

Education for Justice in the Jesuit tradition--IIIb draft July 18, 2002

An Assessment Tool

For 450 years, Jesuit education has sought to educate the “whole person” intellectually and professionally, psychologically, morally and spiritually. But in the emerging global reality, with its great possibilities and deep contradictions, the whole person is different from the whole person of the Counter-Reformation, the Industrial Revolution, or the 20th Century. Tomorrow’s “whole person” cannot be whole without an educated awareness of society and culture, with which to contribute socially, generously, in the real world. Tomorrow’s whole person must have, in brief, a well-educated solidarity....when the heart is touched by direct experience; the mind may be challenged to change. Personal involvement with innocent suffering, with the injustice others suffer, is the catalyst for solidarity which then gives rise to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection. Peter Hans-Kolvenbach, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, *The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education* (Santa Clara, October 6, 2000)

A Jesuit university must be faithful to both the noun “university” and to the adjective “Jesuit.” To be a university requires dedication “to research, teaching and the various forms of service that correspond to its cultural mission.” To be Jesuit “requires that the university act in harmony with the demands of the service of faith and promotion of justice found in Decree Four of GC 32.

The following seven criteria for Education for Justice in a Jesuit university seek to assist each of the 28 American Jesuit universities in establishing an ongoing process of action, reflection, evaluation, and further action on behalf of the central mission of Jesuit institutions, namely *the service of faith and the promotion of justice*. The criteria are descriptive, rather than normative, and each university is encouraged to make local adaptations, but also to delve into the living Jesuit tradition in order to advance and deepen its impact for our own contemporary world.

1. In regard to the STUDENTS we serve.

“The university should be present intellectually where it is needed: to provide science for those who have no science; to provide skills for the unskilled; to be a voice for those who do not possess the academic qualifications to promote . . . their rights.” Fr. Ignacio Ellacuria, SJ

Every Jesuit work exists to serve specific populations. Although many other persons benefit indirectly, the primary recipients of the service a university performs are its students. Who are the people who come to us for an education? It was the hope of the early Society of Jesus that no fees would be required of students to study at its colleges. Now it is primarily middle and upper-middle class students whose families can afford the tuition and other costs at our colleges and universities.

- Can we do more to raise money for scholarships for poor students, Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans, nontraditional students, students from underdeveloped countries, & others who would otherwise be excluded? But bringing such students to campus is not enough. Can we provide welcome, support, relevant course offerings, and appropriate services for these students if they do arrive?
- HOW DO we identify students who show special promise for work in the service of faith and the promotion of justice and provide them the kind of education they will need for this work?
- HOW DO we identify students who show in their community concerns and work a direct connection with our Jesuit mission of education for justice and offer them additional scholarship/ grant monies to continue in peace and justice studies?

What are we already doing? HOW ARE WE DOCUMENTING THESE EFFORTS/ What more CAN WE DO?

2. In regard to the things we teach and the way we teach.

“The measure of Jesuit universities is not what our students do but who they become and the adult Christian responsibility they will exercise in the future towards their neighbor and their world.” Kolvenbach, Santa Clara, 2000.

The Jesuit University as a whole and precisely in its primary educational mission is called to the service of faith and the promotion of social justice. This means that *what* is taught and *the way* it is taught need to be assessed according to these

criteria. WHILE IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE SPECIFIC courses, programs, AND services, THESE IN THEMSELVES ARE NOT ENOUGH.

The way we choose our subjects, plan our courses, pick our course texts, and determine our pedagogies will promote an attitude of either concern or complacency about the great faith and justice issues facing this generation.

- WHAT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS ON JUSTICE (E.G., MAJOR, MINOR, CERTIFICATE) DO WE OFFER?
- Do our COURSES provide information needed to grasp: the gross inequalities in the distribution of wealth, patterns of thought distorted by prejudice and contempt, efforts to distract or dissuade us from urgent concern about the natural environment, methods of inquiry and analysis that expose dehumanizing trends, evasions of ecological responsibility, and structures of domination?
- Do our methods of teaching encourage critical thinking and active involvement in our students? Do they allow the engagement of feeling as well as of thought? Do they encourage students to go deeper – to explore, ask hard questions, and examine their own beliefs, motivations, and faith traditions?
- Do we teach our subject matter in ways that deflect attention away from the moral dimension of public issues and encourage acquiescence in the status quo? Or do we, rather, reorganize attention on the life experience of the poor, the hungry, the homeless, and victims of exploitation or discrimination?
- HOW DO we help students locate the moral and political issues inherent in our subject matter and help them develop the capacity for enduring, intelligent, and active concern?
- WHAT KIND OF opportunities for meaningful community learning experiences through service, internships, SERVICE-LEARNING COURSES and research in the wider community DO OUR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS HAVE, while they are here ? Do these

opportunities lead to social/cultural analysis and to opportunities for linking their faith traditions with their action?

- Do our students leave this Jesuit University aware of existing social problems and cultural strains and contradictions, able to be critical of specific cultural trends, values, and assumptions, and knowledgeable about current affairs and Catholic social teaching?
- In the professional fields, such as the life sciences, the social sciences, law, business, economics, or medicine, do professors make the obvious connections with injustice, oppression, peace-making and ethical issues? Do professors apply their disciplinary specialties to issues of justice and injustice in their research and teaching about health care, legal aid, public policy, and international relations? How does every discipline at the University, engage with human society, human life, and the environment in appropriate ways, cultivating moral concern about how people ought to live together?
- Are students guided to become more active, more informed, more responsible citizens? Do they develop an interest in the wider world and the dynamics of globalization?

What are we already doing? HOW ARE WE DOCUMENTING THESE EFFORTS/What more CAN WE DO?

3. In regard to the interests and concerns that shape the intellectual lives of our faculty.

We can no longer pretend that the inequalities and injustices of our world must be borne as part of the inevitable order of things. It is now quite apparent that they are the result of what the human race itself, humans in their selfishness, has done. . . .Despite the opportunities offered by an ever more serviceable technology, we are simply not willing to pay the price of a more just and more humane society. *Our Mission Today*, Jesuit General Congregation 32, nn. 27, 20 (1975).

A Jesuit university defines itself in such a manner that the mission of the promotion of faith through education for justice is evident in the passion for justice and compassion for the least advantaged permeates the teaching, research, and community outreach of faculty. This perspective goes beyond the usual academic criteria or market forces in recruiting faculty and moves toward a commitment of solidarity and a justice spirituality.

- What interests and concerns shape our own intellectual lives: our research, our thinking, our preaching [at the Jesuit university chapel or elsewhere], our public talks, our writing for publication, OUR COMMUNITY OR PUBLIC SERVICE? What are we capable of caring about?
- How does the condition of our hearts, and the habits of our hearts' imaginations, determine the focus of our sustained attention and the issues that most preoccupy our minds? HOW DOES a habit of critical reflection on our culture or a sense of solidarity with the poor, the oppressed, the excluded, influence our priorities in raising questions, structuring inquiries, choosing methods, or adopting specific interpretive frameworks?
- How does our reward system at the university for salaries, promotion, and tenure recognize efforts on behalf of education for justice and community engagement?
- Do we hire faculty who come to the university with a solid commitment to using their skills, passions, and intellectual gifts toward building a more just and peace-filled world?

What are we already doing? HOW ARE WE DOCUMENTING THESE EFFORTS/ What more CAN WE DO?

4. In regard to the culture of OUR COLLEGE OR university and the way it expresses and communicates its values.

The university as an institution has its own culture, at times reflecting strongly the values and approaches of the larger society and of the wider academic community. These values and approaches are both positive and negative. A

Jesuit university, to be true to its own identity, must be constantly alert in a critical manner to the ways in which negative, materialistic, pragmatic values override other values and practices. Faculty, staff, and administrators in their practices and programs need to bring critical awareness to address the culture within which they work and ensure that such a culture reflects the key values of respect, participation, equality, dignity, ecological sensitivity, a preferential option for the marginalized, and the common good.

- HOW DOES the ethos or culture of this Jesuit COLLEGE OR university reflect the basic commitment to the service of faith and the promotion of justice – in our choice of persons to honor, for example, in our choice of speakers invited on campus, in the art work we commission and display, in our publications, our budgetary priorities, our liturgies and homilies, our public rhetoric, and everyday ways of proceeding?
- Does the COLLEGE OR University feel like a community that cares about human suffering and social responsibility without excuses, about searching for effective means to change the circumstances of life for the disadvantaged, the uprooted, the stigmatized?
- Does our use of the environment on campus awaken in people a sense of responsibility for the care of our natural environment more widely?
- Do students learn these kinds of steady attentiveness and intelligent dedication precisely through their participation in campus life?
- ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE JESUIT HERITAGE AND TRADITION?

What are we already doing? HOW ARE WE DOCUMENTING THESE EFFORTS/ What more CAN WE DO?

5. In regard to the way the university itself models a lively concern about justice in its attitudes & practices.

[draw on Frank Rhodes address at Georgetown University, 1989]

[or Kolvenbach's words to the International Meeting of Jesuit Higher Education, Rome, May 27, 2001: "It is already a cliché to repeat that the university is not an ivory tower, and that it does not exist for itself but for society. . . . Whatever may be the context, the university should see itself as challenged by society, and the university should challenge society. Within an unequal interaction of mutual influences, the local and global context influences the university, and the university is called to influence society, locally and globally" (par. 24, 25).]

As an institution in the larger society, a Jesuit university is called to mirror a life of just relationships. Within the university that calls for an examination of procurement policies, fair wages, fewer disparities among various units of the university, attention to decentralization and participation by all parties at the university. In relation to the community, the vocation of a Jesuit university calls for critical engagement with the surrounding community as a partner in learning and dialogue about critical issues relating to the area in which the university is situated.

- Does the university itself model a lively concern about justice in its relationships with the neighborhood, the city, the state, the region, the federal government, the wider world? What role do we play and what interests do we serve in relationship to the neighborhood in which we are located? On whose side among the people in [*city where the Jesuit University is located*] is this Jesuit University perceived to take its stand?
- Do we arrive at this concern and our consequent choices out of a tradition of thoughtful study, open dialogue, and spiritual discernment?
- More concretely, do we pay a living wage, provide fair benefits, make reasonable efforts to achieve more racial and ethnic diversity and gender balance in our faculty, administration, and staff? Do we do what is needed to build and sustain an experience of community within the university?
- Do our hiring practices FOR STAFF, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS, and our procedures and standards for reappointment and promotion (AND FOR FACULTY, TENURE) really reflect an interest in people competent to enact the Jesuit Catholic mission in its major components? Is this what "mission-centered hiring" means? HOW DO WE INVITE NEWCOMERS INTO THE WORK OF THE MISSION OF THIS PLACE?

- HOW DO members of the faculty, administration, and staff--do the Jesuits themselves--model a lively, educated concern about social problems and current events? HOW DO we model the careful study, calm analysis, and creative imagination that make for responsible citizenship in today's world? HOW DO we teach by example the union of the service of faith and the promotion of justice in all our undertakings?

What are we already doing? HOW ARE WE DOCUMENTING THESE EFFORTS/what more CAN WE DO?

6. In regard to the way this Jesuit COLLEGE OR university itself creates and promotes a “culture of dialogue.”

The university must become a community reflecting the more diverse world and communities in which it finds itself. The dialogue involved will traverse religious, ethnic, cultural and gender boundaries with respect and an eagerness to learn from the engagement. Such dialogues do not mean watering down the central commitments of the dialogue partners but rather as a Catholic, Jesuit institution the full promotion of understanding, acceptance, and cooperation.

- HOW DO we foster a culture of dialogue, civility, and consensus building? HOW DOES this Jesuit COLLEGE OR university, as a Catholic INSTITUTION, cultivate and model for other communities a culture and climate of interpersonal dialogue, interdisciplinary dialogue, intercultural dialogue, and interfaith dialogue? How do we foster such a dialogue? Can we live into the creative tension that holds opposing truth claims with attentiveness, reverence and clarity?
- Can we maintain an atmosphere of critical intellectual discourse leading to a deeper understanding in our collective Jesuit mission integrating the service of faith and the promotion of justice? HOW DOES this dialogue fashion a unity of purpose in the search for meaning while maintaining a respectful harmony with the richness and challenge of pluralistic expression?
- HOW DOES this dialogue and sharing of our own lives extend to the disenfranchised and the poor? Does it extend to all peoples with all the richness of their own religious, spiritual, and wisdom traditions? Does

this sharing extend to others, especially in the civic community, in a dialogue of action and solidarity for the common good? Does it lead to sharing ideas and convictions, studying and discussing problems, including philosophical and theological ones, together?

- Are we, as a Jesuit Catholic university, open to sharing with AND LEARNING FROM others ABOUT the experience of God, as far as possible, in dialogue with each person's and each community's religious and spiritual commitments?
- As a Jesuit university involved in the *faith that does justice*, does the dialectic between faith and justice result in the greater authenticity of each? Are there some places within the academic community where faith/justice linkage is systematically and regularly examined and explored?

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7. In regard to the way the role of the Jesuit Community at the COLLEGE OR university is understood.

Up until the 1970's, the Jesuits were both the animators of the Jesuit tradition and the legal owners of the University. Now, however, the university itself, through its Trustees and officers, carries the responsibility for the mission and identity of the university. At the same time individual Jesuits and the Jesuit Community can continue to be a major resource for assisting the University in ensuring that the Jesuit tradition remains alive, authentic, and contemporary. In addition, every Jesuit University is connected worldwide and one of the primary linkages for these connections is through the Jesuit order?

- How can the Jesuits be both welcoming and persuasive with colleagues about the Society's understanding of its mission?
- How can Jesuits and lay colleagues enter into fruitful dialogue about the contemporary Jesuit mission and its message? HOW CAN lay colleagues

and Jesuits together reflect on whether the Jesuits, as a community, give plausible witness to the values espoused by the Jesuit international and national leadership?

- Is it meaningful even to speak of a corporate or communal Jesuit presence at this university? What, as a matter of fact, does the Jesuit corporate presence say to the rest of the university or the wider community in which the university is located?
- How can Jesuit universities better realize their mission together through regional, national, and international relationships and networks?
- Can the Jesuit community make Ignatian spirituality and especially the *Spiritual Exercises* more accessible to everyone in the University community? Can Jesuits help articulate how its mission of *the service of faith and the promotion of justice* arises out of its own spirituality and historic mission? How do the university's mission and the Jesuit mission intersect and how do they differ?
- What kind of dialogue or reciprocal relationship might provide an ongoing engagement of the charism and tradition of the Jesuit community within the Jesuit University?

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