

SALESIAN YOUTH MINISTRY DEPARTMENT



**ORIENTATIONS FOR CAMPUS MINISTRY
IN SALESIAN INSTITUTIONS
OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

(Document “ad experimentum” 2018-2020)

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INTRODUCTION

[1] The Salesian Institutions of Higher Education (IUS) are integrated in the Salesian mission according to the proper nature of the institution of higher education and according to the charism and the uniqueness of the Salesian mission. This is reflected in the document, *Identity of the Salesian Institutions of Higher Education* (2003), which indicates the following essential characteristics: the option for young people who are poorer, the presence of an academic community committed to an institutional project, Christian and Salesian Orientation, and the educational-pastoral purpose.¹

[2] During the VI General Assembly of IUS (2012), the Provincials and those in charge of the institutions who participated, considered it as necessary to reflect deeply on the educative-pastoral purpose, especially the way in which the campus ministry of IUS is developed. For this reason, the General Coordinator and the Board of Directors of IUS assumed this challenge for the Common programme 4, 2012 - 2016 and invited the IUS from every continent to reflect on the said topic. The continental coordination teams received the invitation and promoted various initiatives in order to reflect on the campus ministry model that is practiced by each institution in the different continents.

[3] As a result of these meetings and the discussion on the pastoral reflection developed in the Congregation in the recent years, a first document was presented during the VII General Assembly of the IUS (2016), in order to apply the pastoral model outlined in the Frame of Reference of Salesian Youth Ministry in all the institutions of higher education of which the Salesian Congregation is responsible. This first text was revised by a Commission that met in Madrid (January 2017). Subsequently, it was studied by the IUS during the year 2017, especially in the continental meetings. At the end of that year, the Commission incorporated the contributions sent by the various IUS into the text. Finally, the document was analyzed and approved by the Board of Directors in January 2018.

[4] The updated text that we are going to present enters a phase of application in all the IUS for three years: 2018, 2019 and 2020 which will conclude with a final evaluation. Thereafter, the document will be studied and approved in the next General Assembly of the IUS (2021). The process will be completed with the definitive approval by the Rector Major.

¹ Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, *Identity of Salesian Institutions for Higher Education*, Roma, 2003, n. 19-24

1. THE CAMPUS MINISTRY IN THE SALESIAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

[5] Reflection on the campus ministry in the IUS needs to start from what the Church has indicated generally regarding the different forms of ecclesial presence in the university and particularly regarding the nature and mission of the Catholic University.²

[6] According to "Ex Corde Ecclesiae", "A Catholic University pursues its objectives through its formation of an authentic human community animated by the spirit of Christ. The source of its unity springs from a common dedication to the truth, a common vision of the dignity of the human person and, ultimately, the person and message of Christ, which gives the Institution its distinctive character. As a result of this inspiration, the community is animated by a spirit of freedom and charity; it is characterized by mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals. It assists each of its members to achieve wholeness as human persons; in turn, everyone in the community helps in promoting unity, and each one, according to his or her role and capacity, contributes towards decisions which affect the community, and also towards maintaining and strengthening the distinctive Catholic character of the Institution."³

[7] The service of evangelization which the higher education institution is called to develop, is expressed primarily through the exercise of its specific institutional functions. For this, "all the basic academic activities of a Catholic University are connected with and in harmony with the evangelizing mission of the Church: research carried out in the light of the Christian message which puts new human discoveries at the service of individuals and society; education offered in a faith-context that forms men and women capable of rational and critical judgment and conscious of the transcendent dignity of the human person; professional training that incorporates ethical values and a sense of service to individuals and to society; the dialogue with culture that makes the faith better understood, and the theological research that translates the faith into contemporary language."⁴

[8] In Catholic institutions of higher education, campus ministry is a transversal dimension that involves the totality of the institution, the complex of its activities and all the people who are part of it. Campus ministry makes the identity and mission of the Catholic institution concrete, transforming it into choices, processes and initiatives.

[9] Finally, it is necessary to affirm that campus ministry cannot be developed without a careful look at the reality of the places and social, educative, cultural and religious contexts in which it is located, as well as without taking into consideration the diversity that characterizes higher education and the different types of institutions. This implies that the guidelines and reflections proposed at the ecclesial and congregational levels are properly applied only after an adequate process of reflection, discernment and confrontation with reality, involving all those who are responsible and the beneficiaries of the campus ministry.

² Congregation for Catholic Education, Pontifical Council for the Laity, Pontifical Council of Culture, *Presence of the Church in the University and in University Culture*, Rome, 1994.

³ *Ibid.*, n.21.

⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 49.

2. THE CAMPUS MINISTRY IN THE SALESIAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SALESIAN MINISTRY MODEL

[10] The presence and action of the Salesian Congregation with regards higher education, which is based on the reflection of the Church on campus ministry and on the charismatic and educative-pastoral tradition, allows the Congregation to define its fields of presence and the elements that characterize the way of doing ministry.

[11] The Salesian presence in higher education is part of her mission⁵ and, as such, is to be developed according to the educative-pastoral model that characterizes her mission. It is marked by an inseparable relationship between educative action and evangelizing action. The integration of these two aspects has its origin in the educative and spiritual experience of Don Bosco and finds its synthesis in the Preventive System.

[12] This model of campus ministry is developed with original characteristics in the various forms of presence in higher education in which the Salesian mission is actualized. As the Frame of Reference of Salesian Youth Ministry states, "Salesian presence in this field today is quite vast and diverse. We operate through management and promotion of academic centres — under the direct responsibility of the Salesian Congregation or in shared responsibility with other church institutions — management and animation of colleges and hostels for university students, and the presence of many Salesians with managerial, teaching, research responsibilities or who provide leadership in chaplaincy or similar ministry in institutions of higher education, be they Salesian, Church or Civil."⁶ Campus ministry develops with different objectives and ways in each of these forms of presence, in as much as the time, structures and people who are involved in each of them allow it.

[13] The educative - pastoral action carried out in the various forms of presence in the world of higher education, especially in the IUS, is developed by taking inspiration from the fundamental elements that characterize the Salesian ministry model and that find expression and specific developments in higher education. The fundamental elements are:

[14] - *The preventive system* is the criterion that inspires all educative action. It is a spirituality, a pedagogical methodology, a style of personal and institutional relationships. The Preventive System is concretized in an educative or formative model proper for each institution, which integrates the study program with the proposal of extracurricular activities, including those that are explicit and specific for evangelization and education to the faith.

The process of accompaniment of the whole academic community, especially of the young, occupies a central place in the educative model. For this reason, spiritual direction and proposals for growth in faith are not isolated activities, but constitute an essential aspect that relates to the other components of the educative process, favoring the integrality of the formative experience;

⁵ Society of Saint Francis de Sales (Salesians of Don Bosco), *Regulations*, 13.

⁶ *Salesian Youth Ministry, Frame of Reference*, p. 213.

[15] - The Academic Community, which translates the Educative-Pastoral Community (EPC) in the context of Salesian higher education, is the subject and at the same time the object and scope of the educative-pastoral mission. This includes young people and adults, students and educators, religious and lay people. The Educative-Pastoral Community is our way of being and of making an educative and ecclesial experience.

The educative-pastoral action develops according to the level of responsibility and competence that each member of the academic community holds within the institution. To be deeply connected with the identity and specific mission of the IUS, campus ministry has, as bearers of prime responsibility, those who exercise authority and governance within the institution, whether they hold collegial or personal authority;

[16] The Institutional Project, which translates the *Salesian Educative-Pastoral Project* (SEPP) for higher education, is the instrument of animation and government in the institution. The Institutional Project “specifies the way in which the institution contextualizes the Salesian charism in response to the needs of the national higher education system and the circumstances in its neighbourhood.”⁷

Precisely because campus ministry in the IUS is not only a pastoral care of persons, but also a pastoral care of culture, the Institutional Project ensures that the educative-pastoral action not only has impact on the life of students who attend it, but, inspired by the values of the Gospel, it also promotes dialogue and the transformation of society and culture in which it is present.⁸

Campus ministry permeates and characterizes not only the specific functions of the university institution - teaching, research and service to society - but also each component of the Institutional Project: mission, objectives, organization, governing body, management model and evaluation process.⁹

The centrality of the campus ministry within the dynamic Salesian model of higher education is highlighted through the educative-pastoral purpose that characterizes the identity of the Salesian Institutions of Higher Education.¹⁰

[17] The option for the poorest young people and the people of the working classes is expressed primarily in privileging their access and in giving direct attention to those already present in our institutions. Moreover, the whole formation, research and social project of the IUS will have as priority, the option for the poorest young people and the working classes.

[18] The centrality of young people as protagonists among their peers, which is expressed primarily in the effective participation of students in the life and processes that shape their formation within the institution. This is also actualized in their commitment to serve other more disadvantaged young people. The academic community seeks to foster solidarity and commitment that become an option for youth serving youth.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.217.

⁸ Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, *Politiche per la presenza salesiana nell'educazione superiore 2016-2021*, Roma, 2016, n. 25-26.

⁹ *Salesian Youth Ministry, Frame of Reference*, p. 217-218.

¹⁰ Direzione Generale Opere Don Bosco, *Identità delle Istituzioni Salesiane di Educazione Superiore*, Roma, 2003, n. 22-24

[19] *Animation and accompaniment*, which are the fruits of educative passion, lead us to a way of being and being with young people. These elements are intended as an intervention of a spiritual and educative nature, but also as a model of institutional management, where the person is at the center of the whole process. For this reason “we accompany people at different levels, through: the general environment of the EPC, groups, personal relationships and personal guidance.”¹¹

¹¹ *Salesian Youth Ministry, Frame of Reference*, p. 122.

3. THE DIMENSIONS OF CAMPUS MINISTRY IN THE SALESIAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

[20] The educative-pastoral action in higher education is a dynamic process that develops in a series of transversal dimensions, which are diverse but related and complementary to each other: education to the faith; educational-cultural; social experience; vocational commitment, both social and missionary.

[21] These dimensions in the higher education setting, respond as much to the nature and dynamics of growth of the person as to the commitment to dialogue between faith and culture and the transformation of society.

3.1 The education to the faith dimension.

[22] The education to the faith proposed in the different religious and cultural contexts presupposes a gradual and diversified process of education to values, openness to transcendence, knowledge of the person of Jesus Christ, interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

[23] We educate to the faith through personal, community and institutional witness, acceptance, open dialogue, the climate of freedom and the family spirit.

[24] We propose a journey of faith in the first place through the proclamation and the presentation of the Good News to those who open themselves to the person of Jesus Christ or to those who show availability for engaging in dialogue, inspired by Gospel values, around the person, the society and the world.

[25] **The proclamation** implies both the catechumenate and the various proposals for initiation that can be used to present the person of Jesus. It is addressed to individuals as well as to small groups of people who undertake for the first time a journey of discovery of the faith or of conversion of one's life.

[26] This dimension also implies **catechesis**, understood as a path of growth and education in faith for those who, knowing the Gospel and the person of Jesus, wish to deepen their faith and reach a level of religious formation comparable to the other dimensions of their formation process: scientific, professional, social and cultural. This service prepares and accompanies people to develop a dialogue of their faith with knowledge, science and culture, favoring a personal synthesis. The proposal includes both moments of formation, developed inside and outside the academic curriculum, as well as community experiences of faith, through moments of prayer, listening to the Word, witnessing and sharing of the faith. This experience is completed by the service of personal listening or spiritual direction that Salesian educators are called to offer to those in need or who ask to be accompanied in their situation of life and growth in the faith.

[27] **The celebration** of faith develops through the care of celebrations throughout the liturgical year and on the occasion of the festivals linked to the life of the local Church and of the Salesian Congregation, as well as through offering possibilities for sacramental life, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist. This service is offered to all the Catholic members

of the Academic Community, respecting their personal freedom and the commitment they may already have in other structures, movements or ecclesial groups.

[28] The journey of growth and education to the faith also implies the promotion of the social dimension of **charity**, which manifests itself in the development of a social conscience and solidarity with the most in need, the commitment to peace and justice and to the construction of a more just and humane society. Faith eventually leads to the defense of the human person and his dignity, to solidarity with persons and people who suffer and to the care and preservation of creation.

3.2 The educational and cultural dimension.

[29] As indicated above, the Salesian educative-pastoral model is marked by an inseparable relationship between evangelizing action and educative action. While the former offers a broader horizon and sense of purpose to the latter, the latter becomes the mediation so that the Gospel can be transformed into life and culture.

[30] In line with what is expressed in the document “Ex Corde Ecclesiae” on the mission of the Catholic university, the Salesian Institutions of Higher Education are called to engage in the search for truth, the preservation and communication of knowledge for the good of society, promoting through their specific functions - teaching, research and service to society - dialogue between the Gospel and culture;¹² in particular by encouraging the defense of human dignity, the promotion of human rights and the common good, the formation of a critical and integral conscience, respect for diversity, for pluralism and for the building of justice and peace.

[31] Education implies the growth of all dimensions of the person, from personal to relational, professional, social and religious. The integration of all these dimensions through the curriculum of studies eventually converges towards the definition of an Educative Model specific to each institution that guarantees the consistency of the pedagogical proposals and educative resources with the educative-pastoral purpose and with the institutional mission.

[32] Campus ministry in the field of formation can be developed strictly at an academic level through the integration in the curriculum of a set of specific courses of ethical or religious content which, offered to all students at the same level and with the same scientific and pedagogical rigor as the other courses, has as its objective the fostering of a Christian vision of the person, of society and of the world, as well as of promoting knowledge and dialogue on Christian culture with those who belong to other religions or who define themselves as unbelievers.

[33] The educational-cultural dimension is applied to the life and culture of the people who make up society according to their multi-linguistic, multi-religious and multi-cultural contexts. The Gospel message can come into contact and dialogue with the different cultures through the educative action and mediation of the higher education institution in order to become the driving force of cultural change.

[34] The faculties, institutes or departments of theology, present in our institutions, have the fundamental task of promoting a higher level of theological formation and of promoting

¹² Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, 1990, n. 43.

dialogue, debate and interdisciplinary work with those responsible for the other areas of humanistic and scientific formation.

3.3 The social experience dimension

[35] This dimension in higher education includes the ability to establish positive relationships with others, to walk, to work and to grow together. This dimension contributes to the “culture of encounter” about which Pope Francis speaks.¹³

[36] A key element of Salesian pedagogy is the environment, understood as the climate of relationships that makes educational and pastoral action possible. This implies:

- The development of interpersonal skills;
- The construction and care of spaces that encourage meeting, dialogue and debate;
- The ability to establish spontaneous relationships with others, the “common home”¹⁴ for everyone, to work and to grow together;
- The family environment, characterized by acceptance and availability for encounter;
- Care for formation of people, development of self-esteem, personal growth and openness to others through dialogue and collaboration;
- The presence and use of official means of reporting, communication and conflict resolution within the Academic Community serving as the Educative Pastoral Community.

[37] **The option for the group** is a fundamental choice of Salesian education and evangelization. This dimension finds a privileged space in the group experience, which presupposes a programme for formation and educative-pastoral interventions. The journey taken together leads the academic community to live and witness the experience of the Church. To accomplish this, the community is called to:

- promote and accompany group experiences within the IUS, with special attention to those groups that foster faith-culture dialogue and social commitment;
- encourage collaboration between the various student groups and associations;
- encourage the participation of students in pastoral, academic and cultural exchanges at national and international levels, that will help them to open up to dialogue and collaboration with young people and people of other cultures and religions;
- promote youth leadership and entrepreneurial skills of young people;
- think of the group experience model as a learning methodology that helps overcome individualistic and competitive models.

This social experience dimension is explicitly cultivated in the animation of the teaching and administrative staff, in order to ensure a family environment, hospitality and availability for encounter.

3.4 The vocational dimension, both social and missionary

¹³ Francesco, Esortazione Apostolica *Evangelii Gaudium*, 24 novembre 2013, n. 220.

¹⁴ Francesco, Lettera enciclica *Laudato Si' sulla cura della casa comune*, 24 maggio 2015.

[38] As indicated in the Frame of Reference of Salesian Youth Ministry, “the three earlier dimensions converge on this one, the ultimate horizon, reference point for our ministry. The aim is to accompany each young person as they go about discovering their vocation, which is the place where the individual responds to the free and unconditional love that God has for him or her.”¹⁵ This implies that this dimension is understood as the process to arrive at personal, social, political and faith choices, inspired by the ethical values of the Gospel with the style of Don Bosco.

[39] The awareness of the value of one’s life and its meaning as a project desired by God can be achieved only through the appropriate accompaniment of the young person in his formative journey, especially in moments of transition and integration into the higher education environment and in the world of work. This becomes concrete in vocational, professional and occupational orientation processes addressed to fresh students, but also to graduates over the years for the personal integration of their professional identity.

[40] Accompaniment is offered at a personal and group level. In this task, the entire Academic Community is the subject and object of accompaniment, actualizing its educational mission as an authentic vocation. Faith and Gospel values constitute the fulcrum that facilitates the maturation of generous and authentic life choices at the service of the Church and of society. In the same way, attention is given to the care of the vocation to marriage and the family. This implies an accompaniment model that is able to adapt to the diversity of contexts.

[41] The horizon of vocational and missionary animation is the responsible insertion of the young person in social life and his commitment to transforming situations of poverty and injustice, that limit the true integral development of persons and people. This requires giving priority to formation, which leads to social, political and apostolic commitment, through social service initiatives, various forms of voluntary services and missionary experiences.

[42] The vocational dimension of social and missionary engagement involves the entire Academic Community in identifying and solving problems in the social contexts in which the community is present. The Academic Community is committed to defending the life, dignity, values and cultures of peoples. As the Salesian Constitutions affirm, “we share in a way appropriate to religious in the witness and commitment of the Church to justice and peace. While not getting involved in ideologies or party politics, we reject everything that encourages deprivation, injustice and violence. We cooperate with all who are trying to build a society more worthy of man’s dignity.”¹⁶

¹⁵ *Salesian Youth Ministry, Frame of Reference*, p. 160.

¹⁶ Society of Saint Francis de Sales (Salesiani di Don Bosco) Constitutions, 33.

4. Organization and animation of the campus ministry in the Salesian Institutions of Higher Education

[43] Campus ministry is a reality that integrates the various dimensions of the life of the institution and, at the same time, is incorporated into the organizational structure of each institution, using instruments of management and animation proper to both higher education and Salesian Ministry models.

4.1 Organization of campus ministry

[44] At an organizational level, campus ministry needs to be reflected in the governance and animation structures of the IUS, involving every member of the Academic Community according to their functions and responsibilities.

a. Governing bodies and governance

[45] Campus ministry in the IUS is the responsibility primarily of those who exercise the highest authority and governance within the institution, whether in the case of collegial or personal authority. They have the responsibility to reflect, to offer guidelines, to make decisions and to ensure the fulfillment of the educative-pastoral goals of the institution.

b. The coordinator and the pastoral animation team

[46] The Coordinator or Director and the members of the pastoral team are called to offer the service of animation of the campus ministry in each IUS. This service requires reflection, planning, programming, coordination and accompaniment of pastoral action, according to the guidelines of the Institutional Project and the objectives of the Pastoral Plan.

c. Organisms and academic structures

[47] Campus ministry in the IUS is translated into processes and initiatives in the various sectors and spheres of institutional life and action. The reflection, planning and pastoral practice must enter into a relationship, in different ways, with the governing bodies and academic structures of the institution in order to favor the creation of an institutional culture and management that reflects the values and choices of the Gospel. This requires that a greater theological-pastoral formation of the various members of the Academic Community be promoted as a function of their corresponsibility and of their fuller grasp of institutional processes and management.

d. Associations and groups

[48] The animation of the Academic Community implies the promotion of servant-leadership among young people and their wide participation through the creation of groups, associations and movements. The IUS encourages the presence and the articulate participation of other groups and ecclesial movements within the Pastoral Plan.

4.2 Planning and management of campus ministry.

[49] The planning and management of processes associated with campus ministry require the development of the following instruments:

a. The Institutional Project

[50] The Institutional Project of each IUS “becomes an educational and pastoral proposal addressed to all members of the academic community, particularly the students, in the desire to have an educational and cultural impact in the society and the church.”¹⁷ Therefore, it is essential that the Institutional Project, in its various components, reflect the elements of the pastoral model described in this document.

[51] The educational-pastoral proposal develops around the four dimensions indicated above and through the different processes and activities, by means of which the institution carries out its functions of teaching, research and service to society.

b. The Pastoral Plan

[52] The Pastoral Plan integrates in an organic way and implements, in the different areas and sectors of the institution, the orientations and the educational-pastoral choices indicated in the Institutional Project.

[53] The Pastoral Plan includes the following: guidelines, objectives, subjects, dimensions, methodologies, structures, resources, implementation and evaluation period.

In order to ensure the conditions for the implementation of the Pastoral Plan, the financial resources and investments necessary for pastoral animation have to be indicated in the annual budget of each institution.

c. The proposal for pastoral formation

[54] The proposal for pastoral formation is integrated with the General Plan of Staff formation of the institution. This requires collaboration and coordinated work with those responsible for personnel management and for the formation process.

d. Planning and programming

[55] Campus ministry gives priority to processes rather than isolated activities or initiatives. This requires the drafting of an organic and articulate vision of campus ministry and its translation into short, medium and long-term processes through adequate planning and programming.

Rome, January 10, 2018

¹⁷ *Salesian Youth Ministry, Frame of Reference*, p. 210.