

A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE NEWMAN CENTER ON
ENGAGING WITH DUKE'S CAMPUS CULTURE

Written by Professor Tom Nechyba

Recent events at Duke have cast an uncomfortable spotlight on our community. But that same spotlight has also provided a rare opportunity for Duke to assume leadership in finding new ways of facilitating 21st century undergraduate environments in which students can develop fully as human beings with, in the words of the recent CCISC report,¹ “the savvy, sensitivity, and skill to be global citizens.” This CCISC report challenges “the entire Duke community” to “take ownership and play a significant role in considering thoughtfully how best to enhance campus culture,” to “find more effective ways for students to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others, to develop even greater cross-cultural respect and appreciation, and to commit more readily to use knowledge in the service of society.” It reminds us that, during their time at Duke, students must “come to terms with new capabilities for thinking, feeling and acting,” must develop “autonomy ... in terms of independence ... [and] with regard to ... self motivation and self-regulation,” and must grow in their “capacity of empathy.” All this in turn echoes a central goal in Duke’s strategic plan² – “to foster in the University’s graduates the ability to generate, evaluate and apply knowledge in the service of society, and to become leaders who make a positive difference in the world.”

We fully endorse these principles and goals, and this document represents our own effort to “take ownership” and “play a significant role in considering thoughtfully how best to enhance campus cultures.” Our response does not attempt to address all the specifics of the CCISC report and its recommendations but rather tries to offer a perspective that appears to be missing from the report while complementing many of its findings. In our view, the discussions about the CCISC report have thus far been excessively retrospective, too rigidly focused on centralized approaches, not sufficiently cognizant of some of the deepest and most meaningful aspects of “difference” and not fully in touch with some of the most salient factors that cause our students to step outside of themselves in ways we all agree are desirable. Much of what we have to say is not specific to an exclusively Roman Catholic perspective even when written from the perspective of the Catholic community at Duke. Rather, it is written with an eye toward what it means to have the “savvy, sensitivity and skill to be a global citizen” in the 21st century, what it means for students to “gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others” and what it might take to “move beyond tolerance to respect and beyond “just putting up with” differences to finding positive value in each individual and the diversity among us.”

We will proceed in the remainder of this report in four steps. First, we consider the way in which a campus culture emerges from the decisions and choices that students make *outside* the classroom and *inside* what we call the “civil society” of the university. An understanding of this process leads us away from thinking of campus culture as

¹ *The Report of the Campus Culture Initiative Steering Committee*, February 2007.

² *Making a Difference*, September 2006

something that can be managed from the top – and leaves us skeptical of proposals that appear to mandate a new campus culture. Instead, it leads us toward a view of the university’s responsibility to provide an infrastructure on which a healthy civil society can grow to offer students a multitude of ways to develop fully as human beings. Second, while a healthy civil society is inevitably composed of many “bottom up” institutions, we will argue that it must hold a central place for faith communities -- both because of the importance of faith and reason in 21st Century life and because of the life-changing role reasoned faith can have on both individuals and the cultures affected by them. Third, we recognize that Duke’s mission is not a religious one but will argue that a secular university like Duke – *to the extent to which* it truly welcomes faith communities into the civil society of the university’s life and precisely *because it does not* have religious mission of its own – is an ideal venue for training future leaders for the challenges we worry about most. Finally, we conclude with thoughts on our own possible contributions to this greater civil society at Duke – and to Duke’s larger mission of training students “with the savvy, sensitivity and skill to be global citizens” who seek to employ “knowledge in the service of society”.

The Individual, Civil Society and the Campus Culture at Duke

In essence, we agree with the general sense that emerges from the CCISC report that a healthier campus culture must emerge from what we will call a healthier “civil society” at Duke. By “civil society” we mean the co-existence of multiple ways in which academic life intersects with more informal engagements that nourish the intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs of undergraduates. Our call for this greater role of the civil society rests on a recognition that cultural change can rarely be mandated – rather it *emerges*, almost by definition, from the voluntary choices made by individuals within the culture. It is therefore within the civil society at Duke that the campus culture is endogenously defined, in all those places where students are offered opportunities to choose freely between alternative ways of spending their time and energies outside the classroom. In the absence of a healthy civil society, students look toward alternatives – often involving alcohol and unsatisfying, short-lived relationships. In the absence of institutions that draw freely choosing students from various backgrounds together, peer groups solidify around similarity – often leading to disrespect or indifference towards individuals from other groups. And without a civil society that focuses on stepping outside oneself, it is natural for students to focus inward – to see their time here as pre-professional training punctuated by moments of immediate gratification.

Without a healthy civil society, the interactions and engagements envisioned by the CCISC therefore cannot emerge. Just as importantly, however, the absence of a healthy civil society cheats our students of opportunities to develop fully as human beings during their critical college years. And at this point, the civil societies at colleges and universities are failing. Thirty percent of college students say they have no social life and are “too tired for intimate relationships.” Their self-reported “number one fun activity” is drinking – which they do “to relax, to de-stress and to escape.” Within a school year, 63 percent of college students report feeling hopeless; 46 percent report feeling “so

depressed they could barely function”; 10 percent feel “suicidal”; and 92% report feeling “exhausted but not from physical activity.” And researchers suggest there is evidence that these statistics are getting worse, not better. At Duke, “students talk with one another with some degree of authenticity, especially during their first year. However, the advent of their sophomore year marks decreased efforts to do so outside a small circle of friends.” Duke students identify as “being lonely in a crowd” and acknowledge that “alcohol is very prevalent in their lives”. Their “gentleness belies the brutal interactions many describe as they characterize a culture of extreme competition and effortless perfection among students who ‘work hard and play (i.e. drink) hard.’”³

Most undergraduates are away from home for extended periods for the first time in their lives – thrust into a life without the safety nets that have always been there. The civil society at Duke – much more than any formal advising relationships the university might seek to build – must provide the new safety net for a new phase of individual growth. The emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs previously nourished by family and home-grown social networks must now be nourished in a new way that is guided more by students themselves within the web of freely chosen associations they themselves undertake. The civil society offers the platform within which these associations take place outside the classroom and therefore provides what the classroom cannot. In the process, it generates the soil on which students grow as human beings and thereby creates the basis on which the campus culture more broadly rests. If there is a problem with the campus culture (which we agree there is), then the problem lies largely within this civil society from which the culture springs.

Civil society institutions do of course exist in all corners of the university, but some occupy more privileged positions than others. Students come together freely around athletics, living arrangements, various social clubs, political engagements and community interactions. Some of these bring together students who are similar and who share a focused purpose; others draw from pools of students that differ greatly but share common interests. Some allow students to hone particular skills in groups of peers; others provide support and comfort at times of need. While all these institutions can play a positive role in the civil society of a university campus, some are by definition more instrumental in providing the new safety net sought by students, in offering paths to grow a deeper understanding of oneself and others and in engaging with the broader university on issues central to the mission of a 21st Century university. And it is this subset of the civil society at Duke that has failed to provide the connections necessary for the healthy campus culture we all desire.

Our focus in this document is on one particular sub-set of civil society institutions – a set that we believe impacts individuals and (through them) the campus culture more directly than most others and in ways that have few substitutes on a campus like Duke’s. This portion of the civil society engages in questions surrounding faith and reason, spiritual growth in a material world and the importance of stepping into the shoes of others in our own path through life. In focusing on this portion of the civil society, we do not mean to

³ Hollingsworth, Kathy and Bill Purdy (2006), *Duke University Students’ Mental and Physical Health Challenges and Needs*.

minimize the important role played by the entire civil society on the campus – rather we seek to highlight the portion that, in our view, holds extraordinary promise for playing a much more active role in supporting the mission of a 21st century university focused on 21st century leadership. In making this case, however, we first have to address the importance of faith, and its relation to reason, for a secular university – and the ways in which the university’s mission then logically intersects with this portion of the civil society.

Faith and Reason at Duke -- and in the 21st Century World

In light of the nature of the events that led to this period of introspection at Duke, it is not surprising that most of our discussions have centered around “issues of race and gender” and “class and privilege”. Furthermore, our campus is, as the CCISC report mentions at the outset, geographically and historically linked to these issues in ways that continue to define who we are and who we strive to be. At the same time, as we look at the world for which we are preparing the next generation of leaders, it is undeniable that some of the central challenges of our time – while never untouched by the issues emphasized in our discussions thus far – surround issues of faith and reason. In fact, it is not unlikely that the outrages of the 20th century – defined so much around clashes with respect to race and gender – could be repeated in the 21st century with respect to different radicalized faiths, i.e. between faiths that have lost touch with reason.

Long before we became so keenly aware of the ways in which faith and reason can clash to produce the carnage of 9/11, domestic and international public discourse had often given the impression that faith and reason inevitably cannot peacefully co-exist in the modern world. As a result, some have rejected faith and others have rejected reason. A university dedicated to the ideals and values articulated by Duke, however, can do neither. In fact, the vast majority of students will ultimately “gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others”, commit “to use knowledge in the service of society” and develop “autonomy” and “empathy” through the exercise of *both* faith and reason – and will develop their full humanity through explorations of the spiritual together with the material. We cannot ignore this essential reality in our debates about our campus culture or else we will miss the very factors that define the culture. We cannot focus on *symptoms* -- intolerance and disrespect, alcohol abuse and the hook-up culture -- without engaging with the very real mechanisms that can aggravate or mitigate these. We cannot mandate respect and empathy when these arise from an inner maturation and transformation *freely* undertaken rather than endured as part of a university’s requirements. And we cannot expect to prepare the next generation of leaders while ignoring the central element of so much of our modern domestic and international conflicts.

Our challenge, then, is two-fold: First, we must prepare students to engage in a world in which a clash between faiths – and between faith and reason -- threatens our collective futures. The answer is not to ignore the powerful role of faith in people’s lives, nor is it to marginalize faith on the college campus and thereby insulate students from conflicts they

will face in their life after Duke. Rather, it is to help students reconcile their faith with reason and, in the process, to allow students for whom faith is important to mature in their faith to a point where they do not shrink from who they are but at the same time can embrace those who are different. Second, we must allow the flourishing of a multitude of pathways for students to grow in their humanity – to “gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others” in ways that lead to greater “empathy” and a desire to “use knowledge in the service of society.” The inner transformation that is required for students to look outside themselves, to view others as more than steppingstones, *can* and often *does* arise from a deep and voluntarily undertaken engagement with the spiritual -- explored with others in a supportive and nurturing environment. While this is not true for all, it is undeniably true for many – which implies that a focus on campus culture cannot ignore such pathways that lead individuals beyond tolerance to respect -- or, in Christian terms, to love.

The Need for Strong Faith Communities in Duke’s Civil Society

While we therefore see faith and reason as central to the mission of a 21st century university, we fully recognize that the Duke of the 21st century is not an institution with a religious mission or focus – nor do we think it should be. The faculty at Duke are (and should be) hired based on excellence in teaching and research – which implies that the faculty has no particular comparative advantage in fostering the spiritual growth of students or (with the exception of a small sub-set of faculty who are theologically trained) helping students bridge the gap between faith and reason. In fact, Duke is no different than most top universities where the vast majority of faculty are not deeply religious and do not identify closely with any particular faith tradition⁴. As a result, faculty are uninvolved in and often deliberately stay away from topics related to the spiritual and religious dimensions of their students. A recent academic study⁵ of the role of religion in faculty life, for instance, concludes that

“While [faculty in elite universities] rarely think their colleagues are hostile towards religion, there are strong unspoken barriers against discussing religion (especially traditional forms of religions, such as Catholicism) in academic settings. Religion is simply not a topic that [faculty] think is acceptable to discuss, even in informal university settings outside the classroom.”

Yet the pool of families from which our students are drawn differs dramatically – with religion playing an important role for many of those families and with students often identifying with particular faith traditions.⁶ Given the importance of preparing students

⁴ Duke is no different from most top universities in this regard. When asked their beliefs about God, nearly 34% of academic scientist (in the natural and social sciences) answer “I do not believe in God” and about 30% answer “I do not know if there is a God and there is no way to find out.” About 52 percent of academic scientists see themselves as having no religious affiliation.

⁵ Ecklund, Elaine H. (2006), *Initial Findings from the Study of Religion Among Academic Scientists*, working paper, SUNY-Buffalo.

⁶ In the general US population, when asked about their religious beliefs, about 3 percent state “I do not believe in God” and about 30% answer “I do not know if there is a God and there is no way to find out.”

for leadership in a religiously diverse world, and given the importance faith and religion can play in the growth of students during their years as undergraduates, it is then a challenge to determine how faith is to play the role it must in a university that does not (and should not) have an explicitly religious mission – and that (appropriately) recruits its scholars without attempts at achieving a “religiously balanced” faculty that reflects the diversity of religious traditions in the population.

The disconnect between faculty religiosity and the religious inclinations of students and parents, together with the decidedly non-religious mission of a secular university, imply that explorations connecting faith and reason – and environments that enable students to grow in reasoned faith, must almost by definition occur within the civil society and not the formal programs of the university. It is perhaps for this reason that this aspect of the campus culture received no attention in the CCISC report – but it nevertheless leaves us with the challenge of how to steer a campus culture more explicitly in the direction of coming to terms with matters of faith and religion and with helping students who are drawn to faith mature in ways that allow faith to nurture the individual (and the culture) in harmony with reason.

The model that remains is then by necessity largely the model we have – a model based on the decentralized functioning of religious communities on the campus. However, as is noted in the CCISC report, “privileging inevitably communicates values, and the University must examine whom it is privileging and for what purposes.” Faith communities will have limited engagement with the campus culture – and limited contributions to dialogues between faiths and across faith and reason -- to the extent to which they operate in marginal spaces with few resources. They can, on the other hand, become thriving centers of student intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social life when included more explicitly in the university’s life. If marginalized in terms of campus presence, they take on the life of a marginalized sub-culture, but they have the potential to contribute to the vital dialogue between faith and reason that must be central to the effort of producing the next generation of leaders. And by engaging the campus more generally, they can become the laboratory in which students grow spiritually, mature in their ability to “engage difference” and, in the process, become less likely to engage in the excesses of a social culture defined too much by an excessive focus on alcohol, the instant gratifications of “hook-ups” and the various dysfunctional behaviors that emerge from these.

In practical terms, this does not suggest explicit university involvement in religious faith communities – but it does suggest a growing university focus on creating a safe place, a basic infrastructure, in which faith communities can actively engage in the life of the university. The university is communicating values, for instance, when a faith community that represents at least a quarter of the students on campus operates out of a basement office hidden away from view. It communicates the value it places on the engagement of that community in the extent to which it assists that community to engage with alumni, many of whom almost certainly would contribute time and resources to a more active presence of the community at Duke. And, to the extent to which the university lowers the barriers for active engagement across faith communities, it signals its own view of its

responsibility to train its graduates to become global citizens in a world torn apart by faith divorced from reason. To say that the explorations of faith and reason – and the nurturing of the spiritual growth of students – properly takes place in the civil society of the university is therefore not to say that the university does not, through its own actions, contribute to the extent to which this civil society can enhance campus culture.

If we take seriously the challenges of the clashes between faith and reason and between faith traditions – and we recognize the transforming impact that faith has and can have on many of our students, we can therefore see no alternative than a greater fostering of the place of religious communities within the civil society of our university. The aim, as we have already emphasized, is not an endorsement of any particular faith or even faith in general by the university, but rather an explicit recognition of the importance of our fostering the ability to engage with people of faith, of nurturing dialogue and understanding across faiths (and between faith and reason) and of recognizing the positive role that reasoned faith can play in the development of a sense of global citizenship. The conversations around faith and reason – and the development of faith consistent with reason and respectful of diversity in all its forms – will not happen on their own, nor can they arise artificially within a university that is simply not (and should not be) primarily focused on such issues in formal classroom settings. But faith communities within the universities – when given a chance to be central to the social, cultural and intellectual life at the university -- can provide the essential bridge between a university focused on 21st century greatness in teaching and research and the needs of 21st century students to have the option of developing fully along a multiplicity of different pathways.

In fact, if the clash of faiths – often driven by a clash of faith and reason – plays the important role we see in the 21st century, an elite secular university that fosters dialogue with and between a vibrant mosaic of faith communities may in fact be the best place for nurturing the future leaders that can tackle the coming challenges. A university with an explicit religious mission is likely to be too focused on a particular faith tradition to achieve what can be achieved here at Duke, and a secular university that does not see the centrality of faith in student lives and the world around us is blind to the challenge. In this effort to reflect on our campus culture, we have the opportunity to be what few universities have at this point even recognized as important – and thereby provide our students an edge not only in terms of their academic training but also in terms of who they become before they graduate and how they use their knowledge thereafter.

Stepping up to the Challenge: The Catholic Community's Role

Given the nature of local cultures, and given the inner transformations required for students to grow in tolerance, empathy and love, we see little evidence that a genuine change in our own culture can arise strictly from changes in rules that govern student life – inside or outside the classroom. We endorse the CCISC's sense that “force and coercion have no place in an academic community” and that “we cannot pretend that [civil society] mechanisms can be costlessly by-passed with curricular or other

institutional changes that are divorced from them.” The inner change that must drive the larger cultural change is not genuine if not voluntarily chosen outside formal requirements – it happens as a result of the daily choices individuals make within the environment shaped by the university’s choices, the engagements with others individuals seek within the civil society of the university and the spiritual and emotional support they find there. As we have argued, we are convinced that a multiplicity of civil society institutions involving various faith communities is crucial to the renewed campus culture that is sought – but we cannot speak for other faith communities in how they might wish to contribute to that culture if given the opportunity to play a more central role. We would therefore like to conclude with a vision of our own contribution – the contribution of the Catholic Community, the largest faith community at Duke.

This vision was outlined some two decades ago by the National Conference of Bishops in a Pastoral Letter that we will quote heavily below.⁷ It is a vision that begins by expressing our “respect [for] the autonomy of the academic community” and our “[appreciation of] its great contributions to the common good.” The goal of Catholic campus ministry is “to help higher education attain its lofty goal of developing a culture in which human beings can realize their full potential” by “promoting the ideal of educating the whole person.” Much as Duke aims for its graduates to use knowledge in the service of society, Catholic campus ministry insists that “a genuine education nurtures a sense of responsibility for the common good and provides skills for active involvement in community life” and that “it is clear that effective leadership in the contemporary world is connected both with a sense of loving service and with a more mature development in self-knowledge.”

As representatives of the Catholic Community at Duke, we see a quite seamless connection between the principles articulated in the CCISC report and the ideals put forth by our Church. We furthermore see a deep connection between the tasks that we are challenged to accomplish by our Church and the needs of our campus articulated in the current debate on the campus culture. Catholic Campus Ministry, while recognizing that many “find that [current campus life] satisfies their needs for companionship and involvement”, there are also “lonely voices on campus [that] cry out for intimacy, and mildly estranged individuals [that] express a desire for more personal interaction.” The Church cites particularly undergraduates that first leave home, graduate students for whom the “world of research and scholarship can seem cold and demeaning” and international [and immigrant] students who must cope with a new culture.” The Church has voiced concern over the “fragmentation of campus life” where “the voices of estrangement are many and varied”, giving rise to “a genuine hunger for community in the academic world.” These are all words that could easily have appeared in a report on Duke’s campus culture and its challenges.

Equally apt is the Church’s assessment of the tension between the goals of elite universities to educate the whole person and the ever increasing pressures from students to simply gain a head start in life. “Some students,” the Bishops write,

⁷ *Empowered by the Spirit: Campus Ministry Faces the Future*, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1985.

“think of college only in terms of opening the door to a good job and a secure future. They attend classes, gain credits, and manage to graduate. Learning to think critically and achieving a well-rounded personality through involvement on campus are not part of their program. For these students, the call to self-fulfillment either falls on deaf ears or is interpreted exclusively in terms of a lucrative career and material success.”

And, while the Bishops see “striking examples of personal commitment to justice, [they] sense a strong current of individualism that undercuts concern for the common good and eclipses the urgency of social concerns.” They go on to recognize that college campuses are replete with “administrators who possess broad visions and sensitive hearts; faculty members who are generous in sharing the results of their scholarship; international students who bring the richness of different cultures; and peers who are willing to share friendship and the common struggle for greater maturity” and that with all of these resources, “the academic world [should be] an ideal setting for [students] establishing their identities, forming relationships, developing their talents, preparing for leadership, discerning their vocations, and charting the direction of their lives.”

The striking resemblance of our current discussions of deficiencies in Duke’s campus culture and the Church’s own words some 20 years ago is evidence of the fact that the issues we face are not entirely new. They also provide ample evidence of the congruence of goals across university and civil society – and the potentials for eminently fruitful partnerships as we move forward.

Faith and Reason: Contribution to the Intellectual Culture

Our emphasis on faith and reason as part of this document is not accidental – the Roman Catholic Church has been engaged in an intellectual project of reconciling these for many centuries. This project has been rooted in the guiding belief that *both* faith and reason are gifts from God, and that God cannot contradict Himself. Reason *and* faith, science *and* religion, are central (in the Church’s view) to understanding different aspects of reality – which is why the Church concludes that when “the academic world produces new knowledge and encourages critical thinking, it assists Christians in the process of deepening and articulating their faith.” While this does not imply that the entirety of our understanding -- of ourselves and the world around us -- must flow from an application of reason or science, it does mean that understandings that emerge from faith *cannot* be contradicted by reason (even as aspects of faith and religion might not themselves be provable through reason alone.)

There is little doubt that often students get the impression from faculty who generally do not wish to engage in discussions of the spiritual that reasoned training in the ways of science must imply a withering of faith – because there is a general presumption that reason and faith *must* be contradictions. As noted by the Church, “in some classes, the

scientific method that has advanced human learning so effectively is presented as a total world view, which supplants religion and renders obsolete other approaches to truth.” At the same time, the Church suggests that the “academic world provides intellectual stimulation and helpful resources for those who want to explore their religious tradition” and it recognizes, as we have argued above already, that “educated persons should know something of the history, teachings, and practices of the various world religions” if they are to operate effectively in the modern world. The Church points to “the existence on campus of an increasing number of fundamentalist groups” and the need for universities to make room for an “intelligent appropriation of the [Christian] faith” – an exploration that recognizes the co-existence of faith and reason. It challenges campus ministries to demonstrate “that religion is worthy of careful and systematic study because it is central to human existence and is an important wellspring of our culture.”

In light of this, there are countless practical ways in which the Catholic Community at Duke could engage with university life on the intellectual dimensions of faith. In its own community, it can challenge students to intellectual rigor in all their pursuits – those in the realm of faith and reason. Within the community of faiths on campus, it can engage in conversations that explore the intellectual foundations of faith across faith traditions. In cooperation with the university, it can sponsor speakers, organize colloquia and engage students and faculty in broader discussions that complement and enrich the formal teaching at the university. Placing such intellectual discourse more squarely in the center of the civil society at Duke would make faculty more willing to engage on such issues – drawing them more into the life of the university community as a whole while allowing the Church to benefit more directly from faculty scholarship and research. Such aspects of a new civil society at Duke will go far toward demystifying the diversity of faith traditions through (in the words of the Church) the “development of ecumenical and interfaith relationships”, building respect among them and with “those who are concerned with human ethical values of our society but do not directly relate their concerns to a faith tradition.” At the same time, this civil society conversation will go far in combating the dangerous notion that faith should be disconnected from reason, that science is invalid when conflicting with religious teachings.

Faith in Practice: Contributions to the Larger Campus Culture

The Catholic Community at Duke, however, sees its role in the civil society of the university as reaching beyond the purely intellectual dimension that is now too absent from our university’s life. In the 1985 Pastoral Letter, the Church wished for “a new relationship” between Campus Ministries and the modern university, a relationship in which “the Church can work with higher education in improving the human community and establishing a culture that enables all human beings to reach their full potential” – “so that intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth can proceed together.” It envisioned the drawing together of alienated communities of students, staff, faculty and local residents, the building of supportive and welcoming avenues for spiritual growth and ethical explorations, and an active engagement with universities in educating for and engaging with social justice.

Such an ambitious engagement with the university's civil society must, as the Church reminds campus ministries, be based on "a genuine respect for academic life and for institutions of higher education" that will enable the Catholic community to "relate openly with faculty members and administrators and to empathize with students who struggle with their personal growth" while fostering integration "with other ministries of the local community" beyond the university. But by working toward genuine community, the Church dreams of campus ministry "unleash[ing] human potential and contribut[ing] to the common struggle against the forces of alienation." When playing a prominent role in the civil society, the Catholic community is called to widen the circle of engagement of faculty, staff, students and the local community, providing opportunities for all "to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of the community".

We have already suggested that, to some extent, such greater community in the civil society can indeed emerge from more intense intellectual explorations of issues of faith and reason, explorations that seem central to the mission of a modern university. The circle of engagement, however, is expanded as infrastructures for spiritual growth, for ethical explorations and for practicing social justice are integrated as essential aspects of the university's civil society.

The Church realizes that "questions of personal values and ethics inevitably arise for individuals in the academic community" and, while "courses often produce particular ethical and value questions," it calls for "a more extensive and informed discussion of ethical issues on campus." These explorations, not always appropriate within formal academic settings, become intensely personal in the lives of students as they struggle with issues of "sexual conduct, drinking and drugs, forming friendships, honesty in their studies, and pursuing a career." They also gain new meaning within the larger context of placing the individual within the community, confronting the "temptation to reduce self-fulfillment to a selfish individualism" with the ethical call for personal engagement in social justice involving the well-being of others.

The Church observes "when individuals pursue personal development within the community of faith, they are constantly challenged to use their talents in the service of others". The civil society in which such students freely engage "safeguards the ideal of full human development by rooting it in the sacredness of the person" and insisting that "all persons are worthy of respect and dignity." From this insistence emanates the call for campus ministries to provide leadership "in combating racism and sexism" while "providing a forum for discussing the great questions of the day in a civil and reasoned fashion so that constructive solutions can be worked out."

Just as in the engagements around faith and reason or in the challenge to educate the "whole person" within universities, the Church sees the deep complementarities between what the university provides and what its portion of the civil society can contribute. While it insists that we need faith communities "who understand that knowledge of economics and politics will not in itself bring about justice unless it is activated by human and religious ideals," it recognizes that "religious ideals without the necessary

secular expertise will not provide the kind of leadership needed to influence our complex society.” But it furthermore sees that the “very presence in the faith community of a core group dedicated to justice serves as an example and invitation to others to contribute their own talents and gifts to create a more humane society.”

Within the larger campus culture, an active presence of faith communities generally and the Catholic community in particular can therefore build community as it calls on its own members to engage in spiritual personal growth, to reach out to the university through dialogue on faith, reason and ethics, to extend cooperation across different faith traditions, and to get involved directly in addressing injustice with all those, religious or not, who share the Church’s desire for promoting peace and justice in our communities. In all these activities within the broader civil society, the Catholic community hopes to play its part in addressing the sense of alienation of our students, provide safe places for the development of spiritual aspects of the human condition and bring knowledge of faith and reason into the service of society. Success along these lines will indeed change the campus culture by providing nourishing alternatives to a culture too dominated by narrow self interest and immediate gratification.

The practical ways in which this can be accomplished are too countless to list in detail. They involve programs our community already provides – programs targeted at both the internal (spiritual) transformation of the individual and the expression of that internal transformation into (social) action. They involve physical spaces devoid of the pressures of effortless perfection, social engagements without excessive alcohol or the expectations of the hook-up culture. But they could also involve much more active partnerships – with the university, with other faith communities and with other civil society institutions that share a subset of the ideals and values of the Catholic community. These partnerships could help the university bridge the divides of race and gender, class and privilege, town and gown in ways we are challenged to do by our ongoing conversation about the campus culture – with individual engagements, voluntarily undertaken within a civil society that takes the place of sub-cultures that are not conducive to the mission of a great university in the 21st century.