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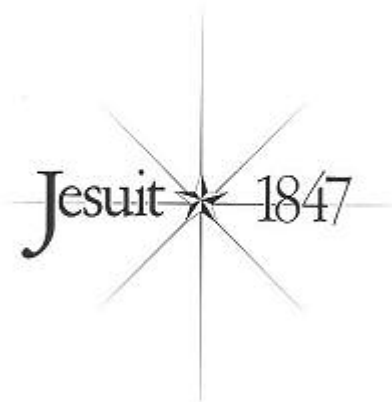


Characteristics of the Teacher at  
Jesuit High School in New Orleans



Jesuit  
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# I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the 160 years of Jesuit High School in New Orleans, many men and women have served the school as teachers. Of course, at first these teachers were Jesuits. Gradually, lay men and women joined the Jesuits in this ministry of teaching.

As in most schools, faculty handbooks and manuals have set forth guidelines, rules, and recommendations to forge a common way of proceeding. These handbooks have always been practical and utilitarian, intended to foster order and clarity. Beyond such manuals, there existed no outline of the affective dimension of teaching, of the traits that Jesuit's teachers were expected to exhibit, and of a philosophy that they should reflect. The philosophy existed *in* the Jesuits, in their schooling, in their training. Grounded in the *Ratio Studiorum* (a 1599 Jesuit document that outlines a plan of studies and a method of proceeding), it was established early on in the Jesuit-only faculty and remained a constant even as lay teachers entered the rolls of faculty. But as the Jesuits became fewer and the lay faculty increased, this method of proceeding gradually became diluted.

As this phenomenon occurred nationally, the Jesuit Secondary Education Association was formed in 1970 to ensure that basic Jesuit principles be a guiding force in the order's U.S. high schools. One JSEA publication, *What Makes a Jesuit High School Jesuit*, published in 2000, directly identifies the distinguishing characteristics of a Jesuit high school.

As Jesuit's Ignatian Identity Team proceeded through the task of vivifying this document for the school's faculty, it soon began to wonder "What makes Jesuit High School of New Orleans distinctive? What gives Jesuit its unique character?" The answer came quickly and forcefully: its teachers. The group thought it would be beneficial to examine in depth and express in detail this distinctive trait.

And so in 2002 the team began the process of identifying the distinctive characteristics of the composite teacher at Jesuit through the years. Using the *Profile of a Graduate at the Time of Graduation* as a template, the faculty of 2002-2003 brainstormed and produced a long list of what they deemed to be the hallmark traits of the Jesuit teacher through the years. One important element in this examination was the opportunity to add new characteristics, not outlined in the "Grad at Grad" document. This, in fact, resulted in an additional characteristic being identified. With this raw material in hand, the team worked for two years distilling, filtering, and clarifying the information provided by the faculty.

The result is the document you hold in your hand, a document unique to Jesuit High School of New Orleans. By expressing the characteristics of the Jesuit High School teacher, we seek to provide our teachers, current and future, with an answer to their question, "What does it mean to be a teacher at Jesuit High School?" In doing so, we insure that the young men entrusted to our care are guided by and, hopefully, enriched by men and women who embrace competence, conscience, and compassion.

*Ignatian Identity Team  
Jesuit High School  
New Orleans, LA  
August 16, 2006*

P R O F I L E  
O F A J E S U I T H I G H  
S C H O O L T E A C H E R

*“Those who wish to give greater proof of their love, and to distinguish themselves in whatever concerns the service of the Eternal King and the Lord of all, will not only offer themselves entirely for the work ... but make offerings of greater value and of more importance.” [Spiritual Exercises, 97]*

St. Ignatius points out that we should never grow slack in our efforts to follow Christ nor be satisfied with the inertia of “good enough.” In the work of education, therefore, we must always seek after a greater offering of self. This principle, seeking after the *magis*, means the constant pursuit of what is more conducive to the service of God.

As a leader, the Jesuit High School teacher strives in word and deed to nurture and improve student life, both in academics and extracurriculars. As a model, the teacher is an authentic witness to the goals and ideals of Jesuit High School. By calling the students to higher levels of excellence in all they do, the teacher patiently encourages students to exemplify the call of St. Ignatius to the *“magis.”*

# O P E N T O G R O W T H

A teacher at Jesuit High School realizes that he is part of God's unfolding creation and, therefore, is a work in progress. He understands that academic subjects are not ends in themselves but means to the greater end of knowing, loving, and serving God.

A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 is self-reflective, seeks new opportunities for professional and intellectual development, and is receptive to teacher evaluation.
- 2 recognizes his own strengths and limitations and strives to build on these strengths to meet the needs of the students.
- 3 is willing to incorporate new teaching methods.
- 4 has an open mind and respect for other academic disciplines.
- 5 seeks to understand each student's background, environment, and individuality and responds accordingly to his particular needs.
- 6 strives for growth in his relationship with God and models this growth to students.
- 7 is receptive to implementing new course outcomes and syllabi, always striving for academic excellence.
- 8 involves himself more fully in school activities.
- 9 models and encourages a joy of learning and a desire for life-long learning.
- 10 embraces and manifests the Jesuit philosophy of education.

# R E L I G I O U S



A teacher at Jesuit High School embraces the fundamental premise of Jesuit education: that the human person is created to praise, reverence, and serve God. Based on this foundation, each faculty member strives for a constant deepening of his relationship with God and promotes a way of living modeled on the person of Jesus Christ, “Who lives in solidarity with all who suffer, and pours out His life in the service of others” (*Go Forth and Teach*, #61).

## A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 respects the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic faith and exemplifies the basic principle of Ignatian spirituality: that all we do, we do for the greater glory of God.
- 2 is respectful of the religious beliefs and differences of others.
- 3 supports the school’s religious formation of its students.
- 4 is committed to encountering God through prayerful experiences.
- 5 is willing to take an active role in student religious formation both inside and outside the classroom, thus striving to bring about a true metanoia in students.
- 6 develops a philosophy of life that includes ongoing reflection.
- 7 participates in those programs that foster faculty religious development, i.e. faculty retreat and staff development programs.
- 8 encourages students to develop a sense of awe, wonder, and appreciation of the beauty and mystery of creation and human existence.
- 9 realizes that the love of God can be made manifest through the experience of community and companionship.
- 10 accepts and promotes the school’s mission to nurture in its students the competence, conscience, and compassion to be men of faith and men for others.

# L O V I N G



A teacher at Jesuit High School strives to see God in each student and understands that his relationship with the students is a manifestation of his relationship with God. All that the teacher does, he does as a result of his belief that we are called to love one another as God loves us.

A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 nurtures each student as an individual person and is sensitive to each student's unique cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and social needs.
- 2 accepts discipline as a manifestation of love and practices truth and fairness by applying policies equally to all students.
- 3 realizes that his actions will have a response and therefore acts with the conviction that how he teaches is just as important as what he teaches.
- 4 seeks to understand each student's point of view and creates a healthy environment for student interaction.
- 5 exercises empathy and forgiveness to students and colleagues, treating all with respect and integrity.
- 6 accepts a school community of students from diverse backgrounds as a reflection of the richness, vastness, and beauty of God's creation.
- 7 understands that he is being called to be a model of Christian behavior to all those in the school community.

# I N T E L L E C T U A L L Y C O M P E T E N T

A teacher at Jesuit High School involves himself in the ongoing process of mastering the intricacies of his discipline. He also strives for *eloquentia perfecta*, or “perfect eloquence,” communicating with wit, tact, and passion. This Ignatian virtue also refers to an ability to assimilate one’s learning and actively engage the minds of students in dialogue, reflection, and an ongoing development of higher-order thinking skills.

A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 has a mastery of and zeal for the subject matter and effectively communicates this material to students.
- 2 models the behaviors of a life-long learner and is willing to continue his education both through independent study and research of subject matter and through formal training.
- 3 demonstrates flexibility in teaching by using a variety of approaches, by embracing new technologies, and by acknowledging diverse teaching and learning styles.
- 4 embraces and supports the imaginative, emotional, and creative dimensions to enrich learning.
- 5 models intellectual curiosity, a thirst for knowledge, and a willingness to search for answers and learn from others.





P R O F E S S I O N A L L Y  
C O M P E T E N T

A teacher at Jesuit High School displays integrity and dignity in all that he does. He realizes that teaching is about relationships and that nurturing relationships with his students, their parents, school administration, and fellow teachers ultimately benefits the students. In attending to his responsibilities, he strives to become a role model for students and colleagues.

A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 creates and maintains an atmosphere conducive to learning by adequately preparing for classes and delivering organized and clear presentations to students.
- 2 makes academic and behavioral expectations known to the students, expectations consistent with the student handbook.
- 3 attends and participates in department and faculty meetings.
- 4 is approachable and available to meet with students.
- 5 evaluates and communicates in a timely manner a student's academic progress through reports to parents and through accurate and timely grade reports.
- 6 presents a professional appearance and dresses in an appropriate manner.
- 7 manages class in a way consistent with the guidelines outlined in the faculty handbook.
- 8 is positive, energetic, enthusiastic, and even inspirational in his ministry of teaching.
- 9 is passionate in challenging students to reach their full potential and is willing to bear witness courageously to Christian moral principles.

# C O M M I T T E D T O J U S T I C E

A teacher at Jesuit High School acknowledges that all men and women should have equal opportunity to partake of God's creation. He also realizes that sometimes this opportunity is compromised and that man must work toward the elimination of these obstacles to a fuller realization of God's commands of justice. Because the work of Jesuit education is formative for life in the modern world, it is important that the Jesuit educator inspire a thirst for justice through his work. Therefore, the teacher is committed both to promoting the dignity of the human person and to taking an active stance against all forces that oppose it.

A MEMBER OF THE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY ...

- 1 establishes a classroom atmosphere that fosters understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of others.
- 2 integrates ideals of social justice into subject matter and educates students in confronting moral ambiguities in our society.
- 3 promotes a culture of life that respects the dignity of the human person from the moment of conception until death.
- 4 responds to social issues on local, national, and world stages by promoting and engaging in community service.
- 5 uses the opportunities afforded by extracurricular activities and organizations to address issues of social justice.
- 6 opposes, both in word and deed, all forms of hatred and intolerance.

The mission of Jesuit High School as a Catholic, college preparatory school is to develop in its students the competence, conscience, and compassion that will enable them to be men of faith and men for others.