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## Basic Values in the Educational Philosophy Underlying Cluster College Development

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## BASIC VALUES IN THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

### UNDERLYING CLUSTER COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT

Warren Bryan Martin  
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The following statement was prepared for the University of the Pacific Faculty Retreat, February 12, 1965. The general theme of the Retreat was "Basic Issues in the Educational Philosophies Underlying Decisions in the Making of a Great University."

I will begin by listing the values in this University's educational philosophy that bear most pointedly on cluster college development. As I list them I ask you to remember that it is within the context of these value-commitments that all substantive decisions concerning cluster college developments must be reached; it is to expand and enrich them that the new colleges are being established and it is by these criteria that all new programs should be judged. Our philosophy of education emphasizes:

Intellectual abundance without the sacrifice of academic rigor.

Social diversity without the sacrifice of moral character.

Personal vivacity without the sacrifice of good judgment.

Now let me expand these themes and show their relevance for cluster college developments.

#### I. Intellectual abundance without the sacrifice of academic rigor.

The radical alteration of the conditions of modern existence makes available an intellectual abundance that staggers the imagination. Jet planes bring scholars from across the nation and around the world; presses turn out the knowledge of ages in paperback form; sophisticated equipment accelerates



scholarly research (and scholarly research accelerates both learning and salaries); faculty and student travel brings new perspectives; Xerox copies are an aid to bad memories (and a curse to weak eyes).

We seek an intellectual plenteousness at Pacific, and such abundance is available now. But our very opportunities are a risk to our integrity. The range of options, the multiplicity of blessings can lead to intellectual dalliance, to a loss of rigor, precision, and depth in our efforts. The child before the Christmas tree is sometimes overwhelmed by the abundance of his gifts. He goes to pieces under the pressure of his choices; he chooses without comprehension, he acts without understanding.

We must not have that here. At Pacific our educational philosophy favors intellectual abundance without the sacrifice of academic rigor. We favor the controlled response. In a world of abundance we will not try to do everything; we will try to do certain things well. And what we do - in the liberal arts and in professional programs - will be judged by the high standards of scholarship that alone can make our work endure beyond the moment.

To apply this principle to the development of cluster colleges is to demand, for one thing, that new programs hire faculty members who will, through their specializations and experience, complement the existing faculties. There will be some duplication but there must always be the promise of enrichment. Thus, to illustrate, when Raymond College adds a faculty member in Civilization - as we are now in fact doing - we must evaluate our candidates not only against the criteria of the job itself but also within the context of the University's other programs and personnel. By interlocking



our talents we will create community and contribute to the plenteousness of Pacific's resources. It is exciting to realize the impact that such planning can have. The Department of History at COP can regard an appointment at Raymond as enriching the history faculty of the total University and, suddenly, we sense that we are all stronger and better than before. Furthermore, as we achieve reciprocity and proceed to move our faculties back and forth across college lines, and allow our students to take advantage of the resources in the various programs, we will achieve an intellectual abundance not available in isolated liberal arts colleges or in a compartmentalized multiversity.

And we can do it without the loss of academic precision. This is so because our faculties will not be devoid of specializations; they will cross over to contribute in another college precisely because they have a needed specialization.

Add to that the fact that each cluster college will have an identity and will be, at least in part, a center of independent thinking. Thus while we act as contributor to each other we also act as critic to each other. Some University programs will be oriented to public service and responsive to public sentiment, while others will be more given to ivory-tower separateness. Both are needed, both merit respect, both contribute to the University's intellectual abundance; but both, since they are populated by finite beings, must be open to criticism and the perspectives of their separate but equal brethren.

Let me bring the theory home. Is Raymond College and Elbert Covell College contributing by curricula and personnel to the intellectual abundance we



seek for Pacific? What are the prospects for St. Michael's? If these new programs are multiplying our resources, are they doing it without the sacrifice of the academic rigor and integrity a great university must have? I will not presume to answer for you, but I will say that these questions are basic to our decisions as we plot the future.

II. Our philosophy of education emphasizes, secondly, social diversity without the sacrifice of moral character.

Pacific has a faculty that has been gathered from the major universities of this country and from universities around the world. Samuel Meyer has been a prime mover in this important development. We have diversity of training as well as diversity of degrees. Yet, we seek still more diversity in scholarship and teaching. We can move up all along the line.

Pacific needs more scholar-teachers, men who know what lonely hours of research mean and what creativity in publication costs. We have some, we need more. We also need teacher-scholars, men who do not resent students, men who express their creativity through involvement. We have more of these, we need still more. Too many of us give too much of our prime energies to various forms of privatism. We have found that creativity in teaching comes hard, involvement with students takes its toll, and, under the pressure of daily duties and the weight of inertia, we forsake the vistas of the mountain pathway for the convenience of the quickest road home.

But a still greater need is for more social diversity in Pacific's faculty - different theoretical perspectives and different styles of life are



needed. A great university will even tolerate some social barbarians if they have first-class minds.

Pacific seeks social diversity in the student body too. Foreign students providing cultural cross-fertilization; out-of-state students, including, I trust, a few hard-nosed types straight off the streets of eastern cities; and students from socially deprived areas to help balance the ippy-pipsy Standard American majority.

Is it possible to have this sort of social diversity without sacrificing the moral character of the university? I think so. The danger is real that diversity will mean a depreciation of value commitments to the level of the lowest common denominator possible to achieve a pragmatic consensus, but, it is possible and it is better for the University to stand with certain moral and ethical certitudes by which the daily life of the university community is measured. I distinguish here between certainty and certitudes. I do not mean moral and ethical certainty - or what John Galesworthy called "cock-eyed cock-suredness," the kind of thing you see in the man who is sometimes wrong but never in doubt, absolute rigidity - but I do mean provisional certitudes concerning man and history that provide guide-lines for value judgments. We cannot operate in a vacuum. We must take a stance on certain things. We see through a glass darkly, but we do see some things. Because we see imperfectly and only in part we may change later in the light of better understanding, but, for now, we hold a certain hierarchy of values. Aware of the dangers of dogma, we are unafraid to believe. A university is



a community of learning in which individuals have come together without giving up their individuality in order to accomplish certain things that they can do better together, but they must have some guide-line to live by if they are to stay together. As Roger William of Rhode Island put it long ago - "The ship has its course and it seeks a destination, but there are many and varied people on board."

I know that I am traversing a cracked ice-field here and that one false step will drop me into the abyss. Yet those who cross the ice-field together must have some provisional certitudes - they had better, for example, be agreed on which is the ice and which the cracks or people will be disappearing at an alarming rate. And it will be too late to argue who was right.

This university seeks social diversity without the loss of character.

Again the cluster colleges must be tested against this standard.

Certainly Elbert Covell College, both in conception and fact, contributes magnificently to social diversity on this campus. Raymond too, I dare to suggest, is making some contributions here through the attempt at wide geographical distribution in the student body, social and cultural diversity in the faculty, and such features as the High Table series.

Certain of our students have offered a greater diversity in dress and personal appearance than was expected. They may represent a threat to the surface image of the University, but they do not threaten the essential character of the place. Do not be thrown off by the way they dress. It is true that in some ways they are Anti-Establishment. Yet it doesn't hurt to



have some dissidents in residence. And they are serious students with deeply felt social concerns. Remember too that they are at the height of their egocentricity, and because they are not in a position of power, fame or wealth, they show their individualism in ways that are accessible to them - in their dress, by sandals and beards. (To do this is no worse than the wealthy Californian who roars around in a fuchsia Cadillac to gain attention.) What we'd better remember is that students today are no less mature than most adults. As for the occasional beard, why make an issue of this? The chief indictment if a controversy is created is on a society that measures a man's acceptability on whether he is willing to do everything in his power to grow hair on one half of his head but cut it off the other! When people shrink back at the sight of the few beards we have at Raymond, I tell them we are preparing for our Centennial. (You know that centennials are the one time in the life of a community when beards are acceptable.) If they look mystified in the realization that the College is only three years old, I smile and assure them that we plan well.

But, more seriously, the cluster colleges we establish at Pacific should contribute to social diversity without destroying the essential character of the University.

III. The third value-commitment in our philosophy of education shall be mentioned very briefly. This university wants an atmosphere that encourages personal vivacity in individuals without the sacrifice of good judgment. I mean that the life of this university ought to be characterized by a certain liveliness, animation, and zest that is proof of the contagious enthusiasm and



tenacity we feel for the life of the mind. It ought to be evident that we enjoy our work, though it is hard, and that we believe in it.

We are glad that the rah-rah days of student hi-jinks are past. Good students today are more serious, hard-working and mature. And good colleges today are trying to move their students toward maturity by treating them as young adults. My point of caution is that we are succeeding almost to a fault. Students reflect their elders too much. There is a certain verve that seems to be lacking among the better college students. Like the English, they take even their pleasures sadly. In this "they mirror the life around them whose tight weave seems to reject the merely playful and spontaneous" (David Boroff). They have taken on the weight of adult burdens though they are generally free from the cant and hypocrisies that disfigure the older generation. Yet they seem burdened down.

Can we help students to feel things deeply and yet encourage them to retain the bouyancy of youth? Our example will be our best advice. We ought to show students how to be skeptical without becoming cynical, realistic without being devoid of hope, serious without the loss of humor. Men can show enthusiasm without losing their wits. They can show vivacity without the sacrifice of good judgment. And it is good judgment, when all is said and done, that we seek. Good judgment is the end to which knowledge is the means.

Will the cluster colleges contribute here? Will they bring cultural infusions into the corporate body? Will they contribute to healthy competition and social enrichment? Will they add dimensions to the total life of the



University that will delight and vitalize students and faculty? It is not too much to ask but it is a demand not easily met.

I have been trying this morning to indicate some value-standards by which the development of the cluster colleges should be judged. Without a philosophy of education Pacific will build boarding houses not colleges. But, in closing, you will understand when I say that those involved in the development of the cluster colleges look to the rest of the University to exemplify the qualities I have discussed. The task is especially difficult. We may all find it necessary to shake some bad habits and make some new beginnings.

In my worst moments I think we are fools for attempting anything new in higher education. The drag of inertia warns us against the overestimation of the effects of change. So much of life remains the same despite our new groupings. But we are committed to try, and, sometimes - I share our secret - Pacific people hear a still small voice which assures us that we are God's elect. The state takes care of its fools. Maybe God will take care of His own.