

**Issues of Sponsorship
Session
January, 2010**

ACCU

Panel Introduction

SOURCE:*Mission and Identity: A Handbook for Trustees of Catholic Colleges and Universities*

Published jointly by: ACCU, AJCU, AGB. c.2003-2004. One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C., 20036.

Chapter 10: "Trustees and Mission: The Ideal and the Real" by Charles L. Currie, S.J.

Definition of sponsorship

The varying degrees of influence sought by the founding congregation come under the rubric of "sponsorship," a term that has no official status in either civil or canon law but which has developed over the last thirty years to describe the different ways the congregation or order relates to the institution in mutual efforts to keep the founding charism alive. There is no universal model for how this is done, but there are two broad governance options that are pursued. (p. 97)

Single-tiered governance model

1. One board is responsible for institutional mission
2. Board holds in trust purpose for which the institution was founded. Includes Catholic/sponsoring group* component. (*Mercy, Benedictine, Jesuit, etc.)
3. Board may recognize legitimate interests of sponsoring group by statute. Some provide specific number of board seats to sponsor.
4. Some by-laws provide for a kind of "block voting" in requiring sponsor members to unite on certain issues

Two-tiered governance model

1. Sponsoring group has reserved powers exercised by smaller board of members of religious congregation. The "operational" board manages most organizational work of institution.
2. Dangers: Second tier board may be less effective due to restricted authority
3. Reserved powers normally limited to major issues, but 56 variations have been identified.
Most common: purchase/sale of property, change in governing documents, institutional mission.

Relationships beyond the legal minimum

Whatever the model, legal definition alone does not create robust institutional life. Some mutuality needs to be present.

1. Essential information must be shared
2. Honest negotiation of differences
3. Congregational charism needs to be tied to educational objectives
4. Sponsoring group needs to be part of important deliberations

SOURCE: Alice Gallin, OSU, *Independence and a New Partnership in Catholic Higher Education*. University of Notre Dame Press. Notre Dame, Indiana. 1996.

- A. Provides history of movement from “wholly owned and operated” by religious congregations to the current models of sponsorship by religious congregations of institutions with boards vested with substantial—and often ultimate—authority for mission.
- B. Gallin lists five reasons why governing boards were changed to provide for more lay leadership in the colleges:
 1. To achieve educational excellence so as to compete with other private universities
 2. To gain the financial and managerial expertise of lay leaders to benefit the growth of the institutions
 3. To change image and to counteract public perception that colleges were “run” by the church—constituting a sub-culture of American academic life
 4. To secure fund-raising success and to increase access to foundations and corporations
 5. To bring expertise of secular world to decision-making process
- C. Led to ability to participate in major extensions of educational grants and loans from the government
- D. Combined support and vision of presidents and religious superiors led to breakthroughs.
 1. At times, however, the religious congregation did not support/understand the change in relationship needed to achieve new balance.
 2. Important to know the history, inner culture of each college/university
- E. Gallin’s last chapter outlines the Bundy money controversy very clearly

SOURCE: Teresa Stanley, CCVI, Ph.D. ‘Sponsorship of Catholic Higher Education: Lessons from Catholic Health Care. ‘ ACCU: Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education. Vol 26.N1, Winter, 2007. 65-83.

Part 1

- A. Stanley’s definitions are more tightly argued and states that there is a formal relationship guaranteed by civil and canon law.
- B. CLSA adopted CHA definition to broaden application beyond health care. (Cites text written in 2006 and published by CLSA)
- C. In 2004, CHA studied models in place in health care and surveyed 35 individuals in 9 systems
- D. Pressure at that time for change based on:
 - 1. Demographic changes in religious orders
 - 2. Changing Church dynamics in US and abroad
 - 3. Need for options to partner with non-Catholic entities
 - 4. Changing market pressures related to health care

Part 2

Outline of differing models of sponsorship

- A. Traditional (two-tiered) model. Primary goals:
 - 1. Inspiring sponsor’s heritage, mission, culture
 - 2. Insuring Catholic identity
 - 3. Protect assets of congregation
- B. Non-traditional
 - 1. Sponsorship council added. Specific canonical responsibilities undertaken on behalf of corporate members.
 - 2. Co-sponsored model with sponsor council—often formed when a number of entities merge
 - 3. Organization becomes PJP(public juridic person)

Part 3

Core elements of education of lay leaders(Core Elements for Leaders of Catholic Ministry: A Reflection Guide. (Intended audience was health care and social ministry.)

- A. Elements identified:
 - 1. Mission oriented
 - 2. Animated
 - 3. Theologically grounded
 - 4. Collaborative
 - 5. Church related
 - 6. Accountable
- B. Emphasis is on partnership with trustees, administrative faculty and staff and sponsor
- C. Qualities of leaders of religiously affiliated institutions:
 - 1. Spiritual grounding
 - 2. Integrity
 - 3. Spiritual leadership
 - 4. Concern for poor and vulnerable persons

D. Few examples of pure mutuality of purpose and intent. (Mayo Sponsorship Board)

Perhaps a concluding story will make the point more eloquently. Mahler's 2nd Symphony, more popularly known as "The Resurrection Symphony," has five movements, the first three of which are orchestral. In these sections, Mahler paints the experience of friend's funeral, a friend who had died at far too young an age. Musically, one encounters the body, attends the service, and fears deeply that death is indeed the end. The music, while laced with moments of lightness and energy as memories are relived, is more often unsettling, terrifying, lonely, and empty. Then, in the fourth movement, something changes. A single contralto voice is heard that simply and insistently requests entrance into the next world, claiming God's promise: "*My beloved God will shed a little light for me, and will illuminate my way throughout the everlasting blessed life.*" That single voice is followed by a chorus who sing faith and belief against music which had nearly despaired of any hope. The voices erupt in cacophony, and then exquisite beauty. As fragile faith is spoken against the musical despair, the music itself changes, becoming cathartic and hope-filled, lifting the listener into a place of healing and belief.

The night I last heard this piece, the Buffalo Philharmonic had lost its choral conductor, Thomas Swan, to cancer two days earlier. He had rehearsed the chorus for that very concert, and the concert was dedicated in his memory and honor. The room was palpably charged with the fear of death against the fragility and triumph of human hope. Tears flowed. Six curtain calls were demanded. It was an extraordinary evening.

Musically, I was struck that Mahler could move his audience to that place of fear, doubt, despair, and the place of God's seeming broken promise, using the orchestra alone. I was equally struck that when he needed to move his hearers beyond that place of doubt to hope, he chose a single, human voice. Then a chorus.

It became clearer to me than ever that night that the transmission of hope and faith and ultimate purpose requires human voices. The transmission of Vincentian values from the present generation to the next also requires voices. Vincentians become Vincentians because they've met Vincentians. All the rest of our planning and activity is support work. Obvious perhaps, but a helpful corrective I think to our present strategies.

Dennis H. Holschneider, C.M.