Chapter 47

The Social Business Guidance Unit:
A Case of Service-Learning Within the Ignatian Pedagogy

Carlos Ballesteros
Universidad Pontificia Comillas, Spain

ABSTRACT

The university work influences many areas of society: It generates jobs and influences employers; it is related to both internal and external publics; it takes part in economic processes and in local and regional decision-making process. This chapter presents a concrete case of a mission-driven approach in modern business education: the Social Business Guidance Service (SBGS), a service-learning structure created at a business school. The SBGS comprises a practical dimension (utilitas) because students have to apply their professional knowledge to concrete managerial problems; a social dimension (iustitia) as this service is concerned with organizations working with excluded people and other related problems. It also has a humanist approach (humanitas) as allow students meet people different from their lifestyles, people who often have real problems to foster their living (economic, stigma, social inclusion). Finally, there is a spiritual dimension (fides), as invite students to reflect on the sense of their acts.

INTRODUCTION

The university as it is known today is a source of knowledge that provides professional training for young people and helps them enter the labor market with sufficient skills, maturity, and technical knowledge. But the university of the 21st century not only must attend to the demands of the professional world, but also the demands of society to educate good citizens. Currently at the university, as a result of the current situation in the world, the dilemma between market orientation and the formation of persons is taking on more importance. Therefore, as a knowledge-creating institution, it should promote reflection and raise awareness in favor of progress and social justice. To achieve this goal we need leaders

and professionals who are committed to their ideals; who are sensitive to fostering dynamic social and educational challenges; and who can drive discussions on the social, cultural, and economic development of the community.

Since the beginning of the last century, universities and business schools have questioned their role as social transforming agents. Beyond formal education, there are other areas where they can have an impact as organizations. Integrating social responsibility (SR) in management in all the activities that academic institutions perform is one of the demands that our society has today. Recent financial scandals reveal the need to change the role of the university into a place that transforms society. Ghoshal (2005) states that our theories and ideas have contributed to reinforce the management practices that we now strongly criticize.

Thus, universities and their staff cannot turn a blind eye to social phenomena; these are precisely the aim of this chapter. Through the analysis of a concrete experience at a Jesuit business school, we attempt to answer the following questions, some of which have already been targeted by Aramendi (2011):

- What role does the university and college students play in the development of society?
- What programs or mechanisms should a university offer to promote community development?
- How can we transcend the merely academic (cognitive) role to offer a real education to men and women who are to make decisions in key positions of society in the future?

Beyond the individual voluntary and humanitarian initiatives of students and academics, there is a need for global learning and an obligation to provide solutions to social problems by college and university students and convert this learning into a community service process. It is precisely in this last activity, in the heart of a Jesuit university, that the chapter focuses, and therefore in an institution of higher education, the values, the integral formation of the person, the service to society, and efforts to create a better world that is more just and united are, if possible, even more imbued with meaning. The training offered at the Universidad Pontificia Comillas has widened the horizons of its students, for in the words of Fr. Arrupe (Society of Jesus' General during the years 1965–1983):

Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-and-women-for-others; men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ—for the God-human who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for others is a farce. (Burke, 2004, p. 173)

In the same vein, Father Adolfo Nicolás, Superior General of the Society of Jesus 2008–2016, has encouraged the university community in various forums (e.g., the Inaugural Lecture of the academic year 2011–2012 at University of Deusto or the conference on the mission of Universidad Pontificia Comillas University in 2015) to give greater prominence to the ethics, the humanities, and the social sciences in the design of the model of society for the 21st century and pointed out that the best educators "involve the students in the reflection and the responsibility to advance and create new paradigms." Therefore it validates the definition of a university set forth in the "Magna Charta Universitatum," signed in Bologna in 1988: ". . . an academic community that, in a rigorous and critical manner, contributes to the protection and development of human dignity and cultural heritage through research, teaching and providing a diverse range of services to local, national and international communities."

9 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-social-business-guidance-unit/274400

Related Content

A Needs Assessment: Critical in Planning and Community Development
Gail C. Farmerand Theodora Papachristou (2009). *Handbook of Research on E-Learning Applications for Career and Technical Education: Technologies for Vocational Training (pp. 534-549).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/needs-assessment-critical-planning-community/19999

Learning from Each Other?: Using Technology to Develop Collaborative Learning in Clinical Education
Helen Bradbury, Melissa Hightonand Rebecca O'Rourke (2010). *Interprofessional E-Learning and Collaborative Work: Practices and Technologies (pp. 117-128).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-each-other/44437

Work-Integrated and Workplace Learning in New Zealand
Katharine Hoskyn (2019). *Global Perspectives on Work-Based Learning Initiatives (pp. 142-161).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/work-integrated-and-workplace-learning-in-new-zealand/213472

Redefining Higher Education and Work
Sunil Ramlall, Ted Crossand Michelle Love (2022). *Handbook of Research on Future of Work and Education: Implications for Curriculum Delivery and Work Design (pp. 1-13).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/redefining-higher-education-and-work/288153

Evolving Corporate Education: Relevance of Management Education
Rajat Kanti Baisyaand Brane Semolic (2013). *Evolving Corporate Education Strategies for Developing Countries: The Role of Universities (pp. 39-55).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/evolving-corporate-education/73740