



CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES OF THE JESUIT EDUCATION AMIDST GLOBALIZATION

**Raising
Seculars
with Jesuit
Identity**

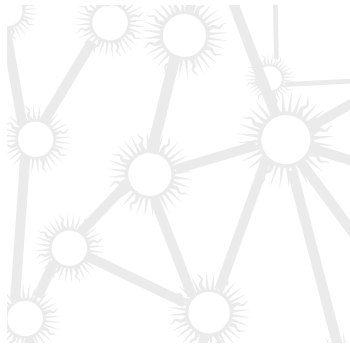
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Líderes



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Which is the main competitive advantage of Jesuit higher education?

1. Jesuit education is not one-dimensional, it does not prepare people to work in a company or for investigation only, but prepare them to live in a creative and active society to contribute for it. We try not to think that our students not to unfold to its own advantage but to serve society. That is one of the priorities in our educational training.

Adolfo Nicolás Pachón
Superior General of the
Society of Jesus

2. Education inspired in the tradition of the Society of Jesus is to try to develop in their students the ability of sensitivity to the neediest sectors and the environment around them.

Justice is also an important point in our philosophy, so many students graduated from the Society of Jesus are more committed with the development of a more equitable society. In that sense, the world of competitiveness, which offer our students is social responsibility in addition to the academic domain, and the performance of works that benefit a significant number of people, functioning in the social context.

The Society of Jesus is related to competitiveness in order to transform it into a more collaborative and mutual assistance society.

Pablo Mella

Rector of the Philosophical Institute
Pedro Francisco Bono
Dominican Republic



3. The main challenge of Jesuit education is to ensure that students develop with greater social and intellectual skills and that we, as trainers, form them in a set of values.

Jesuit Education is not only the intellectual development. It is also important that people count with human principles to share for a better society.

Leonard Chiti, S. J.,

Deputy Director of the Jesuit Centre
for Theological Reflection, Lusaka,
Zambia

4. Jesuit education is a worldview, try to face the problems seen from all the elements that constitute it. The Jesuit University stands out a lot because its educational structure, its curriculum, incorporating elements to improve academic education and integral education also, it focuses on a better training for the student and thus achieving to raise an excellent professional with values that distinguish as a professional that contributes to solve the problems of the society.

Antonio Cruz Pérez

Assistant Dean of the Universidad
Iberoamericana Leon

Ibero received the highest authorities of Jesuit universities

Rectors, directors and representatives of higher education institutions entrusted to the Society of Jesus gathered at the Universidad Iberoamericana in the first day of the “Networks of Jesuit higher education for the globalized world” meeting.

The Ibero was ready since early in the morning to welcome the participants of this important educational event. The corridors of the UIA were adorned with the distinctive colors of the more than two hundred institutions from every region of the world. In the singularity of its campus, the Ibero turned into the house of several languages and backgrounds, but with a common reference: the Society of Jesus university project, who speaks the same language of faith and justice.

With a festive background, at 8:00 in the morning activities began with a Thanksgiving Mass celebrated by Father General Adolfo Nicolás Pachón, and after, the sessions began with the “Regional challenges” topic.

The rectors, directors and administrative members of the Society of Jesus went to the José Sánchez Villaseñor auditorium, prepared for presentations of the challenges for each region.

Dr. José Morales Orozco, President of the UIA, in his introductory message said that one of the characteristics of the Ibero, related to the Jesuit pedagogy, is the ability to raise formal and committed professionals with the country's development, grounded in the Christian values and committed to serving others.

From the above, he gave eloquent, diligent and helpful presence in the logistics of the activity of various students groups, including the youth of the Building Bridges project, the University program that trains people with intellectual disabilities so they can join social life and work and become more independent.

On the other hand, Paul Locatelli, S. J., Secretary of Education of the Society of Jesus, and rector of the University of Santa Clara, USA, acknowledged the assistance of those present and especially to the General Father, Adolfo Nicolás, who dodged

air travel difficulties, caused by the Iceland volcano eruption that paralyzed thousands of flights in both sides of the Atlantic.

The long and rewarding day of work agreed on the need to strengthen the existing network of all institutions of higher education and to establish new and more effective partnerships between them.

Throughout the day several discussion sessions took place, where topics on theology, science, culture, markets, inequality, poverty, ecology and sustainability were discussed.





Challenges and priorities of the Jesuit education amidst globalization

General approach to the first day of sessions

Father Adolfo Nicolás Pachón, S. J., lead the mass, a respectful and official opening to the first of three conference days, where the rectors of the global network of universities will participate, having the Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City Campus as the venue, under the name of *Shaping the future: Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World*.

The purpose of this international symposium gathering the maximum authorities of universities trusted to the Jesuits, is to make their higher education project be up to the task of answering back to globalization challenges and opportunities.

Moreover, they are looking forward to identifying the most alarming problems of this global era, which signify priority tasks for us to address in order to honor the educational spirit that characterizes the Jesuit order, which articulates all of the universities' operations based on faith and justice.

With this focus, the first day of work was dedicated to remember what the challenges and priorities that the Society of Jesus is facing now, considering the current mission factor and according to what the Society of Jesus determined in their last conclave, the General Assembly XXXV.





In this respect, the speakers addressed the globalization process and the complex changes undergone by higher education, on which, they said, there is the need to implement an alternative thinking that responds to diversity, and that may contribute to achieve the conditions for a quality life, especially for the most underprivileged ones.

Furthermore, it was highlighted that one of the outstanding issues of today—also a consequence of globalization—is a “religion without religion”, in the sense that the religious sphere is now restricted to the private only, and is no longer a factor setting up the bar for the Western social organization.

Additionally, the strengthening of the Jesuit identity of higher education institutions, quality, equity and economic sustainability of all of them, were stressed out as some of the major challenges to face.

To accomplish this, fostering dialog was considered a crucial input, by giving out what is specifically up to Jesuit universities, that is, their ability to be enriched from other standpoints, a meaningful research that fosters a new thinking aiming to transform those social structures that generate injustice and exclusion. All of this, along with the search of technological improvements, commitment and link to society.

During some of the lectures of the day, there was a specific concern that kept coming up: the intrigue caused by challenges of our globalizing times, that Jesuit universities face with, no matter their geographic location or culture. For instance, they referred to the

difficulties caused by democratization of higher education, which for the first time opens the doors to large students contingents who did not have the chance of studying before. This enlargement of college studies opportunities, however, does not mean necessarily a decay or weakening of academic quality offered by Jesuit universities, whose trait historically has always been excellency.

Moreover, it was pointed out that there is a need to work and make it possible to have an education that respects and celebrates cultural diversity, which means integrating the cultural expressions of each region along with the Cristian humanistic offer.

Finally, the Jesuit universities role was discussed as a new humanistic project and the enriching experiences among institution of technical unformal teaching and college studies.



Economic sustainability to ensure inclusión

To form students in social values to humanize globalization is one of the great challenges of the educational institutions of the Society of Jesus today, Dr. José Morales Orozco, President of the Association of Jesuit Universities of Latin America said, referring to university challenges in Latin America.

In an interview, after participating in the conference which began the work of Jesuit Higher Education Network for the globalized world: Shaping the Future for a humane, just and sustainable, the doctor talked about that, despite regional and cultural differences, there are similarities in: Africa, Europe, South Asia, Asia Pacific, East Asia and North America, where the Jesuits have university presence.

Among the challenges, the also Rector of the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City talked about the need to transform the Jesuit institutions in reference centers for social change through research, teaching and diffusion.

He also highlighted the cultural diversity faced by many institutions, especially in Asia, Africa and even Europe, where due different languages and cultures, the challenge is to work together in teams to take advantage of the Society of Jesus global nature.

The issue of economic sustainability was another common point, because most institutions do not receive state or government subsidies and rely on its students' tuition. Hence there is the need to seek economic strategies to ensure the inclusion and not be so elitist.

Jesuit higher education should foster a culture of reconciliation

Globalization, secularism, postmodernism, and to promote a culture of peace and reconciliation in Africa, are some of the major challenges of Jesuit higher education, said John J. DeGioia and Mwana Isangu Mfume, Jesuit leaders and authorities of the regions of North America and Africa respectively.

DeGioia abounded that globalization, through technology, makes it possible to be connected as never before, which becomes the key for universities to learn to work in networks and in a more dynamic way to face the collapse of values, undermined by the existential relativism of postmodernity, which cannot be managed without separating the intellectual challenges of our religious traditions.

On his behalf, Mwana Isangu Mfume said that the main challenge for his continent is to increase the number of Jesuit universities, because most schools in this region are few, small and have minimal experience.

Africa also needs to face the lack of human and financial resources, where there is an imperative the need to lay the foundations for a culture of reconciliation to gradually stops all kinds of divisions and wars on the continent.



Raising Seculars with Jesuit Identity



Maintaining the identity in higher education institutions of the Society of Jesus at a time when there are fewer Jesuits as teachers and principals in them, constitutes a challenge facing the necessity to raise seculars for these places, but that have to be imbued with the Jesuit mission and identity.

This was considered by José Ramón Busto Saiz, Rector of the Universidad Pontificia Comillas, while stating Europe's Regional Challenges.

Another of these challenges is to form students on values and faith, to respond to the process of the increasing secularization in Europe, which consequence is the spiritual emptiness and meaninglessness of life.

Busto Saiz noted the importance for all European centers of the Bologna Process, which aims to make an exchange and transparent system across that continent to facilitate the mobility of students and teachers. This, to look for better employability, assessment and external accreditation

of their studies, that guarantee the quality of universities and maintenance of educational competitiveness.

On the other hand, he said that although important networks between higher education institutions entrusted to the Society of Jesus exist, we need progress in joint research projects.





Líderes



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El Salvador



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Universidad Pontificia Comillas
España



Joseph O'Keefe
Rector

Boston College
United States



Chul Cho Hyun
Dean

Sogang University
South Korea



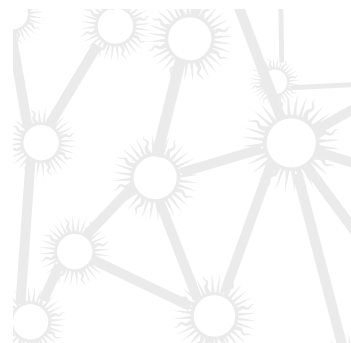
José Cruz
Dean

Ateneo de Manila University
Philippines



Stephen Sundborg
President

Seattle University
United States



SHAPING *the future*

Networking Jesuit Higher Education for a Globalizing World
Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México

April 21 to 25, 2010

Leaders of 180 Jesuit Universities gathered



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