



REMARKS AT FALL 2009 FACULTY/ADVISORS WORKSHOP
Dr. Luís Calingo, Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer
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Good afternoon. I begin by thanking you and the leadership of this great university for entrusting me with the stewardship of our academic programs. I also want to thank Professor Kenneth J. Porada for his years of hard work and dedication as provost and vice president for academic affairs—as well as those before him, Professor Denise M. Lucy and Trustee Katherine U. Henderson. I have just begun my second month in office, and I also thank you for the good wishes that you have extended to me.

Today, I would like to begin the work of engaging you in conversations about two very important questions. The first question is: What will be our shared legacy to Dominican University of California? Because we have just begun our journey together, it is important that we have a shared understanding and passionate commitment about where we are going. Getting to our destination will be the result of our collective effort. And to ensure that no colleague will be left behind, we will be journeying together on the same path. Because I have been entrusted with the role of shepherding you along the way in the years to come, this gives rise to the second question: What type of academic leader and organizational climate will Dominican have during the years under my stewardship? As we begin our journey together, it is very important for you to hear from me now my perspectives on these two questions. It is also very important for you to share with me your vision of the path that we will be taking.

The great President Abraham Lincoln once said, “The best way to predict the future is to create it.” So together, let’s begin this visioning process. I’d like you to sit back, metaphorically close your eyes, and imagine Dominican in the year 2020.

- I see our basketball teams winning Division 2 conference championships and Dominican outperforming other colleges and universities for the top scholar-athlete award in NCAA Division 2.
- I see our full-time and adjunct faculty as excellent disseminators of knowledge and role models in education that accommodate the diverse learning styles of our students, remembering that today’s kindergartners will be our college freshmen in fall 2020.
- I see our full-time faculty producing a portfolio of intellectual contributions that advance their discipline, professional practice, or the teaching and learning process.
- I see young women and men who could not effectively articulate their career and life goals flocking to Dominican because of the memorable learning experiences that will transform them into graduates who are among the most sought-after by employers and graduate schools.
- I see every undergraduate student having participated in at least one study-abroad or service-learning experience and at least two internships, resulting in at least three

competitive job offers or graduate school admission offers by the time of their graduation.

- I see every school demonstrating its commitment to high quality and continuous improvement by seeking the highest possible accreditation or external peer recognition for each of the degree programs offered.
- I see continuously improving graduate programs that have succeeded in attracting outstanding professionals and that rank among the top three among their peers in terms of value for money.
- I see the faculty, staff, and administrators working together as one community and increasing the level of connectedness within the campus—of students to faculty, of faculty to faculty, students to students—as well as the connectedness of the campus to our local, regional, and global communities. In this regard, I see all faculty colleagues looking forward to participating in Shield Day, Commencement, and other student-centered activities outside the classroom.
- Can you feel the vibrancy of this high-performing community of teachers, scholars, and learners? I see our faculty and staff rewarded for their contributions to creating and sustaining such a high-performing, vibrant community.
- I see an innovative, agile academic organization—with schools that have both that strong sense of entrepreneurship that leads to the creation of new programs and the courage and the discipline that leads to the discontinuation of programs.
- I see other colleges and universities visiting Dominican because of our best-in-class processes to support faculty and staff professional development, serve students’ needs according to their stage in university life, and create an innovative, agile organization.
- As a result of improvements in our faculty and staff engagement and work environment, I see the *Chronicle of Higher Education* including Dominican in the Honor Roll of Great Colleges to Work For.
- As a result of improvements in our retention and graduation rates, among others, I see Dominican ranking among the top ten master’s degree-granting universities in the West in the 2020 *US News and World Report* ranking—the #10 position currently being held by the University of Portland.

This is my Mount Everest. I challenge you to join me in this climb to Mount Everest. And I promise you that, as your academic leader, I will be with you in that expedition and I will try my best to serve as your *sherpa*.

Let me now address my philosophy of leadership. My views on leadership are best summarized by the following quote from Max De Pree: “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”¹ The leader therefore reduces the gap between what is reality and what is possible. The two best books that I have read are *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*, and they best articulate my views about building and leading organizations.²

¹ Max De Pree, *Leadership is an Art* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1987).

²James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras, *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1994); Jim Collins, *Good to Great:*

We are now at the base of Mount Everest. I see our Strategic Academic and Institutional Plans as living documents that describe the various base camps that we will create along that 29,000-foot climb to the summit. Where are we now? What challenges do we face at this time? Let me just name three.

- We face a very hostile economic environment where California’s public universities have been forced to mandate pay cuts and two-day-a-month furloughs of faculty, staff, and administrators.
- We are embarking on a new university organizational philosophy called Responsibility Center Management where every school will be accountable not only for operating within its expense budget, but also ensuring adequate revenues from enrollment, gifts, and grants. This decentralization will move down the locus of decision-making and resource allocation activities to the schools, thereby enabling the school deans, faculty, and staff of this university to assume a greater role in shaping the future of Dominican.
- In the midst of all these, we need to gear up for the WASC Educational Effectiveness Review, which involves a campus visit by our peer review team on April 7-9, 2010.

During my first campus visit in January 2007 while interviewing as a business school dean candidate, I articulated the core values that define my behavior as a leader and I’d like to take this opportunity to reiterate my top five. My first core value is community—working together, embracing our diversity, recognition of our mutual dependence, and appreciation of our unique gifts and roles that each of us have in this entire body that we call Dominican University of California. My second core value is honesty—integrity, truthfulness, openness, transparency, achieving goals through honest means, honoring commitments, and being worthy of the trust of others. My third core value is excellence—the quest to continually improve and the commitment to deliver an “unblemished, well-polished, professional product that is produced with the best possible human competence,” reinforced by my long association with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program. My fourth core value is stewardship and accountability—responsible use of the resources (including the ability to lead) that have been entrusted to us. My fifth core value is abundance—the belief that sustainable progress is achieved when everyone works together to achieve “win-win” solutions that make the pie larger. Expect me to enter into partnerships and collaboration even with our competition for the greater good. I recall that, during my first year at Dominican, I had met with the other business deans in the San Francisco Bay Area (except one), introducing myself as their new partner in business education and offering the hand of collaboration. I intend to do the same with my new role. I firmly believe that you can accomplish many great things if you do not mind who gets the credit.

Let me now address my views regarding our shared legacy. It is critical to understand our destination for, as the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland* alluded, “If you don’t know where you’re going, then any road will take you there.” I invite you to reflect and go back in time to your very first day on the job as a professor or as a staff member. To

Why Some Companies Make the Leap—and Others Don’t (New York: HarperBusiness, 2001).

my professor-colleagues, imagine the enthusiasm that you felt when you prepared your very first lecture or when you walked into the classroom for the very first time. I challenge you to rediscover and re-ignite that passion and enthusiasm within you and then commit to working together to create our future as the first great challenge of my academic leadership.

Although we will collectively define our shared legacy to Dominican, I hope that our shared legacy will be defined primarily by two characteristics. The first is to continually improve our academic excellence and reputation, and the second is to enhance our passionate commitment to articulate and live our shared values as members of a university that is rooted in the Dominican ideals of study, reflection, community, and service.

Let me first address improving our academic excellence and reputation. It is particularly important in times of rapid change to remind ourselves our reason for existence. What is our fundamental mission? What core purpose are we trying to achieve, and how will we know how far we have journeyed along our path?

The mission of Dominican University of California is to educate and prepare students to be ethical leaders and socially-responsible citizens who incorporate the Dominican values of study, reflection, community, and service into their lives. Guided by its Catholic heritage, the University is committed to diversity, sustainability, and the integration of the liberal arts, the sciences, and professional programs. We should work together to attract and retain the best faculty, to attract and retain the best students, and to deliver the highest quality memorable learning experience utilizing state-of-the-art facilities. I believe that this captures in one sentence the essence of Dominican's emerging Strategic Institutional Plan. These four factors—faculty, students, learning experiences, and facilities—are what shape our academic excellence and reputation. Let me elaborate on the first three, which are within our control.

First, if we seek to attract and retain the best faculty, what do we mean by “best faculty,” and what do we expect of them? We are called to be both teachers and scholars and to exercise our intellectual curiosity in both our classrooms and our scholarship. I view instruction and scholarship as mutually supportive components of a professor's integrated academic life. Our scholarship—whether of discovery, integration, application, or pedagogy—gives greater substance and meaning to the knowledge that we communicate in our classrooms. As an academic priority, therefore, I would like us to reexamine our policies and criteria for reappointment, tenure, and promotion to ensure that their operational definitions are consistent with those of a university that is both teaching-intensive and scholarship-driven. I would also like us to reexamine our faculty workload to ensure clarity and measurability of performance expectations in instruction, scholarship, and service, thereby enabling the achievement of equity and balance.

Second, if we seek to attract and retain the best students, what do we mean by “best students,” and what do we expect of them? We want to attract and retain students not only of intellectual capacity and exceptional potential, but also students who are

committed to serving others and changing the world in the best Dominican tradition. In other words, we want gifted students with a social conscience. Every human being is endowed with gifts and talents; therefore, I am not referring solely to intellectual gifts. I envision a university that attracts students who are considered by their peers as among the most committed and the most motivated to have their gifts cultivated and be equipped with the knowledge and the character to lead and to serve. Gifted students from all ethnic, racial and socio-economic groups want to go where other gifted students are. If we keep “gifted students with a social conscience” as our foremost criteria for attracting and selecting students and for awarding scholarships, we will be teaching students of a stronger class on all dimensions. Our students will be a class of leaders. It will be diverse and it will be global. As an academic priority, therefore, I would like us to reexamine our courses and increase the opportunities to incorporate ethical decision making, personal and social responsibility, global awareness, and stewardship of our resources in all our courses.

Third, as we strive to improve our academic excellence and reputation, what do we mean by the “highest quality, memorable learning experience”? What are some of the defining characteristics of such a learning experience? I propose three such characteristics: curriculum, diversity, and globalization.

The first is a curriculum that truly responds to the ever-changing needs of the marketplace. I congratulate and thank all of you for enabling the incremental yet significant changes to our General Education core curriculum. Our next strategic challenge is to rethink our entire Dominican educational philosophy and, over the next two years, think about breakthrough innovations to General Education. Corollary to this, I challenge every school dean, department chair, and program director to do an honest-to-goodness assessment of their degree programs. I propose a three-point criteria for conducting these assessments: quality, centrality to the University’s mission and vision, and demand. Look for opportunities for both expansion and contraction, keeping in mind that, given our economic environment for the next 2-3 years, proposals for growth opportunities must be accompanied by opportunities for contraction.

The second is diversity. Notwithstanding the compelling moral reasons for us to be committed to diversity, an educational case can also be made for diversity. Our students are transformed when they are exposed to people with different socio-economic, cultural, and racial backgrounds and people with different ideologies, perspectives and ideas. Although students may feel comfortable, students interacting only with others like themselves lose the opportunity to learn new ways of being human in this world. We enable our students to better build character when they are able to test beliefs and convictions they have always taken for granted against other equally held, but very different assumptions about the world.

The third is globalization, owing from the increasing interconnectedness of our world. How do we educate our students to be effective leaders in a flat world? The people who will succeed in tomorrow’s even more globalized communities will be those who recognize that they not only have responsibilities of citizenship in their own community

or home country, but also in the world. I, therefore, view pursuing international education opportunities for our students and faculty as a strategic priority. I would like us to work to ensure that majority of our graduating students have had a study-abroad or overseas immersion experience and that Dominican is a place where international students are welcomed, wanted, and included.

If we will collectively commit ourselves to the path of attracting and retaining the best faculty and students and delivering the highest quality, memorable learning experience, I would like to emphasize that this journey is a race without a finish line. How will we measure our progress in this journey? How will we know if we have improved our academic excellence and reputation? Although reputation is nothing more than the perceptions of others outside our community, that subjective perception becomes our objective reality. Thus, it is important that we set benchmarks and milestones that will enable us to compare our achievements to those of our peers. As an institutional priority, we need to establish a system of performance measurement, analysis, review, and improvement.

If you join me in our collective strive for excellence, these are my commitments to you: I will do my utmost in ensuring that our collective accomplishments are brought to the attention of the Trustees, alumni, friends, and the people who do the reputation rankings. I will do my utmost in working to improve those areas in most need of significant improvement—including compensation and benefits.

Let me now address the other piece of my vision of our shared legacy. We will enhance our passionate commitment to articulate and live our shared values. As most of you know, before coming to Dominican, I had spent most of my academic professional life in a public university. For some time now, my professional colleagues have been asking me about my new academic home. I usually begin by explaining the history of Dominican University of California—how it has transformed from a two-year to a four-year college, from a women’s to a co-ed college, from a congregation-run to an independent institution, and from a liberal arts college to a comprehensive university. Often, this leads to a conversation about what it means that DUofC is a university that subscribes to Dominican ideals and that is influenced by its Catholic heritage. I would admit that human dignity and social justice are embraced by many other world religions and also by many persons who choose to not belong to a faith community. Because our values are hardly unique, I submit that others will find our uniqueness in our passionate commitment to articulating and living our shared values—especially, respect for the dignity of all human persons.

In the 1967 encyclical, *Populorum Progresso (On the Development of Peoples)*, Pope Paul VI characterizes human dignity as follows.

It is the result of human existence. It is not earned by achievements or bestowed by any authorities other than God. It is not dependent on race, creed, color, economic class, political power, social status, culture, personal abilities, gender, sexual orientation or any other dimensions by

which people discriminate social groupings. There is a unique and sacred worth that is present in each person simply because she or he exists.

Now, as never before, our society needs leaders who champion the human dignity of all persons. We are painfully reminded of the disasters that we have faced—ranging from natural calamities such as the hurricanes of 2005 and the recent typhoons in East Asia to man-made disasters such as the Wall Street meltdown and the Bernie Madoff scheme—even in our own country. We are painfully reminded of the need for more leaders who advocate for the poor and the underserved in our world, and who commit themselves to compassionate service to others.

It is, therefore, my intention to articulate a refined meaning to the word “service” that we utilize in our faculty and staff evaluation processes. I would be very interested in what each of us—faculty, staff, and administrators—do in advancing our university’s mission and identity. We should role-model the social conscience that we wish to find in the gifted students who we will attract. And you have my personal commitment as your chief academic officer that your contributions to articulating and living our values, consistent with our university’s mission and identity, will be appropriately recognized and that they will not be punished when the annual evaluations come to my desk.

If we succeed in attracting and retaining the best faculty and students and delivering the highest quality, memorable educational experience, I imagine that, working together, scaling to the summit of Mount Everest would be a reality by 2020. I had lunch many years ago at a Chinese restaurant and I got that day’s most encouraging piece of advice from a fortune cookie: “A great pleasure in life is doing what others say you cannot.”

We all know that a vision falls in the same genus as the word “dream” and that, unfortunately, one of the Webster Dictionary’s synonyms for the word “dream” is “hallucination.” One of my friends reminded me that there is a fine line that separates being visionary and being insane. Why do I believe that we are capable of landing among the top ten master’s degree-granting universities in the West? Let me name a few indicators:

- The *US News and World Report* will release next week the 2010 rankings of America’s Best Colleges. Our ranking within the top tier of master’s universities in the West has improved from #45 in 2009 to #38 in 2010. We have 28 more rungs to climb—about three each year.
- The *Chronicle of Higher Education*’s “Great Colleges to Work For” report, in which we participated for the first time this year, lists two institutional strengths wherein we scored better than our peers—connection with the institution and pride, and facilities and security. Of course, it also listed several opportunities for improvement, one of them being very close to home—confidence in senior leadership—and one which you have my commitment that we will improve.
- Dr. Mary Crosby, professor and chair of our multiple-subject credential program, has been named the recipient of the Marin Community Foundation’s 2009 Beryl H. Buck Award for Achievement. This year’s awards, one to an individual and the other to an

institution, were for exemplary accomplishments that have educated the residents of Marin County.

I could certainly identify many other accomplishments of our colleagues and our programs, and that would be a long list. To whom I have omitted, I offer my apologies and my deep appreciation for your contributions.

We can do it! This reminds me of a story that I heard many decades ago. I was a varsity runner in the track and cross-country teams from high school through my college years. Of course, my waistline now shows signs of prosperity (as the Chinese would say), and I'm no longer fit to participate in the San Francisco Marathon, let alone the Walk for Life. My high school cross-country and track coach shared with us the story of the Four-Minute Mile. For decades, man had tried to break the four-minute mile barrier. The medical authorities all said that it is impossible to run the mile in less than four minutes. Simply put, you will die. But one British medical student by the name Roger Bannister did not believe the so-called experts. He trained and trained until one day in May 1954, Roger Bannister ran the mile for 3 minutes, 59.4 seconds. He achieved this record on a cinder track under adverse weather conditions. What is even more interesting is that, during the first ten years after he became the world's first sub-four-minute miler, it was reported that 336 other runners beat that record. The youngest runner to break the barrier was a high-school senior Jim Ryun who beat it in 1965 at age 17 and who suffered from asthma all his athletic life. The lesson is that many barriers that we face are artificial.

Continuing on with my story, only 46 days after Roger Bannister overcame the four-minute mile barrier, John Landy of Australia ran the mile 1.4 seconds faster. Then in the great tradition of the Battle of the Champions, in August 1954, Roger Bannister and John Landy were to run the so-called Mile of the Century at the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Vancouver. All through that race, John was way ahead of Roger. When he was close to the finish line, John wanted to gauge how far ahead of Roger he was. So he decided to look to his left side ... and, as he did, Roger Bannister burst past him on his right. And the rest is history. The lesson is constancy of purpose.

We can do it!

In closing, many of us were drawn to Dominican University of California because we seek to make a difference in the lives of others and the world. Your commitment to making a difference is evident. Let us journey together on a path that fulfills our ambitions and creates a shared legacy we will all be very proud of. Thank you and welcome to a new academic year!