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The Dilemma of the Church-Related University

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This paper introduces and explores the issues and problems inherent to the administration of church-related colleges and universities. It includes a discussion of theoretical concepts that shed light on the issues and decisions that occur in this realm of higher education administration. An examination of two cases of these concepts at work reveals that different institutions will handle the issue of religion and church relationship distinctly, based on their own history and situation.

Introduction and Classification of Church-Related Institutions

It is impossible to consider the origins of American higher education without considering the role of religion and church affiliation in the university. Most of the first generation of university builders in North America were active Protestants and ardent believers dedicated to liberal Christianity (Marsden, 1994). Indeed, in 1636, well before the birth of the United States, the first North American church-related institution of higher education appeared in Newtown, Massachusetts (Lucas, 1994). The name of the town later changed to Cambridge, and the chosen name of the college was Harvard. The chief aim of the institution was for every student to "consider the main end of his life and studies to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life" (Lucas, 1994, p. 104). In antebellum America, the nation's most prestigious universities began with a firmly rooted religious identity (Lyon, Beaty, & Mixon, 2002).

Denominational and religious origins maintained a paramount position on American campuses until the late nineteenth century, when elite universities began quietly turning away from their denominations in search of the spoils of modern science, German standards of scholarship, and the attraction of a broader spectrum of faculty and students (Wolfe, 1997). By either neglect or design, the relationship between many institutions and their sponsoring denominations changed or diminished over time (Dovre, 2001; Marsden, 1994). Over one hundred years ago, Harvard discontinued mandatory chapel and removed the motto "*Christo et Ecclesiae*" from its seal (Lyon, Beaty, & Mixon, 2002). This secularization took place throughout the elite institutions of the Ivy League and, later, similar institutions like originally-Methodist Northwestern or Duke Universities. Secularization was lasting, as today one would need to look very closely to see any discernible difference between Princeton, established by the Presbyterians, and Yale, which was founded by the Congregational Church (Wolfe, 1997).

Conversely, other schools have remained diligently faithful to their

founding denominations and religious missions and continue to operate under that control. A rather notorious example of such an institution is Bob Jones University, which proclaims to "stand without apology for the old-time religion and the absolute authority of the Bible" ('Bob Jones,' n.d.). At Indiana Wesleyan University, which is affiliated with the Wesleyan church, students must attend chapel three times per week and sign statements agreeing to abstain from alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and social dancing, while also avoiding behavior specifically forbidden by Scripture such as lying, gossiping, homosexuality, and premarital sex (Reisberg, 1999). Other institutions take a more moderate route. For instance, Charleston Southern (formerly known as Baptist College at Charleston) and Wingate University (NC) hold tightly to their Southern Baptist ties and heritage, but are also taking steps to achieve a more ecumenical campus climate, especially with the influx of non-Baptists into their student bodies (McMurtrie, 2000).

In the middle of the spectrum, anchored at one end by fully secularized universities and on the other by church-controlled schools, falls another kind of institution, which seeks to simultaneously acknowledge its historical affiliation with a religious denomination while also moving away from direct ties and governance by the church. Wake Forest, Baylor, and Furman Universities, three historically-Baptist institutions, have all recently undergone public severances and/or alterations of their relationship with their state's Baptist Convention (Burtchaell, 1998; Blumenstyk, 1992; 'Baptists,' 1991).

Catholic universities, such as Georgetown and Marquette, present an interesting sub-category. They are in most cases still directly led by ordained priests of their founding orders (such as the Jesuits), but they too face the ecumenical challenge. Recognizing the shifting religious climate and the management needs of the modern university, Georgetown named its first lay president, John J. DeGioia, in February 2001 (Borrego, 2001).

Church-related universities present an interesting array of issues to study. At state universities and the fully secularized elite private schools, the issue of religion need not be raised. At the other end of the religious continuum, institutions with explicit and definite ties to their founding denomination do not face many religious issues because the role of religion remains clear and evident on those campuses. Those institutions that fall in the middle, however, must deal with questions about their religious identity every day. These are universities that "attempt to hold on to a serious commitment to the church while simultaneously striving for . . . academic excellence" (Lyon, Beaty, & Mixon, 2002, p. 326).

The question of religious identity affects how these universities recruit students, how they help students from traditionally absent or underrepresented groups feel comfortable on campus, and how they plan

strategically for the future. One example of the interaction between the religious identity of an institution and a contemporary issue in higher education is the question of how such campuses address the issue of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) students. As Love (1997) pointed out, some common approaches to this issue may indeed be counter-cultural at a church-related institution. GLBT advocates must often operate without vocal support from the administration because of the need to be sensitive to varied constituencies (e.g. Trustees, alumni, church leaders, etc).

For some universities, these questions carry financial consequences if a sponsoring denomination chooses to withdraw monetary support. Even in cases when funding directly from the church is modest or mainly symbolic, contributions from individual members of the denominations can be quite significant and the financial consequences sizeable if they become disenchanted with the institution's focus with respect to the church relationship (Tucker, 2001). For other institutions, the danger lies in the loss of historical identity and distinctiveness in the increasingly competitive marketplace of higher education (Dovre, 2001; Wolfe, 1997).

As religious colleges and universities undergo revitalization and growth and the question of the place of religion in the academy is revisited (Wolfe, 1997; Dovre, 2001; Marsden, 1994), so too grows the need to understand these institutions. This paper serves as an introduction to and a discussion of some of the factors affecting the administration of church-related (but not governed) colleges and universities. It includes a summary of some useful contributions from theoretical literature, as well as an examination of two specific cases from this area of higher education administration.

Saga and Janusian Thinking at Church-Related Universities

Culture at American colleges and universities manifests itself in many forms (Kuh & Whitt, 2000). Of these, organizational saga is defined as a historical narrative describing the unique accomplishments of an established group and its leaders, sometimes in heroic terms (Kuh & Whitt, 2000; Clark, 2000). Organizational sagas have either a low or high durability. A low durability saga results from a relatively unstructured social setting, and is created and controlled not within the organization, but by outsiders, such as the mass media (Clark, 2000). In most higher education settings, however, organizational sagas are highly durable because they are built slowly in structured social contexts (Clark, 2000). In short, they are part of what turns a formal place into a beloved institution to which people can be passionately devoted (Clark, 2000). Sagas often originate from the actions of a single person or small cadre, and usually are entwined with the founding of an institution. They are usually buoyed by personnel, unique programs, a social

base, a student subculture, and imagery (Clark, 2000).

Sagas play a particularly key role at private, church-related institutions because such an institution usually only exists due to the determination and convictions of a small group of people involved in its founding. The typical saga is one that tells of humble, uncertain beginnings for an institution that, through perseverance and visionary leadership, grew into a mature university. Texas Christian University boasts such a saga, in which the founders, Addison and Randolph Clark, "set out from Fort Worth . . . to pursue [the] dream of establishing a strong, lasting institution dedicated to education within the context of a Christian way of life" (Swaim, 1992). Today, this saga is passed on to visitors and new students on campus, who hear that the school was among the first coeducational institutions west of the Mississippi River and that it survived a ruinous fire on one of its first campuses (Swaim, 1992).

Saga matters to church-related institutions because an institution that moves away from its founding denomination risks undermining its organizational saga. Changing the nature of the institution's church relationship can affect many of the components mentioned above that support the saga, such as personnel, social base, and imagery. It can change the nature of personnel if, for instance, a college ceases to require that its faculty profess to following the Christian faith. It also can affect the social base, which consists of those outsiders that are devoted to the organization, such as alumni and members of the founding church. The removal, relocation, or addition of religious artifacts or symbols to the campus due to a shift in affiliation can affect the imagery of organizational saga.

Along with organizational saga, the theoretical concept of Janusian thinking also applies to the administration of church-related universities. The term Janusian derives from the Roman god Janus, who was depicted as having two faces looking in different directions at the same time (Cameron, 2000). Thus, Janusian thinking results when two seemingly contradictory thoughts are held to be true simultaneously (Cameron, 2000). In other words, it is a justified paradox. Institutions that attempt to occupy both sides of the fence when it comes to religious affiliation inevitably engage in Janusian thinking. They look backward by acknowledging their history as, oftentimes, a sectarian religious university. Concomitantly, they look forward, striving to become a welcoming campus with an ecumenical view. This type of thinking is necessary, because, as Wolfe (1997) and Marsden (1994) pointed out, institutions that choose to remain strictly faithful to their denominations are frequently marginalized in the realm of academia. Institutions that choose to secularize, however, risk losing their distinctiveness (Wolfe, 1997).

Janusian thinking permits institutions in this predicament to have it both ways, or at least to appear as if they do. They can simultaneously appease the more conservative elements of their constituency, such as older, more affluent alumni who attended the institution when the church relationship was stronger, while also improving their standing according to the secular values of the research academy. An apt example of Janusian thinking at work is the strategic plan at Baptist-affiliated Baylor University, entitled 'Baylor 2012' (Mangan, 2003). Under this plan, Baylor president Robert Sloan intends for Baylor to move into the top tier of American universities, while at the same time strengthening its Christian identity (Mangan, 2003; Hall, 2003). The initiative includes plans to recruit faculty who both affirm their Christian faith and produce significant research (Hall, 2003). This is at odds with the history of most religiously affiliated institutions, which in the past have had to loosen their ties to their denominations on their way to becoming leading research universities (Mangan, 2003; Marsden, 1994).

Only through the application of Janusian thinking can institutions like Baylor pursue seemingly contradictory goals at the same time. The downside to such an approach, however, is that, before long, an institution is likely to end up with a conservative, more religious constituency in its trustees and alumni and a more liberal, secular constituency in its faculty (and those students that are not strongly religious). This leaves the university president caught in the middle of two dichotomous groups. In the end, it is likely that neither constituency will be pleased with the decisions of the university, as evidenced by the recent no-confidence vote by Baylor's faculty against President Sloan, and a letter signed by several trustees indicating the same (Mangan, 2003).

Case Studies

The following examination of how religious identity has informed institutional decision-making at Georgetown and Wake Forest Universities illustrates how a variety of considerations affect and complicate religion-based questions at church-related institutions. Both cases demonstrate the ways in which religious institutions defer to organizational saga and employ Janusian thinking when navigating through issues that strike at the heart of the school's church relationship.

Crucifixes at Georgetown.

An issue centered around religious identity emerged at Georgetown University, the nation's oldest Catholic institution of higher education, when a group of students called for the administration to place crucifixes in every classroom in 1997. This sparked a campus debate at precisely the time that

many Catholic universities were struggling to define their Catholic identity (Lively, 1997). Adding crucifixes to every classroom was not necessarily a radical move, nor was it inherently unpopular among non-Catholic students. Other Catholic universities, such as the University of Notre Dame and Catholic University of America, had crucifixes in their classrooms. It is worth noting, however, that their student bodies were 85 percent Catholic, while Catholic students at Georgetown constituted only 60 percent of student enrollment (Lively, 1997).

In considering a course of action, the Georgetown administration had to weigh several factors. In response to the debate, the head of the Archdiocese of Washington issued an essay encouraging the university to respond affirmatively to its professed Catholic identity (Lively, 1997). Georgetown's leaders would also make this decision in the wake of the papal document *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, in which the Vatican called for Catholic colleges to strengthen the presence of Church teaching on campus (Borrego, 2001). Lastly, the university also had to consider this issue in light of the work it had done to diversify its student body, and be wary of straying from the ideals of open-mindedness and acceptance that drew non-Catholics and non-Christians to the university. The administration wanted to use the crucifix debate as an introduction to a larger conversation about its Catholic identity and academic goals (Lively, 1997).

Ultimately, the administration decided to go forward with placing crucifixes in most of the campus classrooms (Lively, 1998). The eventual solution called for the placement of crucifixes from a variety of eras, along with a plaque explaining the historical significance of each piece. The one campus building consciously excluded from this action was the Intercultural Center, home to the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (Lively, 1998). University officials also resolved to place more Catholic-themed art on the grounds of the campus, in an attempt to strengthen the imagery of its saga as a Catholic institution. Thus, Georgetown resolved the controversy by conscientiously choosing to make its religious identity more visible on campus. The decision was Janusian in nature because the institution's Catholic identity and its commitment to its diverse, non-Catholic population were held to be true at the same time.

Wake Forest versus the Baptist Convention

The case of Wake Forest University is perhaps one of the most public and heated instances of an institution severing its ties with a founding denomination. Wake Forest, located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, is the state's oldest Baptist university (Burtchaell, 1998). Wake Forest's relationship with the state Baptist convention had been unraveling for some time

when its administration made the formal decision to break ties in 1986. As early as the 1930s, the university rankled the state convention by having chapel only twice a week, with student attendance voluntary (Burtchaell, 1998). In 1957, the trustees approved of dancing on campus under proper supervision, which sent local congregations into an uproar and prompted the convention to override the trustees' ruling (Burtchaell, 1998). The decision to accept an annual subsidy from the Reynolds Foundation (related to the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco company) and move the campus from Wake Forest, NC to Winston-Salem also provoked concern in the state convention (Burtchaell, 1998).

By the mid-sixties, there was talk among Wake Forest trustees about removing the "millstone" of its Baptist ties from around the institution's neck. The university had advanced enormously both academically and financially, while at the same time experiencing a reduction in Baptist faculty and students (Burtchaell, 1998). In fact, Baptist leaders were alarmed to discover that enrollment trends indicated that Catholic students would outnumber Baptists by the 1993-1994 academic year (Burtchaell, 1998). Eventually, open hostilities with the state convention commenced, and in 1986 Wake Forest became the first Baptist university to end its formal affiliation with the founding denomination, out of concern for issues of academic freedom and governance (Lively, 1996).

The severance of ties meant that the state convention would no longer provide financial support for the university, nor would it have a say in the choosing of trustees. The University, however, continues to acknowledge its saga by referring to itself as "historically Baptist" (McMurtrie, 2000). It is telling that, while the leaders of Wake Forest were willing to break its formal link to the founding denomination, they did not desire to completely abandon their organizational saga. They pursued the Janusian concept of both dropping their formal affiliation while retaining what they felt to be the most positive elements of that identity. The University has gone even further in its protest of the increasingly fundamentalist nature of the state Baptist convention by starting its own divinity school in 2000 to attract moderate Baptists, who are quickly becoming out of step at the older Baptist seminaries in the state (Lively, 1996).

As religious fundamentalists gradually took control of the Southern Baptist Convention in the 1980s and 1990s, other universities followed Wake Forest's lead in severing or reducing ties to the state convention. In South Carolina, Furman University moved in 1990 to give itself the authority to appoint its own governing board. This action led to an attempted lawsuit by the state convention, the severing of official ties to the organization, and the withdrawal of the annual \$1.1 million dollar appropriation to the university

(Blumenstyk, 1992). In 1991, Baylor University reached an agreement with the Baptist General Convention of Texas to appoint 75 percent of its governing board itself and to become more independent in its decision-making, in spite of a campaign by conservatives to block the move ('Baptists,' 1991).

Conclusion

The challenge for many church-related institutions lies in determining how many of their traditions and/or governances they are willing to shed or alter in order to accommodate (or attract) an increasingly diverse student body (McMurtrie, 2000). Particularly, historically Protestant universities in the South, due to shifting demographics, are finding that, for the first time, Catholic students represent a plurality of the students on campus. Some universities have made adjustments to their religious requirements and to the nature of the speakers invited to campus, but others cling more tightly to their traditions, even at the risk of alienating some of their students (McMurtrie, 2000).

For administrators at these institutions, an even more fundamental issue remains. They must determine how to manage the balance between, first, valuing the institution's denominational legacy, which is inextricably linked with the school's identity and saga; and second, steering the institution's movement toward the world of the secular research university out of a desire for increased prestige and influence in the realm of academia. Marsden (1994) observed that many university builders and leaders, in the midst of these competing forces, attempt to steer this middle course, only to discover how difficult it is. Deference to organizational saga and Janusian thinking can help to strike this balance, but situations where these two elements come into direct conflict often result in difficult decisions. Father Michael Walsh, former president at Boston College (a Jesuit institution), summed up the dilemma quite well when he asked the question, "Should we acknowledge that there is no distinctiveness, that Boston College is no different than Harvard or the University of Massachusetts?" (Burtchaell, 1998, p. 604).

Different institutions will ask themselves that kind of question and answer it differently based on their particular situations and goals. According to Dovre (2001), church-related universities are marked by their variety, "variety in the ways in which they relate to their sponsoring religious bodies, variety in their histories, and variety in the constituencies they serve and the expectations of those constituencies" (p. 23). Each institution will walk the line between the distinctiveness of a denominational relationship and engagement with the broader society in its own highly individualized way (Dovre, 2001).

In the cases discussed above, both Georgetown and Wake Forest reached a crossroads where they had to choose between affirming their historic religious affiliation or move further down the path of secularization. Georgetown's course of action in placing crucifixes and Catholic art on campus constituted a thoughtful strengthening of its Catholic identity, while, on the other hand, Wake Forest's choice was ultimately a severance of official ties to the state Baptist convention. These two distinct decisions were undoubtedly difficult ones for the administrations involved and the university communities, but in that sense they seem to be merely par for the course when it comes to leading the contemporary church-related university.

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Understanding Satisfaction: The Effect of Black Greek-Letter Organization Membership on African American College Students at a Predominantly White Institution

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This study compares the levels of satisfaction of African American students in Black Greek letter Organizations (BGLOs) to those who are not in BGLOs at a predominantly White university. The researchers found that Black Greek membership played a positive role in students' social integration, leadership, spirituality, academic satisfaction, and overall satisfaction with the institution. The study concludes with implications as to how student affairs practitioners can help African American students adjust to campus life at predominantly White institutions.

Introduction

Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) have been part of American colleges and universities since the beginning of the 20th century. The first BGLO, Alpha Phi Alpha, began as a social literary club in 1905 at Cornell University and became the first fraternity primarily for Black men in December of 1906 (McKenzie, 1990). The first sorority for African American women began shortly thereafter, in 1908, at Howard University (McKenzie, 1990). Six of the remaining seven BGLOs were established on various campuses during the next 14 years, and the final BGLO, Iota Phi Theta, was founded in 1963 on the Morgan State University campus (McKenzie, 1990). The National Pan-Hellenic Council, the coordinating body for BGLOs, lists 1.5 million members since the founding of the first BGLO (Ruffins & Roach, 1997).

The focus of this research study is to examine how BGLOs at predominantly White institutions (PWIs) affect Black students' overall satisfaction with college, including academic, spiritual, and psychosocial development. The research question the authors seek to answer is: How do Black Greek students feel their letter organizations have affected their satisfaction with the college experience? Because Black students' satisfaction is a critical determinant of their persistence, particularly at PWIs, it is critical to examine how involvement affects satisfaction (Astin, 1993; Brown, 2000). While much research has focused on the leadership development of Black Greeks (Kimbrough, 1995, 1998; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001), student satisfaction is frequently overlooked (Astin, 1993). According to Brown (2000), between 1982 and 2000, only three studies have focused on African American students' satisfaction with college. More research should be