

Baylor and Silliman: Keeping Quality Faculty in Two Christian Universities

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The experiences of Baylor University and Silliman University are compared as they both struggle in keeping the religious tradition upon which they were founded while ensuring that a quality education responsive to changing times is provided to all types of students. As a UBCHEA Fellow at Baylor University for four months, the researcher modestly documented how Baylor kept Christian faculty while maintaining quality scholarship and how such practices are different or similar with Silliman University. The aspirations of the two universities to recruit develop, and keep Christian faculty with high levels of scholarship are embedded in their respective strategic plans. They demonstrate the need for Christian universities, if they want to maintain such identity, of having a critical mass of Christian faculty who are also academically competent to integrate faith and learning. This is anchored on the argument that the successful transmission of Christian ideals and values, measured by the quality of a university's graduates, is dependent upon the Christian commitment of its faculty members.

KEYWORDS: Christian university, quality education and faculty, tenure, scholarship, strategic plan

INTRODUCTION

The faculty members of any university are on the forefront of providing quality education because they are directly engaged with the students. All other things being equal, they make or break a university, which shows how influential they are to students. Therefore, the pursuit of quality Christian education correspondingly requires Christian faculty. The chapel or church, religion courses,

spiritual programs, and community services are important visible elements of the Christian identity of a university, but they only remain as facade if Christian faith is not effectively interfaced with instruction. But how could a university have or maintain a pool of faculty members who manifest such ability? Taking off from the suggestion of Evans (2007), the solution may be by inviting faculty who are already Christians or to have them commit when hired to uphold the Christian ideals of the university. However, the process is always controversial because it evokes tension between preserving institutional identity and protecting individual religious freedom.

With this backdrop, this paper compares the experiences of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, USA and Silliman University in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, the Philippines (henceforth, Baylor and Silliman, respectively) in their struggles of safeguarding the religious tradition upon which they were founded while ensuring that a quality education that is responsive to changing times is provided to all types of students. I had the opportunity to learn about Baylor through books and documents in its libraries, campus activities, conversations with some faculty and administrators, and discussion with the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Policy Dr. James Benighoft. Silliman, where I served as Research Director and Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, sent me to Baylor with support from the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA) Fellows Program from January to May 2012. Interestingly, although separated by bodies of water, they shared certain parallel political and academic histories and a Protestant heritage that shaped their visions and missions amidst the growing secularization of higher education institutions around the world (Oracion 2012). Since there are lessons that could be learned from Baylor and Silliman, I wrote this article for administrators of higher education institutions anywhere, big or small.

STARTING AT THE HIRING PROCESS

Let me start with how faculty hiring is done although the discussion that follows is about tenureship or the process by which a faculty gains a permanent status. In Baylor it is a long process, particularly for hiring faculty for tenure-track, which starts with expressing or requesting a need for faculty in a particular discipline to the administration. The approval of this request is dependent upon the

allocation or availability of a budget to hire a new faculty. When approved, a notice is published on the website of Baylor or sent out to other institutions for dissemination. A search committee is organized in the department needing the faculty that will first screen the applicants through the resume they submit in order to shortlist those who will eventually be invited to the campus for interview. The applicant has to be interviewed at different levels that start with the search committee, dean, and finally the provost who ultimately approves or disapproves the candidate for hiring.

In the past, a president of Baylor was actively involved in the hiring process but he was misunderstood by critics who considered the practice an act of intervention. He later wrote that this accusation happened when he turned down recommendations even if his reasons were academic rather than religious (Sloan, 2007, p. 321). But even if he vetoed certain appointments because of issues related to faith and theology, which he considered as final criterion for hiring, it "was an exercise of legitimate authority being the president" who is mandated to protect the Christian character and ideals of Baylor (Sloan 2007, p. 323). He was just enforcing what is in Baylor 2012 strategic plan (Baylor University 2002, p. 24): to recruit faculty, aside from having scholarly background, "who embrace the Christian faith and are knowledgeable of the Christian intellectual tradition" and who will "exemplify the integration of faith and learning in their disciplines and in interdisciplinary or collaborative activities." Sloan (2007, p. 325) further wrote that the ordinal preference for hiring, which is a longstanding policy, would be "Baptists and other evangelicals, mainline Protestants, Catholics, Greek-Orthodox, and Jews."

Certainly, the significant contributions of the faculty, both intellectually and spiritually as determined in the potential and willingness of the candidates to pursue the imperatives of Baylor 2012, constitute the model that guides the hiring process of Baylor (Parsons 2003). And because the prospective faculty members are already informed about the Christian ideals of Baylor, when the opening for hiring is posted or invitation letters are sent out, they have the option not to apply if they realize that they do not fit into the quality of faculty the university is looking for. Evans (2007, p. 140) opines that if keeping permanently a school's Christian identity is a priority, then it has the right to deliberately have all or a critical mass of Christian faculty. To ensure this critical mass, Baylor holds an orientation of new faculty every year about policies and issues that cover teaching, research, students, community engagement, and, more importantly,

faith and learning. The Institute for Faith and Learning of Baylor is actively involved in the orientation program, according to its Director, Dr. Darin Davis.¹ He further explained that it is important that the new faculty members are well-equipped to carry out their tasks at Baylor because it is through them that its Christian identity is felt by students.

Silliman also maintains the policy of only hiring faculty who are Christians, notwithstanding their particular religious affiliations, but who have the competence that will contribute to the university's pursuit of academic excellence. As at Baylor, applicants for college faculty at Silliman must have the appropriate graduate degrees in the discipline for which they are applying. However, the process of hiring at Baylor is more systematic and, even if urgent, takes a year before the position is filled or longer if a qualified applicant is not found within a year.² The department at Silliman that is urgently in need of a new faculty immediately looks for candidates; interviews them and requires those shortlisted to undergo a teaching demonstration. The best applicant is recommended for hiring through the Human Resource Development (HRD) Manager who issues the appointment to be signed by the president but on a provisional status for three years. The religious affiliation of a candidate is considered in the hiring but it is not a very heated issue because religious expression is always considered personal. New Silliman faculty members also undergo orientation but the focus is not the same as in Baylor and more limited. Both do not cover community engagement of faculty while there are no orientation topics at Silliman that deal with research and faith and learning integration. In June 2012, after my return to Silliman from Baylor my suggestion to include the aforementioned topics in the orientation of new faculty members was considered for the first time.

PROCESS OF GETTING TENURE

Security in employment, for a faculty member, is equated with tenure; for the administration, tenure is to keep them and to ensure the quality of faculty. But it takes more time and requirements for Baylor faculty to be tenured as compared to Silliman faculty. After three years of provisional service with a minimum graduate degree and a satisfactory teaching performance for the period, a Silliman faculty member is given a permanent teaching status. He or she

becomes eligible to all the benefits enjoyed by regular faculty. In contrast, it takes six years for a Baylor faculty member to be tenured provided that he or she has satisfactory teaching performance and has published articles in refereed journals. The publication of the faculty is not a requirement for tenureship at Silliman, but this is only necessary for promotion in rank from assistant professor to associate and full professor—not from instructor to assistant professor. Therefore, the prevailing “publish or perish” policy of many US higher education institutions, including Baylor, is not strictly observed at Silliman—a faculty member is only denied promotion in rank for failure to publish. A Baylor faculty member I interviewed who is in her sixth year, said that tenureship indeed allows Baylor to retain quality faculty, and that it is what keeps her busy in research and writing for publication.

A Baylor faculty member who is not tenure-track is given the title of lecturer and may be removed from teaching when the need or the condition requires a faculty member who is tenured. A status of lecturer or tenure-track faculty member is already determined during the initial stage of the employment. Unlike the lecturer, the tenure-track faculty member has to undergo an annual review process and is expected to meet the requirements for tenureship throughout the period of six years that he or she is teaching. For example, if the tenure-track faculty member fails to do so during the first or second year of employment, he or she will not be issued a letter of appointment for the following year. And when the faculty member fails to do so after the second year, a terminal letter of appointment will be issued for the succeeding year. The status of a faculty member who still continues in the succeeding years will be finally determined in the sixth year which is considered as the tenure year. If the faculty meets all the requirements then he or she will be given the long awaited tenure—a regular status.

Generally, the bases of the evaluation of tenure-track faculty at Baylor cover teaching performance; scholarship and professional activities; service within and outside the immediate academic environment; community and religious service; interpersonal relationships with students and those within the academic circle; and statement of support to the goals and mission of Baylor. Teaching performance is evaluated by students and peers while scholarship is determined by the quantity and quality of publications, particularly in refereed journals. It should be noted also that among other non-academic bases for evaluation, community and religious services as well as statement of support to the goals and mission of the university

are considered. These concerns are perhaps assumed to manifest the Christian faith of the candidate. The tenure-track faculty member has to prepare his or her credential notebook which is updated annually and is made available to the evaluation committee on particular dates during the scheduled tenure review period.

Since there is no review process for tenure at Silliman but only for promotion, let me just compare how the latter works in comparison to that of Baylor for the sake of appreciating the procedure and to determine if Christian faith is considered. The faculty members who are qualified for promotion, based on the points earned under the Faculty Salary Administration Scheme (FSAS), have to submit their documents which include professional activities, publications, creativity, and teaching performance evaluation³ to the HRD Manager who then convenes the promotion committee⁴ to review the documents and to recommend appropriate action. The review schedule has no definite dates, unlike at Baylor. The favorable action of the promotion committee is forwarded to the Deans Conference which again reviews the documents to concur or dispute the recommendation of the former. If the Deans Conference recommends the promotion, this is submitted to the President (if it is only for assistant professor) and the Board of Trustees (if it is for associate or full professors) for approval and issuance of appointment.

Take note that, in contrast to Baylor, there is no clear criterion at Silliman that looks into the religious involvement of the candidate for promotion. There is also a practice at Silliman that two conference papers can be counted as one "publication" if the candidate failed to produce the required number of published articles needed for promotion. There is also no strict distinction between refereed and non-refereed journals where the articles are published. It is in this respect that Silliman lags behind Baylor in strictly imposing the pursuit for visible manifestation of faith in teaching and practice as well as the pursuit for scholarship of faculty. Although the Silliman administration has been strongly promoting the integration of faith in instruction, research, and extension work and publication in refereed journals; it has yet to seriously consider it as parameter or reinforce its observance in the promotion of its faculty similar to what is done in the tenure process for Baylor faculty. Besides, no tool has been developed at Silliman to measure the extent of faith integration done by the faculty in order that this can be included in annual performance evaluation.

So what really is a Christian faculty member? Is it only what a

faculty member says or how a faculty member acts? Is it only inside the classroom or in the community? I believe that a Christian faculty member cannot only be identified in one's denominational affiliation; but also in what one says and how one acts inside the classroom and in the community. It could be done in different ways as long as one is able to demonstrate Christian faith. That means a Christian faculty is empirical—seen and felt—not abstract or imagined. But I agree with Bennighof (2003, p. 41) when he says that Christian narrative and secular narrative, in some ways and instances, “will not coexist comfortably.” This may be easiest for the humanities, somewhat difficult for the social sciences, but most difficult for the natural sciences (see also Parsons 2003, p. 75). But how faith is to be integrated in a lesson cannot be prescribed, except perhaps the techniques. It can be done in different ways and forms depending upon the lesson or topic, and in a convenient or natural manner. It can be spontaneous or planned and can be within or at the concluding part of the lesson where the meanings beyond the empirical are examined. Arguably, a faculty member with strong Christian foundation is comfortable towards faith integration in his or her profession.

PUBLICATION AS SCHOLARSHIP AND A UNIVERSITY CULTURE

Aside from books published, creative outputs and exhibitions, there are three established measures of scholarships of faculty in terms of their journal publication which include number of research articles, citations, and peer ratings. Using just one of the measures is not enough as compared to having a combination of the three measures together, according to a study conducted by Kirkpatrick and Locke (1992). Desiring to measure the impact of their research articles, researchers are at present publishing in journals that are cited by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) of Thompson Scientific or Scopus of Elsevier, among others. These are refereed journals that have met scholarship standards and, therefore, are given more credits compared to non-refereed journals. Meanwhile, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the Philippines endorses and likewise provides financial assistance to selected private universities that are members of the Philippine Higher Education Research Network (PHERNet).

The emphasis on research involvement and quality of publications

of faculty may explain why the tenure process at Baylor requires the segregation of the two kinds of journals in the credential notebook of the candidate. More importantly, knowing the citation index and peer ratings of the articles published by the candidates would help in determining their level of scholarship. But it is not that easy to promote research in a university whose tradition was in teaching or among older faculty members who were not expected to pursue research in previous decades and who were focused on classroom instruction. According to Hankins and Schmeltekopf (2007, p. 339) two camps emerged at Baylor because of the controversy around research when it first aspired to become and eventually became a research university. The first camp includes the traditionalists who want Baylor "to remain a university that provides an excellent education primarily in undergraduate and professional fields, within a campus culture that nourishes lifelong friendships, moral character, and a sense of public service." The other camp refers to the progressivists who believe that Baylor must "assume much larger responsibilities in the world of higher education, the wider religious community, even for our entire culture." They look for mature accomplishments on all levels of tertiary education as well as in research and publications of faculty beyond the rigors of classroom instruction. These two camps are also present at Silliman and, as the Research Director, I sided with the progressivists in order to convince the traditionalists that there is much to be gained by engaging in research as seen in the accomplishments of the former group.

Unlike Silliman, research is a major enterprise at Baylor, classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a research university, in terms of organization and funding. The Vice Provost for Research (VPR), who is under the Office of the Provost, heads its research unit with the Assistant Vice Provost for Research. According to VPR Dr. Truell Hyde, an assistant is needed because of the number of units to oversee: Administrative Services and Communications, Compliance, Faculty Development and Internal Funding, Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Achievement, Office of Sponsored Programs, Institutional Research Advancement and Technology Management, and Industrial Relations. There are also other research centers and institutes at Baylor that the VPR oversees. The Research Policy Council and the Research Council of Deans work closely together with the office of the VPR. Meanwhile, the research funds of Baylor come from internal as well as from sponsored programs. The internal funds are for the following: Faculty

Research Investment Program, Young Investigator Development Program, Arts and Humanities Faculty Research Program, University Research Committee Small and Mid-Range Grant Programs, and Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Achievement Small Grant Program. The funds for sponsored programs come from state and private organizations.

Silliman has both internal and sponsored or external research funds but the amount is smaller compared to Baylor, and it only has internal research funds for faculty and not for students. Nonetheless, Silliman gets external research funds from government and private organizations, particularly for biology research and conservation, both terrestrial and marine. This is its bias because of the works of its pioneering natural scientists. But it is now moving towards integrative and collaborative research programs by encouraging more of its social and health scientists to do research and publish, as well as to work with the natural scientists. Since 2007 it has allocated annually between Php 250,000 to 500,000 (US\$ 6,098 to 12,195 at US\$ 1 = Php 41) or Php 50,000 (US\$ 1,219) per research project of new researchers to hone their skills so they can eventually bring in external research funds as they improve their track records. In 2011, Silliman was designated by CHED as a research university and a member of PHERNet, and this is a welcome development because a budget of 10 million annually for three years was promised for its research programs.⁵ But there is still more room for improvement in terms of the number of Silliman faculty getting involved and the quality of their research articles.

While Silliman's goal was clearly toward becoming a research university, there was a debate at Baylor over a provision of Baylor in 2012 about its aspiration of becoming a highly-ranked research university because this was going to be costly. The faculty members who will engage in research need to have reduced teaching loads, and this requires hiring additional faculty to fill in the vacancies in some courses. Therefore, the salaries of the faculty who have research projects are derived both from the equivalent loads assigned to their research engagement and the courses they teach during a particular semester. On the positive side, having small teaching loads would allow faculty a significant interaction with students while they also conveniently pursue their research projects, involving some of their students, and this would enhance their teaching (Sloan 2007, p. 324). This shows how research and teaching reinforce each other, and the cost incurred can actually be justified according to those in favor of Baylor's quest for research university status.

At Silliman, requiring the faculty to do research is a must although this would mean an additional task for them. It is also difficult to give reduced teaching loads in favor of research because of limited faculty; in fact, the majority is already overloaded. This suggests the limited budget of the university to hire new faculty. Having teaching overloads is used by some faculty to justify their failure to do research (Fontejon-Bonior 2009, p. 98); but if actually made to select between teaching additional courses and doing research, many would prefer the former to the latter because they perceive the income as immediate and higher. Others also perceive teaching to be easier. Meanwhile, those faculty members who ably managed their time and combined teaching and research have actually earned more and enjoyed other benefits from their research outputs. These added values of research include additional income from honoraria, cash incentive for published articles, promotion in rank, attendance at conferences to present papers, professional growth, and additional knowledge to enhance teaching (see also Fontejon-Bonior 2009). But more importantly, engagement in research and publication improves the quality of faculty that contributes to the university's ranking.

RESEARCH ETHICS AS CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Research ethics is not only needed to ensure scholarly work but also to protect the rights of human and animal subjects. It is a government requirement in the US for seeking state or university funding, and is strictly enforced by universities because of its legal implications. At Baylor, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which has a multi-disciplinary composition and has its own head, is a part of the Compliance Unit under the Office of Vice Provost for Research. Although not all research proposals may require IRB approval before these are recommended for internal or external funding, since some do not pose potential harm or have only minimal harm to the subjects, it is only the board that has the authority to decide on whether a proposal is exempted or not. Silliman has yet to institute its IRB at the university level—only the College of Nursing has organized it at present. And although Silliman's IRB has to be under the office of the Research Director, it has to have its own head to prevent conflict of interest—promoting versus regulating research.

In a Christian university the place of the IRB cannot only be seen

as a bastion for ensuring the observance of the ethical, legal, and scientific requirements of research. In the past, data gathering may have been carried out by deception or exposing to harm the subjects during and after the research process, and the researchers were able to get away with it for the sake of science. From a Christian perspective it was wrong because the sense of value of the lives of humans and animals involved in research was downgraded, regarding them as commodities. The other required traits of ethical researchers such as being honest, caring and nurturing, conscientious or accountable for their actions, stewards of living and non-living elements, and related others are really imprints of Christian ideals. These ideals are what identify Christian researchers in their search for new knowledge, but more importantly in interpreting this knowledge to what it means to the quality of life and living. It is beyond what is simply observed—like what I said about a Christian faculty. So while an aspiring research university is for more faculty publications and citations, it must be inspired by its Christian faith and ideals that all research results should contribute to the betterment of the majority and not only of the few.

BRINGING IN EXCEPTIONAL TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS

Baylor also has a program for bringing in teachers and scholars from other universities with exceptional teaching abilities to widen the learning exposure of its students. One of these is the Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching which started in 1991. This was created by a Baylor alumnus, Robert Foster Cherry who was inspired by how his life had been changed by significant teachers. The award was created not only to recognize excellent teachers but also to bring them in contact with Baylor students. The Cherry Award recipient, as well as his or her home institution, receive a substantial cash award for being at Baylor for a semester (“Recognizing great teaching,” 2012, p. 7). Aside from its academic significance, the idea behind this program is actually a reflection of the Christian value of sharing with others the blessings one has enjoyed. This is another example of how a Baylor graduate must have internalized the Christian ideals he or she learned in college. There are also Silliman alumni who support this concept but I cannot identify an established program of this kind in the university.

Meanwhile, the construction of the Baylor Research and Innovation Collaborative (BRIC) in a location that is going to accommodate the Central Texas Technology and Research Park is an example of bringing out to the community the research expertise and resources of the university. Although primarily a place for graduate research of its School of Engineering and Computer Science and for select Baylor interdisciplinary research centers and institutes, the BRIC will also host advanced technology training and workforce development for nearby colleges. It can be a venue as well for joint research symposia and educational meetings with other institutions and for other industry partners to establish their structures. Dr. Marlan Scully, who is both a Christian and a scientist and has been named Distinguished Research Academician of Science and Engineering at Baylor University, will establish his research laboratory in the BRIC ("BRIC draws 'Renaissance' research," 2011-2012, p. 15). This development will further boost the self-identity of Baylor as a Christian research university. Silliman has yet to pursue further this practice particularly among the alumni returning to Dumaguete through its Alumni College under the Graduate Studies Program. It coordinates with alumni who agree to present lectures, seminars, and related activities as ways of sharing their expertise with students of their alma mater.

FRAMING OR SUSTAINING THE FUTURE

A strategic plan is a comprehensive document that articulates what an institution wants to be or to have, and how this will be achieved. It expresses the institution's dreams which are guided by its vision and mission; these do not represent a particular individual or group but rather a collection of people who identify themselves with the institution. Because of these dynamics the process of preparing a strategic plan is lengthy and tense, but the result is always inspiring when everyone is significantly involved. It addresses a particular time frame, and the process will start again after a certain period. Baylor 2012, which covered a period of 10 years from 2002 to 2012, and the Baylor community during my stay had already finished in refining the draft of the new strategic plan. Although the new plan is called *Pro Futuris*, which is a reminder of the link between the past and the future and an extension of Baylor's motto *Pro Ecclesia, Pro Texana* ("Baylor strategic planning process," n.d.), I will call it Baylor 2022 to compare it with what Silliman has. Because Silliman has its

strategic plan still in effect from 2008 to 2016, but divided into two terms for implementation and monitoring, i.e., 2008-2012 and 2012-2016, I will only examine the last term and call it Silliman 2016; the first term is Silliman 2008.

Baylor 2022

The final version of Baylor 2022 includes five aspirational statements (“Baylor strategic planning process,” n.d.), but I will focus more on those that concern academic programs, faculty quality, and research promotion. The strategic vision which articulates these aspirations contains what Baylor has to achieve that starts with this phrase “Baylor will be a community....” Dr. Elizabeth Davis, Executive Vice President and Provost, during the planning process said that there will be new metric benchmarks to be developed consistent with the strategic visions as bases for the annual evaluation of the university.⁶ Moreover, a quick look at Baylor 2022 leads one to ask what is new as compared to Baylor 2012 because the difference seems to be only on the manner of articulating what had been done, as well as the desire to sustain and intensify all existing efforts and resources to achieve more. It conveys the impression that there is now no turning back in Baylor’s effort to be one of the top Christian research universities. On January 15, 2012 an editorial of *Waco Tribune-Herald* stated:

In short, Baylor seems to be codifying and internalizing worthy pursuits and initiatives that teachers, students and administrators have been undertaking in recent years. The draft strategic plan puts all this into print, ensuring such goals are fully acknowledged, vetted and critically measured by university leaders in charge of such matters. It ensures such priorities don’t disappear just because top administrators retire and students move on.

Baylor 2022 also puts more emphasis on what the various academic units had started with regard to bringing education and the expertise of its students and faculty members through service-learning, community outreach, and volunteer or mission work to the people of the city of Waco, the state of Texas, the US, and even the world. The emergence from a “Baylor bubble” referred to by the *Waco Tribune-Herald* editorial, and reaching out more than before to the community in need is anchored in the Christian principles that guide Baylor’s programs about working to better one’s neighbors. When interviewed by Bill Whitaker (2012), Dr. Davis explained that “...our Christian faith calls us to do it, to care about the community

we live in.” So the new academic programs envisioned, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, should not only build on the existing strengths within departments and schools but also programs that are vital in responding to the existing needs of society such as in the health sciences.

Furthermore, igniting leadership potentials is essential to the aspiration of Baylor of what its academic program for the next ten years can produce. Toward this end, it will continue to “attract, retain, and reward” outstanding faculty who can ably integrate faith and learning. It believes that the making of ethical leaders can be enhanced by their engagement in research with faculty and involvement in experiential learning programs such as service-learning, mission trips, and volunteerism. Actually, these already exist and only need to be enhanced; and they are already proven to develop the mind, body, and spirit of the students. More importantly, Baylor plans to enhance spiritual life programming that will help students explore and discern their beliefs, convictions, and vocations as Christians. Dr. Davis elaborates that to achieve all these “we have to hire faculty who have an active Christian or Jewish faith...” because “...faith matters and faith informs how they go about their work every day” (Whittaker 2012).

Even as it competes with secular universities for rankings, Baylor further aspires to its Christian faith promoting a desire among its faculty and students to help address systemic problems and to be fully aware of the needs of others. In Baylor 2022, the relevance of research goes beyond knowledge for its own sake to the aspiration that it will be useful to “discover and illuminate solutions” to problems besetting the community. On the other hand, the plans for creative endeavors are geared to reflect the span of God’s creation and not simply for art or beauty’s sake. The ultimate aim is to “promote stewardship” of what God has provided to humanity. To realize all this, external funds generation and more collaboration have to be vigorously initiated. When asked about the common theme from the various inputs to the strategic plan, Dr. Davis easily answered: “Do not lose your Christian identity” (Whittaker 2012)—an inspiration for the current administration to preserve Baylor’s Christian heritage as it pursues academic excellence.

Silliman 2016

In contrast to the aspirational statements of Baylor, the thrusts of

Silliman as embodied in its strategic plan are divided into four major areas that are reflective of its tradition for enhancing Christian faith and pursuing excellent education. These major thrusts are Christian witness, academic excellence, governance, and relevance and reach (Silliman Strategic Plan, 2008). It can be noticed that faith-related matters are first in the hierarchy of thrusts which ends with those that concern how the outcomes of Silliman education will benefit from external linkages and subsequently impact the wider community and the environment. What will be discussed here covers only those thrusts that have direct relevance to this article.

The specific thrust toward Christian witness includes increasing the involvement of faculty and staff in faith-related activities outside while widening their spiritual growth within the university. In doing so, the plan likewise aims for broadening of Silliman's involvement with national UCCP and other churches. The specific thrust toward academic excellence is for strengthening the integration of volunteerism and service-learning as well as on-line academic services to reach a greater number of clients that aspire to benefit from Silliman education. These thrusts also demand the improvement of the credentials and capacity of faculty members along these areas. The specific thrust toward governance is focused on the improvement of the organizational and technical capacities of Silliman to deliver the above major thrusts as well as to protect its operation from potential risks. Finally, the specific thrust toward relevance and reach is for widening and sustaining Silliman's professional, financial, and spiritual linkages with organizations and institutions that could help in keeping or realizing its vision and mission. Thus, a good strategic plan, like those of Baylor and Silliman, does not just project what has to be achieved but also tells where and how financial and technical support could be generated.

Silliman 2016 specifically outlines the desired results based on what had been achieved in Silliman 2012, in terms of indicators to measure its achievement at the end of the period, and ultimately the desired outcomes. It states that when realized, the strategic outcomes will make Silliman a leading Christian institution of learning that models the integration of faith and excellent scholarship, the delivery of knowledge and learning to more people in wider communities particularly with its on-line learning, and the promotion of integration and collaboration across disciplines and among its faculty and staff (Silliman Strategic Plan 2008, p. 121). From what it has achieved now, Silliman still desires, among other goals, to have a certain number

of faculty members with advanced degrees, new degree programs both in the undergraduate and graduate levels, modified programs to meet the demands of the time particularly with the implementation of the K to 12 basic education curriculum, integrated general education courses for holistic learning, and a broader on-line learning program. Correspondingly, it desires to have a certain number of faculty and staff with improved qualifications and capabilities, as well as younger faculty and staff, who are involved in the above broadening of programs and undertakings (Silliman Strategic Plan 2008, p. 131).

CONCLUSION

Baylor and Silliman have significantly achieved what they need to prove that they are Christian universities and have competently delivered quality higher education evident in the performance of their graduates. Furthermore, they are distinguished as national research universities—a status that is not self-ascribed but awarded by legitimate academic institutions in recognition of the scholarship of their faculty members. However, the threats brought about by secularization of universities because of modernism, materialism, consumerism, individualism, relativism, and so on have challenged Christian ideals and values. In response, they do not need to reframe their respective visions and missions to confront these threats, but to have strategic plans that will sustain the present efforts they carried out which achieved the imperatives enumerated in Baylor 2012 or the desired outcomes listed in Silliman 2012.

The strategic plans of Baylor and Silliman, therefore, are not only documents but are expressions of their continuing aspiration or desire to be at the pinnacle of promoting quality Christian education along with other institutions with the same commitment within their regions. The presence in the plans of the strengthening of what they have achieved so far, and not the framing of several other new things to pursue, however, is indicative of the hidden anxiety that something may go wrong and the two institutions may become just like other secular universities but of highest quality. So having a critical mass of Christian faculty who are also academically competent and can ably integrate faith and learning with a high level of scholarship is paramount to their strategic plans or visions. The successful transmission of Christian ideals and values, which can be observed in the quality of a university's graduates, is dependent upon

the Christian commitment of its faculty members. For Silliman, the *Code of Christian Collegiality* that enumerates how its faculty, staff, and students should live and relate to each other is another tool toward this end (“Code of Christian collegiality,” n.d.).

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END NOTES

¹ The institute was founded in 1997 to assist the university in achieving its mission of integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment (see <http://www.baylor.edu/ifil/>). Among its other programs, it organizes retreats for new faculty members after a year of their employment or those who had not attended before to reflect about being Christian educators and to encourage collegiality among them. It also caters to students.

² A temporary faculty or lecturer is hired to handle a course without a teacher in the meantime while the process of hiring is on-going or a qualified faculty member has not yet been hired.

³ The teaching performance at Silliman is based on the evaluation of the students, immediate head, peers, and the concerned faculty or self-evaluation.

⁴ The Promotion Committee is composed of the Dean of the College where the candidate comes from, the HRD Manager, the representative of the faculty union, and a faculty with the rank similar to the one considered for promotion. In contrast, no faculty union is organized at Baylor.

⁵ Prior to PHERNet, Silliman was designated by CHED as a Zonal Research Center (ZRC) and tasked to capacitate higher education institutions in research within its assigned regions. Among its several big projects related to the environment, Silliman was commissioned by the Asian Development Bank-Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ADB-DENR) Integrated Coastal Resources Management (ICRM) Project to assist the Regional ICRM Centers in Regions V, VII and XI in their research and marine conservation activities. It was also contracted by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Protected Area and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) of DENR to implement the Protected Area Management Enhancement (PAME) Project in four regions in the country which included Regions IV-B, VI, VII, and VIII.

⁶ She stated this in an interview by Daniel Houston of *Baylor Lariat* (2012) after a

faculty meeting on January 12, 2012 to discuss the draft plan. I attended that meeting and there were only three questions or issues expressed, which suggests that the draft plan was well-accepted. There were no heated discussions. President Ken Starr was present on stage with Dr. Davis to answer questions.

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