

**Guidelines for Addressing the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in  
Advanced Study CAP Course Proposals**

2/4/16

*Updated in Fall 2017 to replace Student Learning Outcomes with Institutional Learning Goals*

There are three Advanced Study Common Academic Program (CAP) components that are intended to further students' understanding of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition (CIT) and its resources: Advanced Study – Religious Studies, Advanced Study – Philosophical Studies, and Advanced Study – Historical Studies. For these courses, the CAP Committee (CAPC) will review proposals using the guidelines found in Appendix A. The portions of these guidelines that mention CIT are listed below. Language in italics was taken directly from the review guidelines, which originated in the Senate Approved CAP Proposal DOC-10-04.

- Advanced Studies (General)
  - *The following is addressed: The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study are indispensable for students' education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world.*
- Advanced Study – Historical Studies
  - *The following is addressed: Furthers students' understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.*
  - *The following is addressed: Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.*
- Advanced Study – Philosophical Studies
  - *The following is addressed: Students deepen their knowledge of the philosophical traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education.*
  - *The following is addressed: Furthers students' understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.*
  - *The following is addressed: Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service*
  - *And may also do the following: Draw on the philosophical resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition to address the challenges of their times.*
- Advanced Study – Religious Studies
  - *The following is addressed: Students deepen their knowledge of the religious traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education.*

- *The following is addressed: Furthers students' understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.*
- *The following is addressed: Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.*
- *And may also do the following: Examine ethics as a central feature of a religious tradition including the use of Catholic social teaching as a resource.*

Course proposals must *explicitly* address each of the guidelines pertaining to the component the course is intended to fulfill. Because furthering students' understanding of CIT and its resources are central to the Advanced Studies components, and distinguishes them from our other advanced CAP components, CIT will normally be referenced throughout the course proposal, including the following sections: "Statement of Need/Rationale," "Course Learning Objectives," and "Describe how this course will satisfy this CAP Component."

In order to assist you in conceptualizing the CIT and understanding some of its resources, please see the following:

- Appendix B: An excerpt from "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Mission of the University: A Continuing Conversation"
- Appendix C: The entirety of "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Mission of the University: A Continuing Conversation"
- Appendix D: "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: A Conversation at Boston College"

Although CIT must be explicitly addressed in Advanced Study course proposals and courses, it is not the goal of CAPC to evaluate the accuracy of proposers' specific conceptualization of CIT, as doing this would be inappropriate. Indeed...

***The catholic intellectual tradition is neither static nor complete. It is a dynamic conversation over time with a highly diverse range of dialectical partners: a conversation made of variant strands and a range of positions. The desire for truth that lies at the heart of the tradition demands that all assertions of truth, meaning, and purpose be tested by the best evidence against them—evidence that may be presented by anyone, of any or no religious tradition, who is engaged in serious inquiry. (The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: A Conversation at Boston College, p. 10, emphasis added)***

## APPENDIX A

# CAP COMMITTEE - CAP COURSE REVIEW GUIDELINES

Revised 09/05/2017

## ADVANCED STUDY IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES, PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY

As a Catholic and Marianist institution of higher education, the University regards religious studies and philosophy as having special roles in the undergraduate curriculum and in the attainment of University-wide learning goals. Students are expected to deepen their knowledge of the religious and philosophical traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education. Advanced study in these areas, especially when conducted through interdisciplinary courses, also assists students in constructing integrated knowledge of the central human questions examined in a liberal education. The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study are indispensable for students' education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world. By requiring every student to take six hours of courses in the areas of religious studies or philosophy and three hours in history beyond the 100 level, the University expects students to engage in liberal learning that connects theory and practice and to draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.

Students will have flexibility in fulfilling these requirements. First, these courses will frequently focus on issues related to, and satisfy the criteria for the Faith Traditions, Practical Ethical Action, Inquiry, and Integrative components of the CAP. Second, the criteria for these requirements are disciplinary-based in the fields of religious, philosophical, and historical studies and, therefore, not limited to specific departments. Courses offered outside the Departments of Philosophy, Religious Studies, and History may count towards the advanced religious, philosophical, and historical studies requirements if the courses draw extensively from those disciplinary perspectives and address in significant ways aspects of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Courses satisfying the advanced religious studies component might examine the central beliefs, texts, or practices of one or more religious traditions or movements; examine ethics as a central feature of a religious tradition including the use of Catholic social teaching as a resource; or examine cultural expressions of religious identity or tradition as the central focus of theological or religious studies. Courses satisfying the advanced philosophical studies component might evaluate competing solutions to theoretical or ethical options in the present day, or draw on the philosophical resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition to address the challenges of their times. Courses satisfying the advanced historical studies component might engage students in the study and analysis of primary materials to further develop students' historical sensibilities in a way that illuminates the historical dimensions of *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection* learning goals. The course could examine a historical topic drawing on the work of historians to show how interpretations of the past may change over time.

# CAP COMMITTEE - CAP COURSE REVIEW GUIDELINES

*Revised 09/05/2017*

<b>ADVANCED STUDY – RELIGIOUS STUDIES</b>	
<p>As a Catholic and Marianist institution of higher education, the University regards religious studies and philosophy as having special roles in the undergraduate curriculum and in the attainment of University-wide learning goals. Students are expected to deepen their knowledge of the religious and philosophical traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education. Advanced study in these areas, especially when conducted through interdisciplinary courses, also assists students in constructing integrated knowledge of the central human questions examined in a liberal education. The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study, are indispensable for students' education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world. With these courses, the University expects students to engage in liberal learning that connects theory and practice and to draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service. Courses satisfying the advanced religious studies component might examine the central beliefs, texts, or practices of one or more religious traditions or movements; examine ethics as a central feature of a religious tradition including the use of Catholic social teaching as a resource; or examine cultural expressions of religious identity or tradition as the central focus of theological or religious studies.</p>	
<b>All of the following are addressed:</b>	
	Course is beyond the 100 level.
	Students deepen their knowledge of the religious traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education.
	Assists students in constructing integrated knowledge of the central human questions examined in liberal education – especially when conducted as an interdisciplinary course.
	Furtheres students' understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.
	Engages students in liberal learning that connects theory and practice.
	Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.
<b>And may also do the following:</b>	
	Examine the central beliefs, texts, or practices of one or more religious traditions or movements.
	Examine ethics as a central feature of a religious tradition including the use of Catholic social teaching as a resource.
	Examine cultural expressions of religious identity or tradition as the central focus of theological or religious studies.
<b>And may:</b>	
	Focus on issues related to, and satisfy the criteria for, the Faith Traditions, Practical Ethical Action, Inquiry, and Integrative components of the CAP.
	Be offered by a department other than Religious Studies. The criteria for this requirement are disciplinary-based in the field of religious studies and, therefore, not limited to specific departments. Courses offered outside the Department of Religious Studies may count towards the advanced religious studies requirement if the course draws extensively from that disciplinary perspective and addresses in significant ways aspects of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

## INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING GOALS (ILGS)

	✓ All that apply. <b>REQUIRED Learning Goals are marked with ** and a thicker border.</b> <i>A minimum of one ILG is required for all CAP Courses.</i>					
	Scholarship	** Faith Traditions **	Diversity	Community	Practical Wisdom	Critical Evaluation of Our Times
Course learning objectives reflect which ILG(s)?						
Course content reflects the targeted ILG(s)						
Developmental level for ILG(s) is listed						
Method for student demonstration of ILG(s)						
Criteria for determining student achievement of ILG(s)						

# CAP COMMITTEE - CAP COURSE REVIEW GUIDELINES

*Revised 09/05/2017*

<b>ADVANCED STUDY – PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES</b>	
<p>As a Catholic and Marianist institution of higher education, the University regards religious studies and philosophy as having special roles in the undergraduate curriculum and in the attainment of University-wide learning goals. Students are expected to deepen their knowledge of the religious and philosophical traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education. Advanced study in these areas, especially when conducted through interdisciplinary courses, also assists students in constructing integrated knowledge of the central human questions examined in a liberal education. The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study, are indispensable for students' education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world. With these courses, the University expects students to engage in liberal learning that connects theory and practice and to draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service. Courses satisfying the advanced philosophical studies component might evaluate competing solutions to theoretical or ethical options in the present day, or draw on the philosophical resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition to address the challenges of their times.</p>	
<b>All of the following are addressed:</b>	
	Course is beyond the 100 level.
	Students deepen their knowledge of the philosophical traditions that inform the Catholic and Marianist education.
	Assists students in constructing integrated knowledge of the central human questions examined in liberal education – especially when conducted as an interdisciplinary course.
	Furthers students' understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.
	Engages students in liberal learning that connects theory and practice.
	Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.
<b>And may also do the following:</b>	
	Evaluate competing solutions to theoretical or ethical options in the present day.
	Draw on the philosophical resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition to address the challenges of their times.
<b>And may:</b>	
	Focus on issues related to, and satisfy the criteria for, the Faith Traditions, Practical Ethical Actions, Inquiry, and Integrative components of the CAP.
	Be offered by a department other than Philosophy. The criteria for this requirement are disciplinary-based in the field of philosophical studies and, therefore, not limited to specific departments. Courses offered outside the Department of Philosophy may count towards the advanced philosophical studies requirement if the course draws extensively from that disciplinary perspective and addresses in significant ways aspects of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

## INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING GOALS (ILGs)

	✓ All that apply. <b>REQUIRED Learning Goals are marked with ** and a thicker border.</b> <i>A minimum of one ILG is required for all CAP Courses.</i>						
	Scholarship	Faith Traditions	Diversity	Community	Practical Wisdom	Critical Evaluation of Our Times	Vocation
Course learning objectives reflect which ILG(s)?							
Course content reflects the targeted ILG(s)							
Developmental level for ILG(s) is listed							
Method for student demonstration of ILG(s)							
Criteria for determining student achievement of ILG(s)							

# CAP COMMITTEE - CAP COURSE REVIEW GUIDELINES

*Revised 09/05/2017*

ADVANCED STUDY – HISTORICAL STUDIES	
<p>The fields of philosophy and religious studies, together with historical study, are indispensable for students’ education in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Students will take courses beyond the 100 level in these fields to further their understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for their own personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformation of the social world. With these courses, the University expects students to engage in liberal learning that connects theory and practice and to draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service. Courses satisfying the advanced historical studies component might engage students in the study and analysis of primary materials to further develop students’ historical sensibilities in a way that illuminates the historical dimensions of <i>Habits of Inquiry and Reflection (HIR)</i> learning goals. The course could examine a historical topic drawing on the work of historians to show how interpretations of the past may change over time.</p>	
<b>All of the following are addressed:</b>	
	Course is beyond the 100 level.
	Furthers students’ understanding of the resources that the Catholic intellectual tradition offers for personal, professional, and civic lives and also for the just transformations of the social world.
	Engages students in liberal learning that connects theory and practice.
	Students draw upon the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition as they consider how to lead wise and ethical lives of leadership and service.
<b>And might/could do the following:</b>	
	Engage students in the study and analysis of primary materials to further develop students’ historical sensibilities in a way that illuminates the historical dimensions of <i>HIR</i> learning goals.
	Examine a historical topic drawing on the work of historians to show how interpretations of the past may change over time.
<b>And may:</b>	
	Focus on issues related to, and satisfy the criteria for, the Faith Traditions, Practical Ethical Actions, Inquiry, and Integrative components of the CAP.
	Be offered by a department other than History. The criteria for this requirement are disciplinary-based in the field of historical studies and, therefore, not limited to specific departments. Courses offered outside the Department of History may count towards the advanced historical studies requirement if the course draws extensively from that disciplinary perspective and addresses in significant ways aspects of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

## INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING GOALS (ILGS)

	✓ All that apply. <b>REQUIRED Learning Goals are marked with ** and a thicker border.</b> <i>A minimum of one ILG is required for all CAP Courses.</i>						
	Scholarship	Faith Traditions	Diversity	Community	Practical Wisdom	Critical Evaluation of Our Times	Vocation
Course learning objectives reflect which ILG(s)?							
Course content reflects the targeted ILG(s)							
Developmental level for ILG(s) is listed							
Method for student demonstration of ILG(s)							
Criteria for determining student achievement of ILG(s)							

## APPENDIX B

# UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

## Excerpt from “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Mission of the University: A Continuing Conversation”

### OFFICE OF THE RECTOR:

[http://www.udayton.edu/rector/resources/img/The\\_Catholic\\_Intellectual\\_Tradition\\_and\\_the\\_Mission\\_of\\_the\\_University.pdf](http://www.udayton.edu/rector/resources/img/The_Catholic_Intellectual_Tradition_and_the_Mission_of_the_University.pdf)

### III. A Description of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

14. The Catholic intellectual tradition can be viewed from three complementary perspectives: 1) sources, i.e., “classic treasures to be cherished, studied, and handed on”; 2) habits of inquiry that bring faith and reason into fruitful dialogue and are the “outcome of centuries of experience, prayer, action, and critical reflection”; and 3) affirmations of the tradition, i.e., insights, arguments, and doctrines that have come from the centuries of inquiry that have brought faith and reason into fruitful dialogue<sup>2</sup> The next three sections give brief summaries of each of these perspectives.

#### The Sources of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

15. The sources of the Catholic faith include its classic texts, such as the Old and New Testaments, treatises and sermons of Church Fathers, and the many scholarly and artistic interpretations of these texts. In writing the New Testament, the early Church drew upon Jewish tests and traditions to understand and interpret the life, person, and message of Jesus. Many scholars, councils, documents, and works of art find their place as part of the tradition. A variety of institutions (Christian communities, monasteries, universities, etc.), social practices (worship, personal prayer, scholarship, teaching and learning, etc.), and persons (saints and sinners) have shaped and sustained the Catholic intellectual tradition of inquiry over time.
16. Some classic texts and artistic expressions of the Catholic intellectual tradition are explicitly religious, while others are more generally exercises of the Christian imagination in art and literature. Among these classics are texts of the patristic era, philosophical and theological text from the early

Middles Ages up through the Enlightenment to the modern era. Insight and perspectives of the Catholic intellectual tradition are expressed in literature and poetry. As Monika Hellwig indicates;

... certain texts in literature became classics (of the tradition), throwing light on the Christian journey through history, on Christian faith and life and understanding the big issues. Immediately coming to mind are *Piers Plowman*, *The Divine Comedy*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and such modern classics as *Murder in the Cathedral*, *A Man for All Seasons*, and *Four Quartets*. Nor should we exclude from the treasury great Protestant and Orthodox classics like *Paradise Lost*, *The Pilgrims' Progress*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*.<sup>3</sup>

17. It is important that undergraduate education at the University provide a thoughtful historical introduction to some of the major classical texts. Understanding and reflecting on the questions raised by these classic texts can help our students develop an order and integration in their learning.

#### Habits of Inquiry in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

18. Over the centuries, people working within the Catholic intellectual tradition have developed certain style or habits of inquiry, which this section briefly describes.

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<sup>2</sup> This description modifies one by Monika K. Hellwig, “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Catholic University,” in *Examining the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*, ed. Anthony J. Cernera and Oliver J. Morgan (Fairfield, CT, Sacred Heart University Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Hellwig, “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Catholic University,” 5.

19. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition sees reason and faith as integrally related in a common search for truth.** Catholic intellectual tradition develops through an intricate and creative interplay between faith and reason. As important as discursive and logical formulations and critical thinking are, they are not able to approach all that can and ought to be understood. Horizons are expanded, relationships are made possible, and understandings embraced when individuals and communities learn to rely at appropriate times and in thoughtful ways on both faith and reason. As Flannery O'Connor's quote on the Jesse Philips Humanities Center reminds us, "Mystery is not something that is gradually evaporating. It grows along with knowledge."
20. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition seeks an integrative perspective on knowledge.** The Catholic intellectual tradition supports both a rigorous search for the truth and appreciation that truth is manifest in a wide variety of disciplines and fields. At a Catholic university, the search for truth is based on the belief that truth is ultimately one and, while it can never be fully grasped, it can more fully be known through human inquiry. In the Catholic tradition of inquiry, both the development of the disciplines and cross-disciplinary research and conversations are required to more fully appreciate and approach the truth. In this process, we come to realize that the most important truths are only partially grasped, and our insight into these truths develops over time.
21. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition is pursued in a sacramental spirit.** The Catholic intellectual tradition sees the world as a creation — as a gift of God. The beauty, complexity and mystery of creation reflect God's presence and love. All the events of life, from the most mundane to the most extraordinary, participate in the story of God's work among us. Some draw us more into the mystery of God; some twist our vision or turn us from it. But none exist apart from it. A Catholic understanding of creation discovers in creation not only immanent purpose but also goodness and beauty. Belief in the incarnation entails recognition that the sacred can be expressed and embodied in persons and things and events of this world.
22. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition is carried out in a dialogical spirit.** The Catholic intellectual tradition has developed through the interchange of contesting positions and arguments. Inquiry in the Catholic tradition both welcomes the questions and addresses the issues of the ages in a spirit of openness and dialogue — a spirit of fidelity, respect, sincerity, freedom, critical inquiry, and charity. This engagement with the critical questions of our age produces the "growing edge" of the tradition.
23. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition has a rich appreciation of both the capability and the limits of rationality.** The Catholic intellectual tradition values the many facets of human rationality, i.e., our ability to perceive, imagine, understand, judge, and act. The Catholic intellectual tradition relies on both analytic rationality and narrative rationality in its search for meaning.<sup>4</sup> The analytic inquirer searches for general patterns of cause and effect and learns to express meanings and insights through discursive arguments. Analytic rationality is marked by the use of logic and its conclusions are judged by coherence, provision of warrants, moral integrity, and reciprocity. Narrative rationality integrates experience through analogy, metaphor, and symbols. Narrative rationality allows the classic texts of the tradition to inspire the imagination, to deepen the emotions, and provide ways of understanding human meaning and value. Narrative rationality can provide a way into universal meaning because it can disclose meaning in a manner not reducible to the structure of an argument. Utilizing both analytical and narrative rationality allow inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition to engage in both a rigorous search for truth and at the same time resist reductionism and use the analogical imagination to see reality in terms of "both/and" rather than "either/or."
24. The Catholic intellectual tradition also realizes that human rationality has limits. The mysteries of God and God's creation can never be fully grasped. There is always more to know and to be

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<sup>4</sup> This distinction between analytic and narrative rationality is made by Jerome Brunner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 11ff.

manifested through inquiry. Human rationality can also be diverted from the truth through sin and human imperfection. A person can fail to be open to new insights because of pride taken in one's partial and incomplete understanding of the truth or one can fail to critically examine inconsistencies in one's arguments. The Catholic intellectual tradition's dialogical spirit allows participants the opportunities to critically address, in a spirit of friendship, partial understandings of the truth and inconsistent arguments.

25. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition cultivates practical wisdom and the search for the common good.** The search for truth and wisdom within the Catholic tradition seeks to render truth and wisdom practical and to transform the world into a greater realization of the common good, i.e., the "sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment."<sup>5</sup> The inquirer in the Catholic tradition endeavors to use knowledge in a way that cultivates the adoption of practical ends, practical judgment, and reflective decision making. Inquirers within the Catholic tradition seek to understand the world so that they can identify, critically evaluate and respond creatively to the important signs of the times. Starting with a conception of human flourishing, inquirers are able to define and diagnose problems and issues, thoughtfully discern both more human visions for the future and strategies of change to realize these visions; organize people and resources to implement the strategies of change; and reflectively learn from the consequences of change. Intellectuals in the Catholic tradition have a deep sense of a calling or vocation to utilize their talents to work to transform society into a greater realization of the common good.

### **Some Major Affirmations of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

26. Affirmations of the Catholic intellectual tradition are those insights, arguments, and doctrines that have come from the centuries of inquiry that have brought faith and reason into fruitful dialogue. Some of the affirmations of the tradition that enrich our appreciation of the Catholic texture of the intellectual life include:
27. **Knowledge of the Transcendent:** By openness to truth and beauty, a sense of moral goodness and the search for happiness, the human person is open to the discovery of the transcendent. It is possible to come to certain, but partial, knowledge of the transcendent, which the tradition calls God.
28. **Creation is Intelligible:** God, who is all-good, is seen as the creator of the universe, including all of its spiritual and material elements, and as such has given it an unfolding purpose and filled it with meaning. God has provided the human person with the capacity to search for the truth about the purpose and the evolving order of creation.
29. **Revelation:** In addition to natural reason, God provides divine revelation, another order of knowledge that humans cannot possibly arrive at under their own power. The divine plan of revelation has been gradually communicated to humanity through deeds and words, through stories of creation, through the covenants with Noah and with Abraham and his descendants, as well as the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures.
30. **Centrality of Jesus Christ:** God revealed God's fullness by sending his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Catholic vision of the intellectual life springs ultimately from the personal revelation of God in Jesus Christ, received in a believing community which has drawn on the resources of theology, philosophy, history, art and literature to elaborate upon and understand that revelation. The mysteries of Christ's life link the human and the divine and open the way for all humanity to explore in multiple ways the implications of the Gospel.
31. **God as Trinity:** God is seen as both a unity and as a community of persons. While there are intimations of this profound mystery in nature and in the Scriptures of Israel's faith, its fullness is revealed in a definitive manner in the incarnation of Jesus, Son of God born of a woman, Mary. God

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<sup>5</sup> Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Second Vatican Council, § 26

the Father sends his Son, true God and true man, for the salvation of the world. The Father sends through Jesus the Holy Spirit to be God's presence in the Church and the world. God is one and God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

32. **The Church:** The Church is seen as the people of God founded on the word and actions of Jesus Christ, fulfilled by his redeeming cross and Resurrection, and animated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Church continues to witness to the presence of Christ through celebration of word and sacrament, building the community of believers, and reaching out in mission to the whole human community. The Church is to be a witness to God's presence in the world and to work with persons and groups to bring forth the Reign of God in the world by advancing justice and reconciliation.
33. **Dignity and social nature of the person:** The human person is an image of God. Because the Trinitarian God is a community of persons, this tradition understands persons as both creative agents and social beings. Though clearly recognizing the reality of sin and human destructiveness, this tradition affirms that, through grace informing human capabilities, people are able to enter into partnership with God and one another and thereby to realize their true humanity. People are constituted and sustained by relationships and naturally seek solidarity with others. Society and its institutions serve a common good when they promote persons' flourishing, both as groups and as individuals. The conditions of human flourishing encompass objective qualities of human fulfillment and social harmony, not simply satisfaction of subjective preferences.
34. **The stewardship of creation:** Creation is a gift from God that has been entrusted to the human community and that we have the responsibility to steward. We show our respect for the Creator by our care of creation. Through our stewardship of creation we participate in God's act of creating and sustaining the world. Our work of stewardship must appreciate the complexity and the fragility of the human ecosystem. Concern for the integrity of creation must serve the quality of life of our neighbor, especially the most vulnerable as well as those generations to come.

## APPENDIX C

# The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Mission of the University: A Continuing Conversation

## I. Introduction

1. During the 2012 Spring Conversations, the Task Force heard numerous requests for a clearer explanation of the Catholic intellectual tradition, a concept that played such an important role in the initial draft of *The Common Themes of the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*. The Task Force was challenged, on the one hand, to provide a simple description for those unfamiliar with the tradition, and on the other hand, to provide a description that respects the tradition's more than 2,000-year history and the many strands of scholarly, literary, and artistic works it comprises. This Appendix offers a starting point for further study of and reflection on the Catholic intellectual tradition and for incorporating this tradition into the University's curriculum and scholarship. A concluding section outlines some initiatives that might have been taken to strengthen the Catholic intellectual tradition on campus, and a working bibliography is provided as a resource.
2. The Catholic intellectual tradition shapes a distinctive approach to the University's mission. In 2004 the University began a series of conversations on a new strategic plan and produced, as one of its first statements, *The University of Dayton: A Vision of Excellence*. In this statement the Catholic intellectual tradition is given prominence in defining our identity.

The University of Dayton — Catholic, Marianist, innovative, and transformative — is a leader in higher education and one of the preeminent Catholic universities in the nation. 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.

3. These strategic planning conversations continued during the 2005-2006 academic year and culminated with Strategic Plan 2006, which the Board of Trustees approved in October 2006. In this strategic plan, the Catholic intellectual tradition is once again a distinctive approach in the University's mission. Under Goal 2 *Cultivate Outstanding Scholarship, Research, and Artistic Creation*, one of the tactics is to *Cultivate faculty expertise in Catholic intellectual tradition across a wide spectrum of disciplines*. The most important resource for the University is a faculty in all disciplines and professional fields, especially religious studies, philosophy, the other humanities, and other key disciplines who appreciate and are able to draw upon appropriate dimensions of the Catholic intellectual tradition. In addition, the University intends to recruit and develop excellent faculty in the disciplines and professional fields from across the University who are open to learning about the Catholic intellectual tradition and drawing upon it as a resource in their teaching and inquiry.
4. Under Goal 3 of Strategic Plan 2006: *Strengthen and promote the University's distinctive Catholic and Marianist identity* we see that the "University is firmly committed to advancing its position as a leader in Catholic higher education and as a Catholic leader in higher education. As such, it articulates to people of all faiths the rich resources of Catholic intellectual tradition." One tactic under this goal is to *Develop the University as a first-choice institution for faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized scholars and authorities on issues pertaining to Catholic intellectual tradition*. Recognized scholars in the Catholic intellectual tradition will be attracted to our campus only if there are dynamic and critical intellectual conversations that engage the Catholic intellectual tradition in dialogue with other intellectual traditions in exploring critical issues of our global community and the Church.
5. *The Common Academic Program (CAP) Proposal*, a new design for the University of Dayton undergraduate program approved by the Academic Senate on April 23, 2010, intentionally incorporates "key elements of the Catholic intellectual tradition and its Marianist charism." In the

CAP Proposal the First Year Humanities Commons (courses in religious studies, philosophy, history, and English) 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 and Integration) are expected to strengthen the student’s appreciation of the “Catholic intellectual tradition in significant ways.”

6. During this same period of time the University’s divisions of Student Development and Campus Ministry created *Commitment to Community: Catholic and Marianist Learning and Living (C2C)*. Founded in the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Marianist tradition of education, C2C outlines principles and personal and social habits which defined the norms of learning and living in the University of Dayton community.
7. As part of Strategic Plan 2006, the University intends to build on its reputation as a Catholic research university by strengthening its graduate programs, centers of advanced study and scholarship, and research programs. These efforts provide another opportunity to more fully integrate the content and the habits of inquiry of the Catholic intellectual tradition into programs of advanced study.
8. The Catholic intellectual tradition is a conversation that has continued for more than two centuries between the Church and the world, a dialogue between the Christian community and the societies and cultures in which it finds itself. The principles, arguments and practices of this tradition have evolved and developed as the Christian community has confronted new issues and questions. As a national Catholic university and as a partner in the worldwide community of Catholic universities, the University of Dayton has the institutional commitment to ensure that the texts, the conceptual frameworks, and habits of inquiry that emerge from this conversation are an important resource for its work of learning, scholarship, and service.
9. For these efforts to be successful the University must continue these conversations on the Catholic intellectual tradition and undertake a comprehensive and systematic approach to helping our faculty, staff, and students to more deeply understand this tradition. Some faculty and staff have raised concerns that emphasizing the Catholic intellectual tradition borders on proselytism and indoctrination, which they believe have no place in an excellent American university. We want to assure those with this concern that there is widespread agreement that the intellectual inquiry at the University of Dayton “must be carried out both with academic freedom and with openness to the transcendent dimension of life. We highly value the free and responsible intellectual inquiry into and the sharing of truth.”<sup>1</sup>
10. Participants in interdisciplinary learning and scholarship often raise questions about the prescriptive assumptions of the individual disciplines and professional fields participating in the joint inquiry. These questions can point out limitations of these prescriptive assumptions and can often lead to the forming of new insights, understandings, and horizons that enrich and broaden the interdisciplinary inquiry. In the same manner, the Catholic intellectual tradition, as an intellectual tradition, can enter into interdisciplinary inquiry with the disciplines and professional fields by raising questions and providing insights that can enrich the inquiry. At the same time, this interdisciplinary inquiry and engagement can present new questions and insights that can enrich the Catholic intellectual tradition and keep the traditions open and with a dynamic “growing edge.”

## **II. Origins Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

11. The Catholic intellectual tradition – a practice of faith seeking understanding and understanding seeking faith – addresses the great human questions, aspirations, and challenges as they unfold across centuries and across cultures. As evident in the New Testament, this tradition was initiated as the early Christians began to reflect upon and engage the Gospels, their experience of Jesus, in a number

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<sup>1</sup> Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton, § 36.

of new cultures. Throughout their history, Christians have wrestled with and drawn upon the best of human knowledge to defend, explain, understand, and better learn to practice their faith.

12. One of the earliest and best examples of such engagement can be found in the work of Clement of Alexandria (c. 150—c. 215) and other Christian intellectuals who studied and made use of the writings of Philo of Alexandria (20 BC—50AD), a Jew. So from early on Christians constructed a complex intellectual tradition from reading works written by members of other faiths. In the early Christian centuries, this most often meant studying Hellenistic thought and culture to produce intellectual accounts of basic Christian beliefs, what it means to be human, what constitutes right human action, and what it means to live the Christian life. This tradition of inquiry led Christians to express their experience of God in Christ and through the Holy Spirit in terms of a Trinitarian monotheism. In the 13th century, Catholic philosophers and theologians engaged and, in some cases, appropriated the work of the Pagan Aristotle, the Jew Maimonides, and the Muslims Avicenna and Averroes to articulate Christian beliefs and practices. In recent centuries, a tradition of Catholic social teaching has emerged that is in serious dialogue with the social, economic, and political thought of the modern world. In recent decades, Catholic scholars have begun serious dialogue with the philosophies of Africa, the near East, and Asia. All of these efforts to draw upon diverse intellectual resources demonstrate the tradition's deep commitment to the integrity of rational inquiry and to the pursuit of truths that are ultimately one.
13. This tradition has evolved and developed through conversations with the world of ideas and philosophies, the example of the saints and the contribution of great artists. The tradition has also developed as persons explored the meaning of the tradition for their personal lives and as the Catholic community, in dialogue with others, explored how the tradition can provide insight in addressing important social questions, such as the status of the worker in modern capitalism, the global economy, war and peace, etc.

### **III. A Description of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

14. The Catholic intellectual tradition can be viewed from three complementary perspectives: 1) sources, i.e., “classic treasures to be cherished, studied, and handed on”; 2) habits of inquiry that bring faith and reason into fruitful dialogue and are the “outcome of centuries of experience, prayer, action, and critical reflection”; and 3) affirmations of the tradition, i.e., insights, arguments, and doctrines that have come from the centuries of inquiry that have brought faith and reason into fruitful dialogue<sup>2</sup> The next three sections give brief summaries of each of these perspectives.

#### **The Sources of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

15. The sources of the Catholic faith include its classic texts, such as the Old and New Testaments, treatises and sermons of Church Fathers, and the many scholarly and artistic interpretations of these texts. In writing the New Testament, the early Church drew upon Jewish texts and traditions to understand and interpret the life, person, and message of Jesus. Many scholars, councils, documents, and works of art find their place as part of the tradition. A variety of institutions (Christian communities, monasteries, universities, etc.), social practices (worship, personal prayer, scholarship, teaching and learning, etc.), and persons (saints and sinners) have shaped and sustained the Catholic intellectual tradition of inquiry over time.
16. Some classic texts and artistic expressions of the Catholic intellectual tradition are explicitly religious, while others are more generally exercises of the Christian imagination in art and literature. Among these classics are texts of the patristic era, philosophical and theological text from the early

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<sup>2</sup> This description modifies one by Monika K. Hellwig, “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Catholic University,” in *Examining the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*, ed. Anthony J. Cernera and Oliver J. Morgan (Fairfield, CT, Sacred Heart University Press, 2000), 3.

Middle Ages up through the Enlightenment to the modern era. Insight and perspectives of the Catholic intellectual tradition are expressed in literature and poetry. As Monika Hellwig indicates;

... certain texts in literature became classics (of the tradition), throwing light on the Christian journey through history, on Christian faith and life and understanding the big issues. Immediately coming to mind are *Piers Plowman*, *The Divine Comedy*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and such modern classics as *Murder in the Cathedral*, *A Man for All Seasons*, and *Four Quartets*. Nor should we exclude from the treasury great Protestant and Orthodox classics like *Paradise Lost*, *The Pilgrims' Progress*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*.<sup>3</sup>

17. It is important that undergraduate education at the University provide a thoughtful historical introduction to some of the major classical texts. Understanding and reflecting on the questions raised by these classic texts can help our students develop an order and integration in their learning.

### **Habits of Inquiry in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

18. Over the centuries, people working within the Catholic intellectual tradition have developed certain style or habits of inquiry, which this section briefly describes.
19. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition sees reason and faith as integrally related in a common search for truth.** Catholic intellectual tradition develops through an intricate and creative interplay between faith and reason. As important as discursive and logical formulations and critical thinking are, they are not able to approach all that can and ought to be understood. Horizons are expanded, relationships are made possible, and understandings embraced when individuals and communities learn to rely at appropriate times and in thoughtful ways on both faith and reason. As Flannery O'Connor's quote on the Jesse Philips Humanities Center reminds us, "Mystery is not something that is gradually evaporating. It grows along with knowledge."
20. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition seeks an integrative perspective on knowledge.** The Catholic intellectual tradition supports both a rigorous search for the truth and appreciation that truth is manifest in a wide variety of disciplines and fields. At a Catholic university, the search for truth is based on the belief that truth is ultimately one and, while it can never be fully grasped, it can more fully be known through human inquiry. In the Catholic tradition of inquiry, both the development of the disciplines and cross-disciplinary research and conversations are required to more fully appreciate and approach the truth. In this process, we come to realize that the most important truths are only partially grasped, and our insight into these truths develops over time.
21. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition is pursued in a sacramental spirit.** The Catholic intellectual tradition sees the world as a creation — as a gift of God. The beauty, complexity and mystery of creation reflect God's presence and love. All the events of life, from the most mundane to the most extraordinary, participate in the story of God's work among us. Some draw us more into the mystery of God; some twist our vision or turn us from it. But none exist apart from it. A Catholic understanding of creation discovers in creation not only immanent purpose but also goodness and beauty. Belief in the incarnation entails recognition that the sacred can be expressed and embodied in persons and things and events of this world.
22. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition is carried out in a dialogical spirit.** The Catholic intellectual tradition has developed through the interchange of contesting positions and arguments. Inquiry in the Catholic tradition both welcomes the questions and addresses the issues of the ages in a spirit of openness and dialogue — a spirit of fidelity, respect, sincerity, freedom, critical inquiry, and charity. This engagement with the critical questions of our age produces the "growing edge" of the tradition.

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<sup>3</sup> Hellwig, "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Catholic University," 5.

23. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition has a rich appreciation of both the capability and the limits of rationality.** The Catholic intellectual tradition values the many facets of human rationality, i.e., our ability to perceive, imagine, understand, judge, and act. The Catholic intellectual tradition relies on both analytic rationality and narrative rationality in its search for meaning.<sup>4</sup> The analytic inquirer searches for general patterns of cause and effect and learns to express meanings and insights through discursive arguments. Analytic rationality is marked by the use of logic and its conclusions are judged by coherence, provision of warrants, moral integrity, and reciprocity. Narrative rationality integrates experience through analogy, metaphor, and symbols. Narrative rationality allows the classic texts of the tradition to inspire the imagination, to deepen the emotions, and provide ways of understanding human meaning and value. Narrative rationality can provide a way into universal meaning because it can disclose meaning in a manner not reducible to the structure of an argument. Utilizing both analytical and narrative rationality allow inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition to engage in both a rigorous search for truth and at the same time resist reductionism and use the analogical imagination to see reality in terms of “both/and” rather than “either/or.”
24. The Catholic intellectual tradition also realizes that human rationality has limits. The mysteries of God and God’s creation can never be fully grasped. There is always more to know and to be manifested through inquiry. Human rationality can also be diverted from the truth through sin and human imperfection. A person can fail to be open to new insights because of pride taken in one’s partial and incomplete understanding of the truth or one can fail to critically examine inconsistencies in one’s arguments. The Catholic intellectual tradition’s dialogical spirit allows participants the opportunities to critically address, in a spirit of friendship, partial understandings of the truth and inconsistent arguments.
25. **Inquiry in the Catholic intellectual tradition cultivates practical wisdom and the search for the common good.** The search for truth and wisdom within the Catholic tradition seeks to render truth and wisdom practical and to transform the world into a greater realization of the common good, i.e., the “sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment.”<sup>5</sup> The inquirer in the Catholic tradition endeavors to use knowledge in a way that cultivates the adoption of practical ends, practical judgment, and reflective decision making. Inquirers within the Catholic tradition seek to understand the world so that they can identify, critically evaluate and respond creatively to the important signs of the times. Starting with a conception of human flourishing, inquirers are able to define and diagnose problems and issues, thoughtfully discern both more human visions for the future and strategies of change to realize these visions; organize people and resources to implement the strategies of change; and reflectively learn from the consequences of change. Intellectuals in the Catholic tradition have a deep sense of a calling or vocation to utilize their talents to work to transform society into a greater realization of the common good.

### **Some Major Affirmations of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition**

26. Affirmations of the Catholic intellectual tradition are those insights, arguments, and doctrines that have come from the centuries of inquiry that have brought faith and reason into fruitful dialogue. Some of the affirmations of the tradition that enrich our appreciation of the Catholic texture of the intellectual life include:
27. **Knowledge of the Transcendent:** By openness to truth and beauty, a sense of moral goodness and the search for happiness, the human person is open to the discovery of the transcendent. It is possible to come to certain, but partial, knowledge of the transcendent, which the tradition calls God.

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<sup>4</sup> This distinction between analytic and narrative rationality is made by Jerome Brunner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 11ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Second Vatican Council*, § 26

28. **Creation is Intelligible:** God, who is all-good, is seen as the creator of the universe, including all of its spiritual and material elements, and as such has given it an unfolding purpose and filled it with meaning. God has provided the human person with the capacity to search for the truth about the purpose and the evolving order of creation.
29. **Revelation:** In addition to natural reason, God provides divine revelation, another order of knowledge that humans cannot possibly arrive at under their own power. The divine plan of revelation has been gradually communicated to humanity through deeds and words, through stories of creation, through the covenants with Noah and with Abraham and his descendants, as well as the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures.
30. **Centrality of Jesus Christ:** God revealed God's fullness by sending his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Catholic vision of the intellectual life springs ultimately from the personal revelation of God in Jesus Christ, received in a believing community which has drawn on the resources of theology, philosophy, history, art and literature to elaborate upon and understand that revelation. The mysteries of Christ's life link the human and the divine and open the way for all humanity to explore in multiple ways the implications of the Gospel.
31. **God as Trinity:** God is seen as both a unity and as a community of persons. While there are intimations of this profound mystery in nature and in the Scriptures of Israel's faith, its fullness is revealed in a definitive manner in the incarnation of Jesus, Son of God born of a woman, Mary. God the Father sends his Son, true God and true man, for the salvation of the world. The Father sends through Jesus the Holy Spirit to be God's presence in the Church and the world. God is one and God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
32. **The Church:** The Church is seen as the people of God founded on the word and actions of Jesus Christ, fulfilled by his redeeming cross and Resurrection, and animated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Church continues to witness to the presence of Christ through celebration of word and sacrament, building the community of believers, and reaching out in mission to the whole human community. The Church is to be a witness to God's presence in the world and to work with persons and groups to bring forth the Reign of God in the world by advancing justice and reconciliation.
33. **Dignity and social nature of the person:** The human person is an image of God. Because the Trinitarian God is a community of persons, this tradition understands persons as both creative agents and social beings. Though clearly recognizing the reality of sin and human destructiveness, this tradition affirms that, through grace informing human capabilities, people are able to enter into partnership with God and one another and thereby to realize their true humanity. People are constituted and sustained by relationships and naturally seek solidarity with others. Society and its institutions serve a common good when they promote persons' flourishing, both as groups and as individuals. The conditions of human flourishing encompass objective qualities of human fulfillment and social harmony, not simply satisfaction of subjective preferences.
34. **The stewardship of creation:** Creation is a gift from God that has been entrusted to the human community and that we have the responsibility to steward. We show our respect for the Creator by our care of creation. Through our stewardship of creation we participate in God's act of creating and sustaining the world. Our work of stewardship must appreciate the complexity and the fragility of the human ecosystem. Concern for the integrity of creation must serve the quality of life of our neighbor, especially the most vulnerable as well as those generations to come.

#### **IV. Conclusion: The Challenge Ahead**

35. For the University of Dayton to faithfully pursue its mission as a national Catholic university in the Marianist tradition of education, members of the University community must understand the

Catholic intellectual tradition and use it to shape all facets of campus life. Several initiatives can be undertaken to enhance the role of the Catholic intellectual tradition in the mission of the University of Dayton.

36. **Continuing the conversation to develop an appreciation of the Catholic intellectual tradition:** One of the major purposes of this Appendix is to invite members of the University community to continue and deepen the conversations that clarify the concept of the Catholic intellectual tradition for the mission of the University. A formal Task Force could be set up for this purpose. The University has established several endowed faculty chairs to contribute to the Catholic intellectual tradition. These chairs should be invited to participate in this conversation.
37. **Provide opportunities for faculty, staff, and administration to deepen their appreciation of the Catholic intellectual tradition:** These development opportunities could provide insights into how the Catholic intellectual tradition might influence the recruitment of faculty and staff and shape University operations, such as residence life, human resources, stewardship, etc.
38. **Integrate the Catholic intellectual tradition into the undergraduate curriculum:** Faculty should be provided opportunities and incentives to undertake the work of curriculum design so that the Common Academic Program intentionally incorporates “key elements of the Catholic intellectual tradition.”
39. **Integrate the Catholic intellectual tradition into graduate studies and interdisciplinary research:** While several initiatives are under way in this area, such as the addition of a course in Business as Vocation to the MBA program, integrating the Catholic intellectual tradition into graduate studies and interdisciplinary research requires greater emphasis.
40. **Develop an Information Commons for the Catholic intellectual tradition:** Through the University’s investment in information technology to support learning, an information commons for the Catholic intellectual tradition, containing resources, syllabi, teaching notes, etc., could be developed.
41. To become a great Catholic university we should give urgency to enabling the Catholic intellectual tradition to shape learning and institutional culture throughout the University of Dayton

## Working Bibliography on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition

Revised: 25 May 2012

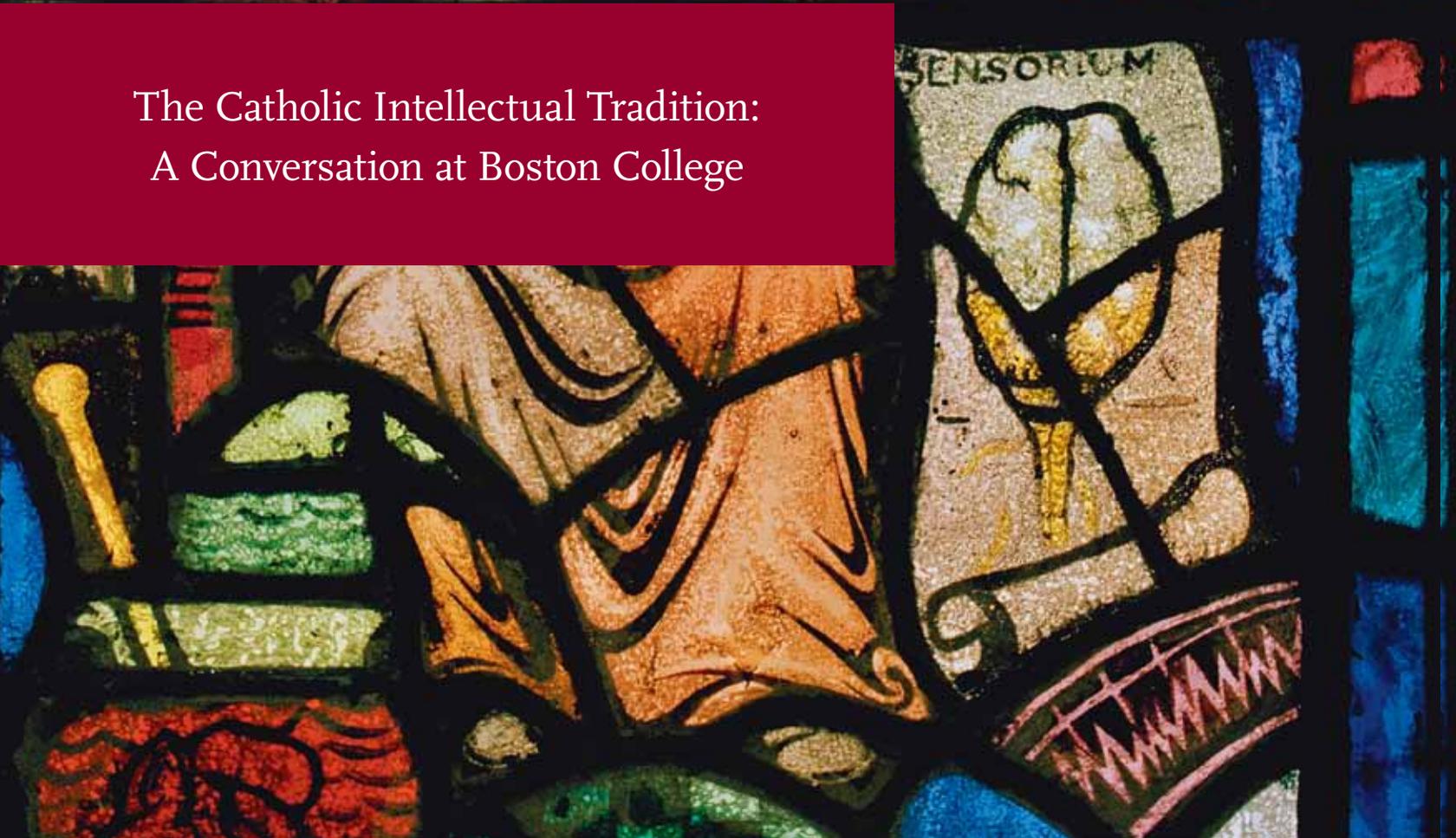
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An extensive bibliography on the Catholic intellectual tradition can be found at <http://www3.villanova.edu/mission/bibliographies/cit.htm>.

## APPENDIX D



The Catholic Intellectual Tradition:  
A Conversation at Boston College







**T**his document introduces two issues of central importance to Boston College: what is meant by the Catholic intellectual tradition, and how this tradition can be a guiding force in a complex, contemporary university committed to its Jesuit, Catholic heritage.

What follows is intended to serve as a starting point for reading and conversation about the Catholic intellectual tradition among members of the Boston College community—whatever their academic disciplines, personal convictions, or religious beliefs. All are invited to bring their insights, experiences, and intelligence to the expansive search for truth, meaning, and justice that animates both the Catholic intellectual tradition and Boston College.

**A 2,000-YEAR-LONG CONVERSATION**

FOR CHRISTIANS, THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN FAITH AND culture is as old as their earliest efforts to articulate what it means to be a distinctive faith community. The first Christians—drawn together by their faith in the uniqueness and universal significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth—were members of Jewish communities living in a Roman political system and influenced by a linguistic and intellectual culture that was largely Greek in origin. As the Christian “way” moved beyond these Jewish communities, attracted Gentile converts, and spread across the Roman world and beyond, a Christian intellectual tradition or, better, a constellation of traditions developed, which were the product of a continuous dialogue between faith and cultures. With the fragmentation of the Christian churches, especially in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Catholic intellectual tradition in the West developed its own characteristics. Since the medieval period, one of its principal venues has been the university, which arose “*ex corde ecclesiae*,” from the heart of the Church.

This dialogue between faith and culture reflects two essential characteristics of the Christian, and especially the Catholic, understanding of human experience: faith necessarily seeks understanding, and all intellectual inquiry leads eventually to questions of ultimacy that invite faith responses. Thus, reason has been intrinsic to the life of the Catholic Church, which sees the search for truth as a manifestation of the Creator: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...all was created through the Word” (John 1:1 and 3). The Greek for “word”—*logos*—has



a second meaning: reason. For the Catholic, thinking is part of believing, and the Catholic view sees no conflict among faith, knowledge, and reason; it looks to how they illuminate one another.

Nowhere is this engagement more clear than in the work of Thomas Aquinas, whose pursuit of truth led him into intellectual conversation with a remarkably diverse set of partners. He chose not only to engage the thought of Aristotle at a time when some in the Church were suspicious of the ancient philosopher’s teachings, but also to enter into dialogue with Muslim and Jewish thinkers, such as Averroes and Maimonides. Aquinas’ passionate engagement with the intellectual pluralism of his times enriched and strengthened the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Nonetheless, getting hold of this “Catholic intellectual tradition” is a challenge. It contains a vast repository of theological thought; philosophizing; devotional practices; works of literature, visual art, music, and drama; styles of architecture; legal reasoning; social and political theorizing; and other forms of cultural expression that have emerged in vastly different parts of the world in the course of 2,000 years of Christian religious experience. Can one even synthesize the meaning of this vast archive, sum up its principles, and make them relevant to contemporary intellectual life in a way that would justify speaking of a tradition? What kind of tradition are we talking about and what role can or should a tradition play in a contemporary university, especially Catholic institutions of higher education?

Despite these questions and others, some Catholic writers



and scholars are convinced that they have been and are dealing with a body of ideas, practices, and ways of thinking rich enough and consistent enough to be called a tradition. More importantly, they believe this tradition and their experience must be brought into regular conversation with significant thinkers in other intellectual and religious traditions to yield new understanding and direction.

### THE TRADITION AND THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

TODAY THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY REMAINS THE HOME for the conversation that explores and advances the Catholic intellectual tradition. For the tradition to achieve the wholeness to which it has aspired for two millennia, it must be engaged in the search for truth in every discipline and with all forms of belief and unbelief. It is a living tradition, not static traditionalism, which draws from the riches of the past to give life to the future.

The Catholic intellectual tradition and the contemporary university share two underlying convictions: that to be human is to desire to discover truth, and that the quest for truth is sparked by the expectation that the universe is intelligible. In the Catholic view, these convictions arise from belief in the union of the divine and human in Jesus Christ and the unity of all things in God. From this theological perspective, the Catholic intellectual tradition is based on two fundamental principles: first, that the search for truth in all aspects of life extends to the ultimate search for truth that animates faith; and, second, that faith is a catalyst for inquiry, as faith seeks to understand itself and its relationship to every dimension of



life. Thus, the most probing questions in every discipline are never deemed to be in opposition to faith but are welcomed into the conversation on the conviction that ongoing discovery of the intelligibility of the universe will reveal more of the truth about God. The Catholic intellectual tradition can thrive only with the participation of all who seek the truth, including those whose inquiry leads them to question whether the search reveals purpose, meaning, or God, or to conclude that it does not.

### EIGHT QUALITIES OF INQUIRY

THE CATHOLIC TRADITION OF INQUIRY INCLUDES:

- A conviction that faith and reason are mutually illuminating, that they are united in the search for truth, and that people of faith must devote themselves to building a world characterized by an “uncompromising commitment to truth”—a world in which truth is explored and revered “in whatever way it discloses itself,” as theologian Michael Buckley, S.J., has written.
- A sacramental vision of reality that holds that each discipline offers the potential to reveal something of the sacred. In the Christian view, grace—God’s loving self-gift to the world in Christ—underlies all of reality. In the words of the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” Thus, the search for truth in any discipline can be a sacred and sacramental activity.
- A hopeful commitment to intellectual integration among disciplines, combined with an appreciation for the integrity and autonomy of individual academic disciplines.
- A resistance to reductionism and an openness to analogical imagination—a disposition to see things in terms of “both/and” rather than “either/or.”



- An understanding that confidence in reason's ability to grasp the intelligibility, meaning, and purpose of the universe must be tempered by an awareness of the mystery of God as radically Other than God's creation. As St. Augustine wrote, "If you think you have grasped God, it is not God you have grasped." Anything the tradition declares about God and truth carries the implicit realization that we are incapable of saying everything about God and truth.
- An openness to the mystery inherent in an evolving, unfinished creation. Our search for truth is fed by the hope that God's grace is drawing the universe toward a fulfillment that lies beyond our vision at this moment in time.
- An awareness that confidence in reason must also be tempered by the recognition that sin can deform reason's unbiased quest for truth.
- A reverence for the dignity of each human being as one created in the image of God. Hence, a commitment to justice, to the solidarity of the human family, and to the common good.

### DYNAMIC AND OPEN

THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION IS NEITHER static nor complete. It is a dynamic conversation over time with a highly diverse range of dialectical partners: a conversation made of variant strands and a range of positions. The desire for truth that lies at the heart of the tradition demands that all assertions of truth, meaning, and purpose be tested by the best evidence against them—evidence that may be presented by anyone, of any or no religious tradition, who is engaged in serious inquiry.

The Catholic intellectual tradition's simultaneous capacity for continuity and change gives it a growing edge, allowing

it to develop in new ways even as it retains its firm roots in the foundational Catholic worldview. In the Catholic university, wisdom accumulated in the past is handed on, criticized, reworked, and re-appropriated in response to new questions prompted by new experience, new evidence, new arguments, and new interlocutors.

So, too, a university animated by the Catholic intellectual tradition and committed to contributing to the Church and enhancing Catholic life embraces all who are dedicated to learning from one another, and remains open to contributions that may come in a range of ways. This persuasion challenges a Catholic university to engage all people, cultures, and traditions in authentic conversation—conversation undertaken in the belief that by talking across traditions we can grow in shared understanding that opens all parties to the possibility of changing their views.

### THE JESUIT DIFFERENCE

EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN STATED ABOUT THE CATHOLIC university might as readily be said about Jesuit institutions of higher education. In addition, colleges and universities that have been shaped by the Jesuit educational tradition exhibit characteristics that are typical of this way of embodying the Catholic spirit. Jesuit schools, which began to spread by the late 1540s and soon became the principal activity of the Society of Jesus, sought to link the intellectual rigor of the medieval university with the humanistic goals of the Renaissance academy to educate and form students who would use their education and talents as leaders in society "for the



greater glory of God.” These institutions stressed a methodical pedagogy, a structured core curriculum, and a commitment to the liberal arts as the key elements of the distinctive model of Jesuit education.

Contemporary Jesuit schools maintain the original commitment to rigorous intellectual development, to personal, moral, and religious formation, and to the discernment of God’s action in all aspects of the student’s experience. The pursuit of the greater glory of God remains rooted in a worldview that God can be encountered in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In recent times, the Jesuit mission has been expressed as “the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement.” This restatement implies a commitment both to substantive values—the proclamation of the Gospel and the promotion of justice—and to dialogue, openness to the experience of others, and an effort to incarnate the Gospel in a wide range of cultures. All of these aspects of the Jesuit approach to the Catholic intellectual tradition are expressed in the Boston College mission.

### THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION TODAY

THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION MANIFESTS ITS catholicity—its striving for wholeness—whenever the university encourages all its members to see their research, study, student formation, and administrative service in the context of the largest questions that can be asked about human life and the world in which we live. These include questions about



the meaning of existence in the face of life’s fragility, about where we have come from and where we are going, and about what it means to lead a good life, to engage in fulfilling relationships, and to participate in community.

A university animated by the Catholic intellectual tradition and committed to serve the Church is an intellectual community where every discipline is open to the striving for truth, value, and meaning that lies at the core of what it is to be human. The tradition is alive:

- when scholars articulate the good they are working toward in their scholarship, and understand their research as contributing to the unity of knowledge;
- when intellectuals explore their deepest questions across disciplinary boundaries in an objective search for answers that lie outside their own specializations;
- when teachers nurture in their students a sense of wonder and a love of learning, both for its own sake and as preparation for a life of service;
- when students are challenged to deepen their own religious faith, and to become people of integrity and generosity; and
- when today’s Catholic university, in reaffirming the Catholic intellectual tradition, becomes a meeting place and bridge between faith and culture and seeks to bring to the modern understanding of the university the richness of the mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

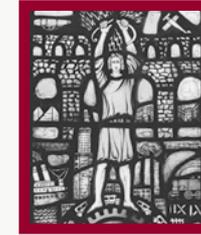
Rooted in the Christian conviction that God, the source of all truth, has become fully human in Jesus Christ, a university animated by the Catholic intellectual tradition promotes



a free, open-ended dialogue between faith and reason, carried on without fear. Over the long history of the tradition, there have been times when this dialogue has been difficult—times when Church teaching and secular scholarly research have stood in tension. During such times, the tradition, at its best, has urged more careful inquiry on both sides, confident that even though “there may be momentary collisions, awkward appearances, and many forebodings and prophecies of contrariety,” as Cardinal John Henry Newman, the great 19th-century scholar, has put it, the unity of truth will ultimately be seen.

#### A SHARED LIFE

THE METAPHOR FOR THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION proposed at the beginning of this presentation was “a conversation.” The original meaning of the word *converse* is “to live together,” “to share a life.” A university illuminated by the Catholic intellectual tradition is a place of shared, transformative, intellectual life—a place where the Church, always acknowledging that there is more to learn, is informed by ongoing scholarship, and where the wisdom developed over centuries within the Catholic tradition permeates a university’s core values, curriculum, and search for truth. The true Catholic university, then, is a community of teachers, scholars, students, and administrators sharing an intellectual journey and conversation in the pursuit of truth.



#### FURTHER READING

The most sustained analysis of the role of the Catholic university in fostering a Catholic intellectual tradition is *The Catholic University as Promise and Project: Reflections in a Jesuit Idiom*, by Michael J. Buckley, S.J. (Georgetown, 1998).

Three essays offer accessible perspectives on what it means to speak of a Catholic intellectual tradition: Richard M. Liddy, “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: Achievement and Challenge,” in *As Leaven in the World: Catholic Perspectives on Faith, Vocation, and the Intellectual Life*, ed. Thomas M. Landy (Sheed and Ward, 2001); William Cahoy, “The Catholic Intellectual Tradition: What Is It? Why Should I Care?,” a talk given to a faculty forum at the College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University, August 20, 2003, <http://www1.csbsju.edu/catholicidentity/values/billcahoy.htm>; and Gregory A. Kalscheur, S.J., “Conversation in Aid of a ‘Conspiracy’ for Truth,” *Boston College Law School Faculty Papers*, 225 (2008), <http://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/lisfp/225>.

An excellent discussion of how the key theological affirmations of Christian faith create a distinctively Catholic intellectual tradition is “Finding God in All Things”: A Sacramental Worldview and Its Effects,” by Michael J. Himes, in Landy, *As Leaven in the World*.

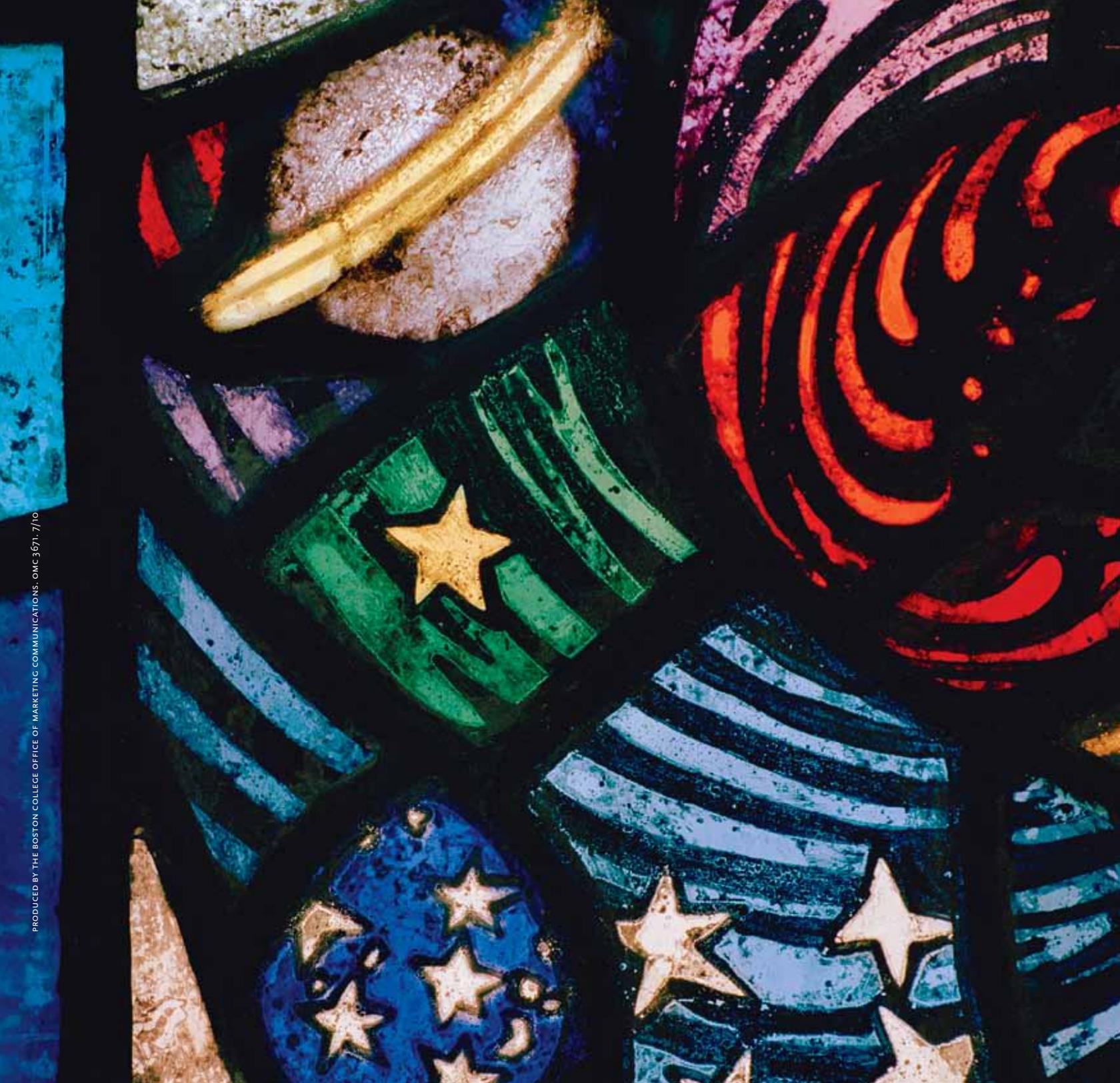
A collection exploring how the Catholic intellectual tradition might interact with particular disciplines in the contemporary university can be found in *Higher Learning and Catholic Traditions*,

ed. Robert E. Sullivan (Notre Dame University Press, 2001). See also *Examining the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*, ed. A. Cernera and O. Morgan (Sacred Heart University Press, 2001). Especially helpful is the essay by Gerald A. McCool, S.J., “The Christian Wisdom Tradition and Enlightenment Reason.”

An essay by the most respected historian of the early Jesuits offers a clear and authoritative discussion of the origins of Jesuit education: John W. O’Malley, S.J., “How the First Jesuits Became Involved in Education,” in *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, ed. Vincent J. Duminuco, S.J. (Fordham University Press, 2000).

See also “Resources for Exploring the Jesuit and Catholic Dimensions of the University’s Mission,” <http://www.bc.edu/offices/mission/exploring.html>, where many of the essays mentioned above can be downloaded.







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Boston College's Church in the 21st Century Center seeks to be a catalyst and resource for the renewal of the Catholic Church in the United States by engaging critical issues facing the Catholic community: roles and relationships in the contemporary Church; sexuality in the Catholic tradition and the Catholic community; handing on the faith to young people; and the Catholic intellectual tradition.

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