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# In Deed: A Survey of Programs and Activities Related to Identity and Mission: Creighton University

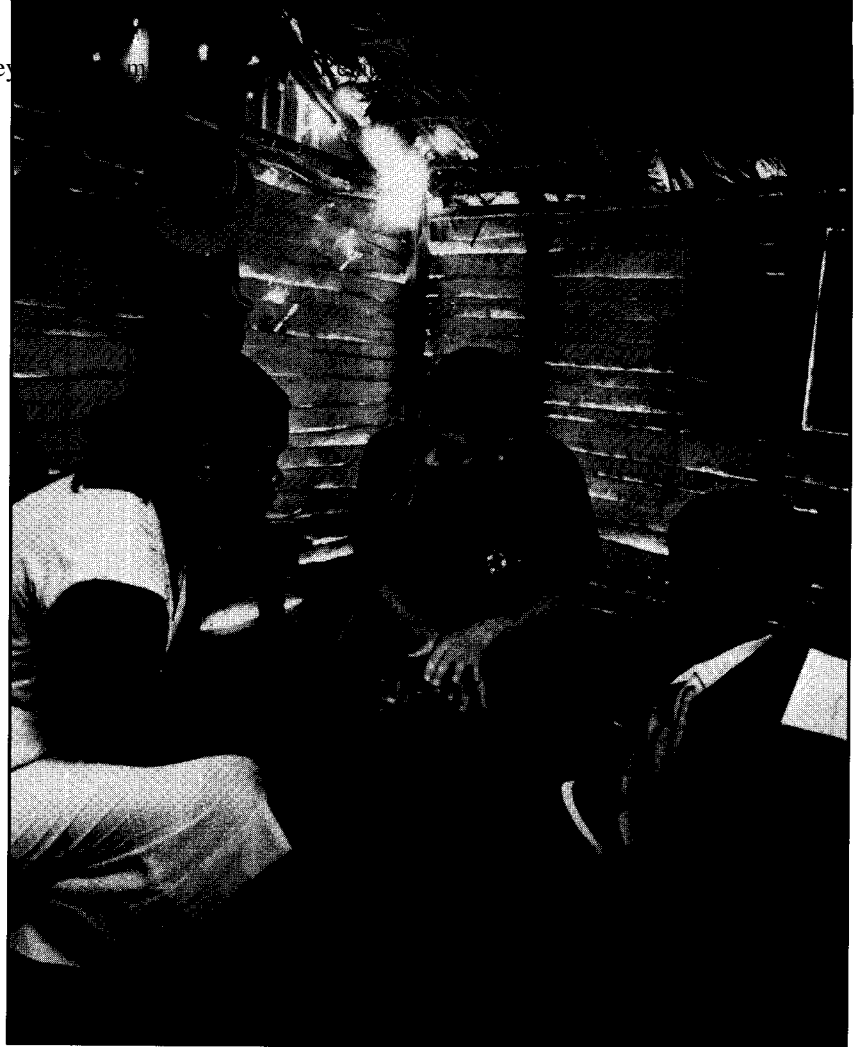
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# In Deed

## A Survey of Programs and Activities Related to Identity and Mission

### Creighton University

*Omaha, Nebraska*

Creighton University founded the Collaborative Ministry Office to foster Jesuit identity and ideals at the Omaha, Nebraska school. Directed by Joan Lanahan, D.Min, and Father Jack Zuercher SJ, the Collaborative Ministry Office provides orientation of new personnel; continuing staff education concerning Jesuit history, Ignatian charisma, and Jesuit educational tradition; community building; and in-

dividual and group spiritual growth and formation. This office was established in 1983 and has developed with the generous support of the president, Father Michael G. Morrison SJ.

The Collaborative Ministry Office is especially interested in engaging persons on campus in dialogue on the mission and identity of the university. Twice a year it organizes a "Breakfast Dialogue" on campus with its advisory

committee and university administrators; an issue of *Conversations* was used as the basis for discussion. "The Seminar on Jesuit Education," open to all faculty and administrators, meets five times a year in the Generals' Hall of Ignatius House, a small Jesuit community on campus.

The Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality was designed for faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other interested persons. Its mission is to provide education in Ignatian spirituality through lectures, classes and programs; and to further spiritual formation using Ignatian

methods. The Center was founded three years ago.

The brief description of the goals of these two offices does not adequately describe the individual attention given to Creighton personnel in the form of counseling and spiritual direction. Retreats—whether half day, three days, or five days long—are available free of charge to all full-time personnel. Released time is given for faculty and staff to attend. The purpose is to offer a "spiritual formation" program for those who desire it. In a sense, the Collaborative Ministry Office and the Deglman Center

serve as "campus ministry" for faculty and staff. In addition to the orientation programs for new faculty members which individual colleges offer, the president sponsors a reception for all new full-time faculty in the fall. The vice presidents are introduced and talks are given about the identity of the institution. Later in the semester the president and rector of the Jesuit Community host a reception and dinner for new faculty and administrators with spouses; after dinner an hour-long program describes Creighton's Jesuit history and identity.

At the monthly staff orientation, a ten-minute video on the Jesuit identity of the university is followed by an introduction of the co-directors of the Collaborative Ministry Office who then publicize their programs. All staff are invited by the Jesuit community for a free meal during the spring semester break; this "We Need a Spring Break Too" luncheon has been greatly valued by the staff. Included is entertainment by Jesuits together with a talk about some aspect of Jesuit life, spirituality, education, etc.

In 1988 the Center for Health Policy and Ethics was established. Seven full-time and part-time professionals address the moral and ethical dimensions of health care, and serve the many professional colleges at Creighton: Dentistry, Medicine, Law, Nursing, and Pharmacy and Allied Health. Faculty and medical students are involved in a free Indian-Chicano Clinic, while residents and medical faculty work in the Charles Drew Community Health Clinic which gives free medical care. The Dental School has an outreach to the poor through a free dental clinic, participates in the

Chicano-Indian Dental Clinic, and offers preventive dental screening in day care centers.

The Institute for Latin American Concern [ILAC] offers programs for a third world experience in the Dominican Republic. For over fifteen years the ILAC program has taken students from the health sciences to rural areas in the Dominican Republic to assist poor campesinos with free medical and dental care. Last year a semester-long program was inaugurated for undergraduate students on Creighton's new campus in San Diego, Dominican Republic.

With the help of a local benefactor and a grant from the Federal government, the Creighton Law Clinic opened its doors in January 1993.

The clinic gives students opportunities to give free family legal advice to the poor of the community.

### Other Programs

■ Creighton is well-known for its summer program in spirituality, which offers a master's degree for those interested in spiritual direction, teaching spirituality, and doing church ministry. The program includes several elements of Ignatian spirituality and boasts an internationally known faculty.

■ More than 30 faculty and staff persons are involved in Christian Life Communities, small community groups that meet regularly and practice a simple way of life based on Ignatian spirituality. Seven Jesuits from the Creighton

University Jesuit Community are members of one of the several groups in Omaha which meet twice a month to talk about their faith.

■ Creighton has an active campus ministry program, with some twenty-two persons having at least a partial responsibility in ministering to the students. The director of Community Service provides experience for students to minister to the poor in the local community during the semester or in distant places during break times. The director of the Peace and Justice Center organizes "Soup with Substance" lunches for all on campus with speakers on topics relating to justice issues.

■ The recent "Creighton 2000" planning process involved 400 persons and 33 committees in preparing for a new decade of service. A critical element in this planning was the newly fashioned mission statement which describes how various elements of the university further the school's ideals. The revised mission statement was distributed to current staff and will be given to those applying to Creighton. Father Michael G. Morrison SJ, president of Creighton, recently made his statement "Creighton Identity" available in published form to current and prospective faculty and staff.

■ The President's Council on Cultural Diversity was recently formed to increase the number of members of underrepresented ethnic groups on campus and the need to ensure the effective and sensitive interaction and socialization of all members of the university community.

