focus. Bring to mind just one student you have wanted to see succeed. Picture that student as she navigates her way through the college experience. What barriers do you see for her? What advice do you want to share with her in order for her to succeed? Now bring to mind all students we admit to the University. We must be committed to making the educational experience rewarding for each and every student.

It is important to begin by focusing on the college experience from a student perspective. Imagine what it is like to traverse an unknown terrain that is stretching before you. Is it a path that is challenging but maneuverable, or is it a maze with dead ends and cul de sacs? Schroeder, Minor & Tarkow (1999) describe a campus environment that comprises “three distinct zones” — faculty, administrators, and students — in which the student alone is required to “migrate daily between the three zones and attempt to navigate the collegiate experience successfully ....” (p. 68). While this may be a stark description, it is often true.

Think first from the student experience and not from any professional area of expertise or responsibility. What type of environment, both physical and psychological, would we create if we were truly committed to helping students make meaningful connections and integrate ideas — if we were committed to an educational culture where students can witness the University mission modeled in their learning experiences and transforming their lives? This would seem a simple challenge and, yet, it eludes us as educators. As we take the Seton Hall University Mission Statement to heart, it can be our goal to provide students a holistic learning experience, developing mind, heart and spirit. Students will gain knowledge while developing strong character and spiritual roots.

Models for Development and Competency

There are many models that discuss intellectual and psychological development of students. I choose the following because they balance both. Marcia Baxter Magolda (2001) finds that the development of an internal sense of self is often the missing piece in a college experience because there is a disconnect between a student’s cognitive learning, internal values and self-definition. She suggests that “inviting the self into the educational process requires moving away from the traditional forms of teaching and control-oriented forms of organizing student life that prevail on many campuses” (p. xxii).

Baxter Magolda speaks of educators as “good company for college students on their journey toward self-authorship.” She found four phases of their journey when studying students over a 10-year period: 1) following external formulas, 2) meeting the crossroads, 3) becoming the author of one’s own life and 4) finding an internal foundation. She sees self-authorship not as selfish or self-centered, but as including others’ needs and external perspectives.

Smith (1998) describes various learning styles derived from multiple intelligences: 1) linguistic, 2) logical-math, 3) spatial, 4) kinesthetic, 5) musical, 6) interpersonal and 7) intrapersonal.

Schroeder (1999) discusses learning outcomes based on partnerships with academic affairs.

He uses the outcomes delineated by Kuh (1993) as expressed in the following clusters: 1) Cognitive Complexity — Reflective thought, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and intellectual flexibility; 2) Knowledge Acquisition and Application — Understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines and the ability to relate knowledge to daily life; 3) Humanitarianism — An understanding and appreciation of human differences; 4) Inter-personal and Intra-personal Competence — A coherent, integrative constellation of personal attributes such as identity, self-esteem, confidence, integrity and sense of civic responsibility, and 5) Practical Competence — skills reflected in enhancing the capacity to manage one’s personal affairs, to be economically self-sufficient and vocationally competent.

Schroeder goes on to suggest that Cognitive Complexity and Knowledge Acquisition and Application, the first two outcome clusters, have historically been the focus for faculty and academic administrators. Student affairs educators have embraced the remaining three clusters, humanitarianism, inter-personal and intra-personal and practical. “This customary practice of
separating undergraduate experiences into separate components fails to capitalize on what we have learned from over fifty years of research on college impact: cognitive and affective development are inextricably intertwined; curricular and out-of-class activities are not discrete, independent variables, but influence one another in profound ways” (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991).

In addition, he suggests the integrated perspective advanced by King and Magolda (1996) as a model process. “When learning and personal development are integrated, the cognitive and affective dimensions are seen as one process; and the hallmark of a successful educational experience is when increased cognitive understanding is complemented by increased sense of self, personal maturity and interpersonal effectiveness” (King & Magolda, p. 163).

The Idea of a Learning Community

It is important to take a critical look not only at the subjects we teach but also at the environment in which they are taught — the culture that defines a learning community. In the broadest sense of the term, a learning community is one where students, faculty and administrators come together for the purpose of learning. Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews & Smith (1990) establish this by focusing on the learning community as an instructional setting. Schroeder, et. al. (1999) use Schroeder & Hurst’s 1996 definition of learning communities as associational groups of students and teachers, sharing common values and a common understanding of purpose, interacting within a context of curricular and co-curricular structures and functions that link traditional disciplines and co-curricular experiences in the vital pursuit of shared inquiry.

Spitzer & Thorndike (1993) describe four principles for creating community on a college campus: 1) centrality of learning, 2) freedom of thought and expression, 3) justice in assessing individual and community actions, and 4) respect for difference as manifested by civility (p 9).

Our focus should be the development of an environment that fosters integrated learning, “intentional, coherent, integrated, and continuous learning” (Schroeder, et al) The institution must support such an integrative model by appropriate allocation of resources.

Principles for Good Practice

The literature reviewed in this article to this point focuses on the disconnect in learning that takes place when an integrative university does not exist (Schroeder, C.C. 1999). Students’ academic experiences are often subdivided into discreet and disjointed general education courses and courses in the major. Co-curricular experiences are disconnected from academic experiences. Classroom facilities are geographically isolated from residence halls. Campus employment opportunities have no relationships with academic or co-curricular goals and outcomes of general education are rarely, if ever, addressed as a core experience in new student orientation. In view of realities such as these, where do students, faculty and student affairs educators find the connections, the integration and the coherence that is the essence of holistic education?” An integrative university culture can help students address their emotional and intellectual development, especially with collaborative leadership.

A number of groups have come together over the years to define principles of good practices. The first of such studies in student affairs was “The student personnel point of view” published by the American Council on Education in 1937. Two studies that built on this seminal work are that of Chickering & Gamson (1987) and the joint project by the American Association of College Personnel Association and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (1997).

Chickering & Gamson identify seven practices in the kind of undergraduate education I am recommending: 1) student-faculty contact, 2) cooperation among students, 3) active learning, 4) prompt feedback, 5) time on task, 6) high expectations, and 7) respect for diverse talents and ways of learning. The Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs: Statement and Inventions document published by the American College Personnel Association and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators identifies its own seven characteristics of effective education: 1) engages students in active learning, 2) helps students develop coherent values and ethical standards, 3) sets and communicates high expectations for student learning, 4) uses systematic inquiry to improve student and institutional performance, 5) uses resources effectively to achieve institutional missions and goals, 6) forges educational partnerships that advance student learning, and 7) builds supportive and inclusive communities.
Schroeder, et. al. suggest five mandates of successful academic partnerships between student and academic affairs: 1) develop a common purpose; 2) design cross-functional teaming and assessment of mutually agreed upon outcomes; 3) align resources, both human and fiscal, to achieve desired results; 4) expect senior administrators to champion innovation and change, nurturing and sustaining partnerships; and 5) expect participants to challenge prevailing assumptions and take reasonable risks.

The 12 principles for effective general education programs published by the Association of American Colleges in 1994 may be adapted in an integrative learning environment. The principles are divided into two parts: those articulating a compelling vision of general education (1-6), and those forming a community based upon a vision of general education (7-12). The first six are as follows: 1) Strong general education programs explicitly answer the question, "What is the point of general education?"; 2) embody institutional mission; 3) continuously strive for educational coherence; 4) are self-consciously value-based and teach social responsibility; 5) attend carefully to student experience; and 6) are consciously designed so that they will continue to evolve. The second set are as follows: 7) require and foster academic community; 8) have strong faculty and administrative leadership; 9) cultivate substantial and enduring support from multiple constituencies; 10) ensure continuing support for faculty, especially as engaging in interdisciplinary dialogue; 11) reach beyond the classroom to the broad range of student co-curricular experiences; and 12) assess and monitor progress toward an evolving vision through ongoing self-reflection.

Examples of Collaboration

Collaboration and integration require that student affairs and academic affairs know enough about each other that professionals from both areas understand which resources to coordinate. While the collaboration between academic and student affairs is key, the ideal is collaboration among all facets of the university to create and sustain a culture that maximizes learning. The university dare not discount any individual or area that can make a positive contribution to the process.

Seton Hall University Examples

Seton Hall has a long way to go toward this ideal integration. Yet, first steps have been taken in the right direction. The COMPASS (Collaborative Opportunities to Mature Personally, Academically, Spiritually & Socially) program approaches New Student Orientation as an extended process. The program's mission is to create and sustain a coherent living learning environment for first-year students that support the development of servant leaders in the global society. From the point of deposit to completion of 24 credit hours, a structured pathway is designed to help each student through transition to college. This collaborative effort, spearheaded jointly by Student Affairs and Freshman Studies, begins with Freshman Preview the spring before students matriculate and continues through the Fall Semester and the entire first academic year for resident students. The COMPASS components include: 1) Freshman Preview, 2) Testing, 3) Technology, 4) New Student Orientation, 5) Welcome Week, 5) Convocations, 6) Freshman Skills Course and 7) Boland Hall COMPASS Experience.

The Boland Hall COMPASS experience connects learning with the living environment. The Seton Hall Student Covenant, signed by all new students during the fall Convocation, is used as the basis for room/suitmate agreements and the building of community standards for each house. Students are assigned to interest houses where specific programming themes engage students (i.e. New York Interest, Sports) or an Academic Teaming Floor where students work with a student academic teaming adviser and develop programs related to academic themes. Students are required to maintain a 1.8 GPA to stay in residence. An individual can apply for exceptions and work with a mentor to develop a success plan. Boland Hall residence life staff work in collaboration with Freshman Studies to monitor student success. Region II of the National Association just recently selected this program as an Innovative Program for Student Personnel Administrators.

SHU 500 was first developed in 1997 as a means to inspire excitement for community service in new students and to create a sense of energy for the campus community. The goal is to get 500 members of the University community to work together for a day on projects in the communities around Seton Hall. A University-wide committee, chaired by the director of the Division of Volunteer Efforts (DOVE), coordinates the annual event. Students receive credit for their involvement.

The American Humanics Program at Seton Hall University is being developed as a part of a national alliance of colleges, universities and nonprofit organizations preparing undergraduates for careers with youth and human service agencies. This undergraduate minor includes interdisciplinary coursework, recognition of co-curricular involvement and required internships in nonprofit organizations.
External Examples

Freshman Interest Groups (FIGS) were established in 1995 at the University of Missouri-Columbia as a means of promoting student success through enhanced undergraduate experiences. The Division of Student Affairs and the College of Arts and Sciences collaborated to design residential learning communities with a set of objectives. A group of 15 to 20 first-year students lived in the same residence hall, enrolled in sections of the same three general education courses and, consequently, enrolled in a one-semester course that integrated the general education courses. This program positively impacted first-year student achievement, learning and retention (Schroeder, et. al.).

References


CLARE COLLEGE: A POSSIBLE STRUCTURE FOR THE CORE?
by Stephen Martin

There are various proposals offered in this volume as to why and how we might envision an appropriate core curriculum for Seton Hall University and key elements that should be incorporated into the core. As these proposals are evaluated, there are at least four important questions this discussion should involve:

- How should a core curriculum reflect the mission of a Catholic, liberal arts institution?
- How can we develop a core curriculum with a characteristic Seton Hall "signature" that reflects that mission and tradition (and helps market it)?
- What might be some key facets of an integrative, Catholic, liberal arts core curriculum?
- How should the core curriculum be organized, both academically and administratively?

Obviously, it is beyond the scope of this short essay and any one member of the Seton Hall community to answer these questions. Nevertheless, one way to begin the process of exploring potential answers is to examine core curricula of other Catholic, liberal arts universities, with similar enrollment, traditions and reasons for seeking to revise their core requirements. Of course, if a Seton Hall core curriculum is to have its own signature, it cannot slavishly copy that of another university. However, since we probably do not wish to reinvent the wheel, it is wise to look to other models of similar core revision processes and products.

One such institution that has undergone a recent core curriculum revision is St. Bonaventure University, located 75 miles southwest of Buffalo, New York, a Catholic, liberal arts university with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 4,000. In my contribution to this volume, I would like to briefly relate the rationale and framework of the St. Bonaventure core curriculum. I offer these reflections from not only academic knowledge of St. Bonaventure's situation, but also from personal involvement. Prior to coming to Seton Hall, I served as an adjunct at St. Bonaventure for two years and a full-time member of the faculty, an instructor, for one year. While I was not present at the beginning of the revision process, by the end of my third year, I had taught more new core sections than any other faculty member, had participated in ongoing core course development sessions and had even become involved in the politics of maintaining the aims of the revised core curriculum as the original ideals were beginning to become sacrificed to financial expediency. I learned firsthand much about the philosophy behind the core and the conflicts at the university concerning the core from my colleague in the theology department, John Apczynski, the first dean of Clare College.

Clare College was set up within the university as part of the core revision process, in charge of administering the core courses. This notion of a "core college," headed by a dean who is in charge of staffing area courses and working with faculty on course content and requirements is one possible contribution St. Bonaventure University can make to our deliberations concerning the make-up of a new core.

Clare College and Curriculum

St. Bonaventure is a university in the Franciscan tradition. Bonaventure himself (1217-1274) is known as the "second founder" of the Franciscans with the unenviable job of reconciling Francis of Assisi's almost anti-intellectual spirituality with a burgeoning Franciscan scholasticism. In 1994, the university began to look at a new structure for its core curriculum. The impetus was to reduce the number of required core courses in the previous system of distribution requirements, and develop a true core to replace the system of distribution requirements. While it was an involved and controversial process, it resulted in a remarkable collaborative effort — revising the purpose, content and structure of a core curriculum. What was achieved, though imperfect, not only reduced the distribution requirements but also integrated Bonaventure's Catholic and Franciscan heritage with the aims of the different disciplines, introducing many new interdisciplinary elements.

The St. Bonaventure core curriculum is made up of the five core areas that replaced its former distribution requirements. Each area was designed to be at least potentially interdisciplinary and, where appropriate, related to the Franciscan tradition. Theoretically, each course was not restricted to being taught by faculty members from any one discipline. This was most true with the course The Intellectual Journey, which is taught by members from biology to theology, with English, philosophy, classical languages and other disciplines in between.
In the content area courses, there was less crossover, though English and philosophy faculty teach Foundational Religious Texts of the Western World and Catholic-Franciscan Heritage, while a theology faculty member currently teaches Arts and Literature. Other content courses, such as Inquiry in the Social World, and Worldviews, are more typically interdisciplinary. All courses listed below are 3 credit hours, except for Inquiry in the Natural World, which is 4 credits because of its lab requirement.

Core Areas
- **The Intellectual Journey** is a required one-course introduction to the “life of intellectual inquiry.” It is centered on reading and discussing excerpts from primary texts in the “Great Books” tradition plus modern and contemporary autobiography, fiction and science fiction, etc. Through a seminar format (15 or less students), the teacher and students reflect on the readings in terms of their historical context, their relation to similar readings in other disciplines being read, the Franciscan tradition and in light of perennial “substantive issues posed by the human community.” Faculty members teaching the course meet on a regular basis throughout each semester to discuss content, pedagogy, exams and ongoing course development and readings selections.

- **Skills Courses**
  - Composition and Critical Thinking I, II
  - Quantitative Reasoning

- **Core Area Courses**
  - Inquiry in the Natural World
  - Foundations of the Western World
  - The Good Life (Ethics)
  - Inquiry in the Social World
  - Foundational Religious Texts of the Western World
  - The Catholic-Franciscan Heritage
  - World Views (Global Diversity)

- **Three-Course Sequence**
  A three-course sequence chosen by the student from those designed by faculty and approved by the faculty senate. The sequences are designed to link either two or three disciplines, or delve progressively deeper within one discipline. Each course within a sequence is also a regular course offering within a department, so that students may also take any individual course being offered outside of the three-course sequence requirement. Also, students are not allowed to choose a three-course sequence that comprises only courses from their major.

  **Example of a more uni-disciplinary sequence.**
  - Classical and Modern Physics
  - Understanding Nature in the West — comprising courses from classical languages and physics.

- **University Forum**
  Every senior must take this cross-disciplinary “capstone” course in which all sections are centered on a particular topic or issue, such as cloning.

**Wholeness, Catholicity and Catholicity**

At one point during my time at St. Bonaventure, I was asked to give a faculty presentation on the revised core curriculum. I had just previously interviewed for the position at Seton Hall and during my interview process I came across John Haughey’s article on “Wisdom as the Goal of Information” in the proceedings for the 1999 faculty summer seminar. In that article, Father Haughey wrote that one of the purposes of the liberal arts university is to be integrative of knowledge, reflecting the “uni” of universitas. He also reminds us that this also goes to the root of the word “catholic” — meaning toward “wholeness.” Being integrative means to somehow help students not only to be exposed to different areas of knowledge but also to develop some way of integrating those areas of knowledge. As Father Haughey wrote, “This oneness is not satisfied by the interdisciplinary thought that is a step in the right direction. To relate or to function in or use a discipline wisely, one must go beyond the interdisciplinary to wholeness.”

This is a large, complicated and controversial task. To be integrative, a core curriculum must be constituted of courses and content from many areas of the university. But it also must be able to put those courses and that content into focus, something like a “life philosophy.” The current core at St Bonaventure is the numerous courses to provide content, but I believe does not have the requisite integration or even the desired interdisciplinary connections to relate and possibly integrate different academic areas.
Toward a “Signature” Core Curriculum

One of the rationales for a university to revisit its core curriculum is this perception that the core courses within a particular college or the university as a whole should reflect a particular vision related to the mission and heritage of the university. Again, this means a core that goes beyond a collection of distribution requirements. For example, St. Bonaventure University centered its freshman seminar, The Intellectual Journey on St. Bonaventure’s The Soul’s Journey Into God. The approach was not to indoctrinate students into Bonaventure’s worldview, but to encourage students to reflect upon and develop their own life philosophy in light of the Catholic and Franciscan liberal arts tradition.

In The Soul’s Journey Into God, Bonaventure sought to integrate the different disciplines, or levels of knowledge, and a person’s spiritual life. An exemplary spiritual life for Bonaventure was that of Francis of Assisi, and Bonaventure sought to integrate Francis’ spirituality into a coherent way of understanding the world and one’s place in it. In The Soul’s Journey Into God, Bonaventure begins with the natural world, which mirrors the divine; moves up one level into the study of the humanities, which reveal the social world and the need for religious knowledge; then to the third level of philosophic and religious discussion of the “ultimately real.” Finally, Bonaventure leads the reader beyond academic knowledge into a recognition of the importance of direct contemplation of the source of all truth, the Godhead, an experience that inspires us to begin the intellectual journey again. The genius of Bonaventure’s particularly medieval, allegorical approach was to root this integration of academic disciplines in St. Francis’ vision at Mt. Alverno of the six-winged seraphim and Christ crucified. The three sets of wings represented for Bonaventure these three levels of knowledge and Christ the ultimate source and goal of that search for knowledge, which also requires sacrifice and service.

We need not adopt an explicitly Franciscan approach of St. Bonaventure’s particular way of integrating its living tradition into its core curriculum. However, reflecting on central elements of St. Bonaventure University’s approach, and echoing some of the other writers in this volume, my experience of teaching in and working to revise St. Bonaventure University’s core curriculum leads me to believe that we should consider something at Seton Hall University like a seminar, which all freshmen take, that introduces them to the Catholic, liberal arts tradition. This would enable them to begin learning the skill of reading in the various disciplines that Richard Liddy advocates in his contribution, and to begin the lifelong process of integrating this search for knowledge into their lives.

We should also investigate developing more courses that transcend particular disciplines in search of wisdom. To quote John Haughey again, “This is not to call into question the legitimate autonomy of the discipline with valid findings, history, methodologies, heroes. It only relativizes that autonomy.” And I think an exciting idea would be to incorporate a senior “capstone” course that brings together various disciplines and integrates them around a central issue chosen by that year’s faculty and students — something like the type that George Browne is advocating. I feel that we can find our own “signature” way to incorporate Seton Hall’s own tradition of “Enriching the mind, the heart and the spirit.” In that way, we would be integrating the ideal of service of our own Elizabeth Ann Seton with the greater Catholic tradition of Augustine, Francis, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Newman, Lonergan and other great thinkers of the wider culture.

To sum up, Seton Hall’s stated mission of “forming servant leaders for a global society” at the minimum begs for a core curriculum that 1) provides through the particular disciplines the needed skills and knowledge base for the beginnings of an adequate education for life and career; 2) incorporates some interdisciplinary components to enable students to work toward integrating the skills and knowledge involved in one discipline or set of disciplines with others; and 3) a transdisciplinary component whose explicit task is concentrating on the wisdom needed for lifelong learning and — even global interaction.

Works Consulted


[11] Bonaventure proposed a synthetic view of reality which, in the final analysis, was also a religious view insofar as he traced everything back to the divine and presented this fundamental analysis as a guide for animating a personal, religious quest.

[12] of the natural world [Step 1], of our sensory, imaginative capacities for apprehending beauty [Step 2], of our consciousness of ourselves as persons [Step 3], and of our need for transformation [Step 4]
CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: ADAPTING TO CHANGE
by Nicholas F. Mazza

It's a fact of everyday life that change is inevitable. Social scientists who assist institutions understand this fact of life. Research shows that institutions experience change and the effects of change on a continuous basis. Change, in fact, is a sign of institutional health and vitality.

Sociologist Beth Jone Chakiris studies institutional "climates." Chakiris investigates the relationship between employee morale and the working atmosphere. Similarly, Gilbert M. Fornaciari is known for his contribution to the field of socio-technical systems. Fornaciari studies the interaction of people, technology and institutions.

In the mid 1960s, sociologist Paul J. Reiss identified the concept of "adaptive change." He studied and characterized the relationship between the college and the external social network as an "exchange" relationship. Specifically, Reiss proposed that, in order for them to survive, Catholic colleges and universities must identify the socioeconomic status of potential students. He concluded that middle-class students were best positioned financially to afford a Catholic education. His conclusions came at a time when higher tuition was an inevitable reality. The final result of this research allowed Catholic colleges and universities successfully to adapt this new market concept and survive.

Historically, colleges and universities in America were established during times of change. For instance, the American Revolution created a unique opportunity for the newly constituted American states to determine their educational structures. To the same extent the influx of Catholic immigrants during the later part of the 19th and early 20th centuries created opportunities for this group to ponder their unique higher education aspirations (Gleason 1967).

Current Influences

Kim Cameron (1984) identified communication and technology as causing dramatic change in society. Similar to Reiss’s "exchange" theory of collegiate survival, she stated that, in order to survive, colleges and universities must develop "adaptive strategies" as a constructive response to these "postindustrial influences."

Reflecting Cameron's postindustrial concerns, Catholic colleges and universities are facing issues unique to their religious purpose. These are most notably:

- Secularism — This is an ideological position that prefers the absence of religious belief in the academic environment.
- Vatican II and a Post-Vatican II Church Renewal — The Catholic Church made concrete strides to renew its internal affairs in the midst of a changing modern world. As a result, many in the Church, and especially Catholic academia itself, have challenged the relationships between Catholic and university. Debate exists in areas bordering on the sacred and the secular, between faith and reason, and between the formation of the person and careerism.
- "Ex Corde Ecclesiae" — This is the papal exhortation intended to bring Catholic colleges and universities more deeply into the "heart of the Church" as it prepares for the "new evangelization" of the third millennium.

Understanding Change

One way to understand change is to view it as a process. Adaptive change develops as institutions process alternative solutions to problems. A practical example can be the constructive scrutiny of faculty, especially in developing and addressing the ongoing philosophy of the collegiate learning environment.

Additionally, Cameron refers to the phenomenon of "lack of fit." This "lack of fit" creates tensions within institutions, thereby, initiating adaptive change. An example of "fit" is the question. Are Catholic and University antithetical? Catholic colleges and universities are currently finding ways to adapt solutions to this critically important question.

Specific responses to this question of fit are found in Thomas Aquinas College, San Paulo, California; Magdalen College, Werner, New Mexico; and a growing handful of small Catholic institutions that were established in the post-Vatican II Church. The missions of these small institutions are to provide "educational environments" where students receive formal spiritual and academic formation in the Catholic faith. Both Aquinas and Magdalen’s core curriculum were developed to support their institutional and academic missions.
However the vast majority of Catholic colleges and universities are adapting solutions to address the mix of both institutional mission and curriculum differently. For example, Seton Hall University has established Catholic studies programs on the undergraduate level to enhance its Catholic mission. In this program, students elect to study the Catholic intellectual life within the framework of a traditional academic plan.

Viewing Change

Cameron views adaptive change along four different perspectives. In Catholic higher education these views are more commonly seen in the following circumstances:

1. The “niche” view. What is the Catholic market niche? In 1967, Catholic institutions positioned themselves to be increasingly more autonomous away from Church authority to foster the notion that distance from the Church in academia would protect academic freedom. As a result, lay boards of directors assumed sole governing authority over many Catholic colleges and universities. This situation was a dramatic change from the traditional control held earlier by religious communities or the local diocese. A more open minded and diverse academic community became the new market niche.

Prior to 1967, close control by religious orders or bishops was the governing norm. Adaptive change was fueled by the vast scope of renewal in the Church after the Vatican Council, including greater lay involvement in Church affairs, and in response to the dramatic declines in religious and priestly vocations (O'Hara, 1999).

On the other side of the governing issue, some colleges chose to be more uniquely identified as Catholic and with a formal, constitutive and statutory bond with the Church. Survival rests in their strong Catholic identity and formal allegiance to Church authority.

2. Life-cycles view. In this view, adaptive change occurs along four different life cycles. Initially change occurs through the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of collegiate leadership; then through the philosophical unity of members supporting the direction of the institution; thirdly, through formal administrative controls to perpetuate the mission; and finally through building more elaborate structures to preserve the institution. Once an organization completes stage four, the life-cycle process begins anew with another more advanced and revitalized purpose for the institution. This revitalization is fueled by another set of creativity and entrepreneurship approaches leading to a progression through the four stages again.

Catholic colleges and universities cycle through a series of changes when mission, curricula and “identity” are reexamined, reevaluated and redefined. A recent example of this remodeling is in the establishment of Clare College at St. Bonaventure University. Clare College was established to provide the student body with a more religious mission-directed core curriculum. Newer courses include subjects grouped in the various areas of the intellectual journey, namely the Good Life, Foundational Religious Texts of the Western World, the Catholic-Franciscan Heritage, and World Views. All incoming freshmen now enter St. Bonaventure through Clare College and its formal curriculum program.

Seton Hall University is currently experiencing a recycling process by examining its core curriculum. This process began four years ago when the University organized the Bayley Project to examine ways to enhance the Catholic religious mission of the University.

3. Strategic-choice view. In this view, change is strongly rooted in the utilization of managerial skills. Organizational expertise and competency are key characteristics of successful adaptation. Miles and Cameron (1982) indicate that the strategic-choice model is successful in external turbulent and hostile environments. Strategic choice is managed through the use of “domain defense” or “domain creation.” In domain defense, institutions attempt quickly to legitimize themselves and their identities. In domain creation, institutions diversify into less risky environments.

Miles and Snow (1978) indicate that institutions search for strategic competencies in order to implement their domain defense strategies or domain creation strategies. These strategies are operational in one of the following models:

(a) Prospector – These institutions implement strategies early in their history.

(b) Analyzer – A “wait and see” approach dominates institutional decision making.

(c) Defenders – These institutions are slow to react to change.

(d) Reactors – Inconsistent change dominates as newer circumstances dictate.
Prospectors are those institutions uniquely established with specific Catholic educational missions or reorganized for this purpose. Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, went through a comprehensive reorganization in the early 1970s in an effort to redefine their Catholic mission. At Franciscan, strategically clear and defined orthodox Catholic academic and formational programs were established to counter the general trends toward secularization at the college.

History has shown that the vast majority of Catholic colleges and universities have taken the "wait and see" (Analyzer) position. Change in these institutions occurs through a process of "identity" searching and domain creation. Critics of this model propose that the "wait and see" position eroded Catholic identity, thereby justifying the need to implement the tenets of "Ex Corde Ecclesiae" since 1990.

4. Symbolic action view Since Catholic colleges and universities are strengthened by common symbols, stories and legends, change can be accomplished as administrators perpetuate institutional symbols. Religious symbolism is frequently used to define the identity of Catholic colleges and universities. Seton Hall University has a large statue of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in front of Kozlowski Hall. St. Bonaventure's Clare College accentuates its Catholic-Franciscan character in the core curriculum, and Franciscan University presents itself as the symbol of Catholic orthodoxy.

Summary

Cameron's organizational adaptation theory provides a valuable conceptual framework to describe the developments of Catholic higher education, especially since the mid 1960s. The years since then have been described by some as a time of "crisis" in Catholic higher education (Martin, 1982). Hopefully, research similar to Cameron's can provide a clearer view through which both higher learning and faith will be strengthened, preserved and understood.

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Possibilities for the Future
IT WAS ALWAYS WINTER, BUT CHRISTMAS NEVER CAME

by George P. Browne

Some 50 years ago, I was introduced to a world where it was always winter, but Christmas never came. The unconventional theologian C.S. Lewis began his Narnia stories with this scenario and proceeded to develop a magical world in which he spun stories of the struggle between good and evil, and the magic and ultimate redemption of faith. Years later, I revisited these books as I introduced them to my children, and, more recently, I have often returned to them in my mind.

While a graduate student, I discovered the world of hobbits, dragons and wizards spun by J.R.R. Tolkien. In his "Ring" trilogy, a titanic confrontation between good and evil unfolds and weak, fallible individuals rise above their limits to perform heroic deeds. Over the decades that followed, I became aware of the origins of these stories written in the years that led up to and through the Second World War.

Recently, the program notes to two magnificent performances of the New York Philharmonic underlined the inspiration of these and many artistic expressions in the dark days before and through the war. André Tippet's A Child of Our Time responds to the events surrounding the Kristallnacht, and the hatreds and divisions it represents. Likewise, Benjamin Britten's War Requiem reflects the sorrows and grandeur of a Britain at war.

The creative response to the winter of our time—from the rise of ugly and romantic nationalisms, followed by brutal programs and wars of expansion and a worldwide conflagration—is an important theme and has wonderful potential for study. I would propose that the Seton Hall University community commit itself to a diverse and extended examination of the shape and nature of this response. The examples assembled here are just that; there are many more possibilities than this essay can catalogue.

In addition to developing seminars and courses that explore this rich vein of human creative endeavor, art exhibits, public performances and lectures, other activities can be used to celebrate the creative response to tragedy and evil. It can become a part of campus life and the learning environment we provide our students. Both in the context of our discussion of general education or core expectations and in the wake of the tragedy of 11 September 2001, we must remind ourselves of human potential and creative energy in the face of despair and sorrow.

References

1 This essay is designed to propose a broad theme that might engage the University community over a span of two-to-four years to create a learning environment that transcends the classroom and disciplinary boundaries. Many other themes might be developed to drive an ongoing search within the University and beyond for creative ways to understand the human experience and the search for lifelong learning.
We did not need the shattering events of September 11 to convince us that we live in extraordinary times. They are certainly times of great potential for human betterment — consider, for example, the possibility of cures for cancer, Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s in our own lifetime. On the other hand, the future may be catalyzmic: violence on a mass scale, environmental collapse, etc. No one at this point can, with any assurance, determine which trend will ultimately win out. The horrific events of September 11 have triggered emotions of great unease and trepidation. Many of us feel that we are at the mercy of forces over which we have little or no control, and that we are no longer capable of determining our own destiny. It is understandable to feel that way when our taken-for-granted routines and lifestyles are seriously disrupted and when we become obsessed and almost paralyzed by the calamities that we feel await us.

And so there is no better time than the present, particularly in light of the events of September 11, to dedicate ourselves to managing and guiding the future in a sensible and ethical fashion. Drawing on what President George W. Bush said in his address to the nation on September 20, we should be determined “to define our times, rather than allow our times to define us.” Will we be like a sailboat, buffeted by winds and current taking us to a port not of our choosing? Or like a steamboat, capable of mobilizing its resources to arrive at an agreed-upon port by overriding potentially impeding forces?

Participants in the core curriculum seminar were asked to construct a vision of the kind of persons we, the faculty, would like our students to become. I would like to propose that our charge is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to guide the future in ways that contribute to the betterment of human civilization rather than to its demise and debasement. This requires the cultivation of the mind, heart and spirit of students in ways that are appropriate for this unique stage in human history. Our task as a faculty is to train their minds, hearts and spirits in ways that prepare them for the inevitability of change in the 21st century and the uncertainty of its direction and scope.

To do this requires 1) “minds” capable of generating reliable forecasts and plausible scenarios; identifying factors responsible for the current state of things, and developing strategies and interventions that would guide change in an effective and humane manner; 2) “hearts” that are in touch with the emotions attendant to rapid change, capable of bleeding for the victims of societal transformation and tolerant of strangeness in a diverse world; and 3) “spirits” that explore the eschatological significance of change in the world, the cosmic meaning of human development, and the challenges for personal growth and salvation posed by institutional change.

Twenty-first century consciousness at its core would recognize that “subsystems must not further their subsystem welfare at the expense of the system.” In its cognitive aspect (involving the mind), this insight acknowledges that the planet and the human species will not survive if human beings continue to pursue their subsystem welfare at the expense of the global system. In its affective aspect (involving the heart), this insight taps into the deep and abiding attachment that we are capable of feeling toward all members of the human family. In its transcendent aspect (involving the spirit), this insight speaks to the fact that our work in sustaining the global system is an act of co-creation with God Himself.

What are the curricular implications of the vision outlined above? It should be pointed out that “futures studies” programs are mushrooming around the country, if not internationally. The following is an excerpt from literature promoting the M.S. in Futures Studies at the University of Houston:

In the 20th century, an awareness of the increasing pace and magnitude of change has spurred the creation of a new academic discipline known as Futures Studies. While only a prophet or fortuneteller would claim the ability to foretell the future, Futures Studies aims to understand and cope with the long term forces of change as they affect both the planet and people — both the whole of humanity and the individual.

Futures researchers track technical innovations, value shifts, geopolitical tides, environmental perturbations, economic developments, demographic patterns, and other trends of change. From these data they create scenarios of possible alternative futures, which are then used as contingencies within strategic planning.
initiatives. Working as facilitators or consultants, futures researchers can help communities, corporations and organizations envision their preferred futures and compare those visions with current trends and scenarios of possible futures. This process leads to the kind of practical planning and policy-making that truly brings about change.

Our objective here at Seton Hall should be to incorporate a futures theme into a liberal arts context. (Down the road we may in fact want to consider developing a futures studies program ourselves.) A futures-oriented core would be divided into two parts: foundational and substantive. Foundational courses would provide students with the competencies required to engage in a meaningful dialogue about the future. They might be divided into the following areas:

Communication Foundations
Written communication
Oral communication
Foreign language competency
Competency in various software packages, e.g., Word, Excel, Frontpage, and Powerpoint

Quantitative and Investigative Foundations
Statistics
Information technology and Web-based research
Library, archival research techniques

Critical-Thinking Foundations
Logic
The scientific method
Analytical reasoning
Textual analysis and interpretation

Substantive courses would focus on topics of crucial importance to our future and our capacity to manage it successfully. I propose that five seminars be offered in this connection:

Guiding the Future
Factors in societal guidance
Introduction to futures studies
Developing and testing scenarios
An overview of trends
The contributions of the various disciplines to the study of the future

The Impact of Technology
The social, existential and ethical implications of biotechnology
The social, existential and ethical implications of information technology

The social, existential and ethical implications of communications technology

Intercultural/Intergroup Relations
Intergroup/Interethnic/Interreligious/Intersocietal conflict and violence
The postmodern world
Fundamentalist movements
Hegemony of Western culture

Globalization and the Global Village
The dominance of McWorld and multi-national corporations
Justice issues in the distribution of wealth and resources
Environmental interdependence and degradation, global warming

Capstone Seminar
A senior thesis that relates the student's major field to future studies

To this point I have not really thought through the credits to be assigned to each of the above or what the total number of core curriculum credits would turn out to be. I do agree that the total should not exceed 36 credits.

In conclusion, I believe that the grounding of the core curriculum in the study of the future has much to commend it. First, such a focus would, I argue, make the core curriculum experience particularly meaningful for our students, given its obvious and direct relevance to their lives. Second, futures studies is highly integrative and interdisciplinary. It lends itself to input from the natural sciences, psychology, the social sciences, the arts and literature, philosophy and theology. Not only does future studies bring together various disciplinary perspectives, but also it is capable of linking past, present and future; for our ability to guide the future requires that we understand how we have arrived at this particular point in the human experience. Tapping into our past is necessary for navigating our way into the future. This insight needs to be incorporated into any futures-oriented liberal arts curriculum.

References
1 This discussion draws on Amiash Etzioni's discussion of the ocean liner metaphor in Social Problems, Prentice-Hall, 1976, p. 46.
3 This description was published in the World Future Society (New Jersey Chapter) Newsletter, September, 2001.
If a man does away with his traditional way of living and throws away his good customs, he had better first make certain that he has something of value to replace them.

- Basuto Proverb

Catholics know that confession is good for the soul, so let me begin with mine. I played a major role in the creation of the current College of Arts and Sciences core curriculum back in the early 1980s and, like the rest of us, I have been living with this "sin" ever since.

It all seemed so venial then. We had a college-wide distribution requirement that already required less coursework than those of us with a modicum of liberal education had been subjected to as students 20 years earlier. In my mind, the curriculum was already watered-down, so I figured that all the Core Curriculum Committee had to do was to rearrange the distribution requirement to give it some coherence and call it a core. As I look back on it now, however, I realize that some of the best and brightest in the college had been wrestling over the implementation strategy without success for well over a year when I arrived upon the Seton Hall scene in 1979.

In my prior life, I had been on the faculty of a state university where, on my way to tenure, I had been selected as a Danforth Associate. Now defunct, the Danforth Associate Program sought to identify professors recognized by their peers as those who attempted to humanize the educational process — whatever that means. The program ultimately became a social club for the academic elite, and this probably accounts for the decision of the Danforth Foundation to withdraw funding in the late 1980s. Nevertheless, I arrived on campus with these credentials and somebody decided that with all this experience I was a natural to help with the implementation of the new core curriculum. So there I was, in my first year at Seton Hall, serving on the Core Curriculum Committee at its most crucial hour.

After many meetings it became clear to me that it was impossible for the Core Curriculum Committee to come up with a coherent core curriculum. Every time the committee approached coherence, we were faced with the realities of turf. Each department that had a share of the distribution requirement was reluctant to give up that share for the good of the core. Jobs were on the line and the times were thorny. Our deliberations were not helped at all by the fact Seton Hall's first lay president was under fire, and the strong whiff of faculty unionization was in the air.

Finally, the committee hit upon the idea of a modified distribution requirement that could masquerade as a core curriculum. We broke the distribution requirement down into the 10 or so categories that now appear in the catalogue as the Arts and Sciences Core, and we rearranged the distribution requirement within these categories. I participated in this exercise with the full understanding that our strategy was designed merely to gain enough votes to adopt the new core curriculum. If I did not originally suggest it, I certainly acquiesced to the idea of allowing different departments to offer courses that would satisfy a given core requirement. I even worked out and distributed a little chart that showed how, given this aspect of the proposed core curriculum, a department might even enroll more students under the new core curriculum requirement than they currently enrolled under the distribution requirement.

The possibility of a free enterprise core curriculum requirement proved to be irresistible. The core curriculum was adopted by the College, and the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) was charged with the responsibility of approving specific courses for the various sections of the core. By this time, I had been elected as a member of the EPC, and at the start of the year in which the courses were to be assigned to the core curriculum, I was elected its chair. We devised the forms and procedures that are still used today by the EPC to approve core curriculum courses, and we assembled the first Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum. I had the dubious honor of placing this core curriculum before the Arts and Sciences faculty where it was approved and made binding on all students admitted to the College of Arts and Sciences in Fall 1984.

Was this really a core curriculum? No. Did I know what I had done? Of course I did. For the sake of expediency, I had promoted a flawed core curriculum that failed to identify those specific courses that were at the heart of a liberal arts education. Here and there we had 6-credit blocks of information that were deemed to be essential to the education of every student in the college, and the student had the choice of acquiring this essential information by taking one of up to 12 course sequences offered by as many as four different departments. Just
how essential could one of 12 different course sequences be? It was a joke that everybody understood, even the administrators.

At the risk of being reminded as to how the road to hell is paved, let me state that I had good intentions. I was 20 years more idealistic at that time and not nearly so well versed in the ways of the world. I actually thought that the departments that offered competitive courses within a given area of core would, with appropriate administrative encouragement, come together to develop a single core course for that area. Little did I realize that we were to be subjected to more than a decade of academic leadership that fostered division more than it fostered cooperation among the faculty. At the very least, release time could have been provided for the purpose of developing coherent, interdepartmental core courses, but to my knowledge, it was not. Without this administrative leadership, the Seton Hall faculty was unable to elect representatives to the EPC who would restrain the growth of the core curriculum — and it grew with abandon.

In the end, the Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum became firmly entrenched. In many departments, it has become a cash cow that is so frequently milked by adjunct herdsmen that reform by providing release time or by tightening up on educational policy is virtually impossible. In the words of the Basuto proverb at the start of this essay, the Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum has become a traditional way of living, a good custom that cannot be thrown away without being certain of having something of value to replace it. This observation provides some understanding of the recent failed attempt to reform the Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum by means of an external ad hoc core curriculum committee. Much well intentioned effort was expended on this endeavor, but at its conclusion, the College did not see enough value in the proposed core curriculum to allow it to give up its traditional way of living. In fact, the wisdom of the Basuto explains why we are in this predicament in the first place: The traditional distribution requirements were such good customs — they provided such steady employment — that they could not be replaced without acquiring something of even more value in exchange, namely, the promise of even steadier employment for the entrepreneurial in our midst.

In the intervening years, core curricula have been developed in the colleges of Business, Diplomacy and International Relations, Education and Human Services, and Nursing. These curricula generally require specific courses within each college and, in most instances, specific courses within Arts and Sciences. That is, specific Arts and Sciences courses are generally required in the core curriculum of Business, Diplomacy and Nursing; Education has followed the example of Arts and Sciences and has provided some of the same options appearing in the Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum. Some of the core courses within all of these colleges are Arts and Sciences listings, so any proposed changes in the core curriculum of these colleges will impact heavily upon Arts and Sciences.

Now we are engaged in a great civil discourse testing whether our system of separate core curricula within each college can long endure. We have once again appointed a Core Curriculum Committee, this time across the entire university, and we seem once again poised to attempt to hammer out some compromise that will hold the promise of sufficient value to do away with (at least some of) our traditional way of living. I wish us good luck, but I am reminded of the adage that good luck happens when preparation meets opportunity, and I am presenting this analysis of our recent history in core curriculum development in the hope that this will prepare us to benefit from our successes and to learn from our mistakes, should the opportunity be presented. Let me summarize these points:

Before we replace existing core curricula with a new University Core Curriculum we had better be certain that the new requirements will be more valuable to us than the old. This is the fundamental wisdom of the Basuto. The perception of value will drive the adoption of a university core; the realization of value will drive its success.

We have had success when we have left course development to the faculty. Say what you will about the current Arts and Sciences Core, it has been on the books for almost 20 years. It was adopted only after the Core Curriculum Committee defined the core credit requirements and then stepped aside to leave the course development to those who would be responsible for teaching these courses. This is sound academic policy; barring triage, we don’t appoint a college committee to revise a departmental major. While I was not a part of the recent failed effort to revise the Arts and Sciences Core, I seem to recall that that committee proposed specific course requirements in their revision. We should not repeat this mistake.

Allocation of university resources is an integral part of core curriculum development. I know, this shouldn’t enter into the picture, but it does. We have become accustomed to these traditional ways, and we fund a lot of worthy activities within our respective departments out of the tuition generated by these required courses. If these credit
hours were to go elsewhere, what of value would the losing department receive as a replacement?

If we do not improve the instructional quality in the core curriculum, revision is meaningless. I have already noted that, in many departments, core courses are taught by adjuncts so that the senior faculty can be about some other business of the department. Yet these are the very courses that demand our best senior faculty, the faculty who will be remembered by these students 40 years hence. We owe it to our students to ensure the quality of instruction in these core courses.

In addition to these points, one final observation is necessary before I propose a plan of action for your consideration: If we are successful in developing a University Core Curriculum, each college will have two core curricula, its own in addition to the University core. This obvious fact of life becomes apparent when one examines the core curriculum requirements in colleges other than Arts and Sciences. All colleges other than Arts and Sciences already have at least two sets of core curriculum requirements, one set requiring courses within the college and another requiring courses within Arts and Sciences. It would be foolhardy for us to even consider the imposition of college specific core requirements across the University. Thus, we must recognize that some college core requirements will persist, even if we adopt a new University core. (For example, I believe that a foreign language requirement will continue to exist in Arts and Sciences and Diplomacy, even if it does not become part of a University Core Curriculum.) This observation presents a remarkable opportunity for us to be sure that we have something of value in hand before we dispose of our good customs. Once the University Core Curriculum is adopted, it should be up to each college to decide what part of its own college core curriculum will be retained, and what part the new core would replace.

There are many roads to Rome, and this modest proposal lays out but one possible route to a University core curriculum. It does not propose any specific courses for the University core curriculum; these choices are best made by those who must live with their consequences. However, it does address the issues raised above in what I believe is a logical manner. Here is my proposed plan of action.

The Senate Core Curriculum Committee should immediately seek to identify those areas of human knowledge that are essential to the educational development of every Seton Hall student. Since it appears that the colleges will continue to retain the right to specify their own core curriculum requirements, the Senate Committee should recognize that University Core Curriculum requirements will be in addition to (rather than in replacement of) existing college requirements. Thus, in making this identification, the committee should consider the current core curricula within the various colleges so that new University Core Curriculum courses, when developed, will have a good chance of replacing many of the existing core courses within the various colleges on a voluntary basis. Conducting a complete analysis of the enrollment patterns for each existing core curriculum course may facilitate this study. Some attention should also be given to the possible consolidation of different courses that satisfy a single Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum requirement. Once these essential areas of knowledge are identified, this approved outline of the University Core Curriculum should be passed on to the appropriate academic unit where new courses could be developed by faculty having the established expertise to do so. The product of this effort, the actual list of University core courses, could be subject to Senate Committee approval before being presented to the University faculty for adoption.

University core courses should be developed within a new academic unit having no direct interest in any current college core curriculum. This new academic unit is needed to assure the quality of all University core courses. It could be a new college such as the Core College envisioned by some of the contributors to this volume. It could be an existing college such as University College that has no current interest in the core curriculum. It could even be a new department such as a Department of University Core within an existing college, such as Arts and Sciences. It is only essential that this academic unit be independent of any existing college core curriculum requirement and that it be headed by an administrator having the authority to make faculty appointments. In all subsequent discussion, I shall refer to this academic unit as the Core College, even though this is not my first choice for its designation.

Faculty members appointed to Core College will have a vested interest in the success of core course development. Core College would have a dean who would be charged with the responsibility of coordinating the development and implementation of the University core curriculum as provided by the Senate Core Curriculum Committee. The dean of Core College would appoint qualified faculty and give them the specific assignment to develop the University core curriculum as authorized by the Senate Committee. Should these courses be approved for the University core curriculum, they would
be offered by Core College and taught initially by those who developed them.

The faculty who develop courses for the University core curriculum should be compensated for their services. Budget lines would be created within the Core College so that joint appointments could be made with faculty in other colleges in order to obtain release time for these qualified individuals to develop University core courses. Release time commensurate with the responsibility of developing each University core course could then be granted by the Core College dean, with the remainder of the regular compensation, if any, provided through the joint appointment. This development could go so far as offering these new courses on a "special topics" basis. Should it be necessary to offer these university core courses on a special topics basis, the full cooperation of the appropriate college (Arts and Sciences in most instances) would be anticipated so that, wherever possible, students could use these courses to meet existing college core curriculum requirements.

Once the University core curriculum is approved, the University will recognize its commitment to the core curriculum by appointing additional full-time senior faculty to teach University core courses within the Core College at a reduced teaching load. This will assure that the quality of our core courses is at the highest level possible by providing course-load reduction as an incentive for senior faculty to teach these courses. Joint appointment to Core College, however, would not be automatic, and the faculty and the administration of Core College would exercise control over faculty appointments to the Core College as outlined in the Faculty Guide. While the primary reason for proposing this incentive is quality assurance, it must be noted that joint appointment with Core College removes part or all of that salary expenditure from the departmental budget, thereby releasing these resources for other departmental needs. This, in turn, could provide a powerful incentive for a college to agree to shift the burden of core course instruction from the college to the University.

That is my proposal. I hope you find it worthy of your consideration. If not, please consider it my penance for the part I played in subjecting you to the current Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum for all these many years.

* Quoted by Robert Ruark in the author's forward to Something of Value, his 1954 novel on the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya.
A SIGNATURE EXPERIENCE
Marian Glenn

Part I: A Signature Seton Hall Experience for all Students

Beginning with the guidelines for general education suggested by the American Association for Higher Education, I have engaged in “mental percolation” over the core discourse of the past few months and am here presenting my current thinking about our new core curriculum. As the discussion continues, I have no doubt that these ideas will continue to evolve.

Here are the essential pedagogical goals:
1. The core curriculum should lead students to carry out the mission, or calling of the University and should extend throughout all four undergraduate years (and even beyond).
2. Students should be introduced to the literature that forms the foundation for the major disciplines of the arts and sciences. Students should be inspired to connect the exploration of the arts and sciences with their quest for the good life.
3. Students should be led to assess and develop essential intellectual competencies, numerical, rhetorical and philosophical (logical and ethical). Remediation, if necessary, should be undertaken outside the core in appropriate department courses.
4. Students should be taught, as much as possible, by our full-time faculty.
5. Students should be encouraged to extend their learning beyond the classroom to create a community of learners within and even outside the University.
6. The whole experience should be developed and assessed in an evolving framework.

The administrative features necessary to build such a core are critical to its success. These structures would also need to evolve as the needs of the program become more clearly defined. As an initial proposal, I’d suggest the following general principles:
1. The program should be run by a separate unit, a Core College led by a dean-level faculty member, and staffed largely by full-time faculty and student affairs personnel who are partly or fully released from their regular assignments.
2. Departments whose full-time faculty apply and are selected for Core College assignments should be compensated.
3. A standing assessment and review committee should be at work from the start. One of the first charges for this committee is to propose how faculty assignments in the Core College will be assessed in tenure and promotion.
4. The Faculty Senate and the provost will cooperate in leading the process of change.

Part II: Valuable Features of the Current Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum

In preparation for this core discussion, I wrote to a large number of the full-time faculty who teach core courses in the arts and sciences, and asked for their thoughts on “particular features of their course, skills, content or methodology, of special value for the general education of the non-major.” The 20 faculty who replied provided many ideas for further discussion. Excerpts are presented below. The comments are arranged in reverse order of faculty seniority, that is, with comments from the University’s newest faculty presented first in each category.

Rhetorical skills

I require that students follow the Chicago (Turabian) style in their writing. There is heavy emphasis in all of my courses on good academic writing.

Students today seem to be limited in their interest in reading ... I reinforce the material at the end of each [unit] with a video.

From the English department: We’re open to the idea of faculty in other departments, who have come through WAC training, helping us with the load of teaching ENGL 1201.

In Logic we teach our students to reason well, effectively and critically. By developing these abilities, they will be able to communicate effectively verbally and in writing.

Oral Communication (COST 1600) aims to introduce students to the theory of human communications, provide ‘expert’ feedback and guidance, reduce levels of communication apprehension and
encourage tolerance for diversity. None of these objectives is adequately met by a ‘communication-across-the-curriculum’ approach.

Students should be able to write a concise report based on their observations and data (i.e., not a searchable topic, not an essay).

The writing skills of the students I see in xxx are so bad, any hint of reducing the English core seems crazy ... We're graduating students in the humanities who are stuck at a junior high level of written work. The core is the place to make certain the students can write.

Course objectives and content

To develop an awareness of the ways in which our lives are shaped by the past.

to provide basic tools that allow students to participate in educated discourse drawing on the tradition of Western thought.

I strongly believe that core courses should be very demanding and that our students will rise to the occasion.

I take considerable pains to present xxx as an activity or process oriented toward problem-solving ... The course, it is hoped, develops critical thinking, analytical reasoning and communication skills.

I try to expose students not only to a wide variety of texts important for an understanding of the topic of the class, but choose texts that tell us something about our common human nature, our weaknesses and strength, and the problems we have created and must face.

Sociology, as I see it, has a clear moral mission, and I attempt to organize the intro course around that mission.

My objective is that the students end the course with a solid, basic understanding of seven of the world’s great religious traditions.

To provide the student with an introduction to the discipline of political thought characterizing the most influential works of political philosophy in Western civilization.

... there is a large amount of material that must be absorbed.

One of my main goals is to make evident our own biases as humans and show students how scientific thinking and objectivity can balance our biases. I try to make them good consumers of the information that they encounter in their lives ... my focus is on the information directly related to psychology, but my hope is that their critical eye will fall upon all of the information they encounter.

History as part of the core offers important skills for all students — how to organize a large body of information, writing skills, evaluation of sources, critical thinking, access to differing opinions/interpretations ... far more than just facts or a list of events.

... we recommend a core literature requirement along the lines of World Lit I & II. We are open to envisioning these courses as interdisciplinary, theme-oriented, team-taught, or in any other creative way.

... we need more discussions and training about moral values across the curriculum.

In the department, we've started to question the value of xx in the core. It certainly gives students an overview of the discipline, but there is a sense that students would be better served by xxx, which would emphasize the value of citizenship education, creating a more informed and critically thinking person.

To demonstrate that science proceeds by the development of laws and theories.

To collect and use actual data and a simple formula to predict an outcome. Measure an outcome and compare to the predicted answer. This skill is virtually non-existent amongst our students ... To use Excel or manual means to present and graph some simple data.

Although there are countless ways of reading reality, I try to foster what I think is the unique vision of philosophy.

Class format

Ideally the course would run in a seminar format with no more than 15 students per group — rather like the Contemporary Civilization courses at Columbia University.

I meet each of them in person at the beginning of the semester.

Courses in a discipline taught by someone from that discipline give students a richer experience (than interdisciplinary courses) ... I feel catch-all courses and interdisciplinary courses always sound the best but are resistant to the harsh reality — large numbers of instructors, large numbers of sections, and a lack of departmental affiliation and support.

Team-teaching doesn't work for unsophisticated freshmen.

There are very few competent Renaissance scientists willing to devote years to the 'core.'

I use the old-fashioned lecture method with a modicum of new-fashioned technique to encourage discussion and questioning.

Finally, a note on process

Have the deans put together a wish list before the faculty spends two years discussing nothing/everything.

I also asked faculty to send copies of their syllabi and have compiled them into a reference binder. My idea with the syllabi was to look at course objectives. The interesting finding was that, although most of the syllabi had a section on course CONTENT, very few stated OBJECTIVES. This also seems like a useful point of departure for discussion. "What do we want our students to become?"
Part III: Imagining a New University Core: Dialogues of Reason, Faith and Service

Reminiscence, November 2004

The University has undertaken a comprehensive project in discernment of vocation, from individual students and faculty reflecting on the meaning of a call to discussions at all levels on the vocation of a university itself. This discourse has set a new perspective for the discussion of curriculum and has taken an important place in developing the new University core, with its focus on academic dialogue and community service as a ‘calling’ of the liberal arts and sciences. Here’s how that plays out in a typical scene from the new core course, Fruits of Civilization.

Monday morning, 10 minutes before 9 a.m., Professor Heinrichs thanks the media tech and the easy jazz of an old tune activates the time machine as Koslowski Hall Auditorium begins to fill. Two dozen faculty find seats amidst the students of their discussion sections. The screen holds the image of a Berlin café of the 1920s superimposed upon a map of Africa. Once the presentations begin, the screen is used for the video enhanced close-ups of the speakers, although they pace the stage and some even mingle with the audience.

“Meine Damen und Herren, please take your seats, the show is about to begin.” This morning it is a diplomacy major from Nigeria who won the chance to introduce Professor Heinrichs. Another first year student, business bound, is also on stage, prepared to introduce Professor Cauker. The students look poised and comfortable chatting with the featured faculty. Like their classmates, they’ve absorbed and practiced the techniques for effective interviewing that Professor Gottlieb demonstrated the first week of class. Her annotated interview with Monsignor Liddy on the influence of Bernard Lonergan brought the freshmen up close to several important guides for their intellectual journey at Seton Hall. On the lighter side was Professor Plummer’s running commentary on the speech prep session staged by Professor Yates and Dean VanOosting. Each of the students practiced what they’d observed on stage by interviewing each other in their discussion groups. 20 students meeting twice a week with their assigned faculty member.

I’m anticipating with delight and curiosity what today’s duo of faculty will present. The featured faculty change each week, with course continuity maintained by the discussion section leaders. The idea is to introduce the students to the range of disciplines that our faculty represent by featuring two each week. The duos present two perspectives on a topic in such a way that the student’s inherent interest in the topic is piqued by the depth of insight that comes from a discipline-focused analysis. It was quite a process to develop these stage shows, (about which more below). But the results are a hit with both students and the faculty, generating real intellectual excitement on campus and revealing the depth of commitment of the faculty to their studies and their students.

Witnessing the faculty duos once a week and clicking through the web site is engaging and informative, and the follow-up discussion sections on Wednesdays and Fridays give everyone a chance to contribute to the week’s assigned reading and discussion questions. About the course Web site: the Teaching and Learning Technology Center worked beforehand with the presenting faculty to produce an interactive Web-based lesson that goes way beyond “talking heads.” The featured faculty also pose a set of questions. Each student posts a response for the discussion section to consider, and the sections also post further threads for the whole class to consider. Students have a full week to turn over ideas from each week’s extensive reading list.

There’s also a designated section of the cafeteria, reserved for students in this core class. All of the discussion leaders have committed to eating there at least once a week, and the featured faculty are there every day for “their” week. More and more it’s become an all day drop-in for both faculty and students. In fact, the leaders of the focus groups evaluating the course decided to hold their sessions in the cafeteria as well.

The idea for a course in which one credit would be outside class has worked well. Concerts, plays and the art gallery have gained a huge audience, and the student-initiated film series has raised plenty of funds selling popcorn. The trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art was a production with five buses, but luckily it’s a big enough place to absorb the crowd.

Students Affairs and Campus Ministry have been successful in getting the students engaged with community service. Part of Friday’s discussion always focuses on this aspect of the course, applying their insights about the reading and ideas of the week to issues in the community, and discussing actions that they can become involved with. Receiving a Student Affairs person with each of the core faculty members has gone a long way toward developing a more integrated campus experience for the first and second-year students, not to mention the insights it’s given to faculty and administrators.
What has been most gratifying about the new core effort has been the sense of intellectual excitement on campus. Giving faculty members a chance to discuss their favorite ideas with first-year students has opened our students' intellectual windows to disciplines that none of them even knew existed, and has suggested possible majors that they'd never considered before. Likewise for the faculty! And the increase in the amount the students are reading has been unprecedented. By posing questions that link the reading with their presentations on stage, faculty provide a guided tour of some pretty sophisticated work.

The library faculty has been instrumental in the success of the new program, supporting the huge demand for reference advice from seniors engaged in their semester-long writing projects. And the phenomenal window displays are showing off the University Archives and giving all of us a sense of connection between Seton Hall's present and past. The library faculty and the FT teams have worked with departments to develop core sets of materials so that students can effectively window-shop for their major and minor.

We agreed early on that the core should be a common experience that focused on forming our students, that affirmed and engaged the diversity within our University community, and that would provide a core of content, encourage reading and reflection and promote action. Nevertheless, arriving at our current "in-progress" state of core was a leap of faith on the part of all. The first step was to entrust the core transformation to a dozen elected faculty. This committee sought wide participation, engaging a suite of partners from Student Affairs and developing a sophisticated call for proposals with the promise of funding for development. Once the proposals were reviewed, revised and one of them was approved, the leap of faith on the part of each of the colleges was to entrust this core revision to a shared vision, faith in their colleagues, and to the process of staged implementation with continuous assessment.

The new core courses give each department the opportunity to showcase its disciplines for all students. And the students, by selecting a major and an Arts and Sciences minor follow two disciplines into some depth during their four year stay. The new core meant big changes in College of Arts and Sciences departments that had had large credit generation in the "old cores." Rather than delivering the dozens of sections of introductory courses, their faculty are freed to participate in the new core or to develop a tiered series of courses for the minor.

Of course, there remain many issues still under consideration. One of the most significant, academically and fiscally, is how well the adjunct faculty and graduate student teaching assistants are doing as junior fellows of the core team. Another issue is how well students are acquiring competence in numeracy, rhetoric and ethics. The competencies are addressed in several ways.

1. Basic levels of English and math preparedness are assessed through the SATs, NJ tests of Basic Skills, NY Regents Exams and our own placement exams. Many students spend the summer taking Basic Skills classes so they are ready to begin college-level work in the fall. Some are still enrolled in the Basic Skills courses in the fall. The core team set up special discussion sections of the core for students enrolled in Basic Skills courses.

2. Students in all discussion sections develop a portfolio of work to demonstrate competencies in a range of specific areas under the categories of numeracy, rhetoric and ethics. At mid-semester, students make a self-assessment and plan for improvement, and this is approved by their discussion leaders. The plan may call for a course or module in a competency-based course, such as oral interpretation, speed reading, expository writing, research skills, logic, etc., that is taught by the relevant departments.

3. So far, the Honors students continue to have a different core experience.

4. Integrating transfer students into the core program is a challenge.

What makes me optimistic about resolving these issues is that we have a core team that is responsive to dialogue, that takes assessment and ongoing evaluation seriously, and that realizes that we aren't writing in stone. We're modeling for our students what it means to live with our old motto, Hazard set forward.

Part IV: Proposal for a Signature Core Curriculum at Seton Hall University

"What characterized the Core, as we understood it, was its commitment to the exploration of foundational issues, its discourse on method, its determination to show students the underlying preoccupations, the motivating and interlocking questions behind adjacent disciplines. It is this insistence on the meta-level, of course, which makes the Core potentially so hard to teach. The students are initially confused and disoriented by the greater emphasis placed"
on method than on material. In the short run, indeed, they may feel they’re not learning anything. In the long run, and in retrospect, however, the Core courses can feel to them like the framework or foundation for all their subsequent coursework. By the same token, it is doubtless easier for professors to teach material in their fields of expert knowledge. But in the long run, it can be much more intellectually enriching for them, as well, to have to explain (and thus be forced to grapple anew) with the underlying questions of their own disciplines and of those around them.”

Comments by core committee member at the University of Chicago

Dialogues on Reason, Faith and Service:
An Education for the 21st Century, Rooted in the Catholic Humanistic Tradition

Overview of requirements for Bachelor’s Degree

**Signature courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Roots and Growing Tips: Paradigm Shifts in World Consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Stems and Branches: Encounters with a Transcendent Presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Fruits of Civilization: Literature, History, Fine and Performance Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Stewardship: Our Common Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or 6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ethics, Moral Values, Vocation/Profession with a Service Component, offered in context of different disciplines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senior Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senior Project of Service and Research (Major Capstone may substitute for this course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27-30 credits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional general education requirements**

- **Minor** 18 credits
  - Arts and Sciences minor not overlapping with major

- **College and major requirements** up to 60 credits

- **Electives** variable

- **Total** 128 credits

The curriculum of the first four semesters consists of a series of 48 faculty panels (usually 2-member panels), illustrating the complex encounters between reason, faith and service. Here is how a Core Team might go about developing the program.

1. The Core Team is versed in the following areas of functional expertise:
   - service learning;
   - Writing Across the Curriculum;
   - Blackboard and other IT course enhancements;
   - rhetorical skills;
   - assessment through portfolio evaluation; and
   - grant writing and evaluation (for preparation of request for proposals (RFP) and its evaluation).

2. The Core Team develops a set of criteria for the faculty panels and puts out a request for proposals (RFP) to the faculty. The Core Team holds open meetings to discuss the RFP and develops a collegial rapport with faculty interested in proposing panels.

3. Faculty teams submit a panel outline and reading list.

4. Core Team meets with finalists and funds development of the panels.

5. Instructional design consultants meet with faculty to design Web-based presentation of the lesson (moving beyond movies of talking heads).

6. The panels are piloted as guest lectures in courses that are currently running, chosen by the faculty.

7. Core team representatives attend the lectures and conduct focus groups with students afterward.

8. Faculty and Core Team reps meet to revise the presentation and critique the reading list.
9. Featured faculty meet with the team of Discussion Section Leaders to discuss the material and develop the discussion questions and writing assignments.

10. Featured faculty meet with Core Team members leading the service component to discuss links between service and their topic.

11. The panels are presented live and archived on the Web. Eight hundred students may attend the two live performances, the others will engage the material on the Web. Alternatively, the presentation can be presented in a venue with seating for 1,500 and the video enhancement can be perfected.

The first four courses, DIAL 1001 – DIAL 2002, consist of faculty panels presented in a large auditorium on Mondays and small group discussion sections or 20 students that meet for 75 minutes twice per week. Discussion leaders attend the panels, work with the featured faculty, and participate in follow-up activities on the Web and in the cafeteria. In addition, each section will carry out a service project under the advisement of their instructor and a service learning representative from Student Affairs. Students are graded on a portfolio of assignments that consists of weekly written work and oral presentations made at least twice per semester.

Course content

"The survey course is the perversion of [a liberal education]... A course or program that is diffuse will be an object of mere acquisition, a rhetoric of mere conclusions ...The challenge is to penetrate to the problem, to attack and try to solve it. It is only when challenges of that kind are recognized by students, prepared for, and met, that the disciplines that liberate rise."

Adapted from Joseph Jackson Schwab,
Liberal Education In The Modern University
(www.cfn.uchicago.edu/no3.html)

DIAL 1001: Paradigm shifts in world consciousness
(5 credits) Paradigm shifts are the measure of intellectual progress.

Possible panel topics; others may be suggested by faculty:
1. What is human consciousness? Does neuroscience explain the soul?
2. Culture is the result of the human mind encountering the environment (anthropology, religion)

3. Our ancestors discovered heavenly events linked to cyclic changes on earth (astronomy, history, sociology, religion).

4. Understanding the place of humans in the universe and the paradigm shift with Galileo, Newton, Hawking that set humans as a small cog in the machine of nature (philosophy, religion, astronomy, history).

5. Changing understanding of the relation of humans: citizens, democracy, divine right of kings, human rights

6. Postmodernism and the deconstruction of identity (psychology, political science).

7. Race and ethnicity reflect the interplay of biological, cultural and political evolution.

8. What is the good life?

Field trips:
- The American Museum Of Natural History
- History Of The Universe Exhibit
- Evolution Of Life Exhibit
- The Cultural Artifacts Of Yesteryear Exhibit

DIAL 1002: Encounters with a transcendent presence (5 credits)
1. History and current status of world-faith traditions
2. Religion and psychology
3. Religion and war
4. Religion and social justice

Field trips:
- The Cloisters
- A Mosque
- A Synagogue
- A Cathedral

Study trips:
- Rome
- Istanbul
- Calcutta
- Jerusalem
- Cairo
- Bali
- Bangkok
- Service learning in local communities to prepare for travel
1. Investigation and examination by juxtaposing philosophical, literary and historiographic modes of interpretation, (i.e., exploring the places where humanistic and social scientific inquiry overlapped)
2. Reading texts foundational to several different disciplines within the social sciences.

Field trips:
- Metropolitan Museum Of Art
- Museum Of Modern Art
- Plays
- Concerts

Community service:
- Sponsoring a school or church art exhibit or poetry reading
- Bringing school groups to campus for exhibits or plays
- Performing with students at a local school or church

DIAL 2002: Stewardship: Our common future (5 credits)

Possible panel topics:
1. Geography as destiny: political and cultural, physical, economic
2. Human migration and U.S. Immigration
3. Capitalism and free markets
4. Democracy, human rights and civil society
5. International organizations and world governance
6. Issues in global health
7. The global commons: oceans, climate, space
8. When poor countries have valuable resources
9. Leadership and service in stewardship

Field trips:
- The United Nations
- Government offices
- Catholic world services and others
- Corporate headquarters

VOCA 3001-3099 (4 credits)
Choice of a variety of courses examining values in the context of disciplines or issues, with a major service learning component. Discussion of vocation and its relation to professional choices.

As an example, Daniel Garber, University of Chicago professor of Philosophy, describes a core course called “Human Being and Citizen.” Aristotle’s Ethics and Augustine’s Confessions offer very different models of inquiry, both of which are unusual and provocative from a modern point of view. Augustine’s complex encounter with Ciceronian, Manichean, neoplatonic, Aristotelian, and Christian explanations and terms generates many issues and, along with Aristotle’s Ethics, provides a surprisingly interesting context for reading Shakespeare.

CAPS 3101/3102 (optional 2 credits each)
Capstone preparation 1 and 2

Capstone experience begins in the third year, with a collective decision on the broad topic for the 4th year exploration. A steering committee of students and faculty take charge of setting up the speakers for the next year, constituting a 2-credit course each semester, for those on the steering committee. The committee manages the budget, invitations, scheduling and preparation of reading material.

CAPS 4001 Senior Capstone: Springboard for lifelong learning (3 credits)

Meets once a week for a large lecture and once for discussion groups.

Semester-long exploration of a broad theme of contemporary importance, selected at the conclusion of the second year, planned during the third year, and carried out in the fourth year.

University Forum will involve presentations, panels, shows, films, etc. Many institutions use similar fora as both “star vehicles” for faculty and serious moments of thought and reflection about liberal education. Recognizing that the faculty may have entirely different conceptions for the Forum, this reader would recommend that the Forum be required of freshmen as well as seniors. That would not mean that the freshmen should be required to take seminars, but rather that a record of their attendance — say seven out of fifteen in a semester — would be kept. It might be possible, indeed desirable, to encourage or arrange for seniors to bring cohorts of freshmen to the fora. In this way, the fora will be a beginning and end, a reflective proof of self-mutation, for all students. Done early on a Friday night in midwinter, followed by a brief reception, this might unite faculty and students while enlivening campus intellectual and social life. On the faculty side, many institutions
use such fora to allow the professors to demonstrate how their unique expertise can broaden the consideration of the scope of the liberal arts ... one might ask professors to start with a topic, work, figure, period, some familiar aspect out of one of the courses of the curriculum, ... One spectacular example this writer has witnessed at another campus involved the use of an overhead projector by a professor to illustrate Chinese principles of artistry while he created a silk screen-cherry blossom painting. Other professors simply wow by their modulated thought and timbre of extended lecture. Still others use "shorts" of film or dramatic scenes by actors, followed by commentary. Seniors might then be invited to ask questions — their moment to become a "faculty." Almost anything is possible and, yet, intellectually probing.

Excerpt from an evaluation of St. Bonaventure University's core, administered by Clare College

CAPS 4002 (optional) Group projects of service and research, required for majors without their own capstone course. 3 credits

Our world is faced with big problems — problems affecting diverse [groups of] people ... in a variety of ways. Their consequences act on various time scales and require study in diverse disciplines. Such problems pose methodological problems even in their description: even their formulation may raise contested issues. We should mark this fact in our curriculum, giving everyone a problem they leave here knowing something about which goes well beyond their individual and disciplinary interests.

This is moral as well as intellectual education, making better scientists, humanists, professionals, and world citizens. Such courses could provide students with a meaningful senior capstone experience — one bridging their education to the world.

With rare exceptions, our students do not now have an occasion to deal with such a big, multi-faceted, complex, important problem especially after their core courses. What is more, purely theoretical solutions to these problems are not enough. Even with agreement about issues, how to implement them effectively, at all levels, nationally or internationally, is seldom addressed. But implementation is part of the intellectual problem.

Sample big "problems:"
1. population and environment: sustainable and diverse, local and global — how many people can the earth support? At what levels? At what costs? To whom?
2. cultural diversities: ethnic, racial, gender, sex, class — how can we live with them? How can we maintain them?
3. energy: sources, choices, cul-de-sacs — how do we renew resources? How do we allocate them?
4. information explosion: flows, overloads, ignorance — how can we select what's valuable? Use what we know? Distribute resources?

Bill Wimsatt, Department of Philosophy, University of Chicago (people.cs.uchicago.edu/~odonnell/OData/CFN/m01.html/open).

Budget

FY 2002
Core Team stipends, $1,000 x 10 members $10,000
Development of Faculty Panels
stipends $1,000 x 48 panels $48,000
TLTC and library support (IDT)

FY 2003
Fall and Spring,
1,400 freshmen, need 70 sections
@ 18-22 students each.
Full-time load is 3 sections,
23 FTE to teach the sections each semester
stipends for faculty panels @ $1,000 (covers both semesters) $24,000

FY 2004 each semester
As above, 23 FTE to teach freshmen
additional 23 FTE to teach sophomores
stipends for faculty panels @ $1,000 (24 per semester) $24,000

FY 2005 each semester
23 FTE for freshmen
23 FTE of sophomores
12 FTE to teach juniors mostly in
PHIL and RELS
Total 58 FTE
stipends for faculty panels @ $1,000 (24 per semester) $24,000
FY 2006 each semester, full roll out.
23 FTE for freshmen
23 FTE of sophomores
12 FTE to teach juniors
15-18 FTE to teach seniors
Total 73-76 FTE for core curriculum.
stipends for faculty panels @ $1,000
(24 per semester) .................................. $24,000

Current full-time faculty in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Faculty</th>
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<td>Art and Music</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
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<td>Political Sciences</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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FTE left to teach majors and minors = 145 - 76 = 68
BIBLIOGRAPHY ON THE CORE CURRICULUM
Summer Seminar 2001


Lonergan Bernard Web site: www.lonergan.on.ca/


BETH S. BLOOM is an associate professor/reference librarian at Seton Hall University. She received an M.L.S. and M.A. (Musicology) at Rutgers University. She is the bibliographic instruction coordinator for the University Libraries and also functions as bibliographer/library liaison to the departments of Art and Music, Women’s Studies, Nursing, the School of Graduate Medical Education and various science departments. Currently, she is working with colleagues on a CDI-4 grant, the goal of which is to incorporate information literacy into the curriculum. She is married to Mark Mendelsohn and has one son, Eric.

GEORGE P. BROWNE is professor of History in the College of Arts and Sciences at Seton Hall University. Teaching United States History and Latin American History since 1968, Browne also serves as the Faculty Athletics Representative. He previously served as the Director of Academic Advising, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Acting Dean of Freshman Studies. He earned his B.A. from the College of Wooster and a M.A., and Ph.D. in Latin American History from the Catholic University of America. Having lived in Brazil during his early childhood years, professor Browne returned there to serve in the Peace Corps and to conduct several research fellowships.

FATHER WALTER DEBOLD was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Newark in 1942 after attending Seton Hall University and Immaculate Conception Seminary at Darlington. He obtained a Masters degree in theology from Notre Dame University in 1966 and a Masters in Asian Area Studies from Seton Hall in 1983. He served as chaplain in the U.S. Army in the Western Pacific during World War II. In other years he served as a parish priest in St. Joseph's Church in Jersey City and St. Joseph’s in Newark. He taught World Religions at Englewood Cliffs College in the 1960s and in the Religious Studies Department at Seton Hall since 1973. He resides in the Xavier Hall dormitory with the students.

ALAN DELOZIER is librarian-archivist/assistant professor at Seton Hall University. He started as a member of the Welsh Library and Special Collections Center staff in 1999, and since that time has engaged in a number of functions including service as a reference librarian, subject specialist in history, philosophy and religious studies, along with various library and University-wide committee task teams. Within the area of Special Collections, he functions as the associate director and records manager where such duties as processing new collections, facilitating research requests, producing finding aids and supervising office staff are a few of the tasks performed on an everyday basis. He received an A.A.S. in Radio/Telecommunications from Mercer County College (1989); a B.A. in Mass Communication with a minor in Theology from St. Bonaventure University (1991); an M.A. in History from Villanova University (1998); and a M.L.S. in Library Science from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (1999). Formerly, he served as college archivist at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey (1994-95), St. Peter’s College (1995-99), and archival technician for the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center (1998-99). He had recent articles on Catholic Tradition and Education published in New Jersey History and Catholic Education, A Journal of Inquiry and Practice.

MARTA MESTROVIC DEYRUP is as an assistant professor/librarian at Seton Hall University. She is a library liaison to the departments of Modern and Classical Languages, the Russian and East European Studies Program and the Department of English. She was formerly an editor and freelance writer, and has written extensively on issues pertaining to Russia and Eastern Europe. She earned a B.A. from Wesleyan University, an M.A. from Columbia University, and a M.L.S. from Rutgers.

MARIAN GLENN’S interest in interdisciplinary liberal arts and sciences education integrates with her roles as associate dean for academic affairs at the School of Diplomacy and International Relations and as professor of biology. Her undergraduate education focused on chemistry and was completed at Middlebury College without benefit of a core curriculum. She also holds a Ph.D. in Biology from Tufts University. Since arriving at Seton Hall in 1985, Glenn has been engaged in general education (her own) through Seton Hall’s many and varied faculty development activities. She served as director of academic advising for undecided students and on the Faculty Senate, as chair and as a co-chair of the Academic Policy and Core Curriculum Committee. She helped design the interdisciplinary environmental programs and
the new global studies curricula at the School of Diplomacy and International Relations. Her research projects and publications range from work on lichens as monitors of forest ecology to surveys of academic advising and Honors programs.

ALBERT B. HAKIM is professor emeritus of philosophy at Seton Hall University. He holds an M.A. from Fordham University and a Ph.D. from the University of Ottawa. He also pursued additional studies at the universities of Louvain and Tubingen. At Seton Hall, Hakim has served as chair of the Department of Philosophy and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He is the author of the text *Historical Introduction to Philosophy* (Prentice Hall). Currently, he is director of the Center for College Teaching.

ANTHONY HAYNOR is an assistant professor of sociology at Seton Hall University. He received his doctoral degree from Rutgers University. He teaches courses in social theory, socialization over the life course, social change, political sociology and sociological practice. Haynor currently is working on a book that develops sociology’s contribution to ethical decision making and problem solving. His other research interests include workplace transformation and modern character structure. Haynor also is involved in the South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race. A member of the Society of Applied Sociology and the Society of Catholic Social Scientists, he is married to Bridgette and has a 6-year-old daughter, Renikah.

JOSEPH T. MALOV is an associate professor of chemistry at Seton Hall University, where his research interests include electroanalytical chemistry and computer modeling of processes controlled by transport phenomena and chemical reaction. Before coming to Seton Hall in 1979, he held tenured teaching positions at West Virginia University (analytical chemistry) and Mount Pleasant (Pennsylvania) High School (mathematics and physical science). He first learned about the arts that make us free as a mathematics major at Saint Vincent College; subsequently, he did his graduate work in physical chemistry at the University of Texas. He holds life memberships in the Society for Electroanalytical Chemistry, Sigma Xi, and the National Eagle Scout Association, and current memberships in the American Chemical Society, the Boy Scouts of America and University Faculty for Life. For the past three years, he has served as the faculty adviser of Seton Hall United for Life, a student pro-life organization.

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