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What is going on in the world? We ask our faculty members to make sense of what we need to know, understand, and reflect upon. They agree to share insights and observations about their respective fields or special interests. Field Notes serves as a window to different worlds where we all belong.

FIELD NOTES

Forging New Adventures

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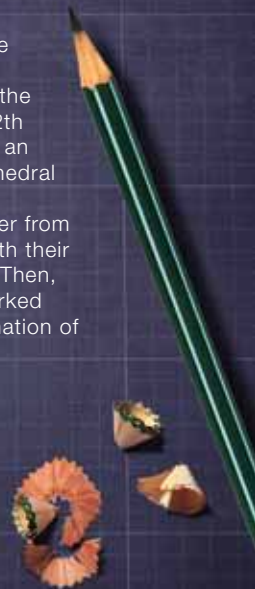
The Honorable Renato Corona, Chief Justice of the Republic of the Philippines, His Excellency Socrates Villegas, Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan, Mr. Francis Estrada, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of De La Salle University, Br. Edmundo Fernandez FSC, Brother Visitor and Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees of De La Salle University, Distinguished guests, Lasallians, friends, and family.

First I'd like to thank the Brothers and the BOT of DLSU for the trust and confidence they have given me. It is a great honor and privilege to be given the opportunity to lead and serve the community of De La Salle University. I am truly humbled and grateful by this appointment and my only prayer is that God will help us accomplish what God thinks is best for this university.

In the magazine, *Forbes* (3/10/97), Peter Drucker once said:

"Thirty years from now the big university campuses will be relics. Universities won't survive. It's as large a change as when we first got the printed book."

Yet, we are now 2010 a bit far removed from the article of Peter Drucker written in 1997. Also, far removed from the universities of the 11th and 12th centuries, where learning was an extension of the Christian cathedral schools or monastic schools, centered on knowledge transfer from the monks to the students, with their mission focused on teaching. Then, the 17th and 18th century marked the beginning of the transformation of universities that would eventually result in the modern research university. This particular



shift has created tension between the teaching and research functions of many universities in Europe, Asia, and North America until today. In the first half of the 20th century, the concept of a university that extends its services to its own country added a new dimension. This concept, aimed at economic and social development, became more prominent, aside from teaching and research functions. Since then, Universities have been dealing with the tension generated by the new environment especially in a knowledge-based and innovation-driven economy, involving the functions of teaching, research, and service or community engagement.

I believe many of the universities today in many countries do continue to adapt and change around the world. Its role in developing and shaping peoples, economies, cultures, governments, and civilizations cannot be ignored. It is clear that the fundamental functions of the university in teaching, research and community engagement do not change over time, yet the particular

expressions of these functions do change—and change quite dramatically, in fact.

Today, I see universities that are very innovative in its expressions of its teaching, research, and service functions in order to survive, adapt, and change. The universities that we know 20 or 30 years ago are no longer the same. On the other hand, there is something about an institution like De La Salle University that never changes – something that is intrinsic to the charism and mission of St. John Baptist de La Salle, our Founder. Inherent in St. La Salle's mission and charism was to provide human and Christian education that was innovative and practical at the same time. In his response to what was happening during his time, he was able to anticipate the future and push the envelope of the possible in forging new adventures. He started the simultaneous method while others were doing a one-on-one type of educator-learner relationship without sacrificing personal care to individual students. He used the vernacular while others were absorbed in teaching and learning in Latin. He developed a pedagogy that continues to withstand space and time, copied and imitated by many which we now call the modern public education offered to the masses for free in many countries.

This was no different from the first Brothers and other missionary Brothers who came to the Philippines. Imagine the French, Irish, German and American Brothers who knew nothing about the Philippines, yet responded at the request of American Archbishop Harty in the early 1900s to put up a school initially for boys. At that time, the Brothers were one of the first to teach in English when Spanish was the medium of instruction. The Brothers then introduced a pedagogy that



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formed young men to be leaders in different fields of profession. Each generation of Brothers and Partners, from 1911 to the present, ventured into a joint project of making sure that St. La Salle's vision (of providing a human and Christian education accessible to all) would continue today in ways beyond the imagination of our Founder and the first Brothers in Manila in the 1900s.

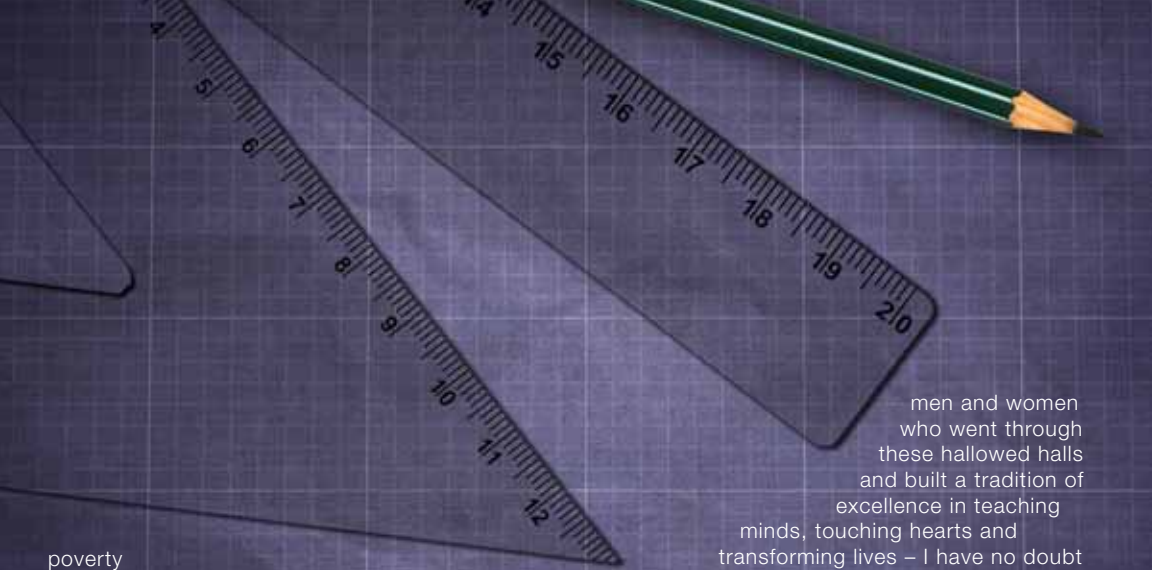
Today, De La Salle University is again at another crossroads as it celebrates its centennial next year. I wonder whether we have what it takes to be able to anticipate the future, dream big, and push the envelope of the possible in forging new adventures in the next 100 years or so.

Let us take a look at the function of “teaching,” that is, transmitting knowledge. We generally think of teaching in terms of a professor lecturing a class of students, who in turn respond by reading assigned texts, writing papers, solving problems or performing experiments, and taking oral and written examinations. Yet, we know that the classroom is no longer the only venue for learning and will soon be replaced by more appropriate and efficient platforms that encourage learning in ways we never imagined 20 or 30 years ago.

We can see that today's students are born to be “digital” or “digital natives”. The moment they come into this world, they have spent their early lives surrounded by electronic media—anime, personal laptops, iPods, smart phones, online games, social networking, and virtual reality.

Students today approach learning as a “copy-and-paste” as well as a “plug-and-play” experience, where they are more inclined to learn through hands-on experimentation and direct participation rather than reading texts and manuals. DLSU needs to ask itself whether our present pedagogy of lecturing is enough to be a good university. We live in an age when being learner centered becomes vital in the life and role of the teacher in the University. DLSU needs to reconsider the role of the teacher. Rather than just being a lecturer, the teacher needs to become a designer of learning experiences, processes, and environments that promote inquiry based learning, transformative lifelong learning, and critical thinking. DLSU needs to reconsider a new pedagogical DNA for teaching, learning, and assessment.

Next, let us take a look at the function of research and scholarship, the process of creating new knowledge—which is also evolving rapidly away from a very private and discipline-specific scholar to teams of scholars, more often than not spread over a number of disciplines. DLSU needs to ask itself whether disciplinary specialist is really necessary—or even relevant—in a future in which the most interesting and significant problems will require inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches. DLSU needs to consider the role of a researcher and scholar. Rather than just working alone that is discipline specific, researchers from different research backgrounds need to work together free from discipline or structural barriers in order to apply innovative and practical solutions to the major research themes of today, such as,



poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and equity and access in quality education. DLSU needs to integrate undergraduate teaching and learning with graduate research to create a true community of scholars.

Last but not the least, we take a look at the function of service and community engagement – the process of creating new knowledge and applying them innovatively as solutions that bring about social change and transformation, solutions that have revolutionized partnerships with non-government organizations, people's organizations, private and public sectors. DLSU needs to ask itself whether these partnerships are truly creating a sustainable future for generations to come. DLSU needs to consider its role in national and regional development, and ask itself whether we have acted as agents of change. DLSU needs to actively participate in societal issues and collaborate with other universities, the government, the private sector, and the industry in order to bring more opportunities for real social transformation and have a more sustainable and meaningful future.

Having said that there is no question that the relevance of the Universities as we know today is vital to the development of persons, not only in terms of skills and knowledge, but values formation. DLSU knows that it lives in exciting times amidst a lot of uncertainty and complexity. It can be a center for learning, knowledge creation, and values formation. DLSU is an institution that stands on the shoulders of great

men and women who went through these hallowed halls and built a tradition of excellence in teaching minds, touching hearts and transforming lives – I have no doubt in my mind that we will do the same – together and by association, we will continue to be a University that truly lives by its motto of *religio, mores, cultura*: aptly summarized in being Lasallian Achievers for God and Country (Lasallian Saints for God and Country). I have no doubt, we will continue the tradition of excellence as handed down to us by our Founder through the first Brothers who came to Manila in 1911, not only now but as we navigate ourselves into the future. I say this not to boast but only because in all humility I know the Lord will be with us, and whatever we do, we participate in God's work, as our St. La Salle would always say, "Lord, the Work is Yours".

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, as I accept this invitation as a Chancellor of the De La Salle University, I wish to once again thank all who have come to witness this occasion. I stand here before you, honored by your trust, and deeply inspired by the charge you have placed in me as your Chancellor.

As we approach our Centennial celebration, the opportunity to lead a University to be at the forefront of being a "learning-centered research university" is unbelievably exciting. I pray that together and by association we will be guided by God's will and the Lasallian core values of Faith, Service and Communion in Mission (or *religio, mores, cultura*), and may we seize the moment and be grateful for whatever challenges will come our way.

Thank you for coming and may we always live Jesus in our hearts - forever.