

*Director of Public Information
Monographic Publication
SHU views the 1970's*

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY
VIEWS THE 1970's



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*Text of an Address given before
Civic Representatives and Newspaper Editors*

by

*Dr. William H. Conley
President, Sacred Heart University*

at the

Algonquin Club

Bridgeport, Connecticut

February 6, 1970

The remarks delivered by Dr. William H. Conley, President, Sacred Heart University, on February 6, 1970 before a select gathering of newspaper editors and civic representatives in the Algonquin Club, Bridgeport, concern Sacred Heart University's definition of the role it will play in supplying capable leadership to its commuting region during this new and challenging decade.

It was felt that a complete text of these remarks might be helpful to you in assessing Sacred Heart University's future plans and we are pleased to present this material for your consideration.

Additional copies may be obtained by writing to or contacting:

Office of Public Information
Sacred Heart University
5229 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
or phoning 374-9441, Ext. 223

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY

VIEWS THE 1970's

Sacred Heart University has made great strides toward fulfilling its aspirations since its founding in 1963. As we enter a new and exciting era of the 1970's, I am pleased to announce a number of steps the University will take to help our Southwestern Connecticut commuting region meet some of its own problems and objectives during this period.

National spokesmen have commented frequently on the great growth in education anticipated during the 1970's. Experimentation in teaching, use of audio-visual techniques, machine teaching, growth of post high school occupational training, restructuring of courses to provide greater learning flexibility, and a general zest to meet rapidly changing conditions will characterize higher educational development. The present problems of the 1960's will be joined or replaced by many new concerns. Pollution, congestion, labor specialization, and complexity of urban social organization undoubtedly will become more acute. The student educated at our colleges during the 1970's must have a training which is not only relevant to the present but to the demands of the future as well.

One of the most successful ways to meet the challenges of the future is to have acquired experience in surmounting the challenges of the past. In February, 1963 — just seven short years ago — Sacred Heart received its charter and added a Freshman Class of 173 to start active operation the following Fall.

As a lay administered, coeducational, commuting institution within the framework of Catholic higher education, it has been dedicated to preserve the historical character and tradition of Judaeo-Christian teachings. However, as a product of the thought of the Second Vatican Council, it also has stressed a type of program designed to make its students adaptable to the needs of modern life and flexible in meeting the demands of environmental change.

Intellectual Development Stressed

The objectives of Sacred Heart University have focused upon intellectual development, moral and spiritual growth and career preparation for teaching, business and other areas in which sound liberal arts training has been proven applicable to the needs of society. To implement these objectives, Sacred Heart has created a

four-year Bachelor of Arts Degree Program, a Teacher Education Program, an Associate in Arts Degree Program, Special Programs of study and Continuing Educational study both in the day and in the evening.

Enrollment has grown to 1,700 full-time students who reside in its Southwestern Connecticut commuting region and adjacent areas. Nearly three-quarters of its faculty now have or are completing work on their doctorates or terminal degrees.

In 1968, its newest physical addition, a 180,000-volume library, was dedicated. Already in existence were a consolidated center complex and a separate Administration Building located on 63 acres of campus area.

Previously accredited by the State of Connecticut Department of Education, the University last December earned full accreditation in minimum time from the Association of New England College and Secondary Schools. Its graduates have enjoyed transfer into leading graduate and professional schools throughout the United States. In addition, swift placement into teaching and other positions of community responsibility have characterized the University's early graduating classes.

The Future

Despite these and other noteworthy accomplishments, the University recognizes a community responsibility to meet economic and social conditions during the 1970's. A meaningful relationship with its Southwestern Connecticut commuting region during this new decade will, in great measure, determine its worth and value to the area as a whole.

It is in our commuting region that Sacred Heart University's effects will be felt; it is from this region that SHU derives its students; it is to this region that graduates will return for full-time employment; it is in this region that alumni will marry, have families and rise in positions of responsibility; it is in this region that SHU adult and community programs will flourish; and it is in this region that Sacred Heart students and alumni, as citizens, will help identify and overcome community social and governmental problems which will exist in future years.

Mr. Frederick B. Silliman, President of the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company, in an address before the Greater Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce December 2, 1969, outlined some of the regional problems which our commuting area will have during the 1970's. In

his talk, he pointed out that for businessmen, the number-one challenge will be "in the management of change" and he went on to urge his fellow business leaders to adopt a broad, interrelated view of their social obligations and responsibilities in meeting new conditions successfully.

Mr. Silliman also went on to describe the characteristics of the 1970 area-work force. Its effectiveness will be based on the abilities of talented executives, supervisors and other personnel with a capacity to work independently and creatively in an atmosphere of greater personal autonomy.

Mr. Silliman talked further about the need for greater decision-making power in local communities and additional responsibilities at the State and municipal level. During the 1970's, the interdependence of institutions within our area will become even more pronounced as specialization of labor increases in complexity.

Mr. Silliman and other leaders who focus on the 1970's within our commuting region impose new and challenging demands upon all of us in higher education. At this time, we at Sacred Heart would like to tell you about some of the ways in which we hope to help meet changing conditions within our area and the directions we will take during the bright young decade we are now entering.

Objectives For The 1970's

During the 1970's, Sacred Heart University will endeavor to do several things:

We will continue to emphasize sound undergraduate liberal arts instruction. We will try to provide graduates who are adaptable and flexible in decision making. We will stress an approach which will not reduce knowledge to a mere proliferation of facts but which will seek to give these graduates a unified understanding of the facts involved.

Secondly, we will work to develop a general core program in the behavioral sciences. Such a program will serve as a "gateway" to further behavioral science course development among our students. We will not concentrate upon our undergraduates as future technical specialists but will seek to prepare them to become competent generalists trained to apply their skills to a variety of social problems. At the same time, we will continue to insist upon their ability to master at least one field of knowledge in depth for their successful completion of the Baccalaureate Degree. The University will seek to make its students capable of coping with the challenges of the

70's, 80's and 90's by developing them intellectually so that they are able to understand their heritage and cultural traditions properly and thus are able to apply their liberal arts background within a broad spectrum of future problem-solving activity.

The idea that current college study must be relevant only to contemporary problems is a damaging one. In effect, it condemns us to exclusion of the future in order to ponder exhaustively upon problems which may already have become obsolete by graduation time. Our emphasis upon a strong general liberal arts core program during the 1970's, presented with a balanced viewpoint, will help our students gain background for flexibility in future decision making through a variety of intellectual stimulation.

*General Business
And Teacher Education
To Be Emphasized*

The University also will continue to expand and improve its programs in general business and teacher education. Since most SHU graduates will live and work within this region, their college train-

ing will be planned to help them meet its future problems successfully.

The competition for quality teachers will become more exacting and rigorous as the 1970's progress. Sacred Heart has been extremely pleased to have already enjoyed a high degree of graduate placement success in this field.

A recent survey of principals who employ Sacred Heart University graduates as teachers within the commuting region indicates that the special strengths such graduates possess appear to be an enthusiasm for teaching and willingness to work overtime, a sound knowledge of subject matter, and a particularly good knowledge of the personal interests, aptitudes and backgrounds of their students. This latter point, of course, reflects the previous background of Sacred Heart University graduates as products of this region. Thus, sound teaching skills and a sense of professional responsibility have been added by the University to a previous personal understanding of local community needs by SHU students who enter teaching.

During the 1970's, Sacred Heart University will focus upon building a working relationship with inner-city schools in our commuting region and having faculty members in its Department of

Education teach their students in clinical situations. Courses in observation, for example, would be conducted off campus in public schools where our future teachers could then immediately apply theory to practice situations on a one-to-one basis and actually verify professorial methods as they were introduced. It is felt that such activity of a clinical nature will make even more well-equipped teachers in future years since theoretical concepts will be tested immediately in operational practice.

Future decision-making processes will require the talent of a business generalist, an executive with the ability to make a broad range of decisions affecting many interrelated areas. We intend to supply that type of future executive through our business administration program which provides a broad general background involving various areas of business preparation. While specialization has its place, we at Sacred Heart feel that we will continue to shape our program on providing future executives who can make decisions on the basis of many factors rather than simply upon narrow economic considerations.

*"Learn While You
Earn" Trend Noted*

Our Continuing Education Program in the 1970's will be geared to a "learn while you earn" trend which is expected to become more evident as Selective Service requirements lessen. More young men, without the anxieties of military service, will work full-time and contemplate college on a part-time schedule in accordance with their economic means. Evening study for post high-school youth will become increasingly popular as more young people spend more time working for college degrees on a part-time basis while holding full-time jobs.

Our commuting region, I believe, will see a great growth in this type of adult education market. Sacred Heart will work especially hard to explore and develop this particular market. We will also give increased attention to the development of specialized institutes, seminars and programs as well as to regular evening course opportunities leading to degrees. We also shall continue our efforts to expand daytime programs of adult study for area housewives.

Mr. Silliman and other speakers who view the 1970's have discussed the importance of mastering the urban and Negro problems since they are both interwoven in today's world. At this time, Sacred Heart is planning to establish an intensive program to teach developmental reading skills to qualified students from minority groups with college potential but with deficiencies in these areas. We also have added special counseling assistance to work directly with minority group students in their recruitment and successful adjustment to college life.

Members of minority groups from deprived urban areas are being enrolled in colleges today in record numbers. The problem of the 1970's is to insure that everything possible is done to keep them in college and help to make them academically and vocationally successful in their college environment. Development in reading skills is most important to this process and Sacred Heart will focus increased efforts to remedy and correct any past deficiencies in this regard.

Interdependence Of Institutions Stressed

Mr. Silliman also discussed the growing interdependence of institutions within our general region. This interdependence, I believe, will become even more pronounced through systems like our own Tri-University one where our three local universities work to make meaningful course and library exchange practices a complete reality. I believe that Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University and the University of Bridgeport are willing and eager to continue their joint cooperative efforts to improve the Tri-University concept so that students at the three institutions will be able to exchange courses and library facilities in the fullest measure possible.

The University further recognizes that the social problems of its commuting area will not be improved solely by the increased number of trained educators, business leaders, social workers and other trained alumni it graduates. Our students also will have a role to play. Therefore, the University will expand its already existing efforts to encourage student participation in activities designed to uplift and advance progress in deprived urban neighborhoods. Programs sponsored by our fraternities and sororities, students interested in Confraternity of Christian Doctrine work, and related groups,

will continue to be part of our commitment to the gospel of social betterment through student community service.

Financially, the University will focus upon two immediate problems. It will continue to seek financial support from many sources to complete the cost of its \$1,150,000 library. An annual operating fund for faculty excellence is also a key goal for the 1970's. Although the University already spends about 60 per cent of its operating budget for instructional purposes, it fully recognizes that inflationary factors in the economy and other added costs make it imperative to create a fund to attract more top scholars as senior college level enrollment grows. Later, it is hoped to initiate plans to finance a possible campus center.

The University has operated as a private non-tax supported institution. But it will require increased assistance from industry, business and individual and governmental sources to develop the kind of program necessary to assist its commuting region by providing trained and capable graduates in future years.

During the 1970's, Sacred Heart University will not seek to be all things to all men. It will stress the instilling of adaptability in future decision making for its students through a strong undergrad-

uate liberal arts program and a variety of specialized counseling services. It will develop further cooperative programs with other institutions of higher learning. It will focus increased attention upon core programs of an interdisciplinary nature, to give its students proper background for future occupational and community leadership roles and it will develop additional institutes and offerings in continuing education and part-time adult evening study. These goals may be subject to revision as new conditions occur and careful consideration will be given to any radical changes in our regional picture. However, I feel that the objectives outlined represent the basic directions that Sacred Heart will pursue during the years ahead and that our institution will be of substantial value in assisting our Southwestern Connecticut commuting region to meet the challenges and problems of these exciting years.



*Photo of
Dr. Conley - in thought*

