

Loyola University Chicago

Commitment to Justice Report

May 2012

Megan Barry

Director, Center for Community Service and Action

John Hardt

**Assistant to the President, Mission and Identity
Assistant Professor, Neiswanger Institute for Bioethics and Health Policy**

Kathleen Maas Weigert

**Carolyn Farrell, BVM Professor of Women and Leadership
Assistant to the Provost for Social Justice Initiatives**

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Introduction

The mission of Loyola University Chicago is profound in its simplicity: “We are Chicago’s Jesuit Catholic University, a diverse community seeking God in all things and working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith.” The challenge is to strive ever more faithfully to live it out. The work undertaken this year on the “Institutional Examen” is part of that effort. Based on multiple and ongoing conversations across the university, along with written reports from twenty-plus units, this document reflects some of the developments in advancing the University’s mission of justice since the June 1999 report submitted for the first “Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education” conference, held at Santa Clara University in October 2000. There is much to celebrate; there is more work to be done. This report contains five parts: the first three are based on the dimensions of Jesuit higher education presented by then Superior General Kolvenbach, S.J. in his keynote speech at the 2000 conference: (1) formation and learning; (2) research and teaching; and (3) way of proceeding; the final two sections are (4) “Areas for Growth” and (5) “Obstacles and/or Challenges.”

Formation and Learning

Because the University’s current strategic plan calls for “ensur(ing) that the core is coherent, authentically humanistic, and developmental in nature and delivery,” the University undertook a reexamination of the Core Curriculum. That work culminated in the design of a new Core Curriculum which will be launched for incoming undergraduate students in AY 2012-2013. Two significant changes directly relate to the justice mission. First, all students will take a foundational ethics course, taught by faculty in the theology and philosophy departments. Second, all students will have an “engaged learning requirement,” that is, a course that provides experiential learning opportunities outside the classroom. Engaged learning courses may focus on service and justice (values) as well as on professional development (skills). A significant collaborative effort between Academic Affairs and Student Development over the last couple of years resulted in the creation of a document entitled *The Loyola Experience: The Four-Year Plan for Student Transformation*. This document affirms the importance of preparing leaders “to better serve their communities...to create a better world for all of us,” through deliberate efforts to build the knowledge, skills and values needed for that work, including the “commitment to faith, justice, and service.”

Several new academic programs that are explicit in considering issues of justice have become available since 2000. The Institute of Pastoral Studies (IPS) launched a Master of Arts in Social Justice and Community Development in 2005. A new Department of Environmental Sciences, begun in January 2011, offers a concentration in sustainable agriculture. The undergraduate interdisciplinary “International Studies” major has experienced great growth and is now the fourth largest in the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, new courses across the university

expand the opportunities for going into more depth on issues of justice; a few examples illustrate. One such course is in Anthropology, focusing on refugee resettlement in the local community. A second is a social entrepreneurship class, in the School of Business Administration, that engages our students with the Near West Side Community Corporation's youth entrepreneurship project, "Technology Trail Blazers." A third is a required course on social justice for all school psychology graduate students in our School of Education (whose mission is "to advance professional education in service of social justice"). A fourth is the Health Justice Project, a live-client clinical course in our Law School, designed to train the next generation of lawyers committed to seeking a more just society.

Our global efforts expand beyond Chicago through our long-standing program in Rome and new programs in Ho Chi Minh City, Santiago, Chile, and Lima, Peru, where students are engaged in many social service projects, with other programs being explored. The Office of International Programs has also expanded study abroad opportunities that focus on social justice. The Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing is providing a cohort of ten nursing faculty from Vietnam and Indonesia with the opportunity to obtain a master's degree in nursing, and in the Stritch School of Medicine, more than half of each entering class has traditionally gone on an international service immersion after their first year. An important unifying theme across the University, which draws on curricular and co-curricular efforts, is that of immigration and migration, with work being done in the Institute of Migration & Global Studies in the School of Social Work and the Immigration Rights Coalition in the Law School along with the collaboration in an Immigration Project under the direction of Cardinal Emeritus Roger Mahoney.

Other initiatives include the special effort in 2010-2011 undertaken with the Interfaith Youth Core, to assess through surveys, focus groups and other efforts what Loyola has done and needs yet to do around interfaith collaboration. In the fall of 2011 an Interfaith Implementation Committee was established to further that work, in the curriculum as well as in the co-curricular arena. Campus Ministry recently added a staff member who has interfaith initiatives as a key part of his work, and it has added "Interfaith Companion" to the various peer-ministry options students might select. There has been an expansion of our "Learning Communities," including the addition of Psychology & Wellness, Green, and Global Citizenship; in 2011-2012 about 350 students participated and we anticipate about 550 in the 2012-2013 academic year. The new Center for Community Service and Action (CCSA) began in 2010 to foster collaborative co-curricular service partnerships between Loyola students and the diverse local community through projects that include reflection and analysis, and help students contribute to and with the local community in advancing the greater good.

There is a rich array of co-curricular opportunities for the study and practice of social justice, including a program for all news students who read a book in common during the summer, attend a lecture on that book in the fall, and participate in a faculty-led discussion of the text; our long-standing "Hunger Week" and Alternative Break Immersion Program (which has recently added several new sites including one on urban farming in Detroit and one on the border of Mexico and the USA); and the emergence of new student groups such as Global Brigades and Invisible Children, as well as new programs such as the STARS (Students Together Are Reaching for Success) Mentor Program and Men of Color Initiative. To facilitate students' abilities and ease at navigating the institutional resources, the University created the "HUB," a one-stop shop to help students navigate academic and financial support services in the Sullivan

Center for Student Services; part of its success is the on-going development of staff knowledge, awareness and application of themes/topics related to the University mission.

Research and Teaching

Perhaps the most dramatic efforts in the area of teaching and research around justice come with the emergence of new centers. Among them are the “University Centers of Excellence” (UCOE), interdisciplinary centers that are specifically charged in the current strategic plan with advancing social justice. Four new UCOEs --- the Center for Science and Math Education (2002), the Center for Urban Environmental Research and Policy (CUERP) (2005), the Center for the Human Rights of Children (CHRC) (2006), and the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage (2006) --- add to the vital justice work provided by the more established UCOEs, i.e., the Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) (1996) and Gannon Center for Women and Leadership (1996). An example of a UCOE global research project comes from the Hank Center and is entitled “The Democracy, Culture and Catholicism International Research Project,” a three-year project that gathers scholars from four continents to study the complex relationship between democracy and Roman Catholicism in the modern world. CURL provides an example of a national project; it has sponsored two conferences to advance the establishment of a national Jesuit Research Action Network. In addition, CURL is a central player in the development of community-based research projects undertaken with a variety of local and national partners and aimed at creating positive social change. And CHRC and CURL, along with the Law School’s Civitas ChildLaw Center, are collaborating on a multidisciplinary project called “Advancing Healthy Homes/Healthy Communities” in the Chicago area.

Other centers add to the vibrancy of justice work; two examples illustrate. The Center for Catholic School Effectiveness (CCSE) in the School of Education, which opened in 2003, collaborated with colleagues across the country in creating the first National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools; this landmark research-based document offers critical school effectiveness standards to more than 7,000 schools across the country. The creation of the Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) in 2007 was in part a response to the need cited in the 1999 report for more curricular-based offerings for community engagement. CEL has created numerous partnerships and opportunities for service-learning courses, service internship courses, and community-based research, providing essential infrastructure for this justice work. CEL has a dedicated staff coordinator to provide student placements with the Catholic Charities network of services and with Misericordia. And CEL coordinated university-wide efforts that led to the acceptance of the University for the Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Elective Classification (2008) and co-submitted with the CCSA Loyola’s successful application as one of six institutions named a Presidential Awardee of the U.S. President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll (2010). And while too numerous to include here, we have individual faculty as well as teams undertaking justice research in a variety of ways, including traditional library research, laboratory research, other forms of quantitative and qualitative research, etc. The recent launches of the University Libraries’ “e-Commons” site (<http://ecommons.luc.edu/>) and the University’s “Social Justice at Loyola” web portal (<http://blogs.luc.edu/socialjustice/>) provide more information and will help identify and promote social justice work at the University.

Way of Proceeding

Building on the strong foundation formed in previous decades, *Our Commitment to Excellence: Loyola's Plan 2009-2015* provides the strategic guide as Loyola moves forward in its commitment to justice. The three overarching goals of the plan are these:

“Deliver the premier undergraduate educational experience in Chicago, characterized by a transformative educational experience in the Jesuit tradition.

“Deliver a high-quality professional education that is characterized by innovation, excellence, ethics, service, and leadership, strategically leveraging health care, law, and business as nationally ranked lead programs.

“Create an institutional culture devoted to public service and research, particularly in the areas of the life sciences and health care, ethics and social justice, and children and families, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaborations.”

Regarding the first goal, we now have a key document, *Transformative Education in the Jesuit Tradition* (2009), that articulates the ingredients of a transformative educational experience and highlights the kind of education we are trying to provide, especially for our undergraduates: “one in which the student is incrementally invited to engage life, to reflect upon it and, then, to be of service to our world.” Woven into this report is some information related to the second goal about the justice work in our professional schools. It is work related to the third goal that shapes this section of the report.

Several areas call for special attention: mission and identity, sustainability, and finances. Concerning mission and identity, the University seeks to encourage the presence of and engagement with the mission across all constituencies of the University's life. Our greatest challenge is in pursuing this objective in the *intellectual life* of the University. There is a natural tendency to presume that mission concerns are centered in campus ministry, service immersions, or liturgical life for example. But these engagements both inform and are informed by an intellectual life that through its teaching, research, and service engage "mission questions," questions framed by the Catholic intellectual tradition that engage across boundaries of cultural and creed the issues of meaning and purpose, the true and the good. In the fall of 2009, the President hired an Assistant to augment this effort. In addition, a newly created position for a Faculty and Staff Chaplain/Director of Staff Mission programming has been filled. A Mission and Identity Advisory Board is being formed in spring 2012. There have been various speakers focused on the justice mission; as part of a series of Mission Lectures, an annual Salvadoran Martyrs lecture was inaugurated in the past year. The Provost appointed an assistant for social justice initiatives in spring of 2011 and has created a new faculty development program, reflected in the Faculty Center for Ignatian Pedagogy, which promotes excellence in teaching and learning, and encourages mission integration in the work of the faculty. The university's

communication and marketing efforts, including a values-based reputation campaign, help tell the stories of Loyola's social justice initiatives.

The University has focused its attention on formation for our governance and leadership bodies as well. The Board of Trustees and the Council of Regents have taken pilgrimage trips to see the Jesuit sites of Rome, meet the Father General, learn about Jesuit history, hear some lectures on the theological disposition and interests of Pope Benedict XVI, and consider the University's commitment to social justice in the context of the faith that gives it life. Follow up retreats are scheduled for these constituencies to engage Ignatian spirituality as a resource for leadership development. A Shared Governance Charter was adopted in 2003 and as of fall 2012 the University will operate with a provisional University Senate, bringing faculty, staff, students, and administrators into a collaborative body for discussion and resolution of university-wide issues. It replaces an ineffective and inactive system of university policy committees but preserves the role of the existing constituency bodies, i.e., Faculty Council, Staff Council, and Unified Student Government Association. We have an Employee Service/Immersion Program Participation policy. Loyola's University Assisted Housing Program was launched in 2008 to encourage home ownership in the city of Chicago (near our two city campuses) by assisting eligible faculty and staff members with closing costs and down payment assistance for the purchase of a primary residence; to date the program has assisted 46 faculty and staff. In 2012 Human Resources introduced a salary based premium rate that provides employees at the lower pay range reduced premiums for health benefits.

The University has made significant strides in **sustainability**. Our increasingly robust environmental initiatives are shaped by our mission rooted both in the Society of Jesus' and the Catholic Church's growing interest in issues of the environment as they bear upon our understanding as stewards of God's creation who have a special obligation to all life that is marginalized, commodified, and wrongfully used. In addition to the information above, special notice must be given to the purchase (May 2010) and development of LUREC, Loyola University Retreat and Ecology Center, in Bull Valley, IL. Summer classes, retreat weekends, an organic farm, and workshops are already making it a popular site for students, staff and faculty. The University is in the process of building an Institute for Environmental Sustainability, which will house CUERP, the Green Sustainable Learning Community, and a new environmental state-of-the-art technology residence hall. In spring 2012, Loyola students voted in favor of a proposal to ban bottled water on campus, a recommendation presented by the Justice Committee of the Unified Student Government Association.

Regarding **finances**: Because of the hard work of so many, Loyola's "Partner: The Campaign for the Future of Loyola" surpassed its goal of \$500 million earlier than expected, a campaign that raised significant funds for scholarships that will strengthen Loyola's mission of welcoming students from a wide variety of economic backgrounds. The University's development efforts will be focused on a few select smaller, targeted campaigns, including one for student scholarships. The concern about student aid stems from the national and local situations. Affording a Loyola education is getting more difficult for many. Recently our staff and students created the Student Financial Aid Alliance, engaging students, alumni, and parents in grassroots advocacy for federal and state financial aid. Nearly one-third of our undergraduates receive Pell grants and 5,669 qualified for Federal Work Study in 2011-2012. In 2009 the University created

a \$2 million financial hardship fund to address unexpected financial difficulties that confront students during the academic year. It also established the Loyola Guarantee in which students whose parents lose jobs or die during their enrollment at Loyola will have their tuition expenses covered by the University.

Because of the generosity of donors, we have a number of endowed scholarships supporting students who study and serve in justice-related programs at the undergraduate (e.g., Gannon Scholars, Leyden Family Community Service Scholarship in Student Development, the School of Communications Scholarships), graduate (e.g., Community and Global Stewards Fellowships) and professional (e.g., from the Bernard Osher Foundation in the School of Continuing & Professional Studies) levels. Recognizing the challenges of attending college for many students who are first-generation, low-income, or have disabilities, the University applied for and was awarded a federal TRiO grant, allowing it to create the “ACE” Program, Achieving College Excellence, in 2010; of the 158 students who have participated in these first two years 97 per cent have persisted. We have the “Cristo Rey Scholars Program,” which provides wrap-around supports, full-tuition and housing scholarships for five Cristo Rey Network high school graduates each year.

Areas for Growth

All of us recognize the importance of striving for excellence, demanding of ourselves the quest for the “magis.” This can be explored in several categories but it is important to note that these overlap and are often wonderfully integrated: student formation, faculty and staff development, and institutional commitment. Since our strategic plan’s first overarching goal focuses on transformational education experiences for our undergraduates, a number of ideas have been recommended. The first has to do with how we help students understand the critical importance of the mission. The new Core Curriculum is crucial in ensuring that students are well introduced to the fullness of the University mission, including justice and faith. Courses with experiential pedagogies, especially service-learning, will be pivotal in this work and we recognize the necessity for providing more opportunities so that all students can participate. Indeed, our strategic plan calls for ensuring that “experiential learning, learning communities, and service and internship opportunities are an integral part of every undergraduate program, reaching 80 percent of undergraduates by 2015.”

Related is the important role that faculty and staff can play as advisors and mentors; how do we help them acquire the necessary tools to do this? Experiences in the global community are salient for life in the twenty-first century; how do we increase the possibilities for students to have these? Second, offering professional development for faculty and staff is central; we need to provide more opportunities for them to deepen their understanding of the Catholic Jesuit roots of the mission and we must pay more attention to including justice questions as part of an on-going dialogue in all arenas. Who are we as a community? Whose voice is heard; whose is not? How do we become more inclusive? While the President’s Leadership Retreat often deals with these issues, it is limited in numbers who can participate. How do we embed more opportunities and sustained intellectual formation in the daily lives of our community? Third is the related importance of building on the good work already in place and increasing the integration of the work in student development and that in academic affairs, so that all recognize the ‘whole

person' is being attended to. Fourth, the financial challenges so many of our students face in taking on a commitment to attend Loyola must be met with additional scholarship funds, and here the importance of growing the endowment takes on urgency.

Obstacles and Challenges

A vision is a key in moving forward; a plan that explicates how to realize the vision is an essential tool. And any plan must take account of the obstacles and/or challenges that might be encountered. One way to approach these is to categorize them under the headings of culture and policies, where several issues come to the fore. One is a basic concern about time; too many feel there is not 'enough' time to do all that they want to or are asked to do --- a theme that applies to our students as well as to our staff and faculty. A corollary is the feeling that there is a 'new' initiative a minute. Surely the concern about time is shared in the larger society, but as a Catholic Jesuit institution, how are we providing the necessary time for reflection and discernment for our staff and faculty? And within that, how do we undertake the kind of assessment we want to do, i.e., careful, thoughtful, often time 'consuming'? How do we help all become more centered?

A second and related challenge: so many feel that burdensome processes preclude imaginative innovations from ever getting off the ground. Interdisciplinary work is a key example. How can we simplify and yet be accountable to the larger goals and needs of our community?

Third, there is some concern that the tenure and promotion criteria and the annual merit award process do not reflect adequate value for social justice research, teaching and service. Are we 'just like' all the other institutions of higher learning or do our particular Catholic Jesuit values both undergird and advance what we are about?

Fourth and perhaps most salient: how do we make sure that "the service of faith of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement" (GC 32, Decree 4) is in fact the overall frame of the work we do? And how do we hold ourselves accountable to that duty as individual people and as an institution committed to justice?