

Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education

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Santa Clara University

Conference Report

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Development

I. Conference Description:

A. Brief Summary:

Seven faculty members and six upper administrators represented Loyola at this gathering of the twenty-eight Jesuit colleges and universities. Delegations from each school signed a pledge endorsing Father Kolvenbach’s call for more faith-justice work. The Loyola representatives regarded Father Kolvenbach’s talk as the climax of the conference. He spoke to our hearts and minds, proclaiming, “[T]he service of faith’ cannot mean anything other than to bring the counter-cultural gift of Christ to our world.” He urged us to remember, “The way to faith and the way to justice are inseparable ways. It is up this undivided road, this steep road, that the pilgrim Church’--the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit College and University--’must travel and toil.” We accepted his charge to develop an agenda for promoting justice in Jesuit higher education in the new millennium. We offer this report as the first step.

The Conference was built around three **keynote addresses** and three forms of interactive small group sessions. The interactive sessions consisted of 1) **Topic Sessions**, which featured a 10-15 minute presentation followed by facilitated discussion, 2) **Interest Groups**, where peers gathered to exchange ideas, and 3) **Model Programs**, where participants learned about specific successful justice programs. Representatives of our Loyola group attended every keynote address and participated in almost every interactive session.

1. Keynote addresses:

The conference culminated in “Faith and Justice in Jesuit Higher Education,” by Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Father General of the Society of Jesus. Please read his talk, which honors the faith that is the context for our justice. His speech is available on reserve at the library or at www.scu.edu/BannanInstitute/kolvenbach_text.html.

Also featured were speeches by Leon Panetta, former White House chief of staff and director of the Panetta Institute, and Dr. Claire Guadiani, president of Connecticut College and founder of a new level of college-community partnerships.

2. Topic Sessions:

- 1) Core Curriculum
- 2) Courses and Programs on Justice
- 3) Research on Issues of Justice
- 4) Service Learning Programs
- 5) Faith and Justice
- 6) Women and Jesuit Colleges/Universities: “Of” or “At”?
- 7) People of Color in Jesuit Universities
- 8) Economic Barriers to Jesuit Higher Education
- 9) Globalization and Justice Education
- 10) Poverty and Justice Education
- 11) The Campus Rewards System
- 12) Spirituality for Justice
- 13) Institutional Issues: Internal
- 14) Institutional Issues: External
- 15) The “Seamless Garment”--Consistent Ethic of Life

The conference produced a book, “Framing the Questions for Discussion,” which presents one-page essays by experts on each of the topic session areas. The book is on reserve in the library, along with notes from members of the Loyola delegation. The essays are also available at www.scu.edu/BannanInstitute/framing.html.

The conference program on library reserve and the Santa Clara web page listed immediately above describe the **Interest Groups** (including sessions for the Humanities, Business and Economics, and Trustees and Presidents) and **Model Programs** (including Boston College’s PULSE and Loyola New Orleans’s Twomey Center for Peace Through Justice).

B. Most Significant Points of the Conference:

Fr. Kolvenbach calls for “American Jesuit Higher Education for faith and justice,” exemplified by three ideal characteristics: “in who our students become, in what our faculty do, and in how our universities proceed.” The faith and justice he describes are integrally Catholic. People from many faith traditions also express commitment to his vision. Many groups offer a view of justice; the college has an opportunity to act for the greater glory of God.

People hunger for justice. People respond to the call for justice in higher education.

Everyone is invited--and needs--to “do justice.” The domain of doing justice no longer belongs to the outreach, service, and service-learning facets of the college.

The conference provided working meetings (rather than presentations). The conference was founded on interdisciplinary exchange.

Consensus: colleges should act for justice *on campus* as well as in society, following the teachings of Jesus Christ (see Matt. 7:3-5). Then we model justice.

II. Implementation:

Loyola’s representatives have established what we hope can be objectives for the college. We hope to offer initial steps to achieve these objectives in the following weeks and months.

Objectives:

1. Invite entire community to think about justice goals for Loyola.

Justice involves the entire institution, from groundskeepers to the trustees and president.

Encourage students, staff, faculty, administrators, trustees, and the president to assess and set goals for justice work.

Offer retreats to integrate faith and justice: invite all above-named parties.

Create a web-page, “Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education.”

Publicize even more the justice work already being accomplished at Loyola.
Help establish mutual connections among these programs.

Keep meeting as a group to continue justice work. Our sesquicentennial urges us to act.

Maintain our links with other groups (Fr. Tim Brown with the Center for Values and Service, Fr. Eugene Geinzer with the Jesuit Community).

Sandra Gooding and Steve Miles proceed with Notre Dame-funded survey and assess current presence of justice issues in teaching and research.

Sandra Gooding and Mark Peyrot survey alumni about their faith-justice activities at Loyola and after graduation.

2. Include justice issues in the strategic plan.

The strategic plan will help raise money and support for justice in a variety of areas.

Generate conversation and results on the justice issues raised in each of the topic areas at Santa Clara.

Justice will enhance curriculum for students and faculty.

Establish funds to support research in justice issues. Encourage each discipline to integrate faith and justice.

Establish our goals for our graduates. Father Kolvenbach declares, “The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become.”

Justice can transform the campus culture at all levels.

3. Justice begins at home.

Loyola and Baltimore need one another. We have a rare opportunity to model the reciprocal needs of the university/universum, the college and the city.

Work very actively with and for our African American students and faculty. Learn their justice concerns.

Work to bring even more minority students and faculty here.

Offer all of our under-educated employees high-school equivalence, language enrichment, etc., at an “education clinic” on campus.

Investigate living wages for employees.