

Ethical Learning and the University: Listening to the Voices of Leaders

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This qualitative study investigated perceptions of contemporary leaders regarding moral and ethical learning and the role of higher education. Participants were asked whether they believed individuals can be educated to be moral and ethical, and if so, how they perceived that this could be achieved. Findings indicated participants believe people can be educated to be moral and ethical. Participants suggested ways that universities might assist students to reach a greater moral potential. Suggestions focused on teaching, the value of service learning, and university courses. Conclusions point to community service and field experiences as vital for moral education and indicate that those who receive a more generalized education – liberal arts -- will be better equipped for moral development and leadership than specialists.

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Introduction

Ethical and moral questions impact every aspect of contemporary American life. Polemical tensions surrounding materialism, individualism, civility, wealth distribution, corporate corruption, government corruption, wars, terrorism, and selfishness (Gaudiani, 1997; Mathews, 1997) lead one to constantly search for both clear, definitive definitions and for specific boundaries. Keohane (2001) notes that “thoughtful observers” have concerns for modern society that stem from a breakdown of ethical awareness. The erosion of the standards of civility that ease human interaction, the rising tolerance for cruelty and violence, the increasing incidence of cheating and fraud are all disturbing aspects of the world today (p. 188).

In fact, our media often champions bad behavior, thus illustrating the rewards of not playing by the rules. The classic trope of the American individualist, the lone cowboy, has transmuted into the self-serving and self-aggrandizing opportunist who takes what he can get regardless of reasonable consideration for consequence, save getting caught. Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) claim that people are often apt to measure success and failure in terms of money, adding this has encouraged a cult of self-worship which is based on the assumption that the only functional ethical principle is reward for the self. Rost (1995) maintains that a society that thrives on materialism and individualism renounces spirituality and the common good. Prince (1997) sees a similar situation. He comments that Americans live in a society that has an overdeveloped sense of individualism and an underdeveloped sense of community.

Additional cultural problems concern the influence of media and peer culture. For example, according to Lisman (1998), students are passive learners who want to be entertained because they are constantly fed a media diet of passive entertainment. He adds that the

overwhelmingly large amount of information that they receive, together with an inadequate preparation to make moral decisions, has led to an indifference and cynicism about ethics.

A corollary to the legacy of bad behavior is the increasing lack of faith in leaders and institutions. Gaudiani (1997) asserts this belief and explains that the media have uncovered unethical leaders even in such unlikely places as among the clergy and college and university presidents. King (1997) adds that although many people yearn for moral leadership, unfortunately, there are too many examples of strong character in the service of nonmoral objectives. Moreover, Ikenberry (1997) sees reasons for concern about the quality of community and civic life. These concerns include, among others, a decline in public faith in social institutions, including government, corporations, the professions, the media, and higher education. Prince (1997) agrees that many institutions have failed to earn the respect of the citizenry, and this has produced a cynicism about legal, medical, religious, and government institutions.

Corporate and government corruption receives media attention every day. Some believe partial blame can be placed on the failure of higher education, particularly in fields such as business (Conroy & Emerson, 2004; Glazer, 1996; Muijen, 2004; Schwartz & Templeton, 1997; Wilson, 1997).

Literature Review

Many educators agree that there should be no debate about the responsibility of colleges and universities for graduating moral citizens (Ikenberry, 1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Piper, 1989). Couch and Dodd (2005) state that “higher education’s central mission is to foster the intellectual and personal development of students” (p.16). Higher education’s moral goals have included the development of values, character, and wisdom (Bastedo, 2005; Ikenberry,

1997; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Willimon, 1997); the capacity to judge wisely in matters of conduct and of life, including helping students understand how to lead ethical, reflective, and fulfilling lives (Keohane, 2001; King, 1997); the obligation to tell the truth (Wilson, 1997); and the quest for self knowledge and the redefinition of the self (Gumport, 2001; Kolenko, Porter, Wheatley, & Colby, 1996). According to Newman, Couturier, and Scurry (2004), at one time, colleges and universities were the primary source for social critique:

Colleges and universities were viewed as the principal source of criticism about social and political trends. Communities turned to these institutions as a place for open debate and objective research. Academic freedom was designed to protect that very function so that academics would be free to teach and speak on controversial topics, and campuses could tolerate – even encourage – debate that helped illuminate critical social issues...The privilege of serving as an open center of analysis and debate allows higher education to make a critical contribution to the democratic functioning of society. (pp. 63-64)

There is a relationship between a liberal education and the resolution of ethical dilemmas (Bastedo, 2005; Keohane, 2001; Lane & Schaupp, 1989; Muijen, 2004). At one time, a liberal education was oriented toward values and proposed to make “students more virtuous human beings” (Lane & Schaupp, 1989, p. 187). There is support for the belief that liberal arts majors have more principled moral reasoning. As examples, Useem (1989) maintains that liberal arts majors have a better appreciation for ethical concerns, and McCabe, Dukerich, & Dutton (1991) state that liberal arts majors are more concerned with other-directed values. Keohane (2001) sees the traditional liberal arts education as an asset – “training students to think carefully about values in human life,” adding all of society benefits “if people are trained to consider critically

the consequences of their behavior for themselves and others” (p. 187). Pascarella (1997), notes that liberal arts colleges continue to adhere to the belief that education makes a good person, and a good person acts nobly.

Over the past several decades, however, colleges and universities have de-emphasized the responsibility to graduate students who honor moral commitments (Schwartz & Templeton, 1997; Wilson, 1997; Glazer, 1996), and schools designed to cultivate moral leaders often have fallen short of this goal (Glazer, 1996; Wilson, 1997). Business schools have often been charged with inadequate attention to ethics (Bishop, 1992; Kelley, 2006; Klusmann, 2006; McCabe et al., 1991; Piper, 1989). Schools that educate students about journalism and mass communication have the potential for great leadership in helping solve some of society’s most critical problems; however, the topic of moral leadership is seldom a priority (Roepke, 1995). Furthermore, in a comparative study of moral growth by areas of study, the least moral growth took place in such career-oriented majors as education and business (Pascarella, 1997).

Universities not only have ethical and moral obligations to their students, they have similar obligations to society as well (Ikenberry, 1997; Roepke, 1995). One of these obligations to society is to graduate students who are moral citizens who have an adequate knowledge of social justice and who, therefore, are able and inclined to contribute to a better society (Rost, 1995). For that purpose, universities should design curriculum content that reflects attention to social issues such as environmental problems, poverty, racism, world hunger, and issues of justice and world peace (Astin, 1989).

The development of ethical and moral leaders and the development of corporate responsibility are additional commitments that universities have to society (Conroy, 2004; De Russy, 2003; Gaudiani, 1997; Mathews, 1997; Muijen, 2004; Piper, 1989; Willimon, 1997).

Muijen (2004) discusses one Dutch university's implementation of a program of values education to educate students to become "morally responsible and reflective scientists and professionals" (p. 23), with the proposed result of preparing morally centered and ethical students. Of course, the hope is that these students will become morally-centered, ethical professionals.

Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) claim that ethical leadership is vital in an organization, and it is the leader's ethical conduct guided by moral principles and integrity that gives legitimacy and credibility to the vision of the organization. Similarly, King (1997) states that helping students to develop the integrity and character strength necessary for leadership may be the most important goal of higher education.

De Russy (2003) adds that in addition to what is or is not taught in professional schools, "the ethics and integrity of academe itself are critical...the professoriate is a gatekeeper, determining a student's first exposure to ethical standards..."(p. 3). The need for fund raising has created college and university faculty and university presidents who are unwilling to speak about "pressing societal issues" (Newman et al., 2004, p. 64). Newman et al, report that the huge salaries of college presidents are criticized for "exacerbating the focus on money for impressionable undergraduates..." (p. 64). Gumpert (2001) discusses a problem in public higher education, the alleged "selling out" of the university:

alleged selling out ranges from diluting the curriculum with politically correct academic offerings, establishing academic-industry research agreements (e.g. the University of California, Berkeley, and Novartis), athletic teams sponsored by Nike or Reebok, exclusive "pouring rights" committed to Coca-Cola or PepsiCo, not to mention the decades of university science and engineering efforts to support national defense. (p. 86)

According to Ciulla (1995), there is little discussion in the literature regarding ethics in the practice of leadership, and if the discussion exists, it is fragmented. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) comment that in the writing, teaching, and theory of administration, few texts incorporate values and ethics and provide little information about how to incorporate caring with leadership.

Rost (1995) reports that there are three problems with researching, writing, and talking about the ethics of leadership. First, there is still no one commonly accepted definition of leadership. The second problem is that most ethical frameworks have to do with individuals rather than with large numbers of people acting ethically in large organizations. The third problem, which confirms Ciulla's (1995) beliefs, is that there is a lack of literature on the subject of ethics and leadership, and leaders and their collaborators need a body of literature on the ethics of leadership. Furthermore, Rost (1995) adds that this type of literature is not a priority among ethicists or among leadership scholars. Although researchers present important questions and problems, they often do not provide answers or ways to resolve the issues.

Researchers have expressed the need for research in three areas (Ciulla, 1995; Marshall et al., 1996; Pascarella, 1997; Rost, 1995). These include new thinking about values and leadership, the role of the university and new ways to study and learn, and the value of real-life examples in the exploration of moral and ethical formation. A number of researchers provide suggestions regarding the role of the university in moral development; however, none presents suggestions from the perspective of identified moral leaders.

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of participants' perceptions regarding ethical learning and the university. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. Can people be educated to be ethical and moral?

2. What programs or courses might universities use to assist undergraduate and graduate students to reach a greater moral potential?

Methods

Context

This qualitative study used open-ended interviews to investigate perceptions of 14 contemporary moral leaders regarding moral development and higher education. A constructivist approach most closely parallels the philosophical underpinnings of this study. This approach assumes an “emphasis on the world of experience as it is lived, felt, undergone by social actors....what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective...” (Schwandt, 1998, p. 236). What participants perceive as real is a construction of their minds. Individuals can have multiple, often conflicting constructions, and all of these can provide understanding for them regarding life circumstances (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Schwandt, 2001; Seale, 1999).

Data Generation, Collection, and Processing

Participants. The participants were selected in one of two ways. Initial participants were selected through a survey process. Subsequently, these original participants nominated others they considered to be “moral leaders.” According to Berg (1995), this technique of snowballing involves “first identifying [those] with relevant characteristics and interviewing them.... these subjects are then asked for the names of other people who possess the same attributes as they do” (p. 33).

Most of the participants are public figures who have written books, who have been the subject of books or articles, who are known locally or nationally, and/or who have received awards and recognition for their work. The participants included six females and eight males, all

white Americans. Their ages range from 35 to over 70. Although African-Americans were included in the survey portraits, and three (3) were selected by the survey participants as potential participants, none from this group was available to be interviewed.

Profiles of the 14 participants (See Appendix) are presented to place their responses in the context of who they are and how they have lived their lives. Their names are included because all participants are public figures who agreed in advance to have their names disclosed. The participants are presented in alphabetical order; the information for the profiles came primarily from the vitae participants provided to the researchers. In some cases, additional information was gathered from publications and books written by and/or about the participants.

Instruments. Two instruments were used in this study: a participant identification survey (MLRS) and an open-ended interview protocol. The MLRS included 39 short portraits/profiles of unnamed public figures who were selected by the researchers from a variety of fields including medicine, politics, the military, religion, education, journalism, psychology, law, entertainment, and business. The MLRS used a continuum for rating the moral and ethical levels of profiles with (1) being the least and (6) being the most moral and ethical. The following definition of moral leadership was provided in the survey's instructions: The moral leader is one who has a positive, lasting effect or influence on others and/or the world (Roepke, 1995).

The second instrument consisted of ten open-ended interview questions about moral leadership, and was used to gather information from the 14 selected leaders. For the purposes of this paper, analyses of the following questions are presented: Do you believe that people can be educated to be ethical and moral? What programs or courses might you suggest that universities could use to assist undergraduate and graduate students to reach a greater moral potential?

Data collection and processing. There were three steps in the data collection procedures: the survey of graduate students, the open-ended interviews with the selected leaders, and document analysis. In the first step, 57 university graduate students selected “moral leaders” who would be invited to participate in the interviews. They were asked to rate the leaders described by the portraits using the MLRS. Twenty-one public figures, who were chosen by 75% or more of the graduate students as being in the top one-half of the moral continuum, were invited to participate. The second step consisted of recruitment for the open-ended interviews. Letters were sent to the 21 selected leaders, and then follow-up telephone calls were made. Four leaders’ responses were indecisive, and three nationally-prominent leaders declined. Thus, of the 21 potential participants, 12 were available for interviews. Initial participants nominated two additional participants.

Appointments for the interviews with the participants were scheduled over the phone at a time and place convenient to them. All the interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim. During the interviews, the researchers wrote notes about the answers of the participants to later develop tentative ideas regarding categories and relationships (Maxwell, 1996). The interviews lasted from 30 to 50 minutes. The variation in length of interview time did not appear to be related to whether the interview was by telephone or face-to-face. The researchers ensured telephone and face-to-face interviews were consistent by using the same interview questions and allowing the participants as much time as they wished to respond to each question.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was the central technique used to identify the issues and themes that emerged from participants’ responses (Berg, 1995; Maxwell, 1996). First, the interview transcripts were read in their entirety; next, each verbatim response to the interview question was

reviewed on a line-by-line basis. Then, for the responses to the question, units of information -- words, phrases, concepts -- that met the following requirements were identified: they contained information that contributed to the meaning of each research question, they were phrases or words that could stand on their own as pieces of data, and they were meaningful to the extent they could be interpreted similarly by individuals other than the researchers. After the units of information were identified, they were coded and grouped into subcategories based on their common content or theme. The subcategories were grouped into broader or core categories. The labels for the subcategories and categories were chosen based on the participants' own words (e. g., teaching, service learning). Thematic connections and recurring patterns began to emerge from sorting the data into subcategories and categories.

Findings

The following presents a discussion of the themes that emerged from the answers participants provided to the interview questions that framed this study: (1) Do you believe that people can be educated to be ethical and moral? And (2) What programs or courses would you suggest that universities could use to assist undergraduate and graduate students to reach a greater moral potential?

All the participants answered "yes" to the first question, they believe people can be educated to be moral and ethical. Given the unanimity of the responses and since none of the participants qualified their affirmative answers, no further qualitative analysis was necessary for this question. The answers to the second question, regarding suggestions for universities, focused on three main areas or categories (1) teaching (e.g., curricular choices, methods, relationships, and role modeling), (2) the effects of experience learning and field work, and (3) course work focus (e.g., liberal arts, peace education, ethics, morality, spirituality, and social analysis).

Teaching: curricular choices/methods/relationships and role modeling

The participants discussed several areas where universities can assist students in reaching their moral potential including teaching beyond the text in order to understand experience, relationship building, teachers as facilitators and/or role models, and teachers as guides to decision making and analysis.

Jim Wallis and Miriam Therese Winter said teaching beyond the text facilitates the moral learning process and that students learn when they are encouraged to discuss experiences, their own and/or that of others. Jim Wallis stated that there is a “need for moral dialogue on a number of issues. At every level, I think politics, religion, and others -- we have got to engage people in moral discourse, and I think in some people this will awaken great things.” He continued by discussing his high school writing teacher who he said “made us read books that really were full of moral discourse....She would treat these as moral issues, not that there was only one opinion. She would try to get us to talk about things in moral terms, and this awakened us...What she was doing was moral education.” He added that although she was teaching writing, and she tried to help all the students become better writers, she would say “having something of merit to say is the first thing about being a good writer.”

Miriam Therese Winter maintained that,

what we have to do is have educational opportunities in relationship to real-life experience. Not something that just piles more data inside heads and then people are going away trying to marry the two edges. That is not in any way to disparage more conceptual learning and understanding....[but] it's hard for the ordinary person to connect the dots. It's hard to do that -- for students -- morally speaking...the point is, it's who you

are and how you do what you do. It's really more methodology and process, and certainly content is helpful.

She called this a facilitating kind of leadership and understanding and added that this kind of process learning is appropriate for graduate level education. She stated that

if you don't understand it, it's disparaged by some, or they might dismiss it as “touchy feely” or as not as intellectual. This is more like sharing. The point is, there's a lot that's intellectual in there. The learning is multi-dimensional. It's in the head and in the heart; it's in the reshaping and reorganizing of one's thoughts.

Pedro Jose Greer suggested that teaching beyond the text often means the discussion of relationship building. As an example, he stated,

I say to my students, I think it's great that you know the article in the medical journals, but how are you going to talk to patients? Have you read the *Miami Herald* this morning? Have you read a novel? Can you discuss this with the person?

He further discussed the importance of teachers as friends and/or mentors. However, he stated that since all teachers and particularly those who maintain student friendships are seen as role models, they need to maintain acceptable moral conduct. He recounted the example of a physician who taught with him who revealed a personal indiscretion:

if you are going to take the role of taking care of other people and be a role model for students, some behavior is totally unacceptable....the worst thing you can have is a popular professor who would do something immoral. In a student's mind, that is very influential.

Five of the participants discussed the importance of teachers as guides to decision making and analysis. As an example, Joan Chittister stated that teachers need to build curriculum that

“brings to bear on the issues of the day, questions of the day, all of the possible moral answers, and then you’ve got to ask people to make moral judgment.” Rosemary Radford Ruether agreed that students benefit when they are encouraged to make moral decisions and discussed her own methods:

I think that you can help people analyze personal and social wrongs and present them with ideals about how to become just and loving people. I can teach in a way that tries to help people see the sort of things they ought to be involved in...but I would always insist that finally people make decisions that are not just the product of someone else giving them information. They make decisions about whether they are going to care about other people or just care about themselves.

Miriam Therese Winter, likewise, maintained that it is important for teachers to help people become decision makers concerning their own belief systems and their own consciences. She added that teachers can organize their subject matter in such a way that “people have to reach some decisions then evaluate those decisions because some very good people make some very bad decisions.” She continued by saying that these situations could be scenarios or could be something in the course content which would lead to “what would you do in this situation, or why would you do it? Is that why? Play it several ways. What if you decided this way and what if you decided that way? So you can see good, better, and best decisions. It’s not only just good and bad.” Furthermore, she stressed,

you have to understand, too, that in order to make good decisions and to develop leadership skills, you have to honor that everybody has the capacity to do that....We have to start from a level playing field which I believe the classroom should be. When you come in that class, it doesn’t matter if one person has had an extensive education and the

other one has had very little formal education. If you've allowed them in the class and said they can handle it, it just means that their ability to share data or experiences differs when it comes to decision making and ethical and moral leadership.

Michael Crosby also stated that good professors can help to raise student awareness:

Some people who are good professors in anthropology, sociology, political science, and economics can raise the social consciences of those sciences and then find ways of interpreting them in ways that adjust the reality of the group, and this is effective. You have to get their eyes opened up, either through their ears or through their feet, by experience, or hearing something or reading something.

Jim Wallis concurred that moral education takes place when people are forced to make moral decisions. Regarding his writing teacher, he said,

she forced you to take a position, a moral position, and maybe that's what moral education is -- forcing people to take a position on the issues of life. And a lot of people do not take a position one way or the other. It's not so much the people who take the wrong position that you have to struggle with. It's the people who take no position at all.

Effects of experience learning/field work

Nine participants discussed the value of experience learning or field work for student moral development and the resulting effects both for those individuals and for others. For instance, Michael Crosby discussed a study that he recalled: "when I began working in social justice, we did a study on how people did change, and we found that most of it came through an immersion experience....I still believe that's the best learning tool -- the immersion experience with a good critical reflection." Shelley Douglass talked about the value of students going to others, an immersion experience, in order for them to begin to see and to question. She

commented that the basic need is to get people to be more concerned about other people and added that some schools do person-to-person programs. She said “I think these are really helpful.”

Thomas Gumbleton also spoke of the merits of education by experience and said that “people can be drawn toward change.” He, like Shelley Douglass, commented about how experience learning can draw students toward valuable questions. He continued by saying,

I think programs whereby students immerse themselves in the life of the poor -- schools that have programs where kids go off for a few weeks or months even to work in Appalachia or some place like that or to go to foreign countries. But not to go as tourists, but to actually be part of the situation, to live with the poor and to work with the poor.

That would change students more than anything else. And so that then when they begin to do some of the analysis of situations, why is it this way? Well, they are doing that analysis out of the perspective of the people themselves, and there is a strong commitment to try to change things for the benefit of the poor. By having the experience, the students become more open to hearing about causes and what methodology to use to change situations. I think that if they've been there and seen what they've seen, they'll be much more open.

Kathy Thornton responded similarly, saying that students learn by situations of experience. She stated, “I would recommend that whatever we do in education be experience-based, so that people learn to value human experience as a way to teach us how to live.” She concluded with this comment: “I'm a firm believer in the education of experience and honestly looking at our experiences, so instead of leaving with theory, we leave with experience.”

Another participant who recounted the value of field work is Joseph Sciortino who said that this type of education is similar to the involvement that SYSCO employees have experienced. He related that

we encouraged the employees at SYSCO to participate in what the Food Bank calls a glean--going to Belle Glade, Florida to glean corn out of a field for the Food Bank. In other words, to be a migrant worker for that time, for the experience.

Rosemary Radford Ruether summed up the value of experience learning by saying, “I think that experiences beyond the classroom are often very transforming -- actually getting involved in some kind of social situation; in other words, a more hands-on experience. That often has a transformative effect that simply information in a classroom doesn't have.”

Course work focus/importance/suggestions

Eight participants discussed course work focus and offered suggestions regarding university education for a greater student moral and ethical potential. Some of the areas they discussed include education for relationship building; the importance of a liberal arts foundation; ethics, morality, and spirituality courses; and the value of social analysis. Marie Carol Hurley expressed the value of educating with a focus on relationship building and remarked that she would talk about the Peace Education Foundation techniques because she is familiar with them. She added that peace educators believe that if people can be taught war and military skills, then they can be taught peace skills -- caring, listening, and respecting -- and that currently this is taught from preschool to twelfth grade. Marie Carol Hurley continued by saying,

at a university, all the [teacher education] interns could be taught the principles of peace education, and you know what it would do for them? It would not only help them to have discipline in their classrooms so that they could have order, but they could also teach

better and be better examples of peaceful people....But it seems to me that every person ought to know something about this just for their own good, for personal relationships--community building and how to get along with people...so maybe if everyone in the university had a course in these skills that would help them in their personal relations throughout life or business or whatever.

Another area that three participants spoke about is their appreciation of a solid liberal arts foundation. For example Pedro Jose Greer discussed the value of the liberal arts education with a focus on history:

The honest truth is I think the universities have gone far too technical. You need first and foremost a good liberal arts education, an education based on readings. You need to read the Bible; you need to read the Torah; you need to read the philosophers. You need to put it all together; you also have to look throughout history and see where morality is important. You need to read about the Roman Empire; you need to read about the Dark Ages; you need to read about the Renaissance....The liberal arts education would give you the basis to understand the depths of morality.

Joan Chittister agreed that the liberal arts foundation is very important and expressed that the university literature curriculum should be designed “to look very carefully at a segment of social change literature.” She further explained the value of literature: “what do you do with a good piece of literature? What’s the purpose of a good piece of literature if it isn’t to see into the human heart and to ask what’s going on in that heart and ask how that plays out in the world at large,” and she then emphasized that “you can’t throw out a liberal arts curriculum and wonder why all you get in this country are technological robots in nuclear industries.”

Morris Dees said that liberal arts courses are important and added that he sees a special value in biographies and history courses. He called this “educating people in a broad communal sense.” Regarding the value of history, he commented:

young people today need to understand that they are history every day and you can be a footnote to history if you want to, and most of us really are. You can also do your bit. You don't plan to do historic things. You do what you're going to do, and history has to make a judgment as to whether it had any merit or not. Hardly any lawsuit I've ever filed I thought was going to become an historical lawsuit, even though some I've filed some people say are historical.

Ethics, morality, and spirituality courses/social analysis

Six participants discussed course work that centered around ethics and/or morality, spirituality and/or theology, and social analysis. As an example, when asked about the implementation of ethics and morality courses at the university level, Pedro Jose Greer replied, “absolutely, and also in high school and grade school, and parents should take it too.” Joseph Sciortino agreed regarding the value of such courses and discussed an approach he thought would be effective:

I will say the obvious. I think all colleges and universities should teach courses in ethics. And I think that they could, rather than just giving them a theoretical brush, they could invite some of the moral and ethical leaders who are in the community to come in and be guest lecturers and teach applied ethics of the workplaces. I think that would have tremendous impact.

Kathy Thornton concurred with respect to ethics courses and discussed the value of ethics courses across the curriculum:

Certainly there needs to be ethics in business courses. I think it should permeate the whole curriculum -- the ethics of art, the ethics of advertising, the ethics of business, the ethics of medicine, the ethics of teaching. And my guess is that there should be a question in every course that asks where does our responsibility for others connect with whatever the course is about.

Three participants discussed the value of a spiritual and/or theological focus. For instance, Rosemary Radford Ruether spoke of a type of personal process called grace:

I think you can present a lot of ideals, but there's another kind of dimension beyond simply giving people ideas. There is a certain kind of process of personal transformation that was traditionally called grace. Somehow people really experience certain transformation and decide to lay hold of it.

And Joan Chittister expressed the idea that theology courses are valuable, but that students should be exposed to a wider view: "I think you've got to look at more than one kind of theology. You've got to look at feminist theology and liberation theology as well as the more traditional theologies."

Joseph Sciortino spoke of the value of courses centered around spirituality, particularly those with a focus on the workplace. He added to his comments about workplace ethics courses by saying that he believes that courses or seminars similar to the one he teaches, "The Spirituality of Work," would be effective. He suggested courses focused on "workplace morality, workplace spirituality, and workplace ethics" and said that the universities could sponsor or offer the courses both at the work site and/or at the university.

Several participants discussed the merits of university courses focused on social analysis. Rosemary Radford Ruether gave as an example "a course like the ones I teach on church and

social systems -- these have helped get analytical tools about what injustices are happening and how people can change them.” Joan Chittister agreed and discussed a similar type of course based on ethical tenets, ”If you are going to give basic sociology courses, basic psychology courses, you should also be applying them [social issues] to the newspapers of the day.” She added that this course would be appropriate not only at religious universities but at all universities as well.

Additionally, Michael Crosby and Joan Chittister suggested several courses they believe would be valuable. Joan Chittister suggested a course called “Ancient Heroes for Contemporary Events,” and Michael Crosby proposed that courses such as “The Nature of Prejudice,” “Issues of Poverty and Wealth,” and “Globalization and Its Impact on Humans and the Environment” would be valuable.

Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that universities should continue to have ethical and moral obligations to assist students in the areas of character building or moral consciousness that lead to values, character, wisdom, idealism, wise judgment, truth telling, self knowledge, and an understanding of how to live ethical and reflective lives (Klusmann, 2006; Ikenberry, 1997; King, 1997). Further, universities also have an obligation to society to graduate students who are moral citizens, have an adequate knowledge of social justice, and are able and inclined to contribute to a better society (Kelly, 2006; Rost, 1995). And, according to Roepke (1995), helping students to develop the integrity and character strength necessary for leadership may be the most important goal of higher education

In light of these needs, the participants’ responses are indeed pertinent and should provide useful information regarding how universities could fulfill their obligation to society to

graduate students who are ethical and moral citizens who have an adequate knowledge of social justice, and who are able and inclined to contribute to a better society.

The findings regarding experience learning or field work for student moral development and as a university educational tool are consistent with results of previous studies (Klusmann, 2006; Ikenberry, 1997; Kolenko et al., 1996; Lisman, 1998; Sax & Astin, 1997). It is interesting to note that the perceptions of the participants of the current study not only build on previous studies, but more importantly, are particularly valuable because their viewpoints express beliefs regarding the value of service learning which are drawn from their personal experiences, analyses, and perspectives as leaders, teachers, and students.

Findings regarding the value of courses with a liberal arts orientation are again consistent with the results of research studies (King & Mayhew, 2002; Lane & Schaupp, 1989; McCabe et al., 1991). Pascarella (1997) reported that the greatest moral growth took place in psychology, nursing, English, and social work; unfortunately, the least moral growth took place in such career-oriented majors as education and business. Roepke (1995) indicated that academic advisors should guide their advisees to specific liberal arts courses that will help them develop a sense of moral consciousness and purpose -- philosophy, literature, sociology, and religion, and Gaudiani (1997) and Muijen (2004) added that all universities have a special role in educating students who possess the moral fiber and social skills necessary to provide leadership.

The findings regarding university course content support previous studies that have indicated that universities should place a greater emphasis on ethics and leadership ethics (Geller, Levine, & Faden, 1993; Kelly, 2006; Nelson & Wittmer, 2004; Roepke, 1995; Sulmasy). Piper (1989) stated that ethics and corporate responsibility must be central issues at professional

schools, and Beck and Murphy (1993) reported a relationship between ethical problems and school leadership and policy.

A related finding indicated the value of educating with a focus on relationship building. One participant decided to discuss Peace Education Foundation techniques. This participant suggested that at a university all students be taught peace education skills because these skills that would help them in their professional and personal relations. This finding supports the suggestion by Marshall et al. (1996) that scholars and policy makers in the field of educational administration need to identify the structures that enhance collaborative, caring leadership.

Several of the participants discussed the merits of university courses focused on social analysis. These findings support and expand on results of prior research in the areas of education for social analysis and/or social responsibility (Astin, 1989; King & Mayhew, 2002; McCabe et al., 1991; Schwartz & Templeton, 1997). It has already been noted that the findings of the present study support previous studies that have indicated the need for a greater focus on moral reasoning skills, spiritual growth, moral values, and community-building as well as social analysis and/or social responsibility. They further support Pascarella's (1997) claim that there is a need for research which examines how colleges can influence the dimensions of moral development and Ikenberry's (1997) comment that universities must be challenged to think about the ultimate purpose of higher education because of the societal concern for values, civic life, and the common good (King & Mayhew, 2002).

Conclusion

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. The most important conclusion is that the development of moral growth and leadership may be the primary goal of higher education. This supports Roepke's (1995) assertion that the most pressing need in

society today is the need for moral leadership. Other conclusions are that community service and field experiences are vital for moral development and that education that stresses values and personal reflection also accommodates the moral growth process. Furthermore, generalists, or those who receive a more generalized education -- liberal arts -- will be better equipped for moral development and leadership than specialists, those who evolve from specialized education. A final conclusion is that generalized education which focuses on humanitarian, spiritual, and/or metaphysical philosophies is more beneficial to the promotion of moral growth and leadership than are philosophies such as empiricism and positivism.

Based on the findings of this study, universities might consider offering professional training: workshops which incorporate strategies such as teaching beyond the text to understand experience, relationship building, teachers as facilitators and/or role models, teachers as guides to decision making and analysis, and Peace Education strategies. Focusing university department meetings to discuss infusion of moral and ethical leadership concepts across the curriculum would also support the findings of this study. Based on the interviews, it appears that the participants suggested that universities consider providing instructors with teaching strategies which include incorporating experiential learning or field work across the curriculum and at all levels -- undergraduate, graduate, and Ph.D. Additionally, teachers would reinforce the value of journal writing and other tools for self reflection.

In the area of curriculum, the findings indicate that leadership programs might focus on models such as Transformational Leadership and Servant Leadership which strive to cultivate leaders who would work for improvement in the area of the politics and ethics. Participants also suggested that universities focus on expanding liberal arts courses as part of the core curriculum. This concentration could take the form of a spiral curriculum, focusing on the areas that enhance

moral growth and leadership across the curriculum and at all levels. Additionally, university-sponsored seminars/training series programs designed for cultivation of moral and ethical leaders for all disciplines and professions was discussed by the participants. A further suggestion focused on universities requiring ethics courses for specific areas of study across the curriculum and at all levels. Finally, several course titles have evolved based on the participants' comments and suggestions, including *The Spirituality of Work*, *The Nature of Prejudice*, *Issues of Poverty and Wealth*, *Social Encyclicals and the Daily News*, *Leadership for Peace*, and *Moral Leadership and Social Justice Responsibility*.

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Appendix

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