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Toward a Shared Understanding of Lasallian Research: A Report on the Second Annual Symposium on Lasallian Research

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Introduction

The Second Annual Symposium on Lasallian Research was convened at the Twin Cities campus of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, October 27-30, 2013, jointly sponsored by Saint Mary's Institute for Lasallian Studies, the Christian Brothers Conference of the Lasallian Region of North America (RELAN) and the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU).²

Purpose of the Symposium

Facilitated by Dr. Roxanne Eubank, Director of the Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University, the symposium's objectives included to:

1. Gather creative minds
2. Dialogue about the key characteristics or key areas that comprise the field of Lasallian research today
3. Look beyond studies solely focused on the origins, tradition, and heritage in Lasallian research
4. Break open the possibilities for Lasallian research in twenty-first-century North America
5. Propose avenues or topics for future needed Lasallian research
6. Produce a "white paper" on Lasallian research for publication in *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education*
7. Develop a community of scholars committed to supporting, conducting, and publishing Lasallian research

Attendees

The attendance at the 2013 symposium nearly doubled in size from the inaugural symposium held in 2012. The 2013 symposium's sixty-six participants represented eight countries including Colombia, France, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Spain and the United States. Participants included professors, academic administrators, doctoral students, regional and district administrators and university presidents.

Program

The initial inaugural symposium, conducted in the fall of 2012, focused on the meaning and scope of Lasallian research, with the intention of creating a sound foundation for future research

pursuits.³ The 2013 symposium endeavored to further clarify the definition of Lasallian research and to provide the opportunity to explore collaborative inquiry. To this end, three keynote presentations and eight breakout sessions were conducted by Lasallian scholars revealing scholarly research on a range of diverse topics with genesis in, and application to, the greater Lasallian world. In addition, the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU) held parallel workshops specifically targeted to the five year vision of research stemming from the organization's global priorities.

Keynote Presenters

Three keynote presenters provided the participants with a view of Lasallian research from their distinct vantage points: Dr. Susan Hines as an author of the white paper from the inaugural symposium, Dr. Arnulfo Azcarraga as a member-at-large of the IALU Board and Br. Diego Muñoz with the vantage point from the center of the Institute. Each keynote presenter in turn raised questions and challenged the participants to engage in the Lasallian research endeavor.

Dr. Susan Hines, the Director of Faculty Development and Assistant Professor in the doctoral program in leadership at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, presented the Sunday evening keynote presentation titled, "A Response to the White Paper from the 2012 Symposium on Lasallian Research."⁴ This presentation was a summary analysis of the work and findings of the inaugural symposium. Highlighted in her talk was the emerging model of Lasallian Research proposed at the 2012 symposium which included: community impact, outcomes, application, contexts, and Lasallian heritage applied to today's lived realities. (See this issue of *AXIS* for the full text of this presentation.)

In the Monday keynote, Dr. Arnulfo Azcarraga, Professor at De La Salle University, Manila, and member-at-large of the IALU Board, presented "Lasallians in the World Solving Real World Problems."⁵ He suggested that the overall goal of Lasallian research is to address real world injustice and emphasized the importance of creating a united Lasallian community that can influence policy. Lasallians, he argued, need to be "instruments of peace and social justice." He quoted Pope John Paul II in explaining that a Catholic University, as an extension of its service to the church, is called on to become an instrument of progress – that we need to research the root causes of the issues of our day. Dr. Azcarraga outlined how Lasallian research is guided by faith and that its orientation is integral to human and Christian development. It is not just enough to study poverty; Lasallians need to develop research that leads to lasting and inclusive growth in society and with an orientation toward eliminating poverty. To that end, the IALU research agenda includes the following three themes: food, nutrition and health; sustainability and the environment; and education. (See this issue of *AXIS* for the full text of this presentation.)

Brother Diego Muñoz, FSC, Ph.D., Coordinator of the Lasallian Research and Resources Service at the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Rome, Italy, presented the third keynote address on Tuesday, October 29th. In his presentation titled, "Looking at the Future from a Challenging Memory,"⁶ Brother Diego discussed how Lasallian identity stems from the founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and his educational mission, yet Lasallians must reflect on current identity and the way we work and live together, with an eye for how our past can serve the present and future. Highlights from the Second International

Assembly and emerging questions were highlighted. Brother Diego discussed the challenges for the future and the importance of collaboration. He concluded by encouraging Lasallian researchers, together and by association, to conduct research that will have social relevance and respond to the demands of society. (See this issue of *AXIS* for the full text of this presentation.)

Research Presentations

Eight research presentations represented current research on a diverse range of topics. The presentations provided a focal point for reflection as the participants discussed the role of Lasallian research in the greater Lasallian world. The following list presents the sessions and the presenters:

1. “Envisioning a Lasallian Online Pedagogy: A Lasallian Approach to the Research and the Topic”
Elizabeth E. Seebach, Ph.D, L.P., Department Chair of Psychology and Lori Charron, Ph.D, Professor of Communications at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona, MN, USA.
2. “The Scholarship Program and Development of De La Salle Health Sciences Institute in Response to the De La Salle Philippines’ 20% Full Scholarship Thrust by 2011”
Juanito O. Cabanias, Ph.D, Director for Academic Services and General Education at De La Salle Health Sciences Institute in Dasmariñas, Cavite, PH
3. “New Forms of Poverty: The Literature and the Reality”
Paul Christensen, Ed.D., Assistant Dean of the Graduate School of Business and Technology, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona, MN, USA
4. “The Mission Community: An Invitation to Discuss the Project”
John R. Wilcox, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Manhattan College, Bronx, NY, USA
5. “Head, Heart and Hands: Engaged Learning and Lasallian Pedagogy”
Monica D. Fitzgerald, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Liberal and Civic Studies Department, Saint Mary’s College of California, Moraga, CA, USA
6. “Using Lasallian Virtues to Advise Graduate Students: 21st Century Decorum and Civility”
Rich Germundsen, Ph.D., Associate Director of the Ed.D. in Leadership Program, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona, MN, USA
7. “Understanding Conflict: Considerations for Working ‘Together and by Association’”
Linka Holey, Ph.D., Associate Vice President and Academic Dean, School of Graduate and Professional Programs, Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota, Winona, MN, USA
8. “Lasallian Association for Mission: A Research Project”
Greg Kopra, Ph.D., Director of Formation for Mission, District of San Francisco, Napa Valley, CA, USA

Workshops

Six workshops were convened to focus on the IALU research agenda. The workshops furthered the discussion surrounding the agenda and the efforts to support that agenda:

1. “Research on Food, Nutrition and Health”
Philippe Choquet, Ph.D., President, Institut Polytechnique La Salle, Beauvais, FR
2. “Sustainability and the Environment”
Roberto Vazquez, Ph.D., Research Director, Universidad La Salle, Mexico City, MX
3. “Possibilities for Funding From External Agencies”
Louie Razon, Ph.D., Professor of Chemical Engineering, De La Salle University, Manila, PH
4. “Research Collaboration Among IALU Members”
Brother Ricky Laguda, FSC, Ph.D., President and Chancellor, De La Salle University, Manila, PH
5. “Revisiting the IALU Research Action Plan”
Stephany Schlachter, Ed.D., Provost, Lewis University, Romeoville, IL, USA
6. “Agreements to Move Forward: Faculty Exchanges, Grants and Goals Leading up to the Encuentro in Bogotá, Colombia in 2015”
Arnulfo Azcarraga, Ph.D., De La Salle University, Manila, PH

General Discussion

After listening to the keynote presenters and attending research presentations and workshops, participants were invited to have discussions in small groups to identify issues that they believed should be surfaced as the next step in developing a Lasallian research agenda. The groups then convened back to the larger group. Each small group presented the themes that emerged through their discussions. There was much spirited and engaged discussion about various opportunities to collaborate with our own students on Lasallian research as well as ways to break down barriers for collaboration across colleges and universities. Discussion also centered on means campuses might employ through faculty development funding geared to encourage Lasallian scholarship. Means to highlight undergraduate and graduate level Lasallian research were also considered.

The following shared themes emerged from the small table discussions:

1. The need to create an emphasis at each campus on Lasallian research and recognition of Lasallian scholarship.
2. The desire to have a website and tools to help connect Lasallians for the purpose of collaboration and sharing.
3. The importance of dialoging with the larger educational world while simultaneously maintaining our identity as Lasallian scholars.

4. The urgent requirement to advance applied scholarship and collaborative research across Lasallian institutions.
5. The need to engage our students in collaborative Lasallian research.
6. Our Lasallian mission positions us to uniquely address the educational issues of the twenty-first century.

The participants noted through discussion that we are still in the early stages of exploration of research in the Lasallian world. Participants and presenters agreed that this Symposium is an ideal way to gather as a community and continue the dialogue with the goal of creating a shared understanding of Lasallian research.

The group ended by collaborating on a shared vision statement. Drs. Eubank, Fitzgerald, and Fox wrote an initial draft of the vision statement and presented it to the group. It was then further refined based on the feedback received from the group.

Vision Statement

*Arising from our Lasallian identity,
Lasallian research is dynamic, interdisciplinary, applied scholarship.
In order to create a more just world,
our scholarship endeavors to intervene, influence and transform society
to foster human dignity and improve the quality of life for all God's creation.*

Conclusion of Symposium

As the Symposium concluded, participants were encouraged to invite colleagues to the 2014 Symposium on Lasallian Research and to present at breakout sessions. This will serve to increase the breadth and focus of the understanding of Lasallian research and its diverse application.

The Symposium of 2013 revealed a rich, interesting dialogue that celebrated our past and moves us – together and by association – toward our collective Lasallian future. There are tremendous opportunities for Lasallian research and collaboration. It is clear that Lasallian research has an important perspective to offer the world and it is imperative that the Lasallian research community answer the call to provide our unique abilities and viewpoint.

The Third Annual Symposium on Lasallian Research will be held September 28-30, 2014, at Saint Mary's University-Twin Cities Campus, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Notes

1. The authorship team for this report is comprised of three participants in the Second Annual Symposium on Lasallian Research, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Campus, Minneapolis, MN, October 27-29, 2013:

Roxanne Eubank, Ed.D., is Director of the Institute for Lasallian Studies and a faculty member in the Educational Leadership doctoral (Ed.D.) program at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. She leads the annual two-week formation program specific to faculty and staff serving in Lasallian higher education ministries, the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU), at the Generalate in Rome. Dr. Eubank was recognized with the Distinguished Lasallian Educator award in 2012, and continues to contribute significantly to dialogues visioning Lasallian association into the future through her service in a number of roles at the District, Regional, and International levels, including the first RELAN Lasallian Women's Symposium.

Monica Fitzgerald, Ph.D., is Associate Professor in the Liberal and Civic Studies Department at Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga, CA, where she teaches courses in history and women's studies. She holds the Ph.D. in Early American History from University of California, Davis; the M.A. in U.S. History from California State University, East Bay; and a B.A. Political Science from University of California, Berkeley.

Mary Catherine Fox, AFSC, Ph.D. is Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, teaches in the Lasallian Core Traditions program, and works with the International Association of Lasallian Universities (IALU) Leadership program in Rome. She served as the initial chair of the Midwest District Mission and Ministry Council, and was a delegate both to the Regional Assembly in Salt Lake City in 2005 and the first International Assembly in Rome in 2006.

2. See <http://lasallianresearch.weebly.com/> for complete program agenda.

3. Maura Thompson Hagarty, Susan R. Hines, and Frederick Mueller. "Strategic Planning for Lasallian Research: A Report on the 2012 RELAN Research Symposium." *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 4, no. 2 (Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota: 2013). <http://axis.smumn.edu/index.php/axis>.

4. See this issue of *AXIS* for complete text. Susan R. Hines, "Lasallian Research: An International Movement Calling Scholars to Create New Knowledge Around Faith-informed Research Priorities." *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 5, no. 2 (Winona, MN: Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, 2014). <http://axis.smumn.edu/index.php/axis>.

5. See this issue of *AXIS* for complete text. Arnulfo Azcarraga, "The IALU Research Agenda: A Resolve to Intervene, Influence, and Transform." *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 5, no. 2 (Winona, MN: Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, 2014). <http://axis.smumn.edu/index.php/axis>.

6. See this issue of *AXIS* for complete text. Diego Muñoz, FSC, Ph.D., "Looking at the Future from a Memory That Challenges." *AXIS: Journal of Lasallian Higher Education* 5, no. 2 (Winona, MN: Institute for Lasallian Studies at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, 2014). <http://axis.smumn.edu/index.php/axis>.