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MULTIFAITH CHAPLAINCIES IN A SUCCESSFUL PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

This chapter provides a perspective on the influences occurring in Australian society which is portrayed as a complex multi-cultural and multi-dimensional one. It identifies and explains some of the factors introduced by the corporate sector in the prevailing climate of economic rationalism, corporate dominance and market-driven economy. It also introduces a distinction between 'internationalization' and 'globalization' not often appreciated in Australian businesses and in the education sector in particular. The problems associated with limited conceptualization of important management ideas and the proliferation of specialized terminology will be related to problems arising in educational institutions as poorly conceptualized globalized marketing strategies are applied to achieve increased student enrolments and greater profitability of tertiary institutions in Australia. The failure of these institutions to adequately recognize the human needs of their students and staff will be discussed in terms of their spiritual needs. Finally, the chapter will explain how the move towards Multifaith chaplaincy at one university may contribute to the humanity and caring dimensions of the university environment.

I have been the Director of the Flinders University Institute of International Education (FUIIE), Director of Studies of Post-graduate Programs in Educational Management and a Senior Lecturer in Education at Flinders University. My work involved teaching, supervision and program management for a significant number of international students from a large number of different countries. My co-authors are Mr. Geoff Boyce who is the Coordinator of the Multifaith Chaplains at Flinders University and who is employed by the Uniting Church of Australia, and Dr Abul Farooque, an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in the School of Education, who works with the Multifaith Chaplains and the Moslem community. My roles have

included management development and strategic management support for the group enabling the chaplains to do what they do best.

Introduction

The locus for this study is located in southern Adelaide in South Australia and involves the entire campus of Flinders University of South Australia. Like universities everywhere, Flinders reflects the community and the society at large and in many ways is rather like a small city within a city. As a result, people who work and study on-campus at Flinders are subjected to the priorities of corporate Australia and economic factors that affect the rest of the country's population. All of the diversity and multiculturalism of Adelaide and South Australia are visibly present on campus. In addition, Flinders has successfully attracted a large number of international students from locations as disparate as Western and Eastern Europe, North and South America, Scandinavia, Central, North, and South East Asia and the Asia-Pacific.

As a result, the university exhibits far greater degrees of diversity and multi-culturalism within its confines than does Australian culture at large. Members of staff are either part-time or full-time and work in academic teaching or research or in administrative roles or are part of the senior administration of the university. Students are either undergraduate or post-graduate, Australian citizens or international students, enrolled in a formal program or are non-award students and they can be full-time or part-time. Many students study at off-campus locations in SA, Australia or elsewhere in overseas locations such as Canada, Singapore, China or Malaysia.

An increasing number of students study from their home or office using 'distance learning', 'flexible delivery' or 'on-line learning' through the internet and computer systems. The students use of the university can be in large part be achieved via the internet and electronic resources. Enrolment in topics and programs can normally be achieved on-line and require no face-to-face contact with university staff unless there are specific needs or difficulties. As a

result, the amount and nature of human contact between students and staff has been significantly diminished.

The university uses strategic management techniques, has large sections devoted to human resources, information systems and properties and buildings. With the changes in Australia from compulsory union membership to voluntary student unionism, the former Student Union has been disbanded and replaced by the Flinders Campus Community Services which now provides student assistance previously provided to students by the Student Union. This, like the numerous international programs committees, tends to be part of the administrative infrastructure and serves to meet the obligations of the university.

Successful prospecting for new students internationally has resulted in increased student enrolments both on-campus and at specific locations in other places including those on foreign soils. Pressures on academic staff are more diverse and far greater than previously. Most staff members have far greater class contact time with considerably larger class sizes and are expected to maintain a balance of teaching, research, publications and community service, and develop their expertise with new technologies and with unfamiliar modes of teaching. Part-time and hourly paid staff members are employed in some areas to undertake assignment marking, student supervision and some teaching. The net result of this can be that students get to see even less of their lecturer and their course coordinator.

Many classes contain a significant proportion of international students including many from non Anglo-Saxon and non English-speaking backgrounds. Many classes are truly multi-cultural, multi-national, and multi-lingual and exhibit extreme diversity in all of its many forms. If the staff struggle with multi-culturalism in the community, it will certainly be no easier within the university setting. The university has created a new unit to manage the support for international students. This unit, which is staffed by a team of highly committed and professional people, is another part of the infrastructure and was a necessity for the university to maintain its

working relationships with major organizations such as AusAid, the Australian government's development agency, who provides scholarship funding for a large number of international students who come from the so-called developing nations. Many of these students come from countries and cultures with which the staff is not familiar. This can mean, for example, that a student's problems assumed to be associated with their lack of English language proficiency could just as likely as not be really related to a culture gap, a religious difference or contextual issue. Any staff members who have travelled, visited, worked or studied in other cultures are certainly advantaged when it comes to perceiving the real nature of a student's difficulties. The author has, for example, spent significant time in South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and has lived and worked in Indonesia and the Philippines. His ability to converse in Bahasa Indonesia has broken down many barriers and paved the way to greater understanding with international students.

Corporate Culture

We have seen, often with anxiety and concern, the growth of corporate giants and proliferation of corporate ways which have in some ways constrained us and in other ways redefined us. We constantly hear, and have come to expect, terminology and jargon words, like 'outsourcing', and 'downsizing', 'economic rationalist', 'productivity', 'bottom line', 'user pays', 'market economy' and the like in our modern society. As these crept into the society, they have also penetrated the academic world and universities have become corporate entities in order to survive. Now the university senior staff, like other corporate leaders and their middle-level managers, employ tools and strategies likes 'strategic management' and they talk about their 'vision', and 'mission', develop 'strategies' to achieve their 'corporate goals' and so on. Whilst the top positions may be filled with people who have developed a sound corporate knowledge and relevant expertise, many staff lower in the bureaucracy are far less likely to have any depth of conceptual understanding or experience with many management tools. They may well have, on the other hand, acquired the terminology and some superficial skills.

Many authors have documented the merits and relevance of effective use of many sophisticated management strategies and techniques. Moves to bring strategic management to public and non-profit organizations have been encouraged by authors such as Bryson (1995, p.10) who said:

“But strategic planning is not just a passing fad..... .. The reason is that the strategic planning process presented here builds on the nature of political decision-making.”

He explains the benefits of a systematic, informed and well thought out planning as a successful prerequisite for successful management. Bryson’s text has been used extensively as a reference for strategic planning and strategic management classes for many years at the post-graduate level. The benefits of effective, informed and thorough long-term planning are innumerable.

With thorough long-range planning in place, the next step in successful strategic management is to achieve efficiencies from effective short-term planning. This usually comes in the form of ‘project management’. As with all new innovations, there are new concepts, new terminology and new relationships between the various elements. Whilst many people are assigned to work on a project, few are provided with adequate knowledge of the fundamental concepts, a functional knowledge of the new terminology and an understanding of how the elements can be orchestrated into an efficient management approach that can also be particularly effective. In the hands of a finance person, project management can achieve great efficiencies; in the hands of a quality manager it can achieve high quality process and products; in the hands of a people oriented person it can achieve fair, user-friendly and effective staff utilization. To an all-round effective manager, project management can achieve all of these efficiencies and total effectiveness as well. According to the very successful author, writer Harold Kerzner (2003, p.33)

The growth of project management can be traced through topics such as roles and responsibilities, organizational structures,

delegation of authority and decision-making and especially corporate profitability.

Project managers speak of 'project management' and focus on 'milestones', 'budgets', 'schedules', 'estimates', getting things done 'within budget', 'on time' with 'high quality' striving to 'sign-off' on various stages of their contracts. They minimize numbers of staff, commit an absolute minimum of financial resources and rarely allocate additional plant and equipment. In some cases they give little or no thought to the welfare of staff, the functionality or serviceability of plant and equipment or future projects. We have so often heard expressions like 'work smarter but not harder' particularly from those who are charged with responsibilities for the 'human resources' and how, when and where they are utilized. There has been some dissension amongst the more people-oriented leaders and their human resources unit colleagues. Can people really be assigned to tasks in the same way that a bulldozer, a computer laboratory or a drilling machine can be taken from the resource pool? This represents the sometimes ruthless priorities of account managers in their quests for higher profits and greater productivity.

It is important to note that the tools of the corporate sector are not inherently good or bad. Put simply, the tools are as good or as bad as the way in which they are applied and the appropriateness, relevance and timeliness of their applications. In the hands of a novice or poorly informed user, they are potentially lethal weapons. Efficiency of use of the key terminology is no guarantee that the potential power of the tools the terms describe will be achieved. A sound grasp of the management concepts and a good understanding of the principles being employed are prerequisites for the terminology to be more than verbal diarrhoea or just rhetoric.

Internationalization and Globalization

Pang (2006, p.3) stated "The term 'globalization' is generally used to refer to a complicated set of economic, political, and cultural factors. Sadly, whilst it is easy to adopt new terminology, the things that change quickly are the words and rhetoric. Real actions and changes

in behaviours take somewhat longer to achieve. ‘Internationalization’ and ‘globalization’ differ considerably at the conceptual level not just the rhetoric. So, it is very easy for people to pick up on something like ‘internationalization’, or is it ‘globalization’? The imagination of institutions such as universities and schools run wild when they realize that there’s a big market place out there in the ‘global village’.

Australia has a relatively small population and the viability of business including those in the education sectors predictably turn our corporate leader’s attention towards our very populous near-neighbours as potential market places to supplement diminishing returns from local markets and dwindling government support for the education sectors. They think that our neighbours such as Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia, and the even larger nations of China and India offer great market potential. With government incentives to promote exporting goods and services, international marketing and exports to international markets have increased the profitability of many companies and service providers over recent years. The term ‘internationalization’ has been applied to these endeavours and considerable income has resulted. For many Australian companies, there were few insurmountable problems in these operations.

However, troubles did start to emerge when the products and services being sold abroad had too many inherently Australian characteristics or in some way failed to meet local consumer demands. In some industries, products designed, developed and manufactured for the local Australian market were not entirely satisfactory in the climate, the geography, cultural setting, weather patterns or other factors directly linked to the location. The so-called Australian ‘domestic’ products were simply unsuitable or unacceptable in the foreign locations. With the evolution of new technologies, particularly the new high-speed mass communication systems such as email, internet and improved telephones, the world was seen to shrink and we came to accept that we all live in a small ‘global village’. This changed the way in which we see ourselves and how much we know about each other. It was part of a new development which became known as ‘globalization’.

Given the potential size of the foreign markets, smart Australian manufacturers and producers soon realized that they could afford to modify their goods and services to more specifically and appropriately meet the demands of various foreign markets. As a result, various forms of the products and services were produced, customized as it were. For a product to be a success in the international market, in the global village as it were, it must have been designed, developed, manufactured and presented to meet the consumers and users in all locations not only those in the originating nation. The term 'globalization' has been used to distinguish between international sales of domestic product and the export of goods designed and developed for specific international markets. Larkin (2006, p.162) explained:

Globalization can be much more than a set of rhetoric and the basis of opportunistic ventures to bolster up dwindling enrolments and reductions in traditional funding for Western universities.

Globalization can give rise to new generations of thinking, new infrastructures and new educational perspectives that spawn exciting new opportunities for local and international students using new learning resources, new technologies and new approaches to tertiary education. He identifies a number of aspects of university resourcing that may need to be addressed in order to achieve success in the globalization process. Larkin (2006, p.162) includes:

The personal traits and professional qualities of teaching staff, together with their insights into and interests in working with people from other cultures may be the most critical factors in the success or otherwise of more global approaches to higher education.

He discussed the concept of developing an international product that will meet the universal needs of many different local markets and at the same time meet the specifics of various local regulations, local laws, local climate and environmental conditions has been very well demonstrated by large car manufacturers for many years. For example, the General Motors (GM) initiative which lead to the

development of the J-car in the 1980's showed how a global design which met universal standards could be adapted and produced as multiple local variants for markets in UK, Canada, USA, Spain, Australia (as the Camira), Europe and the rest of the world.

The additional work involved is, of course, not just for the benefit of the international students. Larkin (2006, p.164) advises that:

A globalized university will need to realize that both international and local (Australian) course participants will benefit from the broader perspective, beyond local domestic issues, provided with a 'global' product in what becomes a 'win:win' situation.

When discussing how a university might achieve effective 'globalization', Larkin (2006, p.165) lists a number of challenges including the following three:

Design awards and topics (subjects) with a foundation based on global issues which embrace cultural, contextual, and political circumstances and the prevailing conditions for students from various nations and cultures.

Provide human resource development activities for academic and general staff that will develop greater sensitivities and insights into the needs and priorities of course participants coming from cultures other than their own.

Create a working climate and university culture that facilitates effective working relationships between academic staff, general staff and international and local participants in culturally inclusive ways.

Once again, the need for a clear conceptual understanding of an important concept is clear. Academics with only limited conceptual understanding of a term like 'globalization' allows them to think that if they just put all their courses and their curriculum materials into small packets that can be posted or 'on-line' they can deliver their

courses internationally. At the same time, supervisors might imagine that the use of mailable resources, electronic and 'on-line' materials would mean that they will not need to fund their staff to travel interstate and overseas. It would be very naïve to imagine that this is all that there is being 'globalized'.

Diversity

We are slowly discovering just how different people can be in so many different ways. Even within Australia, there are Australian citizens, migrants, visiting workers, permanent residents, a tourists and visiting business people. Then we have international students, itinerant workers, refugees, asylum seekers and people who have come to join their families who have migrated from another country. Maybe they all prefer to study or work in different ways using different types of resources and in different environments.

We need to recognize that they bring with them different educational backgrounds, different training, and different professional and life experiences. They have different needs, different interests and different preferences. Maslow told us many years ago, about the different types and levels of human needs. We have different interests, different preferences, and different motivations. We all use different forms of power including 'personal power', 'referred power', and 'positional power' based on the status of our position and its title. How do we use our power?

Some of these differences are associated with our birthplace, our family circumstances, the society in which we live and the regime in which we work and play. In which valley or on which side of the hill were we born? In which country or province does our family live? Which community do we belong to? What parental influences did we encounter? Do we have parents? Are we from a single parent family? What were the time and the place of our birth? What religion or spiritual beliefs did my family hold at the time of my birth and when I was growing up? We all have a sense of humour but what amuses us may be culturally determined. We have different personal traits

and different ways of responding in particular situations and contexts.

Multi-cultural Society

Many of the differences exhibited by people can be traced back to their family background, the geographical location from they originally come, their ethnicity and their cultural heritage. We willingly accept that our society is now multi-cultural and that great diversity and differences exist. What is less clear is whether or not we perceive the nature and extent of these differences. Do we acknowledge and accept the differences that we do identify? Do we understand the consequences and ramifications of such great diversity? More importantly, do we value the differences amongst and between us in all the different aspects and traits? Are we willing and able to work in effective and functional ways in groups that are made up of people who exhibit significant differences? This last question can be stated in another way. Is tolerance of differences enough?

Pluralism

We continue to hear the term pluralism applied in discussions about diverse and multi-cultural groups. There are, of course, many definitions of pluralism and the term is applied to many different aspects of our communities. Pluralism is not just diversity it is a matter of going beyond diversity. Pluralism assumes that diversity is beneficial for society it is a guiding principle which permits peaceful co-existence of interests, convictions, and life-styles. Pluralism implies that the diverse constituents of society interact.

Kazanjian (1996, p.2) told us that:

Tolerance is conflict arrested. It is a great harness applied to the destructive forces of ignorance, fear and prejudice.

..tolerance is not a basis for healthy human relationship nor will it ever lead to true community, for tolerance does not allow for

learning, or growth or transformation, but rather ultimately keeps people in a state of suspended ignorance and conflict.

As the president of Wellesley College, Walsh (1997, p.2) stated:

Our celebrations of religious diversity are teaching us important lessons about how to live together in community at a time when we see all around us the erosion of community, of respect, and of trust.

in her address to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Forum in Baltimore, Maryland.

In the same address, she answered her own question on how women can be prepared to assume global leadership by saying:

... the ability to read critically, write persuasively, speak cogently, reason analytically and quantitatively, a knowledge base from which to think historically, spatially, cross-culturally, comparatively, and (not the least) with empathy – a style of learning that emphasizes context, relationship, and making connections...

Have we established a pluralistic community, province and nation?
What does being pluralistic really entail?

A search of the internet brings many different view, perspectives and definitions of pluralism. Perhaps the most comprehensive treatment is included on the answers.com web site. Whilst discussing the conditions for pluralism, the site Answers.com (2006, p.4) states that:

The most important value is that of mutual respect and tolerance, so that different groups can coexist and interact without anyone being forced to assimilate to anyone else's position in conflicts that will naturally arise out of diverging interests and positions. These conflicts can only be resolved durably by dialogue which leads to compromise and to mutual understanding.

It is clear then that a successful pluralistic society would involve effective, productive and functional interactions within a community

of diverse members. Although conflicts may arise as a result of differences, the members of the community should have the strategies, resources and desire to resolve them amicably within a reasonable length of time.

The fourth chapter of the Delors (1996) was devoted to the four pillars of wisdom. They are 'learning to know', 'learning to do', learning to live together' and 'learning to be'. They provide the basis of the entire report and they extend over many phases of each person's life and are not restricted to a single location. 'Learning to live together' can be considered to be analogous with learning to live in a pluralist community or society.

Learning Organizations

If we return to the corporate world for a moment, we will see new terminology such as 'learning organization'. This term has emerged as the end result of much earlier discussions arising initially in relation to '(staff) supervision', through 'staff appraisal', 'performance review', and 'performance management'. The newer term, 'learning organization' brings a more positive connotation to what had previously been associated with 'big brother is watching', 'we will see your mistakes' and similar thoughts. Although 'performance management', in theory at least, was intended to strengthen the employing institution through more effective personnel management and at the same time providing a developmental approach to the performance of individual staff members, it does still conjure up lots of negativity for many people. Many academic studies have reviewed 'performance management' and investigated the effectiveness of various approaches and different techniques. It is not unusual for a study to determine that there are low expectations and considerable negativity towards it. However, in many cases, what emerges is that it is the poor application and inappropriate implementation of an inadequate form of it that gives the process its bad name. As a result of poor performance of the management process, the move to the 'learning organization' has been welcomed in many sectors. There are still those who cling to the power relationships of the older 'performance appraisal' and even the more primitive 'supervision' models.

A recent Google.com search on the internet matching 'pluralism' or 'pluralism' with 'learning organization' resulted in more than 20,000 hits. Many of the reports indicated that a 'learning organization' approach was very much suited to work in a 'pluralist' workplace or community. So what does a 'learning organization' look like? Senge (1999, p.32) listed what he called the five disciplines of organizational learning. They are: 'personal mastery', 'mental models', and 'shared vision', 'team learning' and 'systems thinking'. In his earlier book, Senge (1990) indicated that, in his opinion, for an enterprise to become a 'learning organization', there must be far more than just 'survival learning', often called 'adaptive learning'; the 'adaptive learning must be supplemented by 'generative learning'. He explained that we must be able to recreate ourselves both as individuals and collectively as the organization. No wonder there is so much literature and interest linking 'learning organizations' and 'pluralism'.

Religion

What is religion? If we look at the major religions, they tend to be vested in groups of people. They are usually recorded with an oral or written account and very often have some significant symbols and sometimes artefacts. There are sometimes sacred texts. There are rituals, festivals and ceremonies, language and vocabulary and rites of passage. There are bases for membership and if you do this then you're in and if you do that you are not really in. Religions provide frameworks, communally understood traditions, for expressing our innate spiritualities. Good religion is constructed to nurture our inner lives and enhance a sense of connectedness to each other, in society, the world and the cosmos. Bad religion stunts or poisons it.

According to Wikipedia (2007, p.1)

Religion is the adherence to coded beliefs and rituals that generally involve a faith in a spiritual nature and a study of inherited ancestral tradition, knowledge and wisdom related to understanding human life. The term 'religion' refers to both the

personal practices related to faith as well as to the larger shared systems of belief.

Smart (1997) suggested that a religion might involve a belief in a god or gods but there are other religions that make no reference to a god at all. Some religions make some reference to a god but it is not central to their beliefs. Then he raises the questions of what is a god and which objects will have a spiritual significance?

Smart (1997) identifies eight components of religions. They include Doctrines and Philosophies, Rituals, Mythic or Narratives, Experiential and Emotional, Ethical and Legal, Social, Materials and Consequences.

We meet different religions in different ways, in different places, in different ways and at different times and stages of our lives through family, friends, within our geographical setting or whatever. We can meet different religions by attending formal services, participating in ceremonies or gatherings, by reading or talking with other people, by brushing shoulders with people like my colleagues the chaplains at Flinders University.

I can recall visiting London's St. Paul's Cathedral at the end of a working day one summer evening a few years ago. Many people were coming into the cathedral for quiet prayers or time to reflect upon their day and their lives. After a short time, the cathedral's choir started to sing accompanied by the magnificent pipe organ. I became quite overwhelmed with emotion and strong feelings whilst I listened to the choir in the elegant building in the late afternoon. It was truly a religious experience. Even today, I am still deeply affected when I think back or see the cathedral in the media. It was the time, the place, the sights and sounds that generated to responses I made. I guess that my emotions and feelings were caused by the associations I made in the particular context and setting at the time.

Wikipedia (2007, p.2) provides the models of how religions come into being. They list religions as social constructs, religions

progressing toward higher objective truth and a particular religion seen as absolutely true. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Spirituality

Many authors have explored the meaning of spirituality. Tacey (2003), for example, has suggested that many young Australians have an interest in their spirituality and that they are not always clear on what has given rise to that interest. He notes also that very few of those young people express their spirituality through an organized religion. Tacey (2003, p.4) declares that:

Most of our public institutions are secular and not prepared for a revolution of spirit. The mainline churches are apparently unable to take up a dialogue with the new spirit of our time, partly because they only acknowledge conventional ideas of the sacred. Things may change and I certainly hope they do. But the field of spirituality is wide open and largely unexplored: we have yet to see any committed institutional response to the challenges posed by the new spirituality.

This revolution involves a democratisation of the spirit. It is about individuals taking authority into their own hands, and refusing to be told what to think or believe. It is about personal autonomy and experimentation, with the use of direct experience of the world as a kind of laboratory of the spirit.

Major government and private institutions strive to retain their status as secular ones. Whilst the battles for State and religious influence have diminished, many in the government sector cling to secularism as it will ensure they have a future. 'Secular' is, like so many other widely used terms, often misunderstood and takes on unintended meaning over time. Langmead (2005, p.2) has clarified the meaning in the following way:

Secularisation here refers to the marginalizing of the Christian perspective in politics, economics, education, the law, the arts, the media (particularly television) and the intellectual life of the nation. It is part of the trend to pluralism, where the market of

ideas is no longer dominated by one worldview and religion becomes less important in a range of areas.

It is important for us to realize that the term ‘secular’ does not imply anti-religion, but rather it rejects monopoly by one particular religion or faith tradition.

I have been through primary school, I have been through secondary school, I have been to four universities and I am only now getting to know and understand my spiritual identity and how I have evolved as a person with a developing spiritual awareness. Years of attending Sunday school, participating in weekly church services at the local church and participating in religious education classes through primary and junior secondary years of schooling had achieved very little towards achieving my own spiritual awareness and my spiritual development. I knew a lot about some passages of the Bible and about many of the traditions, rituals, ceremonies and festivals as they were practiced in my particular branch of a Christian church.

It is interesting to relate this to contemporary view on education and learning. Students certainly see themselves as autonomous learners who have the right, and now the access to, a wide range of resources and real-world experiences. The role of teachers has evolved into one of ‘facilitator of learning’ rather than one of subject matter expert and fountain of all wisdom. Within early childhood, and even middle childhood, the notions of guided discovery and activity-based learning have proven themselves to be very powerful approaches to the development of learning. Many would argue that the best teachers are those who understand the importance of process, the potential for various learning experiences and who have a wide range of strategies to set up ‘potentially rich’ learning situations. Tough (1979) explored the fostering of language development through the encouragement of children’s talk. She introduced the expression ‘potentially rich situations’ to describe a learning environment conducive to effective learning for students. Even earlier, Dienes and Golding (1974) described their ways of guiding young learners to discovery of key mathematical concepts and processes.

It is bold to suggest that the development of one's spirituality and an understanding of one's religious beliefs might both develop in similar ways. If this is so, then who would be the facilitator of this learning?

Chaplaincy

Whilst chaplains have existed for a very long time, as the world changes so must the ways in which a chaplain works, how they are funded, and to whom they are accountable. Boyce (2006) provided an excellent overview of chaplaincy. He described four models of chaplaincy which he described as 'Traditional', 'Professional', 'Surrogate' and 'Multifaith'. He explained that the traditional model of chaplaincy saw the chaplain employed and managed by the religious body. The Catholic Church employed religious or lay people to work in hospitals, in prisons, schools and other locations. There were traditional chaplains in the Defence Services and some worked in other work sites. The "professional" chaplains are more likely to be employed by a government or private organizations and they were often most concerned about 'pastoral care' of employees but could be involved in worship services and faith education. He uses the term 'surrogate' chaplain to describe those who perceive themselves to be charged by their faith to reach out to and evangelise and to convert those of different faiths or without a specific faith.

When describing contextual and environmental changes to the world in which the chaplains work, Boyce (2006) he refers to the great diversity and multi-cultural aspects of Australian society and work places. Although he admits that there is a definite Christian origin to chaplaincy generally, he advises that non-Christian groups are beginning to explore ways of representing them using a form of chaplaincy. As the diversity of the population increases, and as acceptance grows and widens, the resulting pluralism will require a new model of chaplaincy.

Boyce (2006) goes further by suggesting that simple cooperation between single faith chaplains, embracing Christian and non-Christian organizations and traditions, may not be sufficient to

achieve a sustainable situation. Although a group of chaplains representing numerous different faiths may be accommodated in a single centre, the individual chaplains could remain isolated from each other and from the institution that they represent. Interfaith dialogues and interfaith cooperation on joint projects may lead to harmony and workable relations, but the isolation still prevails. Then, as at Flinders, the chaplains may seek to establish themselves as a community of chaplains, provide support for each other and to work together particularly at times of crisis, disaster or emergencies. They become, as it were, a community of colleagues. Then, as demand for chaplaincy services increases the need for synchronized and cooperative work increases.

When the term chaplain is used in the general community, there is a good chance that it refers to the traditional model and one which sees the person working with a religious body, most likely a Christian one, and often seeking out existing members or prospecting for new ones. These carry-over expectations have muddied the waters in which the Multifaith chaplains exist. Their work is much more inclusive of people with different faiths and of those who do not aspire to any of the particular religious belief systems. Their ministry is very much part of the new pluralism.

Von Dietze (1999) was a chaplain funded by Curtin University in Western Australia. He provided some insights into his role of chaplain in his article about his work at Curtin University. Von Dietze (1999, 67) raises the important issue:

How does one go about integrating a chaplaincy effectively into the structures and life of a contemporary secular university?

He points out that some chaplains are paid employees of a major organization in the form of main-stream religions such as the Catholic Church, the Uniting Church of Australia, the Lutheran Church, or the Salvation Army. He goes further to explain that there is often an expectation by the employer of the employee that they will evangelise and strengthen the commitment of existing members of the church and actively recruit new people into the fold. Funded

by the University, Von Dietze's priorities are, as one would expect, directed more toward the needs of the university per se. Many observers note the emergence of a structural dichotomy as chaplaincy is authorized and funded by the secular institution with emphasis on the spiritual needs of the institution replacing chaplaincy authorized and funded by religious bodies with emphasis on satisfying the missional needs of the religious body. The issues of who funds chaplaincy and of whose needs are being met remain pertinent.

Multifaith Chaplaincy

By establishing a community of colleagues, the chaplains at Flinders University have created a unique and exciting new model of chaplaincy. The individual chaplains come from a variety of traditions. At the present time, the Multifaith Chaplaincy includes a Buddhist Monk, a Hindu Chaplain, a Lutheran chaplain, a Pagan chaplain, a Christian layperson who acts as executive officer and, until recently, a Sikh layperson, a Jewish Rabbi and a lay person from the Catholic tradition. The various chaplains are physically located in the university's Religious Centre which is in the centre of the Mall and located near the bank, shops, food outlets and student support services. The Centre provides prayer rooms, space and facilities for meetings and informal gatherings and refreshments are available for those staff and students who choose to drop in to the Centre.

The chaplains are variously funded with some being funded by the religious organization that they represent whilst others are volunteers. All of the chaplains are autonomous in relation to the university and they sit outside the university infrastructure. Despite this, the chaplains, particularly the coordinator of the Multifaith Chaplaincy, have well established and very effective communications with the senior management of the university and at various levels of academic and general staff and with all students.

Hestenes (1991) introduced the notion of 'converting committees' into communities. She made important distinctions between two perspectives she describes as 'institutional' and 'relational'. It is very

easy to identify with the former because we all know the way people who are locked into a power-based hierarchical structure use their powers and spheres of influence. Power is attributed to status and standing in the bureaucracy and others get their (referred) power by association with their colleagues who have the power. Universities are classical examples of institutions that are very hierarchical and that use institutional perspectives most of the time. The second perspective, called 'relational', arises as the result of people networking in the organization and working towards desirable people-oriented outcomes. Hestenes (1999, p.8) explains the attributes of the two approaches and contrasts the former group as concerned about the systems with the later group more concerned about the people and their situations. To overlay Hestenes' views on the discussion of meeting the human needs of international students, we can see straight away that yet another international committee, for example, will achieve very little for the welfare of the students at the end of the day. What are needed are people with excellent people and communications skills who are accessible and available to students at the times they are most needed. They might be lecturers, administrative staff or maybe a Multifaith chaplain?

As I reflect on the Multifaith Chaplaincy at Flinders, I am reminded of a poster I saw a few years ago. It depicts a scene of a young man, bare footed, trousers rolled up, walking in the shallows of a beach away from the camera. Beside him walks a young boy, possibly his son, who is walking in the same direction away from the camera. The caption for the poster is:

I would rather you walk beside me than show me the way.

(Source unknown).

As I observe the chaplains at Flinders, I notice that they do walk beside, or sit beside, the many staff and students with whom they interact whether it is in a one-to-one meeting or at a morning tea or a more formal event. The relationships are relaxed, communicative and encouraging. One can only assume that the visitor, be it a staff member or a student, is meeting their spiritual or religious needs

without great ceremony, great drama or fanfare. There have been the more formal celebrations and structured activities such as the ‘sorry day’, the ‘religion and violence conference’ and more recently the joint candle lighting ceremony to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Flinders University.

Whilst individual chaplains meet with, support and work with individuals from their religious community or faith tradition, they also work collaboratively and collectively in pairs, small groups and as a whole team. They clearly greatly value their collegiality, provide each other with mentoring and mutual support and at times they act as chaplains for one another.

As a collective, their catch-phrase is “nurturing spirit, building community”. They do this by ‘journeying’ with others, actively listening, encouraging and linking people who are structurally isolated from each other, but share common concerns and interests.

Is it a random event that many of the current chaplains are qualified and experienced teachers with formal teaching qualifications? I suspect that that is not the case. The way in which the Multifaith chaplains interact and work with people in the university community is entirely consistent with the way effective class-room teacher’s work. The modus operandi for these chaplains does not involve them telling people what to think and how to behave, but rather it is them being there and being inclusive and being the friend that you need when you don’t have one.

On reflection, these chaplains are working very much as the teacher as facilitator in the models defined by Tough (1979) and Dienes and Golding (1974). At the same time, I can see great similarities between their Multifaith model and the ideas espoused by Senge (1990) and the many other advocates for the creation of ‘learning organizations’ as effective institutions that are both effective and sustainable.

What the chaplains at Flinders University achieve more than any other individual or group is to implement a caring and supportive side to the university culture.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to draw parallels between Australian society and the on-campus community at an Australian university. It has suggested that the diversity and multi-culturalism that exists within the university mirrors those of the society at large but the university populations of staff and students reflect an influx of visiting academic and exchange staff and international students as a direct result of internationalization of the programs and the existence of the university in the global economy.

The discussion of matters of religion, spirituality as factors within an emerging pluralist community at Flinders led to discussion of chaplaincy and Multifaith chaplaincy as it is practised at Flinders University.

The model of working and the ways in which relationships form and communication is achieved by the Multifaith Chaplains were described as consistent with contemporary management concepts and models such as the 'learning organization'. Continued application of the Multifaith model, apart from putting a human side and a caring disposition into the culture of Flinders, could very easily establish a 'learning organization' headset and lead to a strategic advantage for the university.

The more learner-centred approaches used in contemporary education were described as walking beside the learner in a potentially resource rich learning environment. The Multifaith Chaplaincy was portrayed as a similar environment and the chaplains are compensating, to a greater or lesser degree, for the demise of pastoral care and restricted relationships between the students and the staff.

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Although educators in the past may have provided a high level of pastoral and nurturing care for their students, these are now more likely to be provided by specialists through service units and support services such as counsellors. In the past, teachers took a great deal of pride in educating ‘the whole’ child and providing nurture, care and pastoral support for their charges. The new pressures on staff in the corporate climate have reduced student-staff contact time and diminished the quality of staff-student relationships.

Whilst this may be seen by some as unfortunate, globally the indications are that the quality of the programs and the student’s performances may well suffer particularly for the perspective of international students involved and their employers. If true, these could well cause a domino effect and affect the image and credibility of the university as an effective provider of high quality and relevant tertiary education in inclusive and culturally sensitive ways. I would hope that the smart ‘learning organization’ will realize the strategic benefits of providing a caring, nurturing and inclusive educational environment in their increasingly multi-cultural community.

The work of the Multifaith chaplains is truly inspired and inspirational. Let’s hope that the senior staff of universities realizes the relevance of the ways in which the chaplains work and ensure that academic and general staff become inspired to adopt similar models of working with the students. Maybe then, Multifaith chaplains and all university staff will work in a successful pluralist community as a role model for a successful pluralistic society at large.

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MULTIFAITH CHAPLAINCY IN SUCCESSFUL PLURALIST SOCIETY

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