

White Paper prepared by the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom¹
Educating for Practical Wisdom: An Ideal and a Journey

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I. Introduction

“Educating for practical wisdom” has become a key theme in the University of Dayton conversations. Throughout the 2015-2016 academic year, the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom met periodically to explore “educating for practical wisdom” as an important aim for the University’s Common Academic Program (CAP) and ways the aim of practical wisdom could be more effectively incorporated into the formal curriculum of our academic programs and our curriculum of campus life. This white paper summarizes the deliberations of the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom. It is not the final word on educating for practical wisdom, but a summary of conversations within our campus community during the early stages of implementing the CAP. It is organized to be a stimulus for a further and more focused conversation on educating for practical wisdom.

Practical wisdom as we use it at the University of Dayton is both an aim of education and a developmental journey; hence we use the phrase “educating for practical wisdom” as an expression of the University’s intent to create a developmentally appropriate environment, involving both the formal and informal curriculum, in which students become skillful in reasoned and morally responsible action, especially when addressing some of the most perplexing problems of our times.

The white paper is organized in six sections. Section Two provides a short summary of the University-wide conversations that created the Common Academic Program in which “practical wisdom” is an important Student Learning Outcome (SLO). Section Three provides a summary of the ideas on practical wisdom that have appeared in University documents. From this summary a “starting definition” of “problem oriented practical wisdom” is fashioned. Section Four provides a more in-depth exploration of the essential elements of problem-focused practical wisdom: 1) An appreciation of real human problems as adaptive challenges. 2) Excellence in problem-focused practical reasoning, 3) Advanced knowledge and skills, 4) Commitment to a moral tradition, and 5) Skills in constructive conversations. Section Five provides some examples of how different academic and campus life settings provide opportunities for students to grow in practical wisdom. Creating a campus learning environment that deliberately educates for practical wisdom is the focus of Section Six. This section begins with a brief description of the important elements of the development journey of young adults. Using this understanding of the developmental journey, different phases or levels in the development of practical reasoning are outlined. The section concludes with a set of guidelines for developing a rich ecology of persons and learning experiences that educate for practical wisdom. Section Seven shows the relationship of practical wisdom to the other SLOs of UD’s Common Academic Program (CAP). Specific learning objectives are developed which can guide the development of CAP courses that incorporate practical wisdom.

¹ This White Paper has members of the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom listed in Appendix A. Bro. Raymond Fitz, S.M. was the rapporteur for the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom. The white paper has been enriched through conversation with faculty and staff who are working to incorporate practical wisdom into the student experience of the University.

Again, this white paper is presented as a summary of our current campus conversations on practical wisdom. The hope of the HIR Fellows is that this white paper will focus on continuing our conversations.

II. Background: From *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* to the *Common Academic Program*

Over the past 15 years, the University of Dayton community has been in wide-ranging and ongoing conversations on the transformation of undergraduate education that would retain both the best of our Catholic and Marianist traditions of higher education and adapt our curriculum so as to prepare students for the challenges of the work, life, and vocation in early 21st Century. An important starting point for this conversation was the work of the Marianist Education Working Group, which held extensive conversations about what should be the aims of the University of Dayton education in the early decades of the 21st Century. The Working Group issued a report, *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*, that summarized these conversations and made recommendations on a mission for undergraduate education at the University and seven Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that would support the realization of this mission. The proposed Mission Statement for undergraduate education stated:

Students educated in the Catholic and Marianist traditions at the University of Dayton pursue rigorous academic inquiry, in a sacramental spirit, and engage in vigorous dialogue, learning in, through, and for community. Guided by the purpose of transforming society for the ends of justice, peace, and the common good, the University's academic program challenges students to excellence in their majors, cultivates practical wisdom in light of the particular needs of the twenty-first century, and fosters reflection upon their individual vocations.

The Working Group also proposed seven Student Learning Outcomes² that would fulfill this mission:

1. advanced habits of academic inquiry and creativity through production of scholarly work;
2. ability to engage in inquiry regarding major faith traditions, and familiarity with the basic theological understandings and texts that shape Roman Catholicism;
3. understanding of the cultures, histories, times, and places of multiple others;
4. understanding of and practice in values and skills necessary for learning, living, and working in community;
5. practical wisdom in addressing human problems and needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values, and skills in students' chosen professions or majors;
6. habits of inquiry and reflection, informed by Catholic Social Teaching and multidisciplinary study, that equip students to evaluate critically and imaginatively the challenges of our times; and
7. ability to articulate reflectively through the language of vocation the purposes of students' lives and their proposed work.

Under the leadership of the Academic Senate's Academic Policies Committee, this Mission for undergraduate education and the seven Student Learning Outcomes were incorporated into a Common Academic Program for UD undergraduates. In 2010, after more than a year of deliberations by the Academic Senate and the faculty, the Senate approved the Common Academic Program as the basis of a UD undergraduate education. For the last several years the University faculty has been working to develop and implement the Common Academic Program.

² A more detailed description of the seven Student Learning Outcomes is provided in Appendix B.

III. Practical Wisdom: A Statement of the Aim

As indicated in the introduction, the Working Group on Marianist Education's final report *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* outlined practical wisdom as one of the important Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

Practical Wisdom as a Student Learning Outcome (SLO): All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate practical wisdom in addressing real human problems and deep human needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values and skills in their chosen profession or major course of study. Starting with a conception of human flourishing, students will be able to define and diagnose symptoms, relationships and problems clearly and intelligently, construct and evaluate possible solutions, thoughtfully select and implement solutions, and critically reflect on the process in light of actual consequences.

This SLO was subsequently adopted as an important learning outcome in the CAP.

Practical wisdom as outlined in this SLO is problem-focused; i.e., it is the exercise of practical wisdom focusing on addressing and solving real human problems. Both the formal curriculum and campus life should work together toward this SLO of practical wisdom.

A. Why is Practical Wisdom Important at the University of Dayton?

The University of Dayton seeks to educate and graduate transformative leaders, leaders who can "connect learning and scholarship to leadership and service."³ Grounded in solid moral tradition and a depth of knowledge, transformational leaders work with persons, groups, and organizations to identify important human problems that call for change and to bring about solutions to these problems that enable greater human flourishing. Transformational leaders operate in a variety of situations: the political arena, commercial enterprises, educational settings, civic organizations, etc. Wherever their engagement, transformational leaders utilize problem-oriented practical wisdom to create greater human flourishing, especially greater respect for the dignity of persons and the advancement of the common good.

B. Practical Wisdom: The Richness of the UD Conversation

In addition to the conversations around the *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* and the *Common Academic Program*, there were extensive University conversations on the topic of the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton as a Catholic and Marianist University. The Mission and Identity Task Force guided the two years of consultation and deliberation among students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and the Sponsoring Religious Body, the Marianist Province of the United States, and in January 2013 produced *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*. Five themes were identified:

- Excelling in Integrated Learning and Scholarship,
- Searching for Truth Grounded in both Faith and Reason,
- Educating for Practical Wisdom,
- Building Community Across Diversity, and
- Partnering for the Common Good.

³ Taken from the UD Mission Statement

By identifying *educating for practical wisdom* as one of the common themes in the mission and identity, the University’s Task Force affirmed and developed the thinking on practical wisdom that came out of the deliberations of *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*.

Common Themes (p 17) document provided this introduction to practical wisdom:

“Our University community strives for excellence in integrated learning and scholarship in search of truth and wisdom. In our Catholic and Marianist traditions of learning we seek to render truth and wisdom practical and to transform the world into place of greater realization of the truly human good. At the University of Dayton, we strive to develop a community of learners and scholars who, individually and collectively, think both critically and imaginatively, judge from sound moral principles and practical knowledge, and work collaboratively for the common good.”

Appendix B contains important ideas on practical wisdom from *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* and *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*. Table 1 on the next page provides a framework for organizing the ideas expressed in these documents.

Based on this framework, the HIR Fellows constructed a definition of practical wisdom as an aim of a UD education.

This definition provided a direction for exploring key elements in the phrase “educating for practical wisdom.”

Practical Wisdom: As an Aim

For the University of Dayton, practical wisdom, in addressing real human problems, is a set of habits or virtues that combines:

- excellence in practical reasoning, i.e., framing the problems, creating solutions, implementing solutions, and reflecting on the changes;
- advanced knowledge and skills, both theoretical and practical;
- a commitment to a moral tradition, i.e., a concept of the good and the practices needed to realize the good; and
- the skills of constructive conversation, i.e., developing a consensus on problems and solutions,

so that in implementing solutions to these problems there is a greater realization of peace, justice, and the common good.

Our UD conversation on practical wisdom has focused on “practical wisdom that addresses real human problems.” The HIR Fellows has added the phrase “skills of conversations,” because addressing and solving real human problems, in almost all cases, requires a variety of the constructive conversations among the various stakeholders in the problem. Initiating and sustaining these constructive conversations is an important part of practical wisdom in addressing real human problems. This definition will be used in the next section to help us appreciate how students encounter opportunities for growing in practical wisdom through their academic programs and their experiences in campus life.

Table 1: Key Ideas in Problem-Focused Practical Wisdom

Practical Wisdom as an HIR Student Learning Outcome	Enrichments of Practical Wisdom as an SLO	Practical Wisdom Addressing Real Human Problems
<p>All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate practical wisdom in addressing real human problems and deep human needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values and skills in their chosen profession or major course of study.</p> <p>Starting with a conception of human flourishing, students will be able to define and diagnose symptoms, relationships and problems clearly and intelligently, construct and evaluate possible solutions, thoughtfully select and implement solutions, and critically reflect on the process in light of actual consequences.</p>	<p>Guided by the purpose of transforming society for the ends of justice, peace, and the common good, the University's academic program challenges students to excellence in their majors, and cultivates practical wisdom in light of the particular needs of the twenty-first century. (HIR p9)</p> <p>All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate practical wisdom in addressing real human problems and deep human needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values and skills in their chosen profession or major course of study. (HIR p11)</p> <p>Practical wisdom, in the classical and Catholic tradition, is excellence in practical reasoning. (CT p17)</p> <p>In educating for practical wisdom, the University gives priority to the ways the Catholic intellectual tradition can provide conceptual and moral resources to recognize critical issues in particular situations, to imagine how the good can be realized in these situations, and practical guidelines to mobilize people to realize the good. (CT p18-19)</p> <p>Learning practical wisdom is a developmental journey – the interdependency of practical reasoning, a commitment to a moral tradition, and practical knowledge requires continual learning. (CT p19)</p>	<p>Excelling in Practical Reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing the Problem: Sensing the multiple components of the problem; organizing information to understand the structure of the problem; involving key stakeholders in the framing. • Creating a solution: Imagining a shared vision of the good, constructing options to realize the vision of the good, deliberating to choose an option. • Implementing the Solution: marshalling resources to implement the solution and adapting to the unexpected. • Reflecting on the Change: Learning through critical evaluation of the process and the actual consequences. <p>Utilizing a Fund of Knowledge, both theoretical and practical.</p> <p>Committing to a Moral Tradition, a concept of the good and the practices needed to realize the good.</p> <p>Engaging in Constructive Conversations to address and resolve real human problems.</p>
<p>HIR <i>Habits of Inquiry and Reflection</i> https://www.udayton.edu/artssciences/about/images/Habits_of_Inquiry.pdf; CT <i>Common Themes</i> https://www.udayton.edu/rector/resources/img/Common%20Themes%20in%20the%20Mission%20and%20Identity%20of%20the%20University%20of%20Dayton.pdf</p>		

Figure 1: The Process of Problem-Focused Practical Wisdom illustrates the relationship of the different elements of our definition. The phases of practical reasoning are illustrated in the center of the diagram. While the main flow of the process of problem-focused practical reasoning is in the forward direction of moving from Framing the Problem to Creating a Solution to Implementing the Solution, it is often necessary to retrace phases of the process as new information is discovered. Advanced Knowledge and Skills and A Moral Tradition influence each phase of the process of practical reasoning. As was indicated in our definition, the HIR Fellows believe that problem-focused practical reasoning on real human problems requires entering into constructive conversations. Later in this white paper we will indicate the important role a Community of Learning has in educating for practical wisdom.

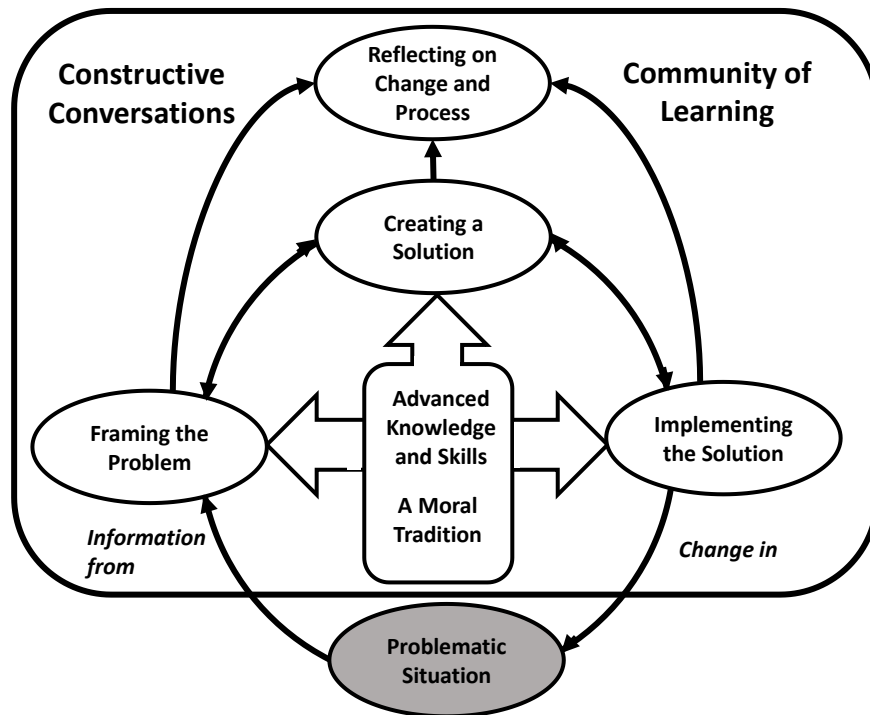


Figure 1: The Process of Problem-Focused Practical Wisdom

IV. Exploring the Elements of Practical Wisdom

Having developed a definition of practical wisdom as an aim of a UD education, this section is devoted to a deeper exploration of the key elements of practical wisdom. This section addresses the nature of real human problems, excellence in practical reasoning, the necessary fund of knowledge, a commitment to a moral tradition, and the nature of constructive conversations.

A. Real Human Problems As Adaptive Challenges⁴

To address problems like breaking the cycle of poverty, protecting human rights, addressing racial injustice, or sustaining the environment as our common home, the transformational leader must be capable of utilizing wise practical reasoning as a personal habit or virtue and skilled to mobilize people and groups to work together to address and resolve very complex problematic situations. In exercising wise practical reasoning, it is important to consider a continuum of problematic situations. Ron Heifetz (1994, pp 73-84) presents a distinction in sorting out problematic situations. On one end of the continuum are technical problems and at the other end are adaptive challenges.

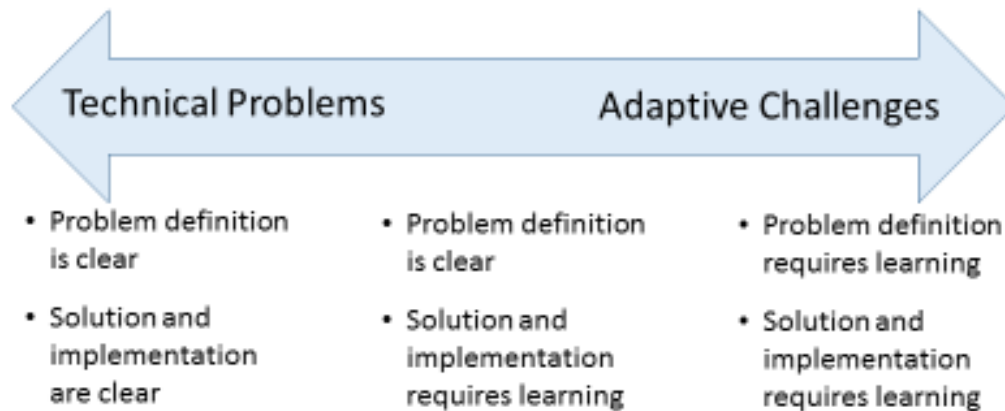


Figure 2: The Heifetz Continuum

Technical problems are problematic situations that can be diagnosed and solved based on expertise; that is, there is someone who knows how to frame the problem and how to solve the problem. For example, if a neighborhood association wants to slow the traffic on one of its well-traveled streets, then there is most likely someone in the City Traffic Department that has the expertise to help them solve the problem. If a major food bank in the city wants to improve the efficiency of its deliveries to the many food pantries in the city, then they could find expertise at a local university that could help them frame the problem and create a solution.

At the other end of the continuum are adaptive challenges. These are problematic situations that the practical reasoner has not meet before in quite the same way. In adaptive challenges there is no known way to frame the problem and to solve the problem using only technical expertise. For example, if a Neighborhood Association is facing a sudden increase in crimes, such as breaking and entering, then community leaders will have to mobilize people and teams to frame the problem. Once having framed the problem, they will need to come together to solve the problem and to implement the solution. Organizing a conversation of stakeholders in the problem (neighborhood leaders, neighbors, neighborhood businesses, the police, etc.) aimed at undertaking the learning is required to frame the problem so that root causes are understood. Once the problem is successfully framed, the conversation must continue in order to determine a goal the group would like to realize, to generate and deliberate on potential options for change, and then develop an implementation plan. Addressing adaptive challenges requires the practical reasoner to frame an understanding of the problem which involves complex, incomplete, and multi-faceted information and to invent a solution in the midst of constraints,

⁴ The distinctions on problematic situations is taken from Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*. Cambridge MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1994), 73-84.

conflicting criteria, and multiple stakeholder expectations. Practical reasoning addressing adaptive challenges is a very complex process.

Addressing adaptive challenges makes the practical reasoning process much more fluid, often chaotic, and requires skills to lead and direct the process. Practical reasoning in addressing adaptive challenges requires learning and change by individuals and groups. Learning and change can be enriching, but can also be painful because it often requires moving out of one’s comfort zone and giving up some personal ideas and values that may be hindering constructive change. Since the transformational leader must be capable of addressing adaptive challenges through exercising personal practical wisdom and social practical wisdom, i.e., leading persons and groups in wise practical reasoning, the remainder of this section will focus on wise practical reasoning addressing adaptive challenges.

B. Excellence in Problem-Oriented Practical Reasoning

1. Practical Reasoning: What is it? Practical reasoning is the capacity to draw on knowledge and intellectual skills to engage concretely in the world. Practical reasoning is driven by the question “What shall I (or we) do?” in this particular situation. It is a mode of reasoning that begins by assessing the salient features of the problematic situation, moves to deliberating on the good to be realized in the situation and the means to realize this humanly desirable good, and ends with the choice of the best course of action within the particular situation. Engaged citizens and leaders of all sectors of society rely on this capacity for practical reasoning to construct the good in all facets of life. If theoretical reasoning is figuring out how the facts stand about a particular facet of the world, then practical reasoning is figuring out what we are to do. The end of theoretical reasoning is propositional claims about how the world is and how it operates; actions are the end of practical reasoning.

2. A Simple Heuristic for Practical Reasoning. *Common Themes* provides a simple, yet helpful, heuristic for understanding practical reasoning.

Practical reasoning is a mode of reasoning that allows one to:	
See	the skill to frame a problem or issue in a given situation so that one understands causes
Judge	the skill to imagine the good to be realized in a given situation and to create the appropriate response or strategy to realize the good
Act	The skill to implement the response and adjust to surprises
Reflect	The skill to untangle the complex experience of change and to draw practical knowledge from the experience

This simple heuristic will guide the development of problem-focused practical reasoning. Before developing problem-focused practical reasoning, it is helpful to describe some of the elements of real human problems.

3. The Elements of Problem-Oriented Practical Reasoning. Problem-oriented practical reasoning has four interdependent elements: a) Framing the problem, b) Creating the solution, c) Implementing the

solution, and d) Reflecting on the change and the process. The following descriptions introduce each of the elements.

a. Framing the Problem: Framing the problem requires gathering and interpreting information on the problematic situation and organizing the information that leads to an appreciation of the problematic situation. Organizing the elements of the situation and their relationship can often lead to the root cause of the problematic situation. The information that is gathered (what is noticed) and how it is organized is shaped by the practical reasoner's fund of knowledge, both theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge and their commitment to a moral tradition.

For example, to frame the problem of designing an interstate highway, the designer⁵ has to be sensitive to the geographic terrain, which is a technical consideration. But exercising practical wisdom also involves asking what will happen to the neighborhoods that will be affected by the implementation of the design. In order to frame the problem of generational poverty in a particular neighborhood, a social worker will have to organize information from a variety of sources, e.g., persons experiencing generational poverty, the welfare agency, the police department, etc. The social worker must be cognizant of the structures of power that affect the generational poverty; that is, social forces driving change and social forces wanting to keep the situation as it is. The social worker must be aware of the values and ways of seeing and knowing of each of the persons and groups who have a stake in the change process.

b. Creating the Solution: Creating the solution follows once the practical reasoner has tentatively framed the problem. Solving the problem involves both imagination and judgment. First, the practical reasoner articulates an image of what the solution might look like. This is often done through articulating a goal, or a set of outcomes, or criteria for the solution. Given an image of what the end point of the solution might look like, the practical reasoner must develop options for realizing the end point. This is followed by an evaluation of which of the options is the best or a least satisfactory option to realize the desired end point.

In the problem-solution process, the designer of the interstate highway must identify some principle and criteria to define what a good highway in this particular situation might look like – develops an image of the end point. The designer then has to develop options that will help realize the desired end point and then evaluate which of these options is the most satisfactory option to realize the end point of the design. Again this phase of practical reasoning is shaped by an influence of the fund of knowledge. Theoretical knowledge of strength of materials and their load-bearing capacity is important in designing options. Practical knowledge gained from past work is also useful in fitting the design to the specific geographical terrain.

For the social worker, solving the problem phase has many of the same features as our highway designer. In addition, the social worker must collaborate with the people of the neighborhood experiencing poverty as well as other stakeholders to articulate a desired future and to invent and assess options for change and eventually make a choice of which option to implement.

c. Implementing the Solution: Implementing the solution requires marshalling and organizing resources, both human and material, to implement the problem's solution in a given situation. In our example of the highway design, a general contractor is given the responsibility for implementing the solution that came out of the design process. Implementing the solution often provides a good example

⁵ Highway design and social work are used as examples to illustrate the process of practical reasoning focusing on addressing a problem. Other examples could easily be drawn from other disciplines or professional fields where addressing problems is important, such as medicine, environment sciences, law, business, etc.

of the interdependency of the different processes of practical reasoning. The general contractor might encounter a feature of the geographical terrain that the engineers working the first two phases did not anticipate. This will force a modest reassessment of framing the problem and solving the problem phases of practical reasoning. In the example of the social worker, they encounter a number of challenges in implementing the solution, e.g., the lack of resources, people important to the solution have left and those replacing them have no idea of the previous conversations. All of these surprises require our social worker to make some adjustments in the plans for implementing the solution.

d. Reflecting on the Change and Process enables the practical reasoner to reflect on the results that came from implementing the solution and how well the process of practical reasoning was performed. In examining the results, the practical reasoner can ask, “Is there a gap between our actual results and the desired result?” “If there is, then why?” “Were there unexpected negative consequences?” “What surprises were encountered, and what do they tell us about future endeavors?” Reflecting on the process of practical reasoning helps us learn how we can improve the process the next time we go to implement it personally or collectively.

B. A Fund of Knowledge, both Theoretical and Practical

Theoretical knowledge involves abstract concepts and conclusions that come from the inquiry into physical, technical, economic, social, cultural, and transcendent realities. Theoretical knowledge is developed through inquiry and study with mentors who have mastered the area of knowledge. Practical knowledge is derived from continual reflection on past experiences in framing problems, solving problems, and implementing solutions in situations that are similar to one the practical reasoner is currently addressing. Practical knowledge, which is often tacit, grows as a person acts and reflects on their actions. Again mentorship is important in developing practical knowledge. A good mentor helps the person on the journey to practical wisdom examine the reasons why they framed and solved problems the way they did.

Theoretical knowledge is often used in practical reasoning to frame a problem and to solve it. For example, a physician, after listening to the experience of the patient and conducting an examination, will use abstract knowledge of the human body to formulate a hypothesis on a cause of an illness. The doctor will use theoretical knowledge to describe an end point of restored health. Based on both theoretical knowledge of the science of drugs and practical knowledge of what worked in similar situations in the past, the doctor is able to consider treatment options and then evaluates which of the options best fits the patient’s situation. The doctor comes to a judgment on what is the best course of treatment for the patient’s symptoms using both theoretical and practical knowledge.

C. A Commitment to a Moral Tradition

A commitment to a moral tradition involves 1) knowledge, of principles and convictions, about the goods of human life and how to realize these goods, and 2) a set of habits or virtues that support the realization of the goods of human life. The doctor in our example above needs at least a tacit understanding of a moral tradition to describe what might be good health for a patient in his/her particular situation. A moral tradition is also needed to evaluate treatment options – when is it appropriate to prescribe an experimental drug or treatment for this particular person? “Learning a moral tradition enriches the practical imagination, which proposes what can be made of our lives and the futures we can hope for, both individually and collectively.” (Common Themes p 18)

The SLO on “critical evaluation of our times” points to the importance of the Catholic social tradition in the habits of inquiry and reflection of our students.

Critical evaluation of our times: Through multidisciplinary study, all undergraduates will develop and demonstrate habits of inquiry and reflection, informed by familiarity with Catholic Social Teaching, that equip them to evaluate critically and imaginatively the ethical, historical, social, political, technological, economic, and ecological challenges of their times in light of the past.

The knowledge of the Catholic social tradition, as a moral tradition, should be an integral part of educating for practical wisdom at the University of Dayton. In the Catholic social tradition, social systems, like families, work settings, neighborhoods, cities, nations, and the international community should be organized to realize the common good, i.e. the human flourishing of all the persons and groups within that social system. The common good requires that our well-being be realized in a setting in which others can also flourish. In the Catholic social tradition, each person has the responsibility to contribute to the common good so human life can flourish, and no realization of the common good can write off persons or groups as unworthy of our interest. Appendix D: *Catholic Social Tradition and the Aim of Practical Wisdom* indicates how the Catholic social tradition can be an important resource for the growth in practical wisdom.

D. Skills of Constructive Conversations

To work toward the common good through the exercise of practical reason requires initiating and facilitating constructive public conversations. There are a number of important habits for conducting a constructive public conversation. The facilitator of the conversation has to make sure the group has a good question to orient the conversation. To address an adaptive challenge, at the very least, the group must address questions around how to frame the problem, what good or goal does the group wish to realize, and what options for change exist.

Constructive conversations start with a period of dialogue on the question where different perspectives can be expressed. For there to be true dialogue, there must be a deep listening which requires the participants to temporarily suspend their assumptions and answers to the questions. Once there has been a period of dialogue, the facilitator can move the group to a period of deliberation on an appropriate answer or answers to the orienting question. The facilitator can usually distinguish two or three strong options for answering the orienting question and can move the group to deliberate on the strengths and weakness of each option. During the period of deliberation, participants must advocate their position with respect for others, continue to listen deeply to others, and inquire into the position of others through good open-ended questions.

V. Opportunities for Students to Grow in Practical Wisdom

At UD we strive to create, sustain, and develop a community of learning that nurtures practical wisdom in our students, faculty, staff and administrators. Below describes some of the opportunities that students have for growing in practical wisdom. These examples will provide a context for a deeper exploration of the phrase “educating for practical wisdom.”

A. Educating for Practical Wisdom in the Academic Program

The University’s academic program provides many opportunities to grow in problem-oriented practical wisdom.

1. Humanities Commons: Jack is a first-year engineering student in PHL 103 in which the professor has introduced the basic elements of Aristotle's ethics and politics. The professor asks the class to write a short reflection paper that uses Aristotle's ideas of human flourishing and the purpose of society to make some recommendations on how to address the contemporary issue of racial justice in the United States. To write the paper, Jack will have to make sure that he has a preliminary grasp of Aristotle's social ethics and an understanding of how the context of Aristotle's writing is the same and different from the contemporary context of racial justice. Then Jack will have to move from reading the current situation (racial justice) to using abstract ethical principles to define the good (racial reconciliation) and then move to how this good might be realized in the current situations. Jack is beginning to learn the skills of practical reasoning needed for practical wisdom.

2. Social Sciences: Joan is a first-year graphic design student taking an introductory social science course in the CAP that emphasizes the issues of urban poverty. One of the requirements of the course is to take three opportunities during the first part of the semester to serve and share a meal at a local soup kitchen. During the second half of the semester, Joan and rest of the class are asked to write a reflection paper on how the content of the course – sociology, anthropology, and political science, help them understand the problem of hunger in the community. In writing this paper Joan, has an opportunity to frame, in a preliminary manner, the problem of hunger in the City of Dayton. In-class conversations on how other students framed this problem opened up to Joan perspectives that others had on the problem and challenged her to think about the problem in a more complex manner.

3. Capstone Courses: Abbey is a senior in the Operations Management Program. In Abbey's capstone course, the professor presented the students with the problem of what is the most effective and efficient way to distribute the food in the newly designed Catholic Social Services' food pantry. During the Capstone Course the professor asks the director of the food pantry to come and talk about the challenges they were facing and some background on the people they wanted to serve. The director insisted that the distribution process had to respect the dignity of persons being served and offer a sense of welcome and hospitality. In thinking about their potential design, students had to consider a variety of factors (understanding the constraints of the space, when food deliveries would be made, and the concern for the dignity of the people being served, etc). Once the students understood the situation, they were able to apply their process design knowledge to design a prototype food distribution process. They were able to help the staff implement the process and then observe how well their design was working. Asking the persons being served how they experienced the process, they were able to make some adjustments that provided a greater sense of welcome. In the design of the food distribution process, Abbey and the other students had the opportunity to grow in practical wisdom that not only considered the technical dimension of a process, but the impact of the process on the dignity of the people receiving the food.

4. Student Teaching: Michael is a senior Adolescence to Young Adult Education major with a minor in religious studies. Michael is currently doing student teaching in a class on social justice at a local Catholic high school with a very diverse population. Michael has watched his mentor teach for the first two weeks of the semester and had opportunities to discuss with his mentor what learning objectives she had for the students, what strategies she was using, and why she responded to student questions as she did. During the third week of the semester, Michael was provided the opportunity to teach some segments on Catholic social teaching and racial justice. Michael had some background in Catholic social teaching and knew what learning resources were available to the students on the topic of racial justice. He also had some insight into the students that he garnered from watching his mentor. Based on this knowledge, Michael had to decide what were appropriate learning objectives and the strategies he would use to realize these objectives. Then he had the opportunity to teach the class with his mentor

observing his work and the engagement of the students. Later in the day he had an opportunity to reflect on the experience to his mentor and discuss “What went well in the class?” and “What might he do differently the next time?” Student teaching provides an opportunity for Michael to grow in practical wisdom by framing what needs to be accomplished, designing principles based instructional strategies, implementing those strategies, and reflecting on the outcome of the teaching experience.

B. Educating for Practical Wisdom in Campus Life

Because the University of Dayton is a residential campus, Student Development and Campus Ministry provide many opportunities for students to take initiatives through reasoned and morally responsible action to enrich the campus life and to provide services to the local, national, and international communities. Growth in practical wisdom occurs when students can reflect on these initiatives to appreciate what went well and what they might do better in the future.

1. Special-Interest Housing: The University provides a variety of housing for students; while first- and second-year students typically live in traditional residence halls, upper-class students have the opportunity to choose or create communities in which they live in. Special-interest housing allows students to organize house communities around specific problems or issues such as sustainability or social justice, around a theme such as the Marianist Student Communities that endeavor to provide a lively student witness to the charism of the Society of Mary, or around academic areas such the honors housing. Margaret convinced some of her friends from Campus South to apply for a special-interest house around the issues of sustainability. To apply for one of these special-interest houses, Margaret had to organize her friends to articulate a mission for their house – what about sustainability was important to them, what goals would help realize this mission, and who could be a faculty member who was willing to be a mentor for their house community and help the community hold themselves accountable for implementing their goals. Margaret and her group had an excellent opportunity to grow in practical wisdom as they deliberated on their mission and goals, implemented their strategies in how they came together as a community and reflected on what they accomplished.

2. Leading Student Organizations: There are a multitude of student organizations on campus that provide students with the opportunity to organize around academic, service, recreational, or social purposes. Ralph has been elected to be president of the Appalachia Club. One of the annual events the club has sponsored is a Spring Breakout to be with the people of Magoffin County, KY. Ralph had the opportunity to participate in the UD Summer Appalachia Program and wants to make sure that participants in the Breakout have the opportunity to appreciate the richness of the people and their way of life and culture. In organizing the Spring Breakout, Ralph and the other members of the Club would have to ensure that the participants in the Breakout had a good orientation to the life and culture of people of Magoffin County, prepare the logistics, and make sure the time spent with the people was beneficial to both the people and the students. In organizing this Breakout, Ralph and other members had the opportunity to grow in practical wisdom as they framed problems and issues, discerned appropriate solutions, and implemented these solutions. Through critical reflection on their organizing efforts, Ralph and others in the group can ask “What went well?” and “What might they do different in the future?” This critical reflection increases their practical knowledge of leadership.

3. Being a Resident Assistant: A number of upper-class students have the opportunity to mentor under-class students in the norms of behavior in UD residence halls. Judy is a Resident Assistant in Marycrest Hall. In this role she must address a number of problematic situations, from designing hall activities to engage students to exercising disciplinary activity. Reflecting on how she framed these problems, created responsive solutions, and implemented these solutions provides Judy with opportunities to grow in practical wisdom. In her work in Marycrest, Judy is supported by a more experienced mentor who can help with this critical reflection.

These are just a few examples of the opportunities students have for growing in practical wisdom within the UD learning community.

VI. A Campus that Educates for Practical Wisdom

Often at graduation we may recall how a particular student developed and changed over the time they have been on the campus. We have watched them grow in their awareness of and skill in working with differences, their ability to critically evaluate taken-for-granted assumptions, their ability to use multiple perspectives in making decisions, and their openness to encounter and learn from new experiences. We have the satisfaction of knowing that the many facets of campus life have provided a challenging and supportive environment for this student's developmental journey. In this section several facets of the college student's developmental journey to practical wisdom will be examined and followed by some guidelines for creating learning experiences that promote the growth of practical wisdom.

A. Forms of Mind, Learning, and the Developmental Journey

Growing in practical wisdom is a developmental journey. This developmental journey will be briefly described by integrating elements from two interrelated perspectives. The first perspective uses the research and theory of King and Kitchner (1994) on the transformations of "how a student knows" or "the student's habits of inquiry and reflection," what they call reflective judgment. King and Kitchner adapt Dewey's concept of reflective judgments that are used in creating solutions to ill-formed problems. In this paper, the work of King and Kitchner can help describe the developmental path for growth in problem-focused practical reasoning (reflective judgment) in addressing adaptive challenges (ill-formed problems). King and Kitchner made the observation that "...people's assumptions about what and how something can be known provide a lens that shapes how individuals frame a problem and how they justify the beliefs about it in the face of uncertainty (1994, xvi)." King and Kitchner's Reflective Judgment Model has seven stages that reflect a distinctive set of assumptions about knowledge, and these assumptions result in different strategies for the inquiry and solution of adaptive challenges. The seven stages may be clustered into pre-reflective thinking (Stage 1, 2, and 3), quasi-reflective thinking (stages 4 and 5), and reflective thinking (stages 6 and 7).

The second perspective describes the development and transformation of young adults in three areas: cognitive (How do I know?), the intrapersonal (Who Am I?), and interpersonal/societal (How do I form relationships near and far?). This perspective builds on Kegan's work on the evolution forms of mind (2000) or complexity of thinking (2016) and the related work of King and Baxter Magolda (2005) on a developmental model of intercultural maturity, and Baxter Magolda (2008) on self-authorship. This perspective complements the cognitive orientation of King and Kitchner's work and provides a more integrated framework for understanding growth in practical wisdom.

All the authors mentioned above utilize the constructivist-developmental approach to describing the developmental journey. The approach holds that humans actively construct their perspectives by interpreting their experiences (i.e. constructivism), and that these constructions form meaning, making structures that evolve over time (i.e. developmentalism). Learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon the current or past knowledge. The learner selects and transforms information, constructs hypotheses, and makes decisions, relying on past knowledge to do so.

While there are several names given to "meaning making structures," in this white paper we will use Kegan's (2000) and Carver Berger's (2016) phrase "form of mind." A form of mind is the level of complexity in our mental processes; i.e., our ways of sensing the world, the manner in which we make judgment and draw conclusions, the way thinking relates to acting, as well as the complexity of our

knowledge, beliefs and convictions. Developmental theorists indicate that a person’s form of mind will evolve to different stages or levels of complexity during their lifetime. This development occurs when dissonance with one’s form of mind prompts consideration of a new, more complex form of mind.

The development of forms of mind enables a distinction to be made between different types of learning – informational learning and transformational learning. Informational learning is learning that increases what we know, but not how we know and understand the world. As Mezirow (2000, p 51) indicates informational learning allows for “changes in one’s fund of knowledge, one’s confidence as a learner, one’s motives in learning, [and] one’s self esteem...” Transformational learning refers to the process where our forms of mind are transformed to make them “more inclusive, discriminating, open emotionally, capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action” (Mezirow 2000, p7). Figure 3 below illustrates the continuum of learning. For our learning community, educating for practical wisdom is important so that we utilize both informational and transformational learning. Informational learning allows the student to develop the advanced fund of knowledge and skills needed for growth in problem-focused practical

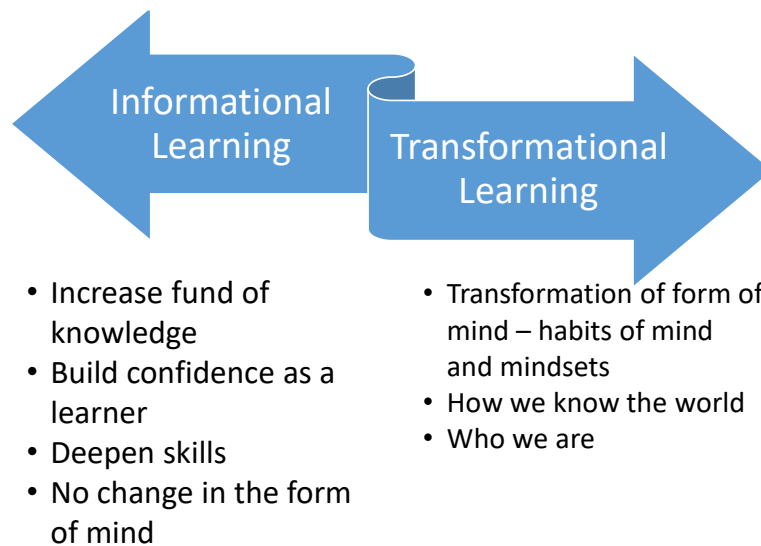


Figure 3: The Learning Continuum

wisdom. Transformational learning is necessary if students are to identify, surface, question, and challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions that are integral to addressing and resolving adaptive challenges.

B. Forms of Mind and Practical Reasoning

Forms of Mind shape the quality of a student’s practical reasoning. Forms of reasoning that are exhibited by young adults are described below. We use the names for these forms of mind that are used by Kegan (2000) and Garvey Burger (2012).

1. The Instrumental Practical Reasoner: Persons utilizing the instrumental form of mind do not recognize or acknowledge uncertainty of knowledge or do not see the complexity of the adaptive challenge being considered. In exercising practical reasoning, they tend to frame problems based on knowledge that is obtained through the work of experts or authority figures or based on personal observation. In creating solutions, the concept of the good toward which action is directed is derived from assumptions received from family or from experts and is not questioned. The practical reasoner using the instrumental form of mind does not use evidence to reason toward the choice of strategies to

be pursued, and their thinking about strategies often lacks coherence. Decisions are made based solely on personal opinion. The uncertainty in addressing adaptive challenges is attributed to missing information or that experts have not found the correct solution. In implementing solutions, the practical reasoner using the instrumental form of mind tends to be rigid in their implementation of solutions and has difficulty in adapting to surprises. It is difficult for the practical reasoner using the instrumental form of mind to enter into constructive conversations because they are not open to alternative perspectives that others will bring to the conversation.

2. The Socialized Practical Reasoner: Persons utilizing the socialized form of mind are beginning to recognize or acknowledge the uncertainty of knowledge or the complexity of the adaptive challenge and no longer expect experts to solve all problems. There is a tendency to view knowledge as subjective because it is filtered through the reasoner's perceptions and judgments. The practical reasoner using a socialized form of mind frames the problems with more complexity than a reasoner with an instrumental form of mind but still somewhat narrowly and based on their own perceptions and criteria for judgment. In creating solutions, they are aware of conflicting points of view in the formulation of the good to be realized and strategies to realize the good, yet they often believe endorsing one alternative denies the legitimacy of other options. A practical reasoner using a socialized frame of mind often finds it difficult to reach a consensus on a solution because they have difficulty understanding the logic of another's perspective on the outcome and the strategies to be pursued. In implementing solutions, reasoners using the socialized form of mind adjust to surprises, but resist those surprises that call for a deeper rethinking of their solution.

3. The Self-Authoring Practical Reasoner: A person using a self-authoring form of mind realizes that knowledge is not given; solutions to adaptive challenges have to be actively constructed. They use multiple perspectives in framing a problem and are able to take into consideration the concerns of various stakeholders. The practical reasoner using the self-authoring form of mind can work with others through constructive conversations to develop a consensus on the best way to frame the problem. In creating a solution, the self-authoring practical reasoner is able to reason to the good to be realized in a given situation based on the principles of a moral tradition, able to appreciate other moral traditions and able to consider multiple options in creating a strategy for realizing the good. Again, through constructive conversations, the self-authoring practical reasoner is able to both advocate a position, but also deeply listen to the perspective of others. Quite often, out of these conversations they are able to create a solution that weaves together the multiple ideas into an effective solution. Reflective thinkers are very adaptive in the implementation of solutions, and they anticipate difficulties and reflect on how these difficulties might be overcome.

Figure 4: Practical Reasoning Using Kegan's Forms of Mind (top of the next page) illustrates the major developmental movements in practical reasoning. To promote the growth in practical wisdom, it will be important to realize that a student will come to the university as an instrumental practical reasoner or as a socialized practical reasoner. As a campus community, we must realize that our students grow best when they continuously experience an appropriate blend of support and challenge. As faculty and staff, we need to recognize and respect the level of practical reasoning of students and through our creation of challenging learning experiences and by mentoring, encourage them to grow in excellence in problem-focused practical wisdom.

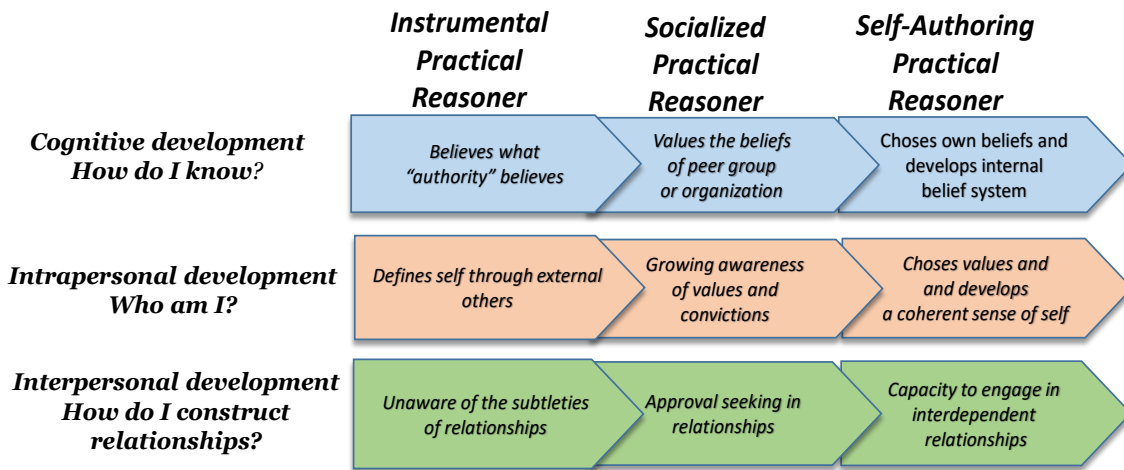


Figure 4: Practical Reasoning Using Kegan's Forms of Mind

C. Designing Learning Experiences for Growth in Practical Wisdom

In order to support our students on the developmental journey to practical wisdom, our faculty and staff must intentionally design learning experiences that promote the developmental journey. As an educational community, we must work together to design and implement an intentional developmental community, i.e., a rich ecology of relationships and opportunities that promote the development and transformation of our students. Summarized below are some guidelines for designing these learning experiences that, when woven together, create a campus learning environment that educates for practical wisdom.

1. Provide opportunities to address adaptive challenges. As was indicated above, real human problems, like hunger, inadequate public schools, multi-generational poverty, etc., are adaptive challenges; i.e., they are so complex, ill-defined, and ambiguous that there is no agreement or expert way to frame the problems or agreed-upon solutions. In these situations, the wise practical reasoner, usually working with a group, has to exercise problem-focused practical reasoning. While students will learn necessary skills by addressing well-structured problems, like producing a coherent and grammatically correct sentence or certain mathematical operations, it will be important that students are asked to address adaptive challenges or ill-defined problems. A good example is asking a student to reflect on an adaptive challenge such as the reflection paper assigned to Jack, our student in the introductory philosophy class, on how to apply Aristotle's social ethics to the contemporary issue of racial justice. Learning skills to address adaptive challenges can be developed at every level of the curriculum.

Campus life presents many opportunities for addressing an adaptive challenge. When Margaret organizes a group around a special-interest house on sustainability, she will have to lead the members in addressing an adaptive challenge. All of the students in the group had some interest in sustainability, but many hours of constructive conversations will be required to develop consensus around a mission and goals for the house, actually implementing these goals and eventually reflecting on how well they were implemented. Being a leader of a student organization, like Ralph, who is the president of the Appalachia Club, present students with many opportunities to address adaptive challenges, such as raising money for the summer immersion program, the lack of student participation, etc.

2. Provide opportunities to become acquainted with various moral traditions and to build a consistent moral orientation to one's life. Many components of the Common Academic Program, as well as components of the curriculum in the disciplines and the professional fields, are designed to give students a coherent introduction and advanced understanding of important moral traditions of our world community. The Humanities Commons provides an introduction to the Catholic moral tradition as well as other moral traditions that have been developed over the centuries. For a student to become a wise practical reasoner, it will be important that they learn to apply these moral traditions to addressing the moral issues that arise in their discipline or professional field. For our students to build a consistent moral orientation to their lives, they must have opportunities to critically reflect with others on important moral issues and how these might be addressed. Community-engaged learning, immersion trips, retreats and a variety of other campus-life opportunities enable students to become aware of important moral issues and apply what they have learned in a classroom setting to how these issues might be addressed. The university disciplinary process is designed not only to reinforce norms of community behavior, but to encourage students to seriously reflect on how their behavior negatively impacts their own human dignity and the human dignity of others and as well as the common good of the campus community.

3. Provide opportunities to engage in analytical and narrative reasoning (Brunner, p 11ff). In analytical reasoning, or what Brunner calls paradigmatic reasoning, things and events are detached from their situation and represented by abstract and systematic propositions. Analytical reasoning attempts to view problematic situations through general patterns of cause and effect. By transferring problematic situations into abstract concepts, the practical reasoner can use the rules of logic and discourse to generate conclusions marked with coherence, clarity, and certainty. In exercising narrative rationality, the practical reasoner gives meaning and significance to a problematic situation by placing it in a broader ongoing story or context of meaningful interaction. Narrative rationality integrates experience through analogy and metaphor. Narrative rationality does not provide the certainty of analytic rationality but allows the practical reasoner to make sense of the problematic situation as a context for action.

One of the important roles of liberal arts education is to enrich the imagination and provide opportunities to develop the skills of narrative rationality. Narrative rationality can often provide a compassionate understanding of people who are involved in the problematic situation. For Joan, our first-year student who is analyzing hunger in an urban community, her appreciation of the problem of hunger is enriched by the stories she heard in spending time to share a meal and talk with persons utilizing the food pantry. Her appreciation of the problem is richer because she has the opportunity to integrate thoughtful analysis of the data on hunger with the perspective she has developed through the stories of those who experience hunger.

4. Provide opportunities to integrate abstract knowledge and principles on one hand with the demands of a particular situation on the other. The theory of an academic discipline or of a profession provides a knowledge base and principles that will be useful in framing and solving problems. The wise practical reasoner has to balance theory and principles with the exigencies of the situation. A novel situation may present a challenge which does not adequately fit the principles and practical experience of the knowledge base, yet the wise practical reasoner must put together a solution that is at least a reasonable response to the situation.

Good capstone courses provide the opportunity for students to integrate the advanced knowledge and skills of their discipline or profession and relate them to an adaptive challenge, which is almost always a messy, complex and ill-defined problem. Faculty who teach and mentor capstone experiences have to create open-ended challenges that enhance the student's ability to utilize problem-focused practical

reasoning with the occasional appropriate guidance. Abbey and her teammates, who participated in the Operations Management project to redesign the food distribution system at the Catholic Social Services food pantry, had the challenge of integrating the principles, logistics and process design to an ill-defined problem. In creating their solution, the team was guided by their client at the food pantry who kept them grounded on the exigencies of the food pantry and by their faculty member helping them to select the appropriate principles and knowledge of the discipline that was required. The capstone experience provided Abbey and her teammates with skill and the confidence that they were developing the capacity to integrate advanced knowledge and skills with the requirements of an adaptive challenge.

5. Provide opportunities to encounter others with diverse perspectives. Our efforts to create a campus with a diversity of students result in opportunities for our students to encounter others with different perspectives. To encounter others takes a student beyond just being in classes together or sharing a common dining hall, to sharing experiences and perspectives on important issues shaping our campus and the larger world. Classroom conversations that encourage and welcome a variety of perspectives expose students to experiences and interpretations that are different, often vastly different, and challenge them to make their own forms of mind more inclusive of diverse perspectives. Creating opportunities where a diverse group of students can come together to share meals or to work on common projects provides a context for developing friendships and conversational partners that enable our students to see the world with complexity and richness. Bringing a diversity of perspectives through our different campus lecture series provides another opportunity for students to expand their perspectives on the world and to be inspired by the vocational journey of people who are making a difference in the world.

6. Provide opportunities to integrate reasoning and emotion. Emotions are cognitions that indicate and point to something of value to a practical reasoner. To become a good practical reasoner, it is important to be able to critically reflect on our emotions and appreciate what they might be telling us about what is valuable to us in a particular situation. “A wise person knows how to make emotions an ally of reason, to rely on emotions to signal what the situation calls for, and to inform judgment without distorting it” (Schwartz, p 24). A wise practical reasoner must develop compassion that not only understands the intellectual dimension of addressing human problems, but understands the experience of people who are oppressed by these problems as well as how their own pattern of living contributes to the problem.

Helping students appreciate the importance of integrating their reasoning with emotions and developing the skills to do so is not a task that is greatly appreciated in contemporary higher education. Yet one of the benefits to our students of a liberal education is the opportunity to enrich their perspectives on life through being engaged in the experiences of great literature and theater and to be awestruck by the beauty of art and dance. All of these experiences enrich the life of our students and provide a more fully human form of mind. Often when a student returns from an intense immersion experience in another culture or from being present to people who are at the margins of society, he or she needs both time and support to process and appreciate how these experiences have not only changed their thinking, but also their emotions and feelings – their compassion. A student often experiences a situation or crisis which touches them at a deep emotional level -- a death of a parent or a close friend, the breakup of a relationship, or being involved in a disciplinary process. These experiences also need support by faculty and staff who can help the student work through both the intellectual and emotional aspects of these crises.

7. Provide opportunities for reflective discourse and constructive conversations. Experiences in the classroom and through campus life should provide opportunities to engage students in reflective discourse. Development and transformation to high forms of mind come when students have the

opportunity for reflective discourse, i.e., opportunities to consciously and critically reflect on their habits of mind and assumptions. Reflective discourse provides the opportunity for a student to engage in dialogue with others to better understand the meaning of an experience and to question the assumptions used in interpreting that experience (Mezirow, p 10-11). Courses at all levels within the university curriculum provide the opportunities for reflective discourse.

Being a wise practical reasoner requires skills in constructive conversations. The wise practical reasoner designs actions, and these actions have an impact on the lives of others. The formulation of a problem and its potential solution often requires the mobilizing of important stakeholders in the problematic situation into a conversation in which conflicts about the description of the problem and conflicts in beliefs used to construct and judge solutions can be addressed and resolved. Orchestrating and resolving these conflicts are important skills in the repertoire of a wise practical reasoner. Practical wisdom is most often carried out in conversations in which persons seek to determine the right action through dialogical exchange with others that are involved in the problematic situation.

8. Provide opportunities for committed engagement. The university has a long tradition of providing students with opportunities for committed service through community-engaged learning and through service and immersion activities. Through the Human Rights Center, students address human trafficking through advocacy and research; through the Center for Social Concern, students partner with the people of Appalachia; and through the ETHOS Program in the School of Engineering, students can partner with people in diverse circumstances to improve their quality of life through appropriate technology. These are just a sampling of opportunities available to students. The opportunities play an important role in educating students for practical wisdom that will allow them to be transformative leaders who work for the common good. These opportunities of committed engagement can be greatly enhanced when academic departments collaborate with one of the opportunities for immersion, such as an Anthropology professor teaming with the Center for Social Concern to develop a semester-long course that prepares students for an immersion with people who are struggling with social justice in El Salvador. It is important that we not see these activities as nice-to-have extracurricular activities, but as an essential part of the educating for practical wisdom, and find ways to provide the resources that make these opportunities available for all students.

9. Provide opportunities to engage with mentors. Several of the guidelines above indicated the important role of mentors, significant individuals who both guide students on the journey to practical wisdom and model for them the mind and heart of a practically wise, practical person. Professors in the classroom are able to ignite the desire for learning in students through the expectations for excellence, the depth of their knowledge and their engagement and care for students. The professor who guides a capstone course can educate and model the practices of a practically wise person by the way they guide students as they struggle to address an adaptive challenge. A member of the student life or campus ministry staff can be a guide as a student addresses and works through a crisis, like the death of a parent or the breakup of a relationship. Becoming a community that educates for practical wisdom will require us to create a rich ecology of relationships with a variety of mentors who can create opportunities for students to grow as practically wise persons who desire to be transformative leaders, and at the same time, can model the excellence in learning and scholarship, a rich appreciation of differences, a commitment to reflective discourse and constructive conversations, and a commitment to the common good.

10. Provide opportunities to grow in virtues and character. The concept of practical wisdom developed in this white paper has stressed the importance of a moral tradition. A moral tradition not only provides images and principles for constructing and judging the good, but a set of virtues that guide one to realizing the good. As an example, in the classical and Catholic tradition, practical wisdom is supported

by a virtue of justice – living in right relations with God, self, others, institutions and creation; fortitude or courage – capacity to be resilient and steadfast in the exercise of practical wisdom; and temperance – sense of balance between extremes and between ideals and the realities of life.

This section endeavors to provide a framework for creating, sustaining, and innovating a learning environment that educates for practical wisdom. Building on an understanding of the developmental journey of the student, the different levels or phases of the journey toward practical wisdom have been outlined. Finally, a set of guidelines has been provided to guide our work of designing and implementing an intentional developmental community, i.e., a rich ecology of relationships and opportunities that promote the development and transformation of our students on their journey toward practical wisdom. This journey will enable them to develop the knowledge, skills, and moral foundations they will need to be successful in work and life and to sustain and nourish a vocation of leadership for justice, peace, and reconciliation.

VII. Key Learning Objectives on the Journey to Practical Wisdom

As indicated in the introduction *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*, we created a set of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (Appendix B) that have been incorporated into the university's Common Academic Program (CAP) and have provided a framework for designing and evaluating all facets of the university's undergraduate experience. In this section, learning objectives that support the SLO of practical wisdom are outlined; i.e., specific results that facilitate the realization of practical wisdom are now in the formal and informal curriculum of the university. This section is organized in three parts: 1) the interdependence of practical wisdom with the other SLOs, 2) key learning objectives for practical wisdom, and 3) learning objective from the other SLOs that support growth in practical wisdom.

The Interdependency of the HIR SLOs

The educational power of the seven SLOs is not only in their individual focus but in the multiple ways they reinforce one another. The interdependencies of practical wisdom to the other SLOs is illustrated in Table 2 (top of next page).

Learning Objectives for Practical Wisdom

The five key elements identified in Section III are used to organize these learning objectives.

1. **Framing the Problem:** Sensing the multiple components of the problem, organizing information to understand the structure of the problem, and involving key stakeholders.
 - a. **Reading the Social Context:** Student demonstrates the ability to read a social context by identifying important problem elements.
 - b. **Organizing Information and Knowledge:** Student demonstrates advanced capability of organizing information and knowledge to develop a well-framed description of the problem.
 - c. **Identify Stakeholders:** Student identifies those persons and groups (stakeholders) that have a stake in the problem and its solution.
 - d. **Identify Stakeholder Interest:** Student identifies stakeholder interest and concerns in the problem and its solution.

Table 2: A Learning Community that Supports the Journey to Practical Wisdom		
Other SLOs	Other SLOs contribute to Practical Wisdom	Practical Wisdom Supports Other SLOs
Scholarship	Exercising practical wisdom requires critical thinking skills and intellectual curiosity and creativity.	Undertaking a project that addresses an important human problem can be an important piece of scholarship.
Faith traditions	Practical wisdom requires an intellectually informed, appreciative, and critical understanding of different faith traditions.	The vision of the good contained in faith traditions can be translated by practical wisdom into the good of a society or a community.
Diversity	Exercising practical wisdom requires diverse perspectives on all facets of human culture and society.	Practical wisdom is required to make diversity productive for community and society at large.
Community	Creating the solution of important human problems requires the constructive collaboration of many.	Communities are initiated, led, sustained, and renewed through the practice of practical wisdom.
Critical evaluation of our times	Appreciation of the challenges that are shaping our present and future provide the starting point for the exercise of practical wisdom.	Exercising practical wisdom is necessary to evaluate critically and imaginatively and respond to the challenges of our times.
Vocation	Sense of identity and purpose is an important foundation for exercising practical wisdom.	Exercising practical wisdom enables a person to critically and imaginatively evaluate, develop, and transform their identity and purpose.

2. **Solving the Problem:** Imagining a shared desired future, construction options to realize the desired future, and deliberating to choose an option.
 - a. **Imagining the Future:** Student is able to collaborate with others to create a shared vision of the future.
 - b. **Creating and Deliberating on Options:** Student is able to creatively construct appropriate options for change and deliberate on the strengths and weakness of each option.
 - c. **Flexibly Balancing Conflicting Goods:** Student is able to improvise, balancing conflicting aims and interpreting rules and principles in light of the particularities of social context.
3. **Implementing the Solution:** Marshalling resources to implement the solution and adapt to the unexpected.
 - a. **Organizing People and Groups for Action:** Student is able to engage and motivate people and groups to implement the option for change.

- b. **Marshalling Resources:** Student is able to mobilize physical and financial resources to implement the option for change.
 - c. **Adapting to the Unexpected:** Student is able to appropriately change course when encountering obstacles or surprises.
4. **Reflecting on Change and Process:** Learning through evaluation of change and the process used.
- a. **Reflecting on Experience:** Student demonstrates that he/she has reflected multiple times during the phase of practical wisdom to critique and enrich her/his fund of knowledge, theoretical and practical, and to critique and enrich his/her moral tradition.
 - b. **Meaning Making:** Student demonstrates that he/she has reflected on the meaning of his/her work of using practical wisdom to address an important human problem.
5. **Engaging in Constructive Team Work:** Working collaboratively in implementing an inquiry that requires executing the phases of practical wisdom.
- a. **Constructive Conversations:** Student demonstrates the ability to organize constructive conversations that enable people with diverse backgrounds to creatively collaborate in addressing specific questions. The conversation is structured to enable people to state their different perspectives, work toward mutual understanding of differences, and develop a consensus on answers to the question.
 - b. **Balancing Inquiry and Advocacy:** Student is able to balance inquiry and advocacy. Inquiry is respectfully asking questions of others to promote understanding of their arguments and conclusions. Advocacy is making arguments and conclusions in a way that others can appreciate them and in a way that invites inquiry.
 - c. **Regulating Emotions:** Student knows how to make emotions an ally of reason, to rely on emotions to signal what a situation calls for, and to inform judgment without distorting it.
6. **Growing in the Fund of Theoretical and Practical Knowledge:** Having a knowledge base to address real human problems.
7. **Committing to a Moral Tradition:** Standing within a moral tradition (a concept of human flourishing that includes the dignity of a human person and the common good).
- a. **Discerning the Good:** Student demonstrates a coherent moral framework by being able to state the moral principles and beliefs that were used in each phase of practical reasoning.
 - b. **Social Justice:** Student is able to identify issues of social justice in the problems being addressed.

These learning objectives will be refined as they are used to design and access learning experiences that contribute to the SLO of Practical Wisdom.

Learning Objectives for the Other SLOs that Contribute to Growth in Practical Wisdom

The other SLOs of the HIR contribute to the journey toward practical wisdom. Listed below are some of the important ways this can happen.

1. **Scholarship:** All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate advanced habits of academic inquiry and creativity.
 - a. **Constructing Knowledge:** Student is aware that knowledge is the outcome of a process of reasonable inquiry in which the solutions to adaptive challenges are constructed. The adequacy of a problem solution is evaluated in terms of what is most reasonable or probable on the basis

of the current evidence and is reevaluated when relevant new evidence, perspectives, or tools of inquiry become available. Students have a sense of humility about their knowledge.

- b. **Justifying Arguments:** Student is aware that arguments and conclusions are justified probabilistically on the basis of a variety of interpretive considerations, such as the weight of the evidence, the explanatory value of the interpretations, the risk of erroneous conclusions, the consequences of alternative judgments, and the interrelationships of these factors.
2. **Faith Tradition:** All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate intellectually informed, appreciative, and critical inquiry regarding major faith traditions.
 - a. **Appreciate Diverse Moral Traditions:** Students demonstrate an appreciation of diverse faith traditions and their definition of the good person and the good society.
 - b. **Application of Catholic Social Tradition:** Students demonstrate the ability to apply the principles of the Catholic social tradition to the questions investigated in the different phases of problem-focused practical wisdom.
3. **Diversity:** All undergraduates will develop intellectually informed, appreciative, and critical understanding of the many dimensions of diversity.
 - a. **Taking the Perspective of Others:** Student is able to take on the perspective of another. Student is able to see the situation as the other does and thus understand how the other person feels.
 - b. **Ability to Engage Diversity:** Students develop the capacity to engage in meaningful, interdependent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences; to understand ways individual and community practices affect social systems; and to be willing to work for the rights of others.
4. **Community:** All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate understanding of and practice the values and skills necessary for learning, living, and working in communities of support and challenge.
 - a. **Creating Community:** Students demonstrate an appreciation that community is created by conversations that address common concerns and create shared responses to these concerns.
 - b. (See the learning objectives under **Engaging in Constructive Team Work**)
5. **Critical Evaluation of our Times:** All undergraduates, through interdisciplinary study and informed by Catholic social teaching, are able to critically and imaginatively evaluate the ethical, historical, social, political, technological, economic, and ecological challenges of their times in light of the past.
 - a. **Identifying Important Problems:** Student demonstrates the ability to identify critical issues of our times and indicate why they are critical issues.
 - b. **Applying Problem Focused Practical Wisdom:** Student demonstrates the ability to use problem-focused practical wisdom in evaluating critical issues of our times
6. **Vocation:** All university undergraduates will develop and demonstrate the ability to articulate reflectively the purpose of their lives and proposed work through the language of vocation.
 - a. **Reflecting on Vocation:** Students critically reflect on how the experience using practical wisdom to address important human problems influences the development of purpose in their lives and focuses their sense of vocation.

These learning objectives can be used to enrich classes focused on practical wisdom and to take advantage of the interdependencies of the HIR SLOs.

VIII. Conclusion

This white paper presents the work of the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom. In this paper we have traced the evolution of “practical wisdom” as Student Learning Outcome (SLO) for the Common Academic Program. A working statement on practical wisdom as one of the important aims of a UD education was derived by organizing insights and concepts from the *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* and the *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*. The important elements of this definition were developed to provide a deeper understanding of practical wisdom. In order to provide some concreteness to our discussion, we provided some examples of how growth in practical wisdom can be facilitated through our academic programs and campus life programs. We then turned our attention to the task of creating “a campus that educates for practical wisdom.” We introduced the concept of the developmental journey to practical wisdom and the phases or levels of development in practical reasoning that are part of the developmental journey. The concept of the developmental journey allowed the HIR Fellows on Practical Wisdom to develop some guidelines for crafting a “campus ecology” of persons and activities that support a growth in practical wisdom. The last section explores learning objectives that can support the realization of the SLO of practical wisdom. The first part of this exploration shows the interdependence of practical wisdom to the other SLOs of the Common Academic Program; the second part develops some learning objectives that can support the realization of practical wisdom outcome. These learning objectives can provide a starting point for faculty and staff looking to create learning experiences that promote practical wisdom.

We started our development of practical wisdom with a paragraph from the *Common Themes* document which described the SLO of practical wisdom. It can also serve as a fitting conclusion.

“Our University community strives for excellence in integrated learning and scholarship in search of truth and wisdom. In our Catholic and Marianist traditions of learning we seek to render truth and wisdom practical and to transform the world into place of greater realization of the truly human good. At the University of Dayton, we strive to develop a community of learners and scholars who, individually and collectively, think both critically and imaginatively, judge from sound moral principles and practical knowledge, and work collaboratively for the common good.”

Educating for Practical Wisdom

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Appendix A

Habits of Inquiry and Reflection Practical Wisdom Fellows

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Assistant Dean
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**Appendix B:
Student Learning Outcomes
Common Academic Program**

1. Scholarship: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate advanced habits of academic inquiry and creativity through the production of a body of artistic, scholarly or community-based work intended for public presentation and defense.

2. Faith traditions: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate ability to engage in intellectually informed, appreciative, and critical inquiry regarding major faith traditions. Students will be familiar with the basic theological understandings and central texts that shape Catholic beliefs and teachings, practices, and spiritualities. Students' abilities should be developed sufficiently to allow them to examine deeply their own faith commitments and also to participate intelligently and respectfully in dialogue with other traditions.

3. Diversity: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate intellectually informed, appreciative, and critical understanding of the cultures, histories, times, and places of multiple others, as marked by class, race, gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, and other manifestations of difference. Students' understanding will reflect scholarly inquiry, experiential immersion, and disciplined reflection.

4. Community: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate understanding of and practice in the values and skills necessary for learning, living, and working in communities of support and challenge. These values and skills include accepting difference, resolving conflicts peacefully, and promoting reconciliation; they encompass productive, discerning, creative, and respectful collaboration with persons from diverse backgrounds and perspectives for the common purpose of learning, service, and leadership that aim at just social transformation. Students will demonstrate these values and skills on campus and in the Dayton region as part of their preparation for global citizenship.

5. Practical wisdom: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate practical wisdom in addressing real human problems and deep human needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values, and skills in their chosen profession or major course of study. Starting with a conception of human flourishing, students will be able to define and diagnose symptoms, relationships, and problems clearly and intelligently, construct and evaluate possible solutions, thoughtfully select and implement solutions, and critically reflect on the process in light of actual consequences.

6. Critical evaluation of our times: Through multidisciplinary study, all undergraduates will develop and demonstrate habits of inquiry and reflection, informed by familiarity with Catholic Social Teaching, that equip them to evaluate critically and imaginatively the ethical, historical, social, political, technological, economic, and ecological challenges of their times in light of the past.

7. Vocation: Using appropriate scholarly and communal resources, all undergraduates will develop and demonstrate ability to articulate reflectively the purposes of their life and proposed work through the language of vocation. In collaboration with the university community, students' developing vocational plans will exhibit appreciation of the fullness of human life, including its intellectual, ethical, spiritual, aesthetic, social, emotional, and bodily dimensions, and will examine both the interdependence of self and community and the responsibility to live in service of others.

Appendix C: Practical Wisdom in the University Documents

*From Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*⁶

Commentary on Practical Wisdom (Page 8)

Practical wisdom: The innovative and transformative purposes of higher education in a Catholic and Marianist context mean that the search for wisdom and truth that defines any university must ultimately be rendered practical. A Catholic, Marianist university strives to cultivate wisdom in the adoption of practical ends, in practical judgment, and in reflective decision-making. These purposes are to be distinguished from mere skill in the fruitful practical application of knowledge. A Catholic, Marianist university aims to educate persons for good and whole lives, developing rigorous theoretical understanding yet also influencing sensibilities, motives, and conduct in academically appropriate and relevant ways.

Cultivation of practical wisdom requires that deep immersion in the world through experience, activity, and imaginative exploration be central to a university education. In particular, university education must address real human problems and needs. This is why descriptions of Catholic, Marianist education properly emphasize integration of liberal and professional education and the uniting of creative imagination with analytical forms of inquiry.

Mission of Undergraduate Education at the University of Dayton (Page 9 & 10)

Students educated in the Catholic and Marianist traditions at the University of Dayton pursue rigorous academic inquiry, in a sacramental spirit, and engage in vigorous dialogue, learning in, through, and for community. Guided by the purpose of transforming society for the ends of justice, peace, and the common good, the university's academic program challenges students to excellence in their majors, cultivates practical wisdom in light of the particular needs of the twenty-first century, and fosters reflection upon their individual vocations.

Practical Wisdom as a Student Learning Outcome (SLO)⁷ (page 11)

All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate practical wisdom in addressing real human problems and deep human needs, drawing upon advanced knowledge, values and skills in their chosen profession or major course of study. Starting with a conception of human flourishing, students will be able to define and diagnose symptoms, relationships and problems clearly and intelligently, construct and evaluate possible solutions, thoughtfully select and implement solutions, and critically reflect on the process in light of actual consequences.

⁶ Page numbers are from the e-commons text of *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*, http://ecommons.udayton.edu/senate_docs/23/ the numbers refer to the pages of the pdf.

⁷ This statement became a Student Learning Outcome (SLO) in the Common Academic Program.

From the *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*⁸

Theme 3: Educating for Practical Wisdom (pp 17-19)

Our University community strives for excellence in integrated learning and scholarship in search of truth and wisdom. In our Catholic and Marianist traditions of learning we seek to render truth and practical wisdom and to transform the world into a place of greater realization of the truly human good. At the University of Dayton, we strive to develop a community of learners and scholars who, individually and collectively, think both critically and imaginatively, judge from sound moral principles and practical knowledge, and work collaboratively for the common good.

Practical wisdom, in the classical and Catholic tradition, is excellence in practical reasoning. Practical reasoning represents the capacity to draw on knowledge and intellectual skills to engage concretely in the world. Practical reasoning allows the individual to go beyond reflection to deliberate and decide upon the best course of action within a particular situation.⁹ Engaged citizens and leaders of all sectors of society rely on this capacity for practical reasoning to construct the good in all facets of life. Practical reasoning allows one to *see* — to frame a problem or issue so that one understands causes; to *judge* — imagining the good to be realized and designing the appropriate response to realize the good; and to *act* — implementing that response. Practical reasoning also allows one to *reflect* — to untangle the complex web of experience and to draw practical knowledge from this experience.

Practical wisdom is a virtue or habit that combines skill in practical reasoning, a commitment to a moral tradition, and practical knowledge. A commitment to a moral tradition involves 1) knowledge, i.e., principles and beliefs, about the goods of human life and how to realize these goods and 2) a set of habits or virtues that support the realization of the goods of human life. Learning a moral tradition enriches the practical imagination, which proposes what we can make of our lives and the futures that we can hope for, both individually and collectively. Practical knowledge is obtained through reflection on past actions and is usually tacit knowledge about how one rightly connects a particular situation with the goods one would like to realize. Engaging in the journey toward practical wisdom is an important way to realize excellence in integrated learning.

In educating for practical wisdom, the University gives priority to the ways the Catholic intellectual tradition can provide conceptual and moral resources to recognize critical issues in particular situations, to imagine how the good can be realized in these situations, and practical guidelines to mobilize people to realize the good. In the Catholic intellectual tradition practical reasoning can be enriched by virtues like justice, fortitude and temperance and by openness to the grace of God.

Learning practical wisdom is a developmental journey – the interdependency of practical reasoning, a commitment to a moral tradition, and practical knowledge require a continual learning. Persons learn practical wisdom by exercising practical reasoning within a community of practice. Practical wisdom develops through conversations of inquiry, action, and reflection that are well-facilitated and well-mentored. In a Catholic university these conversations should involve many mentors who can demonstrate how the conceptual and moral resources of the Catholic intellectual and social traditions

⁸ Page numbers refer to pages in the Common Themes Brochure on the Vice President for Mission and the Rector <https://www.udayton.edu/rector/documents/index.php>

⁹ The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has been promoting practical reasoning as an important way of integrating liberal education and professional education. See specifically William Sullivan and Matthew Rosin, *A New Agenda for Higher Education: Shaping a Life of the Mind for Practice* (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2008) and Anne Colby, et. al., *Rethinking Undergraduate Business Education: Liberal Learning for the Profession* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

and the best of contemporary knowledge can be integrated in addressing issues of personal integrity and social responsibility.

In our globalized world we can encounter many injustices, for example, the suffering and misery caused by unjust economic structures, the lack of opportunity caused by local and global poverty, and the discrimination suffered by minorities and women. In the Catholic moral tradition, the virtue of compassion is an important complement to practical wisdom. Compassion allows us to enter into the suffering of others in a way that allows us to perceive the affliction of the other and our role in causing that affliction, with a willingness to interpret the context of injustice from the perspective of those who suffer, and with a commitment to create new relationships that can transform ourselves, our neighbor, the institutional structures of society.¹⁰ Local and overseas immersions are important in learning practical wisdom; they allow our students and faculty to enter into the plight of peoples and communities that suffer injustice.

Practical wisdom allows one to read the signs of the times and to be skillful in adaptation and change. Reading the signs of the times requires both a deep knowledge of the trends within one's world combined with knowledge of an intellectual and moral tradition that allows one to evaluate these trends. At the University of Dayton, we draw on profound and longstanding intellectual traditions, especially the Catholic intellectual tradition, to evaluate the trends of our society. We make these evaluations in an open and critical dialogue with others and with a hopeful spirit that seeks justice, peace, reconciliation, and the common good.

Cultivating practical wisdom enables students to develop a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives and to continually refine that purpose into a deeper sense of vocation. Learning in the Catholic and Marianist traditions strives to support students, inside and outside the classroom, to find and explore the deep purposes that lend meaning, wonder, and fulfillment to their lives. "These purposes consist not merely in what students may find themselves especially fit for pursuing but in what each student is especially called to do. The university's commitment to support students' discernment of their vocations in academically appropriate ways follows from the fundamental objective to educate whole persons, in mind, spirit, and body, for whole lives."¹¹

¹⁰ On the connection of compassion to practical reasoning see Maureen H. O'Connell, *Compassion: Loving our Neighbor in an Age of Globalization* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

¹¹ "Habits of Inquiry and Reflection," http://www.udayton.edu/artssciences/about/images/Habits_of_Inquiry.pdf p. 6

Appendix D: The Catholic Social Tradition and the Aim of Practical Wisdom

Note: This appendix is a slightly modified version of a section of a paper by Dr. Patricia Johnson and Bro. Raymond Fitz presented at Conference on Virtues, Vices, and Teaching, Calvin College, October 3-5, 2013. This section talks about Catholic social tradition as a practice of practical reasoning addressing social issues in dialogue with the Catholic intellectual tradition.

In its strategic vision the University of Dayton declares "... As a Catholic university our commitment to rigorous intellectual inquiry and vigorous dialogue is shaped by the insights of Catholic intellectual traditions that form Catholics and enlighten people of all faiths."¹² This commitment to the Catholic intellectual tradition has shaped in part the university's faculty recruitment and development strategy. The university intends to "cultivate faculty expertise in Catholic intellectual tradition across a wide spectrum of disciplines" and become "a first choice institution for faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized scholars and authorities on issues pertaining to Catholic intellectual tradition."¹³

The Common Academic Program intentionally incorporates "key elements of the Catholic intellectual tradition and its Marianist charism." The First Year Humanities Commons (courses in religious studies, philosophy, history, and English) should collectively "familiarize students with the central concepts and texts of the Catholic intellectual tradition." The Crossing Boundaries Courses (upper-level courses in Faith Traditions, Practical Ethical Action, Inquiry, Integration, and Social Justice and Diversity) are expected to strengthen the student's appreciation of the "Catholic intellectual tradition in significant ways."¹⁴

This section illustrates how the Catholic social tradition, informed and embedded in the Catholic intellectual tradition, can be an important resource for the practical reasoning around all the issues to be addressed in the Common Academic Program.

Appreciating the Catholic Social Tradition

The Catholic social tradition, informed and embedded in the Catholic intellectual tradition, is an important resource for both liberal and professional education in a Catholic university.¹⁵ The Catholic social tradition focuses the Catholic intellectual tradition on inquiry into important social questions, such as care for the poor, the conditions of labor, war and peace. This tradition has its implicit roots in the Old and New Testaments of the Christian scriptures in its concerns for the "widow, orphans, and aliens." This implicit development continued with work of the Church Fathers and the great Doctors of the Middle Ages. The Popes and Bishops of the Catholic Church began to explicitly address these important social questions in the midst of the dramatic political, social and cultural turmoil of the eighteenth century.¹⁶

¹² Strategic Plan 2006 -- http://www.udayton.edu/strategicplan/strategic_plan_introduction.htm

¹³ Strategic Plan 2006 – tactics under Goal 2 and Goal 3.2.

¹⁴ University of Dayton. Academic Senate. Academic Policies Committee, "The Common Academic Program" (2010). Senate Documents. Paper 9. http://ecommons.udayton.edu/senate_docs/9.

¹⁵ A description of the Catholic intellectual tradition can be found at <http://www.udayton.edu/rector/#7>.

¹⁶ An excellent summary of the scriptural and historical dimensions of the Catholic social tradition is given in Kenneth R. Himes, *Christianity and the Political Order: Conflict, Cooptation, and Cooperation* (Maryknoll, NY, Orbis Books, 2013).

Contributions to the Catholic Social Tradition have come from three interacting streams of inquiry:¹⁷

- **Catholic Social Teaching:** Through conciliar and synodal documents, encyclicals, and pastoral letters, the social teachings of the Catholic Church seek to bring the light of faith and the Church's tradition to address "the social question" in its local, national, and international dimensions.
- **Catholic Social Thought:** The church's social teachings inform and are informed by the various disciplines of knowledge. Theologians, philosophers, economists, political scientists, management theorists, educators, sociologists, and others have, throughout the years, developed a tradition of thought that extends the church's social teachings into the specifics of cultural, economic, and political life.
- **Catholic Social Practice:** Catholic social teaching and thought will not develop without the contributions of managers, lawyers, peace activists, politicians, social workers, unionists, and the various organizations of such practitioners. Pope John Paul II has strongly pointed out that more than ever, "the Church is aware that her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions than as a result of its internal logic and consistency."

Given the importance of practical reasoning in the integration of liberal education and professional education, it can be helpful to view the Catholic social tradition as having two complementary dimensions: 1) the *ongoing practice of practical reasoning* by the Catholic community and 2) the *principles and practical knowledge* that result from this practical reasoning.

Catholic Social Tradition: A Practice of Practical Reasoning: The Catholic social tradition is the *practice* of practical reasoning by the Catholic community in dialogue with others, on important social questions, such as the condition of labor, international development, or war and peace. In conducting each movement of its practical reasoning, the Catholic community engages in a critical and reciprocal dialogue between the best of contemporary knowledge on the social question and the resources of the Catholic Christian faith (scripture and tradition). In this dialogue the contemporary knowledge on the social question both enriches our understanding of the resources of the Catholic Christian faith and raises important questions to be addressed by these resources. For example, the latest research on the AIDS epidemic in Africa can provide new insights or meaning into our scriptural text on the care of "widows and orphans." In the same manner, the resources of Catholic Christian faith both enrich our understanding of contemporary knowledge and raise important question to be addressed in the use of this knowledge. For example, the concern for the poor and the marginalized, which is a theme of the Catholic tradition, can help an investigator sharpen his or her questions about winners and losers in the global market economy and in free-trade agreements. The Catholic community, especially in the communities of social action, has used what is called the Cardijn method of social analysis and action. This method was named after a Belgian priest, Joseph Cardijn. He worked with some groups of laity on a weekly basis to systematically 1) see – observe and discuss their environment, 2) judge – judge the situation in the light of the gospel, and then 3) act – to bring about change.

Catholic Social Tradition: Principles and Practical Knowledge: Over time this practice of practical reasoning by the Catholic community yields a set of *principles*, i.e., beliefs for reflection, criteria for judgment, and directions for action that can guide practical reasoning on current and future social

¹⁷ Miles, Stephen, Michael Naughton, and Deborah Ruddy, "Educating practically wise professionals: The role of the Catholic social tradition in Catholic universities." *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 4.2 (Summer 2007): 437-457.

questions.¹⁸ These principles are expanded, refined, and critiqued as participants in the tradition apply practical reasoning to new situations and questions and to new understanding of previous situations and questions.

The Catholic social tradition endeavors to articulate a set of principles that together allows us to see what we as humans and communities can be at our very best.¹⁹ At the heart of the Catholic social traditions are two foundational principles: the dignity of the human person and the common good. From these foundational principles are derived principles that describe how the basic institutions of society ought to function in order to support human dignity and the common good. In addition, the Catholic social tradition articulates principles that help us understand the complex network of relationship within and among the basic institutions of society. The following brief summary of these principles is organized around foundational principles, principles for organizing society, principles pertaining to major institutions of society, and cross-cutting principles – principles which cut across all sectors of society.

Foundational Principles:

- **Dignity of the Human Person** – The Catholic social tradition proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of the moral vision of society. The individual has dignity simply by virtue of existing as a human person. The human person is not a static entity but on a developmental journey becoming who he or she is created and called to be. The Catholic tradition sees the human person as the image of God. As an image of God who is loving and wise, the human person shows forth dignity through the exercise of freedom in wise and loving ways.
- **Common Good** – The Catholic social tradition teaches that the human person is relational and that human dignity requires our relations to be both just and loving. The common good is the set of social conditions within society that ensures “all persons and groups are able to reach their human fulfillment more fully and more easily.”²⁰ The common good in our modern, complex, and pluralistic society must be determined through public deliberative conversations.

Principles for Organizing Society:

- **Subsidiarity** – In the Catholic social tradition, subsidiarity is a principle guiding the distribution of authority, responsibility, and accountability within the complex network of society with its various institutions. This principle insists that in hierarchical relations within society, decisions should be made at the most appropriate level. While higher-level authorities carry responsibility for decisions and actions for larger units, they should never supplant nor absorb the work and responsibilities of those closest to where decisions are to be made.
- **Solidarity** – Solidarity is a communitarian principle and virtue developed in the Catholic social tradition over the last 50 years in response to the growing interdependence and complexity of society. It has integrated traditional concepts of justice and compassion for those on the margins of society. As a moral virtue, solidarity is “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good. That is to say to the good of all and of each individual,

¹⁸ Pope Paul VI, *Octogesima adveniens*, no. 4, in David J. O’Brien, and Thomas A. Shannon. “Octogesima adveniens”, (1971). In *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 280-303.

¹⁹ There many ways to organize the principles of the Catholic social tradition. This organization emphasizes the basic institutions of society and their relationship to one another.

²⁰ Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 26. In O’Brien & Shannon, 172-250.

because we are all responsible for all.”²¹ Solidarity applies not only to our relationships that are close, extended family, neighborhood, but all relations extending to the international community.

Principles on the Basic Institutions of Society:

- **Family** – In the Catholic tradition, the family is the basic unit of society. “It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life.”²² Family life provides an essential introduction to life in society. Families provide a school where persons learn to care and take responsibility for each other. Parents are the first educators of their children. Society must support and strengthen families, but following the principle of subsidiarity (c.f. below), the society must take care not to usurp the parents’ obligation or to inappropriately interfere in its life.
- **Economy and Markets**²³ – The economy consists of those organizations and institutions that are involved in the producing, distributing, and consuming of goods and services. Markets are the institutions that enable parties in society to exchange goods and services. In the Catholic social tradition, the economy and markets exist for the person and the enhancement of human dignity. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation. Employers contribute to the common good through the services or products they provide and by creating jobs that uphold the dignity and rights of workers. Workers have responsibilities to their employers, co-workers, and to the common good. Workers, employers, and unions should not only advance their own interest, but also work together to advance economic justice and the well-being of all.
- **Government** – Government, at all levels, as the legitimate political authority, exists to bring coherence, unity, and organization to the life of society. Governments, along with the other institutions of society, work to promote human dignity, human rights, and the common good; government is to work for the good of all, not a dominant group. All people have a right to participate in the political institutions that contribute to the formation and operation of governments. Government functions should be performed at the lowest level possible as long as they can be performed adequately.
- **Civil Society** – Civil society consists of all those groups, organizations, and associations which are distinct from government and business organizations.²⁴ Civil society is constituted by so-called “intermediary institutions” such as professional associations, faith communities, labor unions, and citizen advocacy organizations that give a voice to various sectors of society and enrich public participation in democracies. The Catholic social tradition supports a strong civic society in order to build trust and cooperation within society and to provide persons with the opportunity to participate in shaping the structure and culture of a society.

²¹ John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38. in O’Brien & Shannon, 422-468.

²² Catholic Catechism, 2207.

²³ See the American Bishops Pastoral Letter, *Economic Justice for All*, in O’Brien & Shannon, 689-806.

²⁴ Which organizations belong to civil society is a contested issue, but this definition is a helpful one for the purposes of this Appendix

Cross-Cutting Principles:

- **Rights and Responsibilities** – Human dignity is respected and the common good fostered only if human rights are protected and basic responsibilities are met. Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for an adequate level of human flourishing. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.
- **Option for the Poor** – While the common good embraces all, those who are weak, vulnerable, and most in need deserve preferential concern. A moral test for our society is how we treat the most vulnerable in our midst.
- **Universal Designation of Goods** – The Catholic tradition sees God’s creation as intended for everyone – rich and poor, powerful and weak, now and in the future. “God destined the earth and all it contains for all men and all peoples so that all created things would be shared fairly by all mankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity.”²⁵
- **Stewardship of Creation** – Over the past decades, the Catholic social tradition has recognized the importance of being good stewards of creation. The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility toward the poor, future generations, and humanity as whole. The contemporary challenges of environment, ecology, climate change, etc. have important moral and ethical dimensions which must be considered as we shape the personal and societal dimensions of life.

These principles present a brief summary of what the Catholic community has learned, in dialogue with others, in addressing important social questions. As a living tradition, these principles always manifest a cutting edge of development as new issues are encountered. For example, the theme stewardship of creation has only been developed over the last 20 years as environment and climate change have become important issues of public dialogue and debate.

²⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*, 69. in O’Brien & Shannon, 172-250.