

Together in El Salvador

The Third Directors Meeting on Adult and Distance Learning of AUSJAL and AJCU took place at the «Universidad Centroamericana Jose Simon Cañas» from March 12th to 14th, 2008. 24 participants from AJCU and 23 participants from AUSJAL, as well as representatives from

Messina Commons and Magis America, attended the meeting. The agenda included 4 conferences and 16 round tables on: new distance-learning programs and projects developed by the North-American



and Latin-American universities; the online catalogue of AJCU and AUSJAL virtual courses and programs; possible collaboration areas for Messina Commons; the Fe-y -Alegria's radio education experience; and the AUSJAL Course on Poverty in Latin-American.

Luis Ugalde s.j AUSJAL President gave the first conference called «Challenges and Priorities of University Education in Latin-America.» Christopher Lowney was in charge of the second plenary and gave an updating on the initiative of Messina Commons which aspires to offer educative services to the poor through the Jesuit networks worldwide.

Charles Currie AJCU President was in charge of the rest of the conferences and spoke about

«Developing an Inter-American Jesuit Network for On-line Learning.» Mary Rose Grant from Gonzaga University coordinated a panel with professors from the AJCU members: Regis University, Gonzaga University and Fairfield University, and also ITESO and «Universidad Iberoamericana de Leon», to debate on the topic «Going from the Classrooms to On-line Learning: Impact and Issues for Students and Teachers.»

The round tables coordinated by AUSJAL were: Strengthening Distance Education in Fe-y-Alegria's Schools in Latin-America (AUSJAL Executive Secretariat); Lessons and Models from the AUSJAL experience on Inter-university On-line courses and programs («Universidad Catolica del Uruguay», «Universidad Javeriana de Bogota» and «Universidad Iberoamericana de Leon»); Pedagogical Models on Distance learning («Universidad Javeriana de Bogota»); and Developing Inter-university Policies for Distance Learning Programs («Universidad Rafael Landivar» and UCA-Managua).

Teachers in Disadvantaged Areas

Representatives from the «Fe y Alegria International Federation», «Universidad Javeriana de Bogota», «Universidad Catolica del Ecuador», «Universidad Antonio Ruiz de Montoya» (Peru) and AUSJAL Secretariat met in Caracas on February 20th and 22nd to work on the definition of a formation program for teachers in disadvantaged areas for the Federation's staff. The goal is to offer this program to 900 teachers from «Fe y Alegria» and the public sector in 11 Latin-American countries during a two years term.

The general and specific objectives, the profile of the program and the contents were designed after an intense academic and methodological debate. The program will be offered by the AUSJAL universities as a virtual program and will be hosted by the «Fe-y- Alegria» platform. The main purpose of the program is to support teachers on their integral formation and also

on the construction of their professional identity from the perspective of the education in disadvantaged areas.



The program intends to develop an environment of supportive learning that will allow the participants to reflect on their educative practice and to facilitate the construction of teaching and learning strategies in order to transform the work in the classrooms.

After the meeting in Caracas, the group has continued on the structuring of the program's modules and, in order to do so, it has performed two audio-conferences and has established a committee, including representatives of «Fe y Alegria», «Universidad Javeriana de Bogota» and «Universidad Catolica Andres Bello», to present the final version of the program's curriculum.

AUSJAL Briefs

New President for Belo Horizonte Higher Education Center. João Roque Rohr s.j. Chancellor of the Jesuit Faculty of Philosophy and Theology of Belo Horizonte (Brazil), appointed Jaldemir Vitório s.j. as new president for this higher education institution, as a replacement for de Joao Mc Dowell, s.j. Vitório s.j. was born in «Cachoeiro del Itapemirim» on September 3rd, 1949. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1969 and was ordained for priestly ministry in 1979. He has a Master's degree on Holy Scripture from the Biblical Papal Institute of Rome (1986) and a PhD on Theology from the PUC-Rio (1995). He is a member of the FAJE Theology Department since 1986 and he has held the Director's position between 1999 and 2007. He took up his new position on March 2008 at the opening ceremony of FAJE's academic year.

Structuring dimensions into a hierarchy. The University Social Responsibility Network held an audio-conference to define the dimensions as well as management and impact indicators for University Social Responsibility in AUSJAL universities. The immediate challenge for the Network is to structure dimensions and proposed variables into a hierarchy in order to define an appropriate, comparable and flexible indicators' system in our universities. In the first phase, this system must allow having an auto-diagnostic on the management of the University Social Responsibility in our universities; and, in the second phase, defining institutional strengthening actions for the University Social Responsibility.

New edition of the Course on Environment. The third edition of the AUSJAL Course on Environment and Sustainability which is offered by the «Universidad Javeriana de Bogota», «Universidad Catolica Andres Bello» (Venezuela), «Universidad Rafael Landivar» (Guatemala), «Universidad Iberoamericana de Puebla» (Mexico) has just started; the coordination team met through an audio-conference to discussed about the logistics and they analyzed the possibility to publish a technical series based on the materials and study cases developed for the course.

Projects and Programs of the Network of Peers on Education. The Network of Peers on Education had a series of virtual meetings where the work teams exchanged information and comments about four projects and programs of the Network. Rafael Estrada Network Coordinator encouraged the leaders from the Course on Values and Ethics, the «Youth Culture Watch» Research Project, the FIFyA-AUSJAL project «Formation of Teachers in Disadvantaged Areas», the course «Internet as Didactics Tool and Virtual Learning Communities», to update their peers on the news related to their initiatives' development.

Values and Ethics Repeat. The AUSJAL Network of Peers on Education is offering, for the second time, the AUSJAL Course «Values and Ethics: Challenges and Tools for Today's University Faculty.» The course intends to promote, from the Latin-American perspective, the shared vision of the AUSJAL universities' faculty referred to the need of integrating ethics and values to the educative praxis. Click on www.ausjal.org/sitios/valores for more information.

Commitment to Education. The «Fe y Alegria International Federation» started a continental campaign called «Commitment to Education: Six Proposals for Dialogue and Action.» The Network of Peers on Education will organize a series of audio-conferences in order to support the promotion of this initiative and to explore possible joint-working opportunities. Click on www.feyalegria.org/accionpublica for more information.