

TERTIARY CHAPLAINCY: PARADIGMS AND PROGRAMMES

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PARADIGMS IN UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY - It's not like this any more

The job description requires of all university chaplains that they "Pastoral care with all staff and students of the university"

50's : the faithful flock – requires faith-allegiance

60's : the trusted pastoral-counsel-coach – requires referral

70-80: the public justice-activist – requires group or residence connection

90's : facilitator of things that matter - spirituality – requires expert events, wide publicity

00's : global human flourishing, multifaith events and projects, peaceful provocateurs

Note: broad approximations only, variations in uni cultures and between states

All these modes are now present . All these modes are pastoral.

All of these modes are open to all but not 'secular' in the atheistic sense of 'no religion please' or 'freedom from religion', but secular in the traditional European sense of 'no established or privileged religion' or 'freedom of religion'.

Two things are driving re-evaluation of the paradigm of university chaplaincy – external pressures and generational change.

RECENT NEW EXTERNAL PRESSURES ON STAFF

- **Federal pre\$\$ure** on staff, driven by the marketing paradigm in government.
- **The Equity issue** – does paying fees mean university is only individual benefits or shared benefit? E.g. How do community-sector graduates (schools and community agencies, churches and health workers) repay their loans when they receive lower pay. What happens then to all those sectors?
- **Research funding** by businesses contributes pressure to come up with quicker results. This means short cuts, poor results, turnover of research staff, failure to engage with tougher issues.

THEREFORE NEW UNIVERSITY-DRIVEN EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

- Overwork or lose your job
- Enhance the 'student experience'
- Market yourself in the university
- Go global
- Do this without \$\$ from church or university

These pressures have made staff more angry than I have ever seen them. It affects chaplains as much as everyone. Therefore, how do we now contribute as chaplains?

STILLNESS

Is it our peculiar role to provide stillness rather than more activity? Or does this simply render us invisible?

- We made space in the chapel. But there is much more than waiting at the chapel.
- Annual UWA Students Desert Retreat
- Annual Spirit Journeys
- End-of-semester Quiet Days for staff.

WE KNOW HOW TO GO GLOBAL

We arrived at 'the global syllogism' that has gained purchase in the university departments

- a. A 'university' has always been a global, multidisciplinary and secular community, that is, multi-faith, even when it was housed in the monasteries.
- b. Religion has NOT gone away in the globalised world, rather it has erupted in public life, flourishing in the environment of secularized ignorance.
- c. Therefore, EITHER UWA practises appreciative enquiry with religious insights OR UWA turns out graduates who are culturally incompetent

How have we attempted to express this?

- a. UWA RELIGION AND GLOBALIZATION INITIATIVE In the Curriculum and In UWA Community
Two broadening units in Humanities, now popular
Interfaith dinner, invitations, festivals, events
- b. CHAPLAIN'S INTERNATIONAL LECTURES
Historical research into Bible origins – John Dickson
Afghanistan (2) – Dan Mori and Phil Sparrow
The Bible's Influence in the West – Vishal Mangalwadi
Science and the Bible – Hugh Ross
Global Issues in Christian Perspective – Vinoth Ramachandra
An Activist's Life – Tim Costello
CS Lewis 50 years on – Scott Stephens
Soul-Friendship in Celtic model – Ray Simpson
Religion and Violence – William Cavanagh
Philosophy and Religion – Keith Ward

Each of these receives 15- 60 in the audience, good questions mostly, more adults than undergraduates. That audience demographic leads us to the next section.

The second set of change-drivers are more viral changes in the internet generation.

TEN GENERATIONAL-CHANGES

1. Online study vs interactive campus
2. Work harder - play harder
3. Clergy not trusted
4. 'Truth must be experienced' (Christian Research Association)
5. 'Boomer' staff unusually anti-Christian at UWA
6. Defensive-posture in religious groups
7. Importance of social media, horizontal networks
8. Student-champions needed for marketing services provided by the university
9. Unaware of contribution of "faith" in culture (Hill, Schmidt, de Witte, etc)
10. Strong shy desire for pillars of meaning (Gary Bouma)

This has been very hard to engage with, almost by definition. Since the university requires that chaplains be experienced pastoral carers, we tend to be as old as their fathers or mothers.

HOW HAVE WE RESPONDED TO THESE? EXCELLENT EXPERIMENTS

With my ratings on our success (and why) :

- A. didn't get off the ground
- B. made a loose network maybe web-work with some ongoing relationships
- C. Made an ongoing project

1. WXED: 2014, 2015 series in faculties, addressing cultural blindspots and offering apologies, **Whats Christianity Ever Done** for law, arts and Architecture, Education, Science, Healthcare Rating C – pillars of meaning, appreciative story of church, public apologies
2. Short courses in Spirituality: Rating A – people too shy to take this face on
3. First non-Christian chaplain: Rating a then c. Muslim. NO success seeking a rabbi or buddhist.
4. “What Matters to Me and Why?”: Rating c: good open process in background
5. “Heart in Higher Education” group: Rating c: good open process in background
6. Quiet Days : Rating c: good open process in background
7. Israel Pilgrimage for Young Adults: Rating c –excitement for enlarged global engagement
8. Support all student belief-groups. Rating b – groups tend to be defensive here
9. Spiritual Life@UWA =Chaplaincy Website, twitter, facebook Rating b. social media is not that easy to break into
10. “Max Doubt – searching the evidence for God” (web) Rating b. 5000 hits
11. “Interfaith Online - in their own words” (web) Rating b. Cant advertise it effectively.
12. Red-tent ‘pop-ups’, including the labyrinth Rating b. Very cool response.
13. Drop in to meals at residential halls Rating a. Too noisy, too many.
14. ETHOS (public theology) faculty and graduates: group Rating b. Too busy to commit.
15. “Experiment in Extraordinary Wonder” (faith and science) Rating b. Reference list.

NET OUTCOMES from SURVEY in 2014

As a result of the questions implied above, and the inwardly wrestling soloism of the chaplain, the UCA at my request conducted a survey by two outside persons in early 2014, the questionnaire questioned responses to the Uniting Chaplain in regard to programme activities, not about the presence-work of networking and ‘showing up’ at things. There were three major outcomes:

1. Not many responses – having gained approval from the university for the questionnaire and for all-student and all-staff emails (25 thousand in total) , we received 0.1% response rate. Interviews with those with more direct contact were much more fruitful.
2. Those who did connect, religious or not, highly valued chaplaincy – both presence and programme. The programme activities are creative and engaging when accessed. The intuition that university chaplaincy can be a ground -breaker for the church has been reinforced. Fabulous.
3. Conclusion from both these things. Chaplains remain invisible to the UWA systems. As a result, I visited again all deans who would give me time and all student service sections who would give me time. A third to a half of them responded, but the rest of the year showed no change in referral or attendance. Social Media gatekeepers will feed only material that is of value to ‘all students’ that is, a certain kind of secular objective, e.g. ‘mindfulness’ group of a dozen. In effect, chaplains must act as not-spiritual. Ca-chink!

So, we are in the vicious circle of invisibility. Because we are restricted in access we have a value that we cannot measure in statistics.

SUGGESTIONS NEXT

FOR CHAPLAINS

- Revive the *Religion and Globalisation Initiative* as community events.
- Increase participation in UWA social media, which requires a new way of working with its gate-keepers
- Start a *Bible Discovery* group focussed on original sources as experience, current issues ‘now as then’, not focussed on received theology: maybe as a focus-points for ‘chaplaincy’ hitherto disunited.

FOR UWA

1. Ask for UWA contribution\$ to be re-aligned, its one of only two institutions in WA who do not contribute anything much to the work of their chaplaincy. No buy-in means marginalised.
2. Cultural target: Re-adjust the language of “secular” towards inclusive

THANK YOU

Thanks for your attention.

What questions has it raised about effective engagement in personal, public or cultural ways?

What ideas did you find refreshing or depressing?

Any web addresses etc please ask me.