

## QEP Topic Conversations: Student Life/Career Services/Campus Ministry/Campus Safety (03.31.09)

- One recurring theme in this meeting was the importance of service learning, and of our gifts and talents being shared with the larger Memphis community.
- Possibility of service learning as a graduate requirement. More specifically, it was suggested that the second half Freshman Orientation be turned over to service learning. Importance of involving faculty in 1-1:50 timeslot. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the importance of a focus on mission, and this tied to an academic piece; this would take students out of their comfort zone(s) early on in their academic experience.
- Mention was made of the premium that incoming president John Smarrelli clearly placed on service/community, and of its importance for commuter students who often don't seem to have the opportunity to experience what is at the heart of CBU's mission. Another important piece here is social justice, which is, obviously, also inextricably tied to our mission.
- If we're serious about mission, then the resources must either be there or be found! Additionally, it was suggested that the Campus Ministry staff needs to hire younger people who have the requisite energy to carry the important work of Campus Ministry out.
- What about a campus-wide capstone course for seniors? For example, how to fill out a job application, etc. Possibly a kind of "finishing" course for graduating seniors, where common sense sorts of things related to civility, presentation, personal finances, identity theft, etc. would be addressed. This would be distinct from what Sadie does, though not entirely divorced from it. In sum, there would seem clearly to be a need for providing students with an opportunity to reflect on their overall academic experience and what comes next.
- Discussion then turned to the importance of emphasizing what is unique and distinctive about CBU and a CBU education. As a start, we need to establish higher standards – both academic and personal/behavioral – that should affect retention. Possibly organize retreats and various opportunities to build/establish/nurture a clearer sense of community and mission. This should be in place at the "front end" (i.e., incoming freshmen).
- Tied to this last issue was the perceived need to focus more on ethical issues in class: i.e., how one's behavior affects others, and the impact of one's behavior on school, community, world.
- Attention turned then to the importance of deliberately incorporating – where? – more of what it means to be Lasallian, not only to students but also to parents; working with parents or guardians and students together, which would also – more than likely – affect retention.
- Emphasis was placed, once again, on the importance of "high standards" for our students, and this in relation both to academics and service/vocation.

- Given the current “state of affairs” in the world in general and in the U.S. in particular, it was suggested that “the time is ripe” for encouraging our students to begin to think about the sorts of issues and questions touched on to this point in the conversation. Moreover, the timing of CBU’s first non-Brother president would seem perfect for re-thinking who we are as an institution, and why we do what we do. This is obviously tied to the matter of vocation, and also to a notion of social conscience based on and bound to mission.
- We were then reminded never to forget about our commuters, who make up a considerable percentage of our overall student population.
- Finally, whatever focus we eventually settle on as a community, it must also connect with Graduate and Professional Studies. More to the point, we must be intentional about including our adjunct faculty and encouraging them to “get on board,” since so many of them teach in our Graduate and Professional Studies program, and which enrolls such a large percentage of our students.

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