

Institute of Christian Teaching
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**FOSTERING THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF AN
ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY: A PROPOSAL**

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INTRODUCTION

The reason for the existence of any organization is its mission. Such mission is usually expressed in mission statements. Mission statements are important planning document which defines the identity of any organization. It is so cardinal that Kohler (1985) says that management without a mission is impossible. Adventist higher institutions are no exception in this case.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a well defined mission statement for her educational institutions. This mission describes the future of Adventist Education as per where it wishes to go, what it wants to become and the impact it wishes to have on the students.

The mission of Adventist education is to prepare people for useful and joy-filled lives, fostering friendship with God, whole person development, Bible based values, and selfless service in accordance with the SDA church core Mission to the world (WAD Working Policy, 2004), which is to “proclaim to all the peoples the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels message of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as a personal Saviour and to unite with His church , and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return”

It is a truism that the mission of a denominational school may dim or be totally forgotten over time. The result is that such a school loses its distinguishing characteristics, becomes unable to contain its evolving challenges. History is replete with Christian educational institutions that initially were driven by their mission but later succumbed to the pressure of secularism and shifted from Richard’s Niebuhr’s paradigm of “Christ against culture” to “Christ of culture” (Beitz, 2003). Such has been the experience of many denominational colleges and universities; Congregationalists (Harvard University), Presbyterians (Lafayette and Davidson Colleges), Methodists (Ohio Wesleyan University), Lutherans (Concordia University), and Catholics (Boston College, Azusa Pacific University) just to mention a few (Burtchaell, 1998).

The question is; how are Adventist higher institutions faring in fostering their mission? The original purpose of Adventist education is to attract students who want to explore what it means to be distinctively Christians in the modern world, men and women who can act in the fear of God. The 2005 report of the commission on Higher Education acknowledged the increment in the size of the church’s higher education institutions and its positive impact. It however recognizes the considerable strain that has begun to occur within the Adventist higher education program. The document indicated categorically that there are marked tendencies of “secularization” of Adventist schools and further proffers that the church be proactive in several areas including the development of strategies to make students more aware of the reality of God. (Adventist Review, October 2005).

The gradual march of many Adventist educational institutions to secularization is a matter of concern. More than eighty years ago, White (1923) noted that there is danger that our colleges (universities) may be turned away from their original design. Out of the five challenges of Adventist education, identified by Richarch (1999), the issue of maintaining identity is the foremost. This is borne from the historical fact that Adventist church related schools loose their identity and church relatedness over time. This trend brings to the front burner the problem of this paper; **“Fostering the Mission and Identity of an Adventist University: A Proposal”**

The purpose of this paper therefore, is to review the mission and identity of Adventist education as contained in the denominational working policy and its implications to an Adventist university. It also explores the threats to fostering such mission and identity and proposes ways to foster the mission and identity of an Adventist University.

BREIF REVIEW OF ADVENTIST HIGHER EDUCATION MISSION AND IDENTITY

Adventist mission and identity are the two distinguishing characteristics of Adventist higher education. Identity can be defined as the condition of being oneself and not another. It is the state or fact of being the same as described (Websters, 2003). The identity of any organization is embedded in its mission. The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church Education focuses on the values, customs, and traditions that Adventist colleges and universities wish to pass on, the kind of world we wish to shape (De Jong, 1990). Adventists recognize that human motives, thinking, and behaviour have fallen short of God’s ideal. As such, education in it broadest sense is a means of restoring human beings to their original relationship with God. White 1952), describes this mission clearly when she says; “In the highest sense the work of education and redemption are one. This mission is the identity of an Adventist university.

The WAD Working Policy (2004) noted that the Seventh day Adventist Church operates institutions of higher learning for;

“the purpose of providing special opportunities for Seventh-day Adventist youth who have satisfactorily completed secondary school instruction.... The church related institutions in their custodial, creative, and evaluative roles help develop within the students ethical, religious, and social values compatible with the church philosophy and teachings, values which prepare the graduate for his/her life-work or vocation inside or outside denominational employ. These institutions also help develop in their students a higher concept of service to God and man”

For the Graduate (Post Graduate) Education the end product must be, not a detached intellectual but a mature committed Christian.

“The essential business of a Seventh-day Adventist university or college on the graduate level is the master, critical evaluation, discovery and dissemination of knowledge, in a community of SDA Christian scholars,

with the scholarly goals of supporting God's church.... Graduate (postgraduate) programs require the application of investigation and evaluation as found in the laws of evidence . The Christian educator and advanced students alike utilize systems of evidence of reason and science, but also recognize the validity of divine revelation, which is accorded a paramount position."

Implications of Adventist Education Mission and Identity on University Education

Here the role of Adventist universities towards the realization of the church's education mission are stated under certain key components. This section is taken verbatim from the West-Central Africa Division(WAD) Working Policy 2004.

1). **The Student:** As a child of God the students is the primary focus of the entire educational effort and should be loved and accepted. The purpose of Adventist education is to help students reach their highest potential and to fulfill God's purpose for their lives. Student outcomes constitute a significant guiding criterion in assessing the health and effectiveness of the school.

2). **The Teacher:** The teacher holds a central place of importance. Ideally, the teacher should be both a committed Adventist Christian and an exemplary role model of the Christian graces and professional competence.

3). **Knowledge:** All learning is grounded on faith in a certain set of presuppositions or worldview. The Christian worldview recognizes a supernatural as well as a natural order. Adventist define knowledge more broadly than that which is merely intellectual or scientific. True knowledge encompass cognitive, experiential, emotional, relational, intuitive and spiritual elements. An acquisition of true knowledge leads to an understanding which is manifested in wisdom and appropriate action.

4). **The Curriculum:** The curriculum will promote academic excellence and will include core of general studies needed for responsible citizenship in a given culture along with spiritual insights that inform Christian living and build a community. Such citizenship includes appreciation for the Christian heritage, concern for social justice, and stewardship of the environment. A balanced integrated curriculum will address the major developmental needs in the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and vocational realms. All areas of knowledge will be examined from the perspective of the biblical worldview within the context of the great controversy theme.

5). **Instruction:** The instructional program of the classroom places appropriate emphasis on all forms of true knowledge , purposely integrating faith and learning. Instructional methodology will actively engage the needs abilities of each student, giving opportunity to put what is learned into practice, and be appropriate to the discipline and culture.

6). **Discipline:** Discipline in a Christian school is built upon the need to restore the image of God in each student and recognizes the freedom of the will and the work of the Holy Spirit. Discipline - not to be confused with punishment - seeks

the development of self-control. In redemptive discipline the students will and intelligence are engaged.

7). **School Life:** A blended emphasis of worship, study, labor recreation, and relationships will characterize the total learning environment with careful attention given to balance. The campus community will be pervaded by joyful spirituality, a spirit of cooperation, and respect for the diversity of individuals and cultures.

8). **Assessment:** The Adventist school, college or university gives clear evidence that it subscribes to an Adventist philosophy of education. Such evidence is found in the written curriculum, in teaching and learning activity, in the campus ethos, and in the testimony of students, graduates, constituents, employees, and the community at large.

THREATS TO FOSTERING THE MISSION AND IDENTITY OF AN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

The need to foster the mission and identity of an Adventist university is a matter of concern in the 21st Century. Like many other denominational educational institutions in history, many Adventist schools are gradually losing their identity of helping students to develop a responsible Christian character and to embrace Christian values. Such concerns are not unwarranted at the heels of secularism which has overtaken the academia. Secularism is living without the consciousness of God (Oshitelu, 2002).

Secularism is antithetical to everything a Christian school stands for. It takes a subtle approach of sliding the institution into a non biblical worldview that mirrors the materialism of the day. They begin with frivolous and peripheral issues such as the name of an institution or the methods of teaching certain doctrines (Hudson, 2002). Secularism in an Adventist university no doubt is the off shoot of not following the church's educational mission. It could be engendered by the following phenomena;

UNIVERSITY BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

Inadequate Financial Support

The critical role of funding in the realization of the mission of any institution can not be over-emphasized. When a school board sets targets and goals to be achieved and expect results without matching such expectations with adequate funding little or nothing will be achieved. Adequate financial support to a university is crucial to enable the nurturing and sustenance of structures that drive its mission and identity.

Conflict among Leadership

Conflict and friction ridden internal environment of many Christian institutions is another factor that brew secularism. The foremost challenge confronting many Adventist institutions leadership is sour relationships among the administrators, faculty, and students. Having a friction ridden environment in Christian campus appear not to be recent development. Walter (1966) concluded that many problems which have caused perplexity to colleges throughout history can be the directly traced to the friction between individuals. The problem is that such atmosphere undermines the goal of motivating the students to see the reality of

God and diminishes the modeling role of the faculty and staff. Such conflict can foster secularization by creating a lacuna for views and actions which are opposed to the school's mission.

Lack of IFL Knowledge and Implementation by Administrators and Staff:

It might be amazing to know that many school administrators and staff either do not have the required knowledge of the IFL and its implementation or have but do not implement it. As such, they do not know what to expect from their subordinates in this regard and cannot guide them well. It is also possible that some of them do not have the biblical Christian world view. Such development no doubt impedes the pursuit of Adventist education mission and identity.

Administrators Rhetoric/Comments:

This is a bane of fostering the mission of an Adventist University. Sometimes school administrators make public comments that subtly undermines the concept and practice of the schools mission. Take for instance a situation where a denominational leader at a public gathering in a university campus read a verse of the bible that indicated that people ate meat and remarked "And you tell us not to eat meat here!" Such statements touches on the health message of Adventist education as it relates to physical development, and can be easily misunderstood. At other times some Adventist university administrators are not able to publicly stand for the biblical Christian worldview on issues and practices in Adventist education. Such stance covertly weakens the integration of faith and learning which is a veritable tool for propelling the Adventist education mission and identity.

Imitation of other Universities

Secularism creeps in, in situations where Adventist University administrators are obsessed with imitating other reputable public and private universities built on totally different mission. The tendency sometimes is to see the denominational policy and methods as parochial, confined and not dynamic. It was when ancient Israel desperately wanted to be like other nations by having a king that secularization set in. Often times administrators in our institutions are not able to form a counter culture to the prevailing one. The result is the "gradual disappearance of expressions of initial spiritual life and practices derived from the religious philosophy of education of the church.

Discipline

One of the elements that influences the mission of an Adventist school is how discipline is enforced. There seem to be an ambiguity in the understanding and practice of discipline as being redemptive. Harshness and permissiveness are two extremes in discipline which are sometimes condoned by the lack of proper understanding of the redemptive nature of discipline. When discipline is not properly meted, it dims the reality of God and his justice in the minds of staff and students. When students and staff do not by evidence understand that "the government of God knows no compromise with evil" (White, 1952), their view of God is dimmed.

TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION

Increasing Population of Teachers from other Denominations

Teachers are a critical factor in fostering the mission of a school. As a matter of fact the teacher's world view is the greatest single factor in a school situation that influences the accomplishment (or lack of it) of the purpose for which the church operates schools around the world (Mathema,1990). Nwosu (1994) observed that many people who teach in Adventist institutions of higher learning did not go through the Adventist educational system. As a result they come (without meaning harm) with the various worldviews dominant in their institutions. Their worldview are contagious, and conditions the worldviews of their students. When a teacher can not influence students positively in a holistic sense the mission and identity of the institution is undermined. Often times these teachers are thrown to the classroom and university environment without orientation. "In integral education where mind, body, and spirit are developed the faculty plays and important role ... Teachers who are not of our faith cannot help in this process and at times can become an obstacle" (Becerra, 2005)

Increasing Population of Adventist Teachers and Staff who do not embrace School Mission

There seem to be many Seventh day Adventist church faculty and staff who do not embrace the mission of our schools. These are Adventist teachers by name and not by impact. Many of them seem not to exhibit any sense of commitment towards the goals of the university and can equally be an obstacle. Often times some non Adventist teacher exhibit more sense of purpose, commitment and pursuit of the redemption goal of Adventist education.

Inconsistencies in Life Style of Staff and Administrators

The inability of faculty and staff to constitute the primary force of motivating students to adopt new behaviors is also a concern. This inability, is a function of lifestyle inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies are subtle but potent in shaping secularism. It is true today as it was when Gaebelein (1968) said; "Few things can be more damaging to students and faculty than the gap between professed principles and the actual practice of those who are in authority over them. Such inconsistencies are also seen in staff students relationships and treatment, in staff-staff relationships, faculty and staff attitude to worship and spiritual goals, administrative policies and implementation. The commitment of staff through leadership and personal behaviour can either make or mar the school's mission.

Overwhelming Population of Students who do not Compliment the Mission of the University:

Many Christian campuses have students (Adventist and non Adventist students alike) who do not compliment their spiritual mission. Though this group of students serve as a mission field but their influence sometimes on their peer and entire campus life, could be counterproductive to the spiritual mission of a Christian institution. Many of these students are not practicing Christians nor from Christian homes. They are often influenced by the standards maintained in neighbouring secular institutions which are diametrically opposed to the Christian ideals. As the Bible says; "the carnal mind is in enmity and is not subject to the law of God". Peer influence can significantly exceed that of teachers,

particularly in personal growth. (Hudson, 2002). At every time when this happens the mission is undermined. Often times many Seventh-day Adventist Students are prominent in this group.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Relegation of IFL to the Classroom

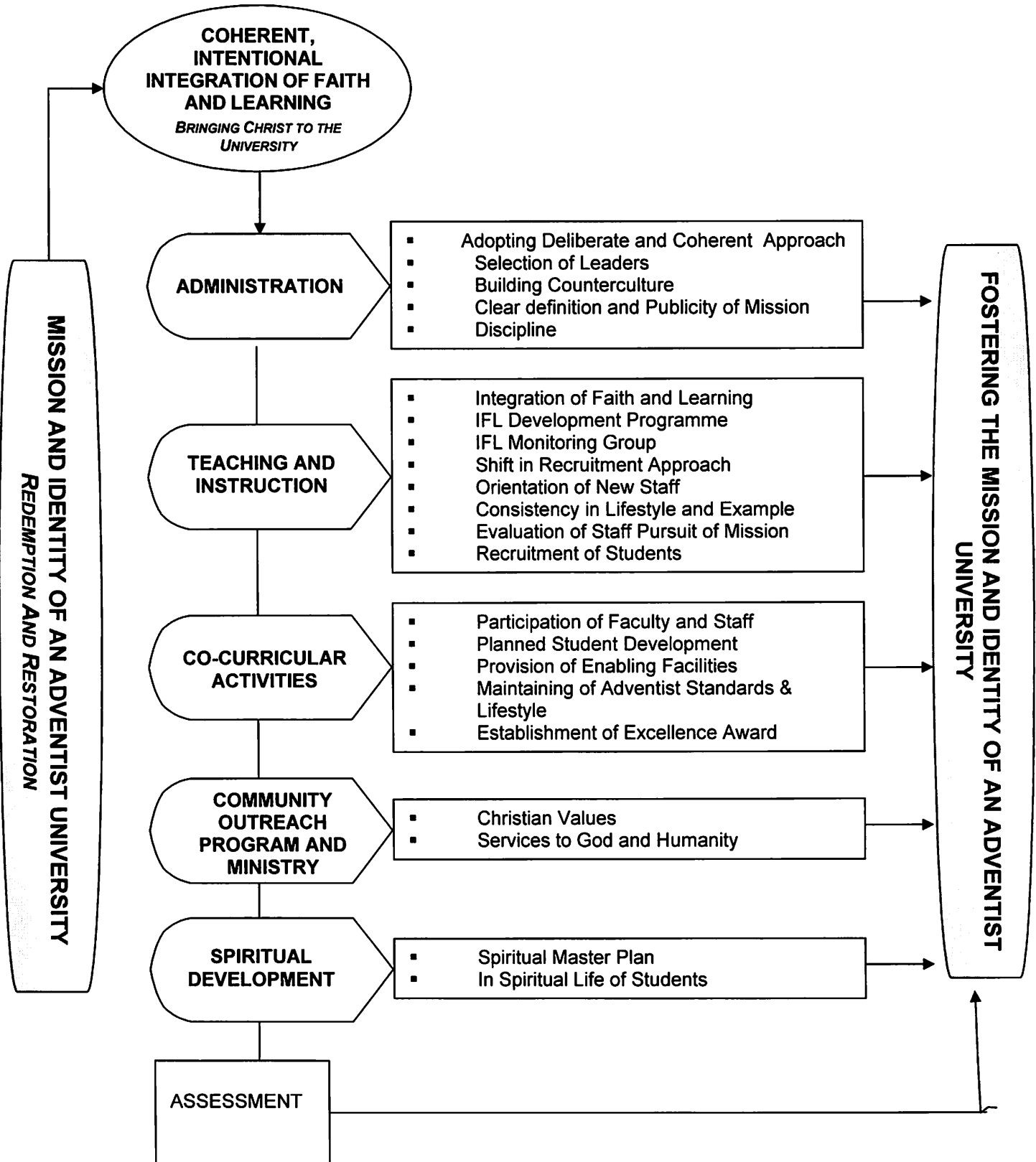
The burgeoning need to foster the mission of an Adventist university is further sustained by the relegation of IFL to only a classroom affair. There seem to be a trend where faculty and staff of our institutions do not see their involvement in the achievement of the schools mission beyond the classroom. This may be based on a wrong understanding of learning as only academic and limited to the classroom. As such the emphasis on the integration of faith and learning is compartmentalized and integration in other aspects of campus life is diminished. Faculty member only interact with the students in the classroom at the level of mental development alone. They also have minimal or no contact with the community where the university is located.

The afore-mentioned factors and others contribute in no obscure manner to the process of secularization in Adventist Universities today. The question is what can be done to foster the identity and mission of an Adventist University in spite of these threats? This however, does not in any way dim the strong and positive impact Adventist higher education has made in preparing young men and women for service to the church and the world.

A PROPOSAL FOR FOSTERING THE MISSION AND IDENTITY OF AN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

The different spots highlighted in the experience and existence of an Adventist University no doubt make it necessary that its identity and mission be fostered. The "Total Commitment Document of the General Conference of the Seventh day Adventist Church" calls for the affirmation of our beliefs, practices and worldviews in campus life. As such the proposal affects all aspects of the university. Figure 1. shows a conceptual model for fostering the mission and identity of an Adventist university.

FIG. I SAMPLE CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR FOSTERING MISSION AND IDENTITY
IN AN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY



The author is of the opinion that an intentional or deliberate, and coherent Integration of Faith and Learning in the different aspects of the university that are potent conduits for fostering the church's educational mission and identity will go a long way to counter the looming atmosphere of secularization. The author considers these four areas; Administration; Teaching/instruction; Co-curricular activities and Spiritual development. as fertile for fostering a university's mission and identity. Following therefore, are the specific strategies that could be of help.

A. UNIVERSITY BOARD

(1) Adequate Funding

It is very important to set goals and pursue religiously the mission and identity of Adventist university . But it becomes fruitless when such grave assignment turns to be mere rhetoric without being matched by needed finance. While the pursuit of mission is required, corresponding financial, material and moral support should be given by the university board or council.

(2) Selection of Leaders

The university Councils and Boards must make sure that persons selected to lead are ones who know, share and embrace the mission of Adventist education. Those who are ready to work with the Adventist philosophy of education. "Visionary deans and presidents who feel confined and asphyxiated by the church organization" contribute in an evident manner to the secularization of our universities" (Becerra, 2006). Any one being considered for leadership position is an adventist educational facility must have broad-based and intimate understanding of SDA philosophy of education, a working knowledge of how to practically implement these principles, as well as an established record of successful, spiritually enhancing administrative experience" (Ron du Preez, 2001). What Ferrari de Bizzochi (1994) says about a school principal is true for university leadership also; "Only administrators who are conscious of their mission can coordinate, motivate, and organize the institution to achieve the Integration of faith and learning" in this case the identity and mission. The university top officers have the capacity more than any other to develop and model the mission and identity.

B. ADMINISTRATION

Though every member of an Adventist university community has a contribution towards the fostering of the university's mission and identity , it is the administration that will determine whether it should be fostered or not at the institutional level. Hence the following proposal;

(1) Adopting Deliberate and Coherent Mission Oriented Approach

There is no gainsaying the fact that many Adventist universities are pursuing the mission and identity but the problem has been that the efforts have not been coherent and integrated. There should be a calculated, planned blue print of action with specific objectives affecting all the aspects or components of the university and stake holders. This should include for example, a blue print in the integration of faith and learning; university Strategic Plan; and Spiritual Master Plan. The university administration must be seen to have in motion a campus

wide plan that involves both faculty and staff in selecting the beliefs and values that the institution wishes to convey to the university community based on the institutional statement of mission. Every board member, members of the university administration, students, academic and non academic staff must be part of drawing and implementing the road map towards this purpose.

(2) Building of Counter-culture

The leaders of our institution should be courageous to build a counter-culture. to ideas, models, strategies of leadership which though popular do not emanate from a biblical world view. There is no doubt that Adventist universities have loyalty to her proprietor and its accrediting body, and to the government and its regulating agency. Leadership should be able to call to question any directive that undermines her mission and identity. They should change the “being like other university” mentality. It will be good to note at this juncture that popularity of an Adventist university does not lie in eroding her identity and standards but in upholding them.

(3) Definition and Publicity of School Mission

The mission statement of every university must be clearly articulated and concisely defined. Every stakeholder in the university must also understand it and their role towards its implementation. A strategic plan based on such mission statement must be crafted by each university.

(4) Discipline

Administration must make sure that students and staff who consistently do not conform to the requirements of being members of an Adventist university community should be shown the way out. Keeping such individuals destroys the university culture and identity. However, warning and counseling should precede the laying off of any staff in order to maintain the redemptive nature of discipline.

The relevant strategies to maintain faith in religious higher education identified by Benne (2001) could be insightful here for Adventist educational administrators. They are; **i)** people that believe that Christianity is relevant for university life **ii)** accountability of persons that hold the beliefs, **iii)** selection of administrators, teachers, personnel, and students committed to live the beliefs, and **iv)** leadership that sustains practices that favor the development of faith.

B. TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION

(a) Integration of Faith and Learning

It is the integration of faith and learning that distinguishes the Adventist university from its public university counterpart hence one of its strongest identity. The problem of Christian education is the application of the integration (Gaebelain, 1968). Teachers must integrate faith at the subject level. The position of Korniejczuk (2006) is then appropriate here; teachers must highlight this connection in their course plan, lectures, student assignments, class discussions,

thought questions in examinations and other learning experiences. Its aim is to ensure that students under the influence of Christian teachers will internalize biblical values and view of knowledge, life, and destiny that is Christ-centered service oriented, and kingdom directed before they leave school (Rasi, 1993).

b) Integration of Faith and Learning Development Programme

Many non Adventist faculty and staff may not have been exposed to the IFL in their training, but they may have in one way or another come to know of the it on their campuses. The problem is that many, Adventist and non Adventist alike do not know how to make their declarative knowledge procedural. As such an IFL Development program for faculty and staff will be effective in this regard. Such program will be targeted towards improving the skills, attitude, understanding and practice of IFL by staff. It will help sustain a campus wide emphasis of IFL both in and outside of the classroom and motivate them towards mastery of the concept. If faculty and staff do not have adequate understanding of the IFL concept, internalizing and presenting it to their students will be a Herculean task.

Such IFL Procedural Knowledge program must have the following component of Buttler (1992) staff development program;

- a. Presentation of theory or description of the IFL
- b. Modelling or demonstration of skills needed for the IFL by experts
- c. Practice in simulated and actual setting
- d. Structured and open ended feedback
- e. Coaching for application

(c) IFL Monitoring Group

The University should set up a Monitoring Group to see to the actual implementation of the IFL by the different arms of the university. Such group(s) comprising of men and women who have reasonable knowledge and understanding of IFL should see to it that IFL is fostered in the academic and non academic arms of the university.

(d) Shift in Recruitment Approach

The Critical nature of teachers and staff in fostering the mission and identity of a university cannot be gainsaid. A shift in recruitment approach is needed from what Ron du Preez (2001) called "unidimensional approach" which considers only academic qualifications to what I call a "mission oriented approach" of recruitment which carefully considers a teachers worldview, habits, principles to determine if he or she can be a partner in the pursuit of the school's mission and goals. "The habits and principles of teachers should be considered of even greater importance than his literary qualifications." (White, 1952). The following questions suggested by Ron du Preez (2001) could form part of the questionnaire to be completed during the screening process;

- a. what post have you actively held in your church during the past 3-5 years
- b. what are your specific spiritual goals and what forms of ministry have

- you utilized them over the past 3-5 years.
- c. what kind of personal health/ exercise programs have you been following for the past 3-5 years
 - d. what kind of community activity and or service have you been involved with over the past 3-5 years
 - e. Itemize the various professional organization you have been an active member of , as well as the scholarly presentations made and refereed journal articles published during the past 3-5 years.
 - f. list all your graduate degrees indicating the areas of concentration.

Hudson (2002) was right when he said that “prospective teachers should be interviewed carefully by several individuals, using a pre-established set of questions that probe the candidate’s level of spirituality and commitment to the church as well as his or her ability to interact positively with students and colleagues.”

(e) Orientation of New Staff

No staff academic non academic should enter the classroom or an office without an orientation in the Adventist Philosophy of Education. This is another way of making the school’s mission understandable. Such orientation should be held every semester, quarterly or every time new staff are recruited with a heavy IFL component. The Academic Office should be responsible or any other designated office. This is also crucial considering the many non Adventist teachers in some of our campuses.

(f) Consistency in Life Style and Example

“If it is imperative that every teacher should integrate faith and learning, it is much more imperative that they integrate faith in learning and in living” (Kamwendo, 2001). Faculty and staff must live lives that are christo-centric and mission oriented in the following suggested ways;

1. Staff are to socialize their students through modeling. They should lead by example in conduct, communications, dressing, relationships, participation in worship. Our words must match our practice. Faith is caught and not taught.
2. Harmonious relationship among staff must be enhanced as rancour and disunity among administrators weakens the integration of faith and learning.
3. Discipline should be enforced appropriately, promptly and redemptively. Enforcement of discipline is known to be one element that influence the IFL.

(g) Evaluation of Staff Pursuit of University Mission

A careful assessment and evaluation of staff should be instituted. Each staff should be made to complete a questionnaire designed to ascertain whether he or she subscribes in belief and practice to the educational philosophy of the university. The items of the questionnaire drawn should take into cognizance the mental, spiritual, physical, and social activities expected of a Christian staff. Such assessment questionnaire as that designed by Ikonne (1990) on “Measuring Integration of Faith and Learning at SDA Colleges can be used. The result of the

evaluation must be corroborated by other evaluation report centered on the achievement of the university mission. This is necessary because the obsession with evaluation, promotion and recruitment based on academic degrees and publication is the bane of fostering the mission and identity of an Adventist university. The office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic or Vice President Academic Affairs/administration should undertake this routinely, except where the university has an Assessment and Statistics Unit. It is recommended here for all Adventist to have an Assessment and Evaluation Unit in view of the various assessments needed to improve quality of the delivery of Adventist education. Staff members who are found to be of negative influence should be courageously replaced.

(h) Recruitment of Students

The extent to which students who do not embrace the mission of the church can constitute a barrier to fostering the Adventist education mission and identity may not be easily quantifiable. Adventist education should take care of Adventist youths first and then others. Taking for granted that many Adventists do not get access to Adventist schools due to financial reasons, concerted efforts should be made to reverse the emerging trend of having more non Adventist students. This can be done through; lucrative work study program; bursary and scholarships for Adventist youths, and payment plan just to mention a few. Intensive promotion in churches should also go on to erase negative ideas of some Adventist parents about Adventist universities. Other students should be thoroughly screened before admission is offered. Especially as it regards their influence on peers.

C. CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

(i) Participation of faculty and staff

To be mission oriented, All academic, non academic staff, administrators must become agents and ambassadors of students Affairs or development in implementing co-curricular activities. Students must be mentored outside the classroom. That attitude that ignores the importance of, and gives second place to co-curricular activities should be exorcised. It seems a common trend for example to see spiritual mentoring left strictly to few pastors and elders on campus, the socials and physical left to the student development staff. This trend in many Adventist universities where the physical, social, moral and spiritual development of the students is left for selected few, undermines the university's mission and identity. It is then appropriate to note that; " Nurturing faith in every aspect of the program is everybody's business at a Christian school..." (Akers, 1994). Faith when not integrated in the curricular, co-curricular, peri-curricular, extra-curricular and post -curricular activities does not make its profound and holistic impact on the learner. "All of life with its culture and its learning must be penetrated with the Christian perspective." (Holmes, 1987)

For the mission and identity of Adventist university to be fostered, the following are necessary;

- a. Apart from classroom teaching, faculty and staff should get involved in students programs outside the classroom. They should play sports and dine with them in the cafeteria. Restricting mentoring to the classroom limits their influence.
- b. The food services department should slate the names of staff at least once a semester to eat in the cafeteria weekly with students. Staff should also invite students to homes for food, dinner, and prayer .
- c. Faculty and staff should play active role in worship services. Both Adventist and non Adventist teacher should be constrained to Participate in the weekly worship program on campus. The university through an action should approve a placement list of faculty and staff in various spiritual, and social programs.
- d. the faculty and staff must participate in the spiritual nurture of students.

(ii) Planned Student Development

Adventist university educational administrators should plan co-curricular activities as intentional part of the overall educational experience of student outside of the classroom. These programs should be designed to seek the wholistic development of students and should include social, cultural, recreational, artistic, spiritual and missionary activities. This will further accommodate clubs, exhibitions, excursions, sports, among others.

Translated into action, this will mean that;

- a. The Director of Student Development (or Affairs, Services) should set the objectives of this unit based on the institutions general objectives and goals that is the responsibility of the unit to achieve
- b. Those in charge of each sector of this department should develop a work plan that includes appropriate specific objectives which are measurable. i.e in sports, worship services, excursions etc.
- c. Such objectives should be measured periodically
- d. Clear methods and means by which the objectives can be achieved.
- e. Specific responsibility should be assigned to group of persons who must see to its accomplishment.

By so doing co-curricular activities are not left to chance. “ When adequately planned and organized, it will result in the formation of Christian character, the ultimate goal of adventist educational system.” (Becerra, 2006).

(iii). Provision of Enabling Facilities

To foster the mission of intentional promotion of faith through co-curricular activities universities should provide the enabling environment for smooth implementation. For spiritual development facilities such as prayer garden, relaxation parks with benches or seats for quiet meditation, airing spiritually uplifting music in recreation areas, multimedia equipment for worship, stadium and sporting facilities among others.

(iv). Maintaining of Adventist Identity in Lifestyle Issues:

Relaxing standards does not usually yield the desired result. Evidence drawn from the experience of other denominations is clear on the fact that result of lowering standards (i.e in dress codes) are counter productive on set mission of such denominations. Standards should not be relaxed for its sake. Adventism in her effort to confront perennial problem of denominational standard “must carefully avoid the temptation of conscienceless conformity to contemporary cultural norms in a frenzied but futile effort to retain its members, especially its youths; similarly Adventism should studiously resist the seductive lure of adopting a fortress mentality of tenaciously clinging to obsolete obligations based on 19th century societal practices, while categorically condemning any aspect of so-called “modern culture” in a misdirected bid to be a peculiar people” (Ron du Preez, 2001)

Life style issues are becoming sore point of challenges to Adventist universities. Be it Sabbath observance, dress codes, vegetarian food, or music, the standards are under attack by students, parents and faculty. Divergent positions exist among Adventist educators. Some are of the view that Adventist schools should change their stance on certain life style issues and be more accommodating. Keavin (2001) lauded, the point that the Church will loose many of her member who may leave never to return especially the youths if she continues taking a hard line, unbending stand regarding less morally defined issues such as jewelry. Recent researches show the opposite. Mainline denominations lost their members after relaxing their traditional Sabbath observance and other time consuming practices.(Rodney and Roger, 2000). Member felt deprived of their distinctive sense of identity.

(v). Establishment of Excellence Awards in Co-curricular Activities

To foster mission and identity, excellence awards on co-curricular activities should be instituted. The trend of emphasis in the cognitive development. This is a digression from the numerous academic excellence awards given to students. Most awards students and staff receive take into consideration the quantitative and not qualitative development of the recipients. Awards with qualitative dimension are usually faith-based and fosters the university’s mission and identity. This will include awards which emphasize Christian values of honesty, humility, cooperation, commitment and the like. Such awards should be given students by administration at students gatherings; Honours day, Matriculation, Convocation, Chapel Seminars, Hall Worship and at other university ceremonies. This will serve as motivation to students to develop Christ-like virtues.

D. COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME/MINSITRY

Community service and outreach should be made an integral part of all the learning experiences of students including the written curriculum and the co-curricular activities. It has to do with knowledge application. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. If our mission is to develop faith for service in our students the curriculum must provide opportunities for students and teachers to practice

Christian witnessing and outreach together. " As the body is dead when there is no breath left in it, so faith divorced from deeds is lifeless as a corpse" . "If faith is not matched by action or practice, our instruction about Christian living becomes "ivory tower theory". (Krathwohl, 1968). Krathwohl notes that this relationship between learning, faith, and practice is consistent with the taxonomy of the effective domain, a product of ways people acquire beliefs and values. This includes; receiving, responding, valuing, organizing and characterization of a value through living. " values are not completely understood until they are practiced"

" The final result of Christian education is service to God and human beings. The impact of the application of professional, spiritual and social knowledge in selfless service will land on a more complete development of the student character, as a preparation for this and thereafter (Korniejczuk, 2006). This is why students must put values learnt to work in both the academic and non academic setting. Through projects, outreach activities, youth anti-drug campaigns, literature evangelism, manual labour, humanitarian service, environmental clean ups, free baby sitting, and assignments. Again, teachers should implement this service concept at the classroom level.

E. SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS

Though every university programme and activity should have a spiritual component a deliberate effort must be made to nurture student spiritually. Spiritual development is the cardinal mission of Adventist University.

The following must be deliberately done to achieve this;

- a) Spiritual development of students must be taken as a prime responsibility
- b) Participation of faculty members in spiritual nurture of students required
- c) The university must have a comprehensive master plan
- d) Specific objective to be achieved each semester or quarter or session must be set and pursued actively.
- e) Measurement of spiritual programmes and progress of programmes
- f) Fostering of a thinking climate for faith development (help them develop value system, moral reasoning which helps them choose freely from viable alternatives)
- g) Provision of opportunity and environment to practice spiritual service (prayer garden, witnessing among others)

CONCLUSION

The Adventist education mission and identity which is leading men and women to become children of God and to prepare them for service in this world and in the world to come is the *raison d'être* for the existence of an Adventist University. In these times when secularism and humanistic world views have overtaken even the academia. Intensifying efforts to foster this mission and identity is not an option but a given. The factors that shape secularism can be foreseen and can be tackled through a deliberate and coherent action of any university leadership in the areas of administration, teaching and instruction, and co-curricular

activities among others. Mission and identity play a critical role in the life of any institution. Secularism sets in Adventist institutions when this lofty mission is relegated for other interests. Just as salt is not of any use if it loses its test, so is an Adventist university that does not pursue her mission and identity in its operational and strategic space. I agree with Poe (2004) when he said that Christian colleges and Universities that will be able to deal with the challenges of higher education in the 21st century be the ones focused on the strategic issue of how to fulfill the mission for which they were founded. The challenge of Adventist Universities today, is to represent themselves as Adventist by being guided by the church higher education mission and identity.

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