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# THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR: ALIGNING A MARIANIST MISSION WITH PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE IN AN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DOCTORAL PROGRAM

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*This inquiry was conducted to explore how the characteristics of our university's religious mission are interwoven into our educational leadership doctoral program and are manifest in the structure and learning experiences that our students encounter. We examined how these characteristics might correspond to or relate to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards that resulted from national reform initiatives in educational leadership in the mid 1990s. We concluded that the foundations of the PhD program are built solidly on the distinctive characteristics and identity of our founders and are aligned with these professional standards as well. Implications for universities include our conclusion that when the distinctive mission of a university aligns with the professional standards of a field, more effective leadership preparation will result.*

## INTRODUCTION

Professional standards reflect the uniqueness of the professional field and evolve over time according to prevailing expectations for professionalism (Brubaker & Rudy, 1997). Addressing professional standards dates back to The Carnegie Foundation sponsoring of the 1910 Flexner Report that forced professional programs to set high standards and also recommended the termination of programs operating below acceptable levels (Brubaker & Rudy). State licensing bureaus as well as practitioner and academic associations also exert pressure that assures minimum standards regulate both programs and professionals (Brubaker & Rudy). These standards can be judged on the basis of curricular strength and rigor, quality of faculty employed, students enrolled, efficiency of existing physical facilities, effectiveness of pedagogical/andragogical technique, placement of graduates, accreditation achieved, and program's relationship to comparable programs.

Identifying standards and expectations for educational leadership programs, in particular, has been established by the following professional organizations, learned societies, and accrediting bodies: University Council for Educational Administration (<http://www.ucea.org>), the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards (<http://www.ccsso.org/standards.html>), National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (<http://www.ncepa.net>), National Policy Board for Educational Administration (<http://www.npbea.org>), Association for the Study of Higher Education (<http://www.ashe.missouri.edu>), regional bodies such as the Southern Regional Council of Educational Administrators (<http://www.hehd.clemson.edu/srcea>), 50 state boards of education, state boards of regents, state commissions on higher education, university boards of trustees (Kerr & Gade, 1989), and individual program advisory boards (Kochan & Twale, 2000).

University departments in the professional fields, such as educational leadership, socialize students according to prevailing professional standards of practice, program standards, and faculty culture (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Even more fundamental than the standards of professional organizations and learned societies are the deeply held values rooted in the historical tradition of each unique university that offers educational leadership programs. Operating along with the national, regional, and local guidelines, individual university programs in educational leadership, whether public or private, impose their own set of standards that faculty must uphold and with which students must comply. The collective ideals of a university can lead to excellence in student outcomes, when they create an energized learning culture (Fullan, 1993; Senge, 1990).

Mission-based standards transmit the university's values within the formal curriculum and its resulting instructional practices. Private, religious universities may impose additional standards of practice upon students that faculty must weave into their program content and ethos. With the implementation of the norms for *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (John Paul II, 1990) at Catholic universities, religious practice, for instance, is further determined through the mission statement, course content, faculty composition, and presidential commitment to the faith (Henkin, Dee, & Holman, 2001; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2001). There is no reason to assume that adherence to a religious mission should preclude adherence to established secular standards of professional practice (Burtchaell, 1998). The nexus between the professional standards and one university's guiding principles was the site of this investigation. In this study we asked, how are the distinctive characteristics of the university's mission evidenced in the PhD program in educational leadership? Second, we wondered in what ways might the nexus of the university's religious mission and a set of secular professional standards be mutually reinforcing.

One such example is the University of Dayton, a Marianist Catholic institution. In this study we examined the extent to which and in what ways the distinctive qualities of the Society of Mary are evidenced in program design and

the expectations of faculty and students in an educational leadership preparation program at one of the Society's institutions, the University of Dayton.

## **THE MARIANIST TRADITION**

In France, Father William Joseph Chaminade established the Society of Mary, a Catholic religious community in 1817. It was not long before a Marianist priest, Father Leo Meyer, found his way to America, specifically to the Cincinnati, Ohio area. In 1850, St. Mary's Institute, later to become the University of Dayton, was founded in Dayton, Ohio. At least two qualities of the Society of Mary rendered it as a particularly compelling place for preparing educational leaders. First of all, the Marianists began as a society of teachers. Education is therefore central to their heritage. Teaching children was a way to lead them to know and love God (Lackner, 1997). The earliest documents of Father Chaminade were pedagogical in nature. Father John Baptiste Lalanne, a disciple of Chaminade, was an early public Marianist who extolled education - a value in creating three capacities in "man:" reason, liberty and love (Lackner, 1997).

Second, throughout its history the Society of Mary has celebrated the preponderance of lay people at its core. The Marianists continue that emphasis into the 21st century, believing that the laity and the vowed religious are equals working together (Fitz, 1981-82; Kaufmann, 1999; Landolfi, 1990; Ruppel, 1974). The strong integration of the day-to-day lives of lay people alongside the vowed religious has naturally led to service to public schools as well as to Catholic schools by this religious community of educators.

Within the broader notion of service to schools is preparing those who would be school leaders. Since 1969, the University of Dayton has delivered educational preparation programs to aspiring school administrators. The PhD program was added in 1990. In 1997, the university added a program to prepare leaders for higher education administration as well. Particular outcomes that are distinctly Marianist such as beliefs, knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes should be evidenced in graduates.

## **THE MARIANIST CHARISMS**

These characteristics or charisms can be identified as the following five categories:

### **EDUCATION FOR FORMATION IN FAITH**

Against the secular trend, graduates understand ethical decision making and virtuous character. Community is valued. Knowledge combines both faith and reason, and mind and heart. The dialogue between faith and culture is not avoided. Service to others to transform society is mandated. Students conduct their lives and uphold their faith in a thoughtful manner.

## **AN EXCELLENT AND INTEGRAL EDUCATION**

The whole person is valued (cognitive, moral, spiritual, physical, psychological). The importance of a global awareness and value for those different from oneself is central. Self-knowledge is encouraged as a path to broader learning. The inclusive environment is open, welcoming, and respectful.

## **A FAMILY SPIRIT**

Community is the foundation of Marianist education. Relationships are integrated across all levels of the educational bureaucracy. The incumbents are concerned and caring, building on member strengths and diverse contributions. Each member is equally valued, which assists in empowering others.

## **SERVICE, JUSTICE, AND PEACE**

Social justice, sacredness of life, commitment to the common good, and serving poor and marginalized people are at the core of this educational mission. The dignity and equality of genders as well as all races, cultures, ethnicities, abilities, and creeds are respected. Members of the community understand yesterday and today so they can deal with tomorrow.

## **ADAPTATION TO CHANGE**

Critical thinking skills, discernment, authenticity means to preserve what is valued from the past and adopt what is of value for now and for the future. With values intact, risk-taking is necessary to initiate change. Support and compassion accompany those who seek planned change in an effort to move the mission and institution forward (Chaminade University of Honolulu, St. Mary's University, University of Dayton, 1999).

Graduates possess these Marianist characteristics only if they are a constant and active emphasis in the experiences of students during their preparation experiences. Each must be evidenced in the syllabi, course activities, learning goals, and the beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes of the faculty (DeMarco, Ridenour, Laubach, & Morefield, 1999; Ridenour & DeMarco, 1999; Twale & Schaller, 2002).

## **METHOD IN INQUIRY**

We conducted this study to explore how the mission and professional standards mutually reinforce the educational leadership program at the University of Dayton. Through a process of examining course syllabi and studying mission statements, vision statements, and strategic plans, first we identified where the five charisms of the Society of Mary are evident and then, how they might be manifest in learning experiences that were planned for students. Second, we cross-indexed our results with the ISLLC standards to locate congruence and incongruence. The possibility loomed that the secular nature of

the standards might conflict with our confirmed religious mission. Such conflict would need to be resolved by adhering to the greater good of the profession while remaining true to the university mission and charisms.

We chose the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards (See Figure 1) for this investigation because the ISLLC standards tend to drive the preparation of educational administrators at most institutions of higher education in this country. The Council of Chief State School Officers, working with numerous state education agencies and individuals from professional associations, developed the six standards over a period of 2 years, publishing the first draft in 1996. This effort was one among many reform initiatives during the 1980s and 1990s. During those years almost all professional organizations in education struggled with adapting to the changing needs of society with new models of schooling and new leadership roles to serve those schools (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Murphy, 1992). The standards were tightly interwoven with other professional efforts to form the national accreditation guidelines by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the professional association that governs much of professional preparation in education (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2002).

Figure 1: Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards  
Source: ISLLC website [www.ccsso.org/isllc.htm](http://www.ccsso.org/isllc.htm)

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1. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
  2. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
  3. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
  4. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
  5. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
  6. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
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We are required, as well as committed, to show that our leadership preparation program is in compliance with the NCATE standards. We are even more committed to show that our leadership preparation program celebrates the Marianist heritage, the mission of our university. It seemed logical, then, to align the two sets of goals to explore how they might or might not mesh and be mutually reinforcing.

The outcomes (a) argue for mission-based leadership programs, (b) suggest that more effective educational leadership is forthcoming when leadership preparation is mission-based, (c) expand to a richer explanation of the Society of Mary and its educational characteristics and how that heritage is linked to learning as suggested in the ISLLC Standards, and (d) portray a conceptual framework showing how we interpreted these resulting relationships at this Marianist university.

## RESULTS

While the University of Dayton's mission was developed primarily for undergraduate education, the addition of graduate programs extends that mission to students who spend less time on campus and who are preparing to enter various professional fields. Faculty are challenged to incorporate the mission through graduate coursework exclusively, as campus activities and residence life options are unlikely avenues for graduate student socialization and development. In addition, professional standards also dictate programmatic content. To uphold our mission is paramount, but to ignore the standards of practice jeopardizes program viability and perhaps marketability. Incorporation of national standards further challenges faculty to align with the mission so as to preserve the uniqueness of the program. The increase in diverse student populations desiring part-time study presents many challenges as well (Twale & Kochan, 2000; Twale, Schaller, Hunley, & Polanski, 2002).

Even though programs across the country are similar by virtue of national standards, each has a signature feature that separates it from others. At the University of Dayton, distinctiveness is accomplished by alignment with the five Marianist characteristics or charisms. Figure 2 depicts the parallels between the ISLLC standards and the Marianist characteristics or charisms, and how to translate these into administrative decisions, program goals, course goals and objectives, and classroom and semester activities. Admittedly, these links are constructions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and are not tightly bounded one-to-one connections. An ISLLC standard that we aligned with the "Excellent and Integral Education," for example, evokes "Family Spirit." We constructed the dominant connections between mission and activities, accepting the natural overlaps that exist.

Figure 2: Comparisons of the Marianist Charisms and the ISLLC Standards

<b>Marianist Charisms</b>	<b>Program Activities and Objectives</b>	<b>ISLLC Standards</b>
Family spirit	Critical reflective practice; celebrate accomplishments; administrative change is logical, strategic, and participatory	Developing, articulating, implementing, and stewarding a vision of learning shared and supported by the school community
Adaptation in change	Shift to a postmodern perspective as it impacts leadership style; responsiveness to technological change; support risk taking; faculty development initiatives	Advocating school culture and instructional programs conducive to learning and growth
Excellent and integral education	Promote growth; collaborate in groups; promote inclusiveness with each incoming cohort	Managing the learning environment
Service, justice, peace	Acting upon principles of justice and care for all members of the school community; diverse cohort groups; program revision to accommodate student needs	Collaborating with community and mobilizing resources
Education for the formation of faith	Moral and ethical stance in inquiry and research decisions; moral dimensions in one's role as leader and follower; servant leadership	Ethics, fairness, integrity
All five charisms combined	Faith in God in a secular world; global awareness; valuing difference; managing contextual change; defending values; timely responsiveness	Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger external context



## **STANDARD 1 AND FAMILY SPIRIT**

Standard 1, a shared and supported vision, manifests itself in our School of Education and Allied Profession's conceptual framework of critical reflective practice. Our administration of the doctoral program is participatory, logical, and strategic. For instance, a coordinator is assigned to manage each of the major concentrations in the PhD program (P-12 education and higher education). Our coordinators and dean work together to address anticipated changes and needs. As we examine neighboring educational leadership programs, we lift up our university ethos as unique and supported by faculty. We celebrate together as a school and share our research and scholarly accomplishments to engrain a sense of belonging. We believe that as faculty we must examine our own practices and values, and seek opportunities to research together and with students, practitioners in residence, and practicing professionals. We aspire to live out the Marianist belief in Family Spirit that encourages rich relationships among all members of the community, including "valuing the relationships students can develop with faculty as a result of collaborating in research" (Chaminade University of Honolulu et al., 1999, p. 19). With the assistance of technology, we establish additional connections with students through class related communication including the testing of on-line courses at the certification level. We strive to ensure only the "appropriate" uses of technology (Chaminade University of Honolulu et al., p. 17).

As we allow the doctoral program to evolve, we value greater input and involvement from colleagues and envision a wider circle of faculty and adjunct professors who can serve on dissertation committees. Rather than hoard our cultural capital, we desire to spend and invest it wisely in order to create more. These activities closely parallel the Family Spirit charism that embraces celebratory community, empowerment, and system wide support.

Though we do admit full-time students, most students attend part time. Students come from varied educational settings and cultures to form an identifiable entity. They are admitted as a cohort each fall, which for a period of time sustains them. Many would acknowledge this group as a second family. As time passes for them in the program, students mature and eventually strike out on their own intellectual journey. They move naturally from a community of student supporters to again be supported by the community of scholars who oversee their dissertation process and guide them on their continued professional journey.

## **STANDARD 2 AND ADAPTATION TO CHANGE**

Standard 2 advocates for a nurturing school culture and students' professional growth through instruction. We recently concluded the University of Dayton's (UD) 150th anniversary celebration. As an institution, we remembered the past while celebrating the present and anticipating the challenges of the future. For example, UD embraced technological change and wired the entire campus, mandating computer purchases for first-year students. We need to continually question decisions about the use of technology, mindful of keeping persons,

not things, central to university life. Technology serves only as a tool, according to the Marianists. The Marianist tradition acknowledges the “ambivalent achievements of technology” (Chaminade University of Honolulu et al., 1999, p. 17), and our duty is to use technology in ways that only benefit, not weaken, the human community.

Faculty development options are encouraged and supported both financially and administratively. Various opportunities also exist for students to present their work either in class, at department/school sponsored poster sessions, and at regional and national conferences. Students are assigned meaningful activities in courses, students conduct action research by shadowing leaders or offering consultation to informal learning communities; students evaluate the impact of policy statements on constituents; they immerse themselves in the last 10 years of a particular journal in their field by identifying evolving trends; and students analyze case studies.

Our administrative vision of change to meet the future needs of graduates arises from the Adaptation to Change charism. Like Mary herself – strong, confrontational, and a risk taker tempered with her qualities of compassion, nurturance, and support – the University of Dayton’s vision moves us forward. As such, we encourage and support our students to take risks, think critically, and reflect on their work and their personal styles in order to advocate change for the better. We generate an atmosphere of openness in our classes to render discussion and dialogue commonplace. We listen to students’ voices and seek resolution where feasible.

Perhaps the greatest risk students must take is to articulate their own professional philosophy, understand their leadership styles, and operationalize and adjust them. The exposure to debate and criticism can be invigorating and challenging when the student has been educated, mentored, encouraged, and supported so as to espouse new ideas and carry them through to fruition. Father Chaminade’s words, “New times call for new methods,” is probably his most frequently quoted sentiment. Challenge from change is not feared but is faced “calmly, balancing acceptance and adaptation” (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*, 1996, p. 29). We encourage dissertation topics that are varied and open to multiple means for analysis. We believe students are also looking for ways their research will assist future generations in adapting to change.

### **STANDARD 3 AND EXCELLENT AND INTEGRAL EDUCATION**

Standard 3 deals with the issue of managing the school organization to provide an effective learning environment. Managing the learning environment in Standard 3 encompasses those legal, financial, and ethical issues that effectively allow the institution to evolve, or on the other hand, issues that might confound and stifle it. An Excellent and Integral Education undergirds our cohort model and the need for entering doctoral students to value one another

and each one's contribution to the group. Students are encouraged to work in collaborative groups both in and out of class, to share, and to celebrate together. This Marianist charism calls us to educate "the whole person...physical, psychological, intellectual, moral, social and creative qualities" (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*, 1996, p. 18). We attempt to nurture that holistic spirit in each student cohort. Individual concern or loss of a valued member through attrition would rally the group to offer support and encouragement. Peer presence at a final defense of a cohort member, for example, is supportive and comforting. One cohort has a potluck supper one night a week after class.

A cohesive cohort group is more likely to petition the administration for programmatic change in order to preserve group ties and show solidarity through a group designed t-shirt. They value the strength of the group over individual choice. This strength allows them to take risks that less coherent cohorts would not entertain. This solidarity grows the longer they are together and works to form a common unity. They have learned to genuinely like and appreciate one another's strengths, weaknesses, and differences. Students develop "respect for the dignity of the person as a daughter or son of God, unique and individual," a quality typical of learning environments that an Excellent and Integral Education would have us achieve (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*, 1996, p. 19).

Newly admitted groups exhibiting their identity each year begin new traditions. As faculty we are also compelled to model an integral community by collaborating on research projects. With this in mind, we encourage all students to share, team, and bond as they uncover and discover in order to add to the existing bodies of knowledge through their individual research efforts. This prevailing attitude should extend through the dissertation phase and beyond as students move from a community of peers to a community of scholars.

## **STANDARD 4 AND SERVICE, JUSTICE, PEACE**

Standard 4 envisions a leader who is deeply concerned with collaborating with families, the community in which they live, and the community's many and diverse members. This community collaboration helps mobilize people, resources, and information. The idea is to nurture relationships with others both in the school settings, and outside, air concerns, mediate conflict, and solve problems through collaborative efforts. Education leaders, according to Standard 4, understand the social dynamics of diverse communities. Furthermore, such leaders believe that diversity lends strength not weakness to the learning environment. Compliance with this standard is accomplished only by going beyond tolerance for diversity to respect for and even celebration of those unlike oneself. Our Service, Justice, and Peace charism finds its way into our curriculum as we address care and concern for all persons, especially the

marginalized. Our program seeks to admit from diverse groups and in this manner prepares students to live and work successfully with a diversity of persons when they graduate. This mission driven charism focuses our efforts on understanding the times and the need to change.

Currently, our doctoral program is transitioning to a new format in light of both internal and external financial concerns that are mandating revision. Proposed program change entails certain risks. However, the standard encourages trust in the change maker's judgment and the implied belief that change will be for the better. Without using the specific words, the language of Standard 4 evokes images of the common good, an image that the Marianist heritage explicates in detail.

As clearly stated in its mission, the University educates for life and the commitment to the common good, or, furthermore, the greater good. While this end can be achieved through equitable distribution of resources and support personnel, fair policies and procedures, and sound administrative practice, it can also be achieved through research. Whether the research be independent, collaborative, or dissertation-related, results from that research should strive for the greater good. The Service, Justice, and Peace charism calls us to serve the common good by serving the "poor and by preparing people for genuine service to the economically disadvantaged, the handicapped, and the marginalized" (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*, 1996, p. 26). Two venues to make manifest the meaning of this characteristic are awarding scholarships and engaging in community service (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*). Through fundraising that commemorated former professors in the program, scholarships are awarded each year to support dissertation research of two PhD students on topics studying urban schools and those families and children in most need.

## **STANDARD 5 AND EDUCATION FOR FORMATION IN FAITH**

To address Standard 5, leaders must act fairly, ethically, and with integrity. Central to this standard is a value system, professional philosophy, and respectful attitude. All overt actions are open to scrutiny. Contractual obligations must be fulfilled; confidentiality must be maintained. While the curriculum includes an ethics course, we weave moral and ethical conduct through our coursework on leadership roles and research inquiry and decision making. Given the opportunities to gather data in action research projects, discuss real administrative situations, and critically reflect on each one's personal leadership style, students learn that these conversations are sacred and discussions stay in the classroom. The fifth charism, Education for Formation in Faith, advocates for virtuous character and ethical decision making. Students are asked to reflect on their values and how they impact their faith, their ability to reason, and then, come to closure on decisive matters.

Research is a quest for truth. All research questions are open for possible study. Questions of faith and culture and their intersection are important sources of dialogue. This important nexus is special in our Catholic Marianist university, one usually unavailable to students in most secular institutions. In Marianist language, the search for truth involves both science and faith:

In the search for truth, the Marianist educator stimulates and learns from dialogue between faith and culture. Gospel faith, with its integration of the intellect and the heart, illuminates our knowledge of particular cultures, while science, technology, and knowledge of other religions amplify our understanding of the search for truth. (*Characteristics of a Marianist Education*, 1996, p. 15)

Students are encouraged to practice servant leadership as a matter of faith as they traverse their intellectual journey through the program. We believe in the experiential nature of our program where we encourage students to apply their knowledge. Novice professionals equipped with skills, knowledge, and values should possess faith in this ability to respond accordingly and succeed ultimately.

## **STANDARD 6 AND ALL MARIANIST CHARISMS**

Standard 6 addresses our responsiveness to the larger world context. We see this as permeating the five characteristics or charisms. Faith in God is balanced against the secular world that impacts the University of Dayton. Global awareness and valuing diversity is tantamount to Integrated Education. While Family Spirit tempers the influences of the secular world on our education program, it does not shield our students from it. Contextual changes across the legal, social, economic, political, and cultural worlds are anticipated but social justice, sacredness of life, and commitment to the marginalized must be addressed. Lastly, these contextual influences must not be diminished or ignored. While adhering to basic values, the University and its adherents move forward with those values intact. We must understand the times and their impact on the institution, the program, our students, and ourselves, the faculty. Our responsiveness is timely and contextual, but our values, faith, commitment, community spirit, and compassion are constant.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

We challenged ourselves at the beginning of this discussion to first document evidence showing the distinctive charisms of our Marianist mission in the PhD program for preparing educational leaders. Second, we aligned the professional ISLLC standards that are the predominant criteria driving education leader-

ship programs at our institution and across the country with our Marianist charisms. Interestingly, but ultimately not surprising to us, was the fact that our centuries-old Marianist religious identity and contemporary standards embodied in ISLLC value many similar qualities within those who would lead contemporary education institutions. We concluded that both sets of ideals value students' humanity, administrator nurturing and concern, and humanness, and take precedence over the technical dimensions of professional roles within education institutions. The changing nature of schools and society is driving the new understandings, skills, and attitudes that novice education leaders must be prepared to demonstrate; and, ISLLC seems to have responded to those changes by emphasizing those human and spiritual qualities that the Marianists began to articulate more than 200 years ago. Given the interpenetration of society's five social structures, that is, family, religion, education, economics, and politics, we assume that the professional panel members, though non Marianist, devised the ISLLC standards from a framework that espoused moral, ethical, and human values that likely stemmed from their interwoven yet unspoken family and religious values, attitudes, and beliefs.

We found that, in some instances, even the language of the Marianists and ISLLC were not dissimilar. For one thing, both the Marianists and ISLLC discuss the needed "dispositions" among candidates for leadership. For example, 30 years ago, Father Stefanelli (1974), a Marianist, discussed that fact that

We find out also that even with the best of intentions, there are times when we really don't know which way to go...so the first three virtues of purification are confidence in God, distrust of ourselves, and recourse to counsel. They are virtues in an improper sense, obviously; they are more dispositions, attitudes within us. (p. 154)

He continues a lengthy discussion of the dispositions aspiring religious leaders would have. He likened dispositions to attitudes toward the world and toward one's own spirituality. At one point, he exclaimed, "What a tremendous challenge to develop all those dispositions!" (Stefanelli, 1974, p. 157). The language of the ISLLC standards relies heavily on "dispositions," dimensions within our students for which we are accountable. We, too, can exclaim with Father Stefanelli about the "tremendous challenge." Three levels of accountability face us in attesting to student preparedness for a leadership role: knowledge, disposition, and performance. The explication of "dispositions" in these standards parallels the notion of attitudes that Father Stefanelli suggested.

In a flash of serendipity, we discovered another similarity in our investigation. This similarity is not between the Marianists and ISLLC, but a similarity that, perhaps, likens our own search for evidence of distinctive identity and Father Stefanelli's (1974) Marianist quest. He states so clearly what we started out trying to find: "If we were to analyze our life as individuals and as a

community and ask ourselves what are the qualifications or the dispositions or the attitudes that we need in order to do what we're trying to do" (pp. 145-146).

Like Father Stefanelli, we were in search of the qualities that we need in order "to do what we're trying to do" at UD. Interpreting the results of our investigation, we showed links between the foundations of the PhD program and the distinctive Marianist characteristics of our founders.

We showed evidence of each of the five charisms in our daily practice. The ways in which the Marianist charisms mesh with the ISLLC standards suggest to us that, with vigilance, our efforts to demonstrate both will strengthen our program. Perhaps the standards reflect the similarly value-added perspective as our charisms that are espoused in our program goals and purpose. More than likely, however, the marriage of the charisms and the professional standards is the natural outgrowth of our graduate faculty recognizing and upholding our unique heritage. We conclude with a working hypothesis that when the professional standards of a national regulating organization can be aligned with an institution's foundational identity and distinctive mission, then more effective leadership preparation will result. Fine tuning one's program to align with one's mission and the professional standards can be a transformative, developmental exercise of importance to programs regardless of their university affiliation or status (Bergquist, 1992; Fullan, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1994).

Our continual challenge is to reflect at regular intervals on "what we're trying to do," in Father Stefanelli's words so as to not inadvertently weaken or lose that distinctiveness. It is easy to document evidence of what we can show we might be doing right. It is not easy to admit to what values we might be failing to display. For example, to admit our lack of wide ethnic diversity within the PhD faculty challenges us to more fully examine that commitment and devote more resources to hiring faculty from non-White, non-dominant groups. Strengthening family spirit is a daily challenge, one for which we can celebrate success but for which we cannot be complacent. Reflecting on the quality-of-work standards to which we hold students must be daily practice. Living in community and caring for one another cannot elude us during times of change and transition, which can fracture any community ethos. For each charism, we need to be consistently and unflinchingly vigilant. Not only is vigilance the only way to assure our distinctiveness, but it is also our moral obligation to students we serve.

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