Institute for Christian Teaching
Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists

THE ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT UNITS OF AN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IN FOSTERING INTEGRATION OF FAITH AND LEARNING

By
Elden G. Kamwendo
Solusi University
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

466-00 Institute for Christian Teaching
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904 USA

Prepared for the
28th International Faith and Learning Seminar
Held at Babcock University,
Ogun State, Nigeria
June 17 – 19, 2001
INTRODUCTION

The highlight of the graduation weekend activities in one of the Seventh-day Adventist institutions of higher learning was the awards giving ceremony. The guests, teaching and the non-teaching workers, the students and the attending public waited anxiously to see who among themselves had performed outstandingly to receive these awards.

During this particular year, the Dean of Women or the Boarding Mistress was selected as the best non-teaching worker of the year. The writer of this story was curious to find out what the students had written down about her during their evaluations. Some of the comments the students wrote were as follows: "She is motherly, she is exemplary in her behavior, she is a good representative of Christ and Christian living. While she is loving and kind, she is firm and unmovable on principles of life and behavior." Such comments made the writer realize that the integration of faith, learning and practice is not only done within the four walls of a classroom. Every worker on a school campus is a teacher and an integrator of faith, learning and practice.

The mandate given by the wisest man who ever lived on earth - Solomon - is to train up a child the way he should go. "Train up a child the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6, KJV).

Seventh-day Adventist schools were established for a definite purpose. Ellen G. White, under inspiration encouraged the young Seventh-day Adventist Church to establish schools. She saw these schools not only as evangelist centers for non-Adventists but as training centers for Adventist denominational workers and lay leaders.¹

¹ Rasi, Humberto M. "A Rationale for Adventist Education" paper handed out at the 28th International Faith and Learning Seminar, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria, June 2001. He presented them as follows:

- To educate children and youth for a useful life in the context of biblical, Christian faith.
- To train Adventist denominational workers and lay leaders who will devote their talents to accomplish the church’s mission
While the emphasis is on integration of faith and learning in the classroom, Gaebelein wrote:

Education is more than teachers and courses. The school has its setting in the environment in which it lives and moves and has its being; it also has its general policies and practices beyond the classroom. These are just as much part of God’s truth as the subject matter of various courses of study.\(^2\)

To elaborate on this point, Ron du Preez wrote:

It is becoming more and more apparent that a similar emphasis now needs to be placed on integrating faith into everything that happens in an educational institution outside the classroom, since these experiences also have a profound impact indeed and an indelible influence on the learner.\(^3\)

It is a fact that most of the university campuses have more administrative and support staff than classroom teachers. It is further interesting to see that while a student spends at least three hours of a three-credit course per week with a teacher, he spends most of the day with support staff. Such an observation makes it imperative that we look into the role of administrative and support units of an Adventist university in fostering the integration of faith and learning.

---

- To strengthen the Christian commitment of Adventist Youth and to attract non-Adventist young people to Christ and to the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- To exert an uplifting influence on society in ever-widening circles through service, evangelism, research and discoveries carried out by Adventist educators, students and alumni
- To cooperate with the church in discovering new truths, developing strategies, and providing Christian answers to issues raised by the contemporary society.


\(^3\) du Preez, Ron. “Integrating Faith in the peri-curricular practices of an Adventist Institution.” *Christ in the Classroom* Vol. 27, 2000, p.60.
Definitions

Right at the offset, it is important that we define the terms we will use in this discussion.

Support Units – These are clusters of workers who manage the departments, which serve the needs of the faculty and students as they concentrate on the core business of teaching and learning.

Peri-Curriculum – These are non-classroom activities, practices and experiences at an educational institution that influence and impact on the education of the student while acquiring knowledge, wisdom and practice.

Co-Curriculum – Programs and opportunities planned by the institution as an intentional part of the overall experience to be gained by the student outside the classroom.

Post-Curriculum – These are well-planned strategies made by the institution to actively remain in contact with the alumni, so as to involve them in continuing education opportunities.

While most of the current studies apparently emphasize the importance of incorporating Christian faith into the curricular and co-curricular course content and classroom instruction, there is a need to study the role played by the non-teaching members of an educational institution in integrating faith, learning and living. George Akers rightly pointed out, "Nurturing faith in every aspect of the program is everybody's business at a Christian school, if the place is to be effective."4

School Administrators - These are the members of the school community who are given the power, authority and responsibility of running the school through the support staff, faculty and general staff. They decide on the course the school should take as it

endeavors to reach the expectations of God, the Church, the Community, the government and the students themselves.

For the smooth running of the institution there is the chief executive who is called the president or a vice-chancellor; under him there are those who are in charge of academic administration, financial administration, student administration, and development and public relations administration.

There are two well-known types of school organization or administration known as autocratically and democratically lead schools. In the autocratic conception of administration, authority and responsibility are placed on the chief executive or single individual. In this type of school organization, efficiency of operation is the primary goal. In a democratic school organization, the administrator’s position of leadership is derived from the position of authority but out of group decisions and deliberations. This authority is derived from the situation and is shared by all who participate in the planning. Final authority is vested in the group. The group, as well as the leaders are held responsible for its actions. Effective responsibility becomes possible only through an optimum level of participation which is the requisite of freedom.

Gregorio has given four principles that govern the democratic type of school administrations:

a) Principle of intelligence – Only people with ability or intelligence should participate in the administration of the school. Democratic administration calls for use of intelligence rather than emotions.

b) Principle of cooperation – The democratic type of school administration provides opportunity for cooperation. Group process is used in this type of school administration.
c) Principle of participation – This type of school administration provides for individual participation and recognizes the strength or ability of each individual.

d) Principle of individuality – Democratic administration recognizes the uniqueness of an individual. His interests are particular interests and his abilities are special abilities. These differences are sources of strength.\(^5\)

**The President**

He is the chief executive who is responsible for dreaming and articulating the vision, mission and goals or objectives of the institution. He is the one who leads out in the very important work of crafting, establishing, concretizing and internalizing the shared vision, mission and goals of the institution.

Brown further added:

The president/principal is the head of the school. It is he who should make the plans and provide the guidance under the orientation of the school board. “The presidency is expected to provide leadership. It must be a place of light if that leadership is to be at once strong and wise” (Keld J. Reynolds, “Academic Administration in the College,” 6th Biennial, p. 54). The president/principal is the official voice of the institution to the constituency and to the general public. He is the one who unifies the efforts of all the departments and of all the personnel of the institution. “The one standing at the head of a school is to put his undivided interests into the work of making the school just what the Lord designated it to be” (FE: 510).\(^6\)

There are a number of major functions the school administrator should accomplish as he strives to help the institution meet its goals. These functions are planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, supervising, evaluating, providing

---


leadership, recording and reporting and promoting close school-community relationship.⁷

Naval and Aquino identified three kinds of skills a successful administrator must possess. These are technical skills, administrative skills and human skills.

Maphosa pointed out that although the skills needed by presidents of Adventist institutions are not different from skills needed by their counterparts in other similar institutions, he was quick to point out that:

The differences are found in the underlying values and the worldviews brought to the workplace by the chief executives. It is for this reason that a major step in the integration of faith and learning in an Adventist institution is taken at the faculty, administrative and staff selection as well as the curriculum design levels.⁸

Commenting on the above standards, Gaebelein emphatically stated that no Christian institution leader should recruit teachers who do not subscribe to the mission and goals of the institution. He must not allow the introduction of a curriculum which does not contribute to the institution’s objectives. Compromise on these issues, if persisted in, will always result in the progressive de-Christianizing of an institution.⁹

Birkenstock identifies other key responsibilities of the president as the challenge of providing quality education at a time when there are so many other clamoring demands on the scarce resources of the Church in the areas of finance and manpower. Another major challenge he identified is the president’s attempt to gain accreditation and national identity as well as the much needed institutional recognition.¹⁰ Another challenge is to try

---


and keep a balance between expansion in infrastructure, staff development, and course offerings, and the ability to fund expansions and maintain the standards of the Church and the quality of the end products.\textsuperscript{11}

Maphosa identified a number of roles the chief administrator plays: strategic formulation, marketing the institution, managing change in and outside the institution, training the team players, delegating responsibility as well as power and authority, problem solving, time management, group processes management, and modeling behavior and values.\textsuperscript{12}

Over and above all these administrative roles and responsibilities is his role of being a model, father figure, a spiritual mentor and an integrator of faith, learning and living. At a time when many of our students miss the exemplary behavior of a father they might have lost through death, decadence and degeneracy of morals, it is the duty of the president to play this role. It is a challenge to the chief administrator to be all things to all men and women, the young and the old in his school. It is his duty to foster values of love, unity, patience, justice, and integrity, honesty, prudence, etc.

\textbf{Academic Administrator}

This is one of the chief executives who are responsible for the core business of the educational institution. His main role is to implement the managerial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, decision-making and evaluating the academic

\textsuperscript{11} There is a danger when administrators push to offer more courses than the institution is ready to sponsor just to mimic other universities or because there is faculty(s) to teach or run the department.

\textsuperscript{12} Maphosa Norman. "Critical Skills for Chief Executive in Adventist Institutions of Higher Learning." \textit{Christ in the Classroom} Volume 12, 1993, pp. 146-157
program. It is his responsibility to see to it that the vision, mission and goals are being implemented in the school.

To be able to play this role well the academic administrator should be a leader with a vision, drive and initiative. In order to be successful the leader must meet the following leadership roles: Christian leadership behavior in school governance, Christian leadership in human interaction, and Christian leadership initiative in school administration.\(^{13}\)

Segovia identified another important role of the administrator as fostering a family spirit in an academic culture.

The presence or absence of togetherness and belongingness in a school campus, and values that are dominant in family relations, depend to a large degree upon the behavior of the administrator who can significantly influence the behavior of others.\(^ {14}\)

It is the role of the academic administrator and the other administrators to foster the spirit of unity, camaraderie, and community between the administration and the faculty. It is his duty to cultivate in the faculty members a liking for the institution so that one would want to stay in the school until Jesus comes.

Koontz stated that men, money, raw materials, land and machines are resources that a manager manages. Contemporary management thought refers to people as “human resources” implying at best that humans are ranked equally with other resources. The prevalent consideration is to keep workers satisfied, happy and challenged so that they

\(^{13}\) The main function of the administrator and his support unit is to see to it that the faculty are doing their work according to the designed program. They have to constantly communicate with the faculty on how the program is running. As a team they identify the strengths and address the weaknesses of the program. The administrator and his or her support team ought to encourage and motivate the team in their work.

can contribute to a greater degree towards the organization’s goal achievements. At worst the manager (academic administrator) may view people as human resources to be exploited just as the other resources are exploited.\textsuperscript{15}

The danger of this scenario is that the teachers become the human resources to be exploited while the students become the raw materials to be processed. Thus the administrator is busy supervising the teacher and forgets to cooperate with him or her in integrating faith, learning and living to the students.

It is the duty of this administrator to make sure that the quality of the academic programs and teaching faculty is maintained. It means making sure that the teachers that are recruited meet the academic standards of the institution. He must also make sure that the faculty development program is on course for those who need to improve their academic qualifications.

Commenting on the administration of teaching personnel Gregorio wrote:

The administration of the teaching personnel is an important aspect of any school system. The purpose is to secure, develop and retain teachers, supervisors and administrators who are qualified to achieve a standard of competence as high as available human and financial resources will permit. The accomplishment of this aim is a large order for any school administrator. The administrator of a school system exists solely for the purpose of making it possible for teachers to do effective work.\textsuperscript{16}

Another important work of the academic administrator is to make sure that his faculty are growing professionally. Teaching is a professional field where changes are constantly taking place. New discoveries in every subject area and in methods of teaching are a rule rather than the exception. A teacher who is a challenging leader of his

students must learn to keep abreast at such changes and in a very real sense continue to be a learner after his formal education has been completed.

The professional growth of a teacher involves not only a continuous effort to understand students better, but also a constant self-appraisal in which the teacher carefully scrutinizes methods of increasing his own learning. The teacher's professional growth, or lack of it, will be reflected in his methods, in his willingness to change, in his working relationships with the students, and in his overall efficiency as a teacher. A professionally maturing teacher is not only better able to diagnose and meet his own needs, but also sets a worthwhile example of growth and learning for students with whom he works.

There are many reasons why modern teachers cannot afford to stop growing professionally. In the first place, stagnation may lead to grumpiness, unhappiness and irritation. Furthermore, there is danger that continuous repetition of the same assignments and discussions will make the teaching job boring to both the teacher and the students. On the other hand a teacher who is continually and systematically learning new materials and methods of delivering the materials can make teaching a very pleasant and exhilarating experience. Financial recognition is also given in our school system for continued professional growth and development. When a teacher is well versed with his subject content, he finds it a lot easier to find ways of integrating faith in his lessons.

If it is imperative that every teacher should integrate faith and learning, it is much more imperative that the administrator integrate faith, learning and living. Such an

---

example and an encouragement to the teachers and a demonstration to the students is very important for the school to achieve its academic goal(s).

**Financial Administrator**

A university cannot run without money. Therefore there is a need for an administrator whose duty is to see to it that the funds of the school are properly managed. He is the custodian of the Lord's money and materials. These materials are the assets of the university, the industries, their products and proceeds. The support units of this department are the farm, income generating industries, maintenance, buildings and equipment of the school.

Oberholster has proposed that a Christian approach to this kind of management is that of stewardship. This steward together with his fellow stewards in his unit takes care of those resources that have been entrusted to them for development towards God directed purpose and to the glory of God. Oberholster said:

...Every individual and family is placed on this earth to play a role in the plan of salvation, so every organization, whether business, manufacturer, farmer, or non-profit organization, has a role to fulfill. This provides the Christian businessman with a higher purpose than to make a profit. He, as a steward, has an integral part to play in God's cause in this world. It provides the businessman a much higher meaning in life than material gain.17

Looking at the financial administrator from this angle, his role is not only a steward but a provider of spiritual dimension in the workplace. His work extends from provider of physiological, sociological and psychological needs to an integrator of faith and Godly living to his fellow workers in his unit, faculty and staff of other units and students.
Another challenge he has is to make sure that the students pay their fees, the custodians keep the funds they have collected and yet do all this with love. As God’s steward or a servant leader, he is under the obligation to blend honest, responsibility, tact and prudence.

He is duty bound to insist that financial dues are paid by the students according to the agreements they entered into. In doing all this, he should reflect the love of Jesus and integrate faith and Christian living in order to demonstrate to the student how to integrate faith in his work. He does this not only to show congruence with what the students learn in class but also to prepare himself, the workers, and the students for a Christian life and finally, salvation when Jesus comes.

Issues of financial nature are sensitive and do affect the spiritual atmosphere on a campus. It is important then that while the financial administrator and his support unit make sure that efficiency and accounting perfection are expected of every worker in the unit, interpersonal relationships, simple Christian graces such as friendliness, helpfulness, and the willingness to genuinely listen to a student’s or client’s concern are also very important.

It is through such gestures that the unit will demonstrate to the students the integration of faith, learning and living. The students will see congruency of what they are learning in the classroom and what is actually happening outside the classroom.

**Student Administrator**

This is the administrator who deals with the students outside the classroom. It is very important that the words and acts of this administrator be congruent with what the students are taught in class. It is this administrator who deals with all the things that affect the students outside the classroom. He is also in charge of all the student services. The heaviest responsibility of this administrator is to manage dormitories through dormitory deans. Dormitory deans are important partners of our educational institutions for dormitory students. They play the role of parents while the students are in the school.

Dormitory deans will not achieve their objectives if the whole school team (teachers, administrators and staff) does not support them in playing the role of the extended family network. The role of other social and community institutions such as the church and other parents should not be neglected. 18

Coleman overemphasized the need for a good relationship between the students and the dormitory deans as follows:

A school can have a good infrastructure, highly qualified teachers and dormitory deans, and a good library; but if these resources are not complemented by social capital embodied in good relations among students themselves, it is irrelevant to the students' educational growth. If Jesus is made the head of every dormitory room, the work of the teachers and administrators would be much easier. 19

This administrator is also in-charge of the co-curricular programs, like student work program, student clubs, and student sports program. Since these are the areas where values and integration of faith and learning are put into practice, the administrator and his unit should not only provide the time and the atmosphere, but to actually demonstrate to the students how to integrate. A practical example will help the students fully understand the use of the values received in the classroom.

---

Brown gave a summary of the responsibilities of the dean of student affairs as follows:

1. To foster the physical, spiritual, moral and social well-being of the students.
2. To promote high SDA standards of student conduct.
3. To coordinate and supervise the work of the dormitory deans.
4. To maintain an organized health service for students under the direction of a physician and a nurse.
   a. To offer students adequate and reasonable health and accident insurance.
   b. To make available positive emotional and physical health counseling through the health service.
5. To arrange for the social, cultural, and recreational activities of the student body and school community.
6. To promote unity of purpose in relation to the philosophy of the school in the various student organizations and to coordinate the work of, and provide guidelines for these organizations in cooperation with the organization advisors.
7. To be responsible for the testing and counseling program for the students.
   a. To administer the testing and counseling program and inform the faculty of the results of these programs and other descriptive surveys undertaken of the student body.
   b. To counsel with students regarding general adjustment to school problems.
   c. To inform the faculty regularly regarding student activities and problems.
   d. To accumulate records and serve as custodian of current student guidance files.
   e. To ensure that the legal documentation of foreign students are kept up to date.
8. To maintain a student placement of graduates.
   a. To encourage placement of graduates.
   b. To encourage placement visitation by prospective employers with emphasis on the denominational needs.
9. To be responsible to the president for the work of the following committees:
   a. Student Affairs, chairperson.
   b. Residence deans.
   c. Traffic, chairperson
   d. Health and safety.
   e. Discipline Committee.
10. To be responsible for the issuance of published matters pertaining to student life.
11. To be responsible for the organization and coordination of the activities of the student association, conferring with the other appropriate officers of the

19 Ibid, P. 115
administration as student association activities infringe into their area of special responsibility.20

There are many values that may be derived by students from their participation in extracurricular activities. These values pertain to the skills, attitudes, ideas, understandings, and habits that are developed. Examples are the cooperative skills, leadership skills, ideals of honesty, trustworthiness, and promptness; proper attitudes toward one's best; and such habits as thriftiness, neatness, courtesy and cleanliness.

There are fundamental principles that the administrator should make sure are followed in order that the students may gain maximum benefits from these activities. These principles are as follows:

a) Democracy of opportunity should be stressed.
b) Extracurricular activities should be directly related to class work.
c) Extracurricular activities should be related to future, as well as current, daily living.
d) Intrinsic values should be given more weight than tangible rewards.
e) Well-rounded development of pupil personalities should receive primary consideration.21

**Development and Public Relations Administrator**

It is the duty of the development administrator to see to it that there is a development plan for the school and that it is being followed. It is not only his duty to solicit funds for construction of new buildings but also to make sure that the buildings, the grounds, and equipments are of a good quality, sufficient for the faculty, staff and students, well maintained and in good repair.

---


Seventh-day Adventist schools are not only established to prepare the students for their roles in this life and their preparation of the life to come, but also to be evangelistic centers for the communities around the school. As a public relations officer this administrator is tasked with the work of making sure that the relationship between the school and the communities around is good and conducive for evangelism. It is the immediate as well as the distant public that support the school with students and donations in money and in kind. The administrator should inform the public regarding the aims, purposes, plans, and needs of the school. When the public possesses such information, it is more competent and more willing to cooperate with the school in all its endeavors.

Gregorio has given a number of ways of developing good school-community relations as follows:

1. Provide school-visiting days for alumni and parents
2. Provide public participation in the study and solving of school-community problems.
3. The school must be the center of community improvement.
4. Encourage the community to serve the school.
5. The school personnel should register their membership in community organizations that support and advance the goals of the school.
6. Establish working relationships with local and national organizations.22

This administrator is in charge of the pre and post curricular programs. His work is not only to promote the interests of the institution outside the campus but also to see that Christian relationships are maintained on the campus. After the students have left the campus as graduates or not, it is his responsibility to follow them up to encourage them to

---

integrate faith and learning in their workplaces and homes. Ron du Preez gives a way of maintaining relationship with the graduates:

Once students have graduated, the institution can continue to positively affect them by means of an active Alumni Association to keep former students connected to their alma mater. Each institution needs to promote and plan for the Annual Alumni weekend. Contact can also be maintained through the official public relations newsletter, or news magazine, with a specific section devoted to Alumni Affairs.23

Other activities which can be implemented are the staging of seminars that aim at increasing the knowledge of the alumni, involving them in soliciting funds for capital development and seeking their counsel on how the school can solve some of its problems and meet its goals.

This is the administrator who markets the school for new students and helps the graduates continue integrating faith, learning and living after they have left the portals of their alma mater.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the challenge of integrating faith and learning is insurmountable.

Eager puts the challenge this way:

As parents, teachers, ministers and Christian leaders, we must be perceptive to both the ideal, the "what ought to be" "reality" and, "what is." Jesus shared a challenging goal with us which focuses on "what ought to be." "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Is this expectation beyond reality?24

This statement clearly shows that the administrators and their units cannot augment the classroom teachers in integrating faith, learning and living if Christ is not in them. It is only when Christ is made the Lord of their lives that the ideal can be reached.

The truth of the matter is that no administrator is able to do this impossible task without the Holy Spirit's guidance at each step of the way. Further encouragement should come from the fact that we have a reality on the measurements of success to the biblical perspective. The human problem is that we often limit the measurements of results to quantitative measurements to determine success. We need to understand that the true measurement of success for the biblical steward is his attitude. Ellen G. White wrote:

The reward is given to the steward entrusted with the talents, not because he has done so great a work, but because of his fidelity over a few things. God measured not according to the results, but according to the motives. If the steward is faithful he is successful, and is sure of the final reward however small the mission may have been.25

Ellen G. White makes a statement, which should both challenge and encourage the administrators:

A steward identifies with his master. His master's interests become his. He has accepted the responsibilities of a steward and he must act in his master's stead doing as the master would do if he were presiding over his own goods. The position is one of dignity in that his master trusts him.26

If the idea that values are caught rather than taught is true, then administrators, faculty, staff and the entire community of the school are duty bound to help the students catch the values.


26 White, Ellen G. Counsels on Stewardship. Review and Herald Publishing Association, Jakoma Park, Washington D.C., 1940, p. 113
REFERENCES


Rasi, Humberto M. 28th International Faith and Learning Seminar, Babcock University, Nigeria, 2001


White, Ellen G. The Kress Collection. P. 7. Institute for Christian Teaching Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists