Service Learning, Servant Leadership and Virtuous Leadership – a Catholic view

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Service Learning, Servant Leadership and Virtuous Leadership – a Catholic view. Mini Symposium at the Jubilee Centre Annual Conference on 'Virtuous Leadership and Character'
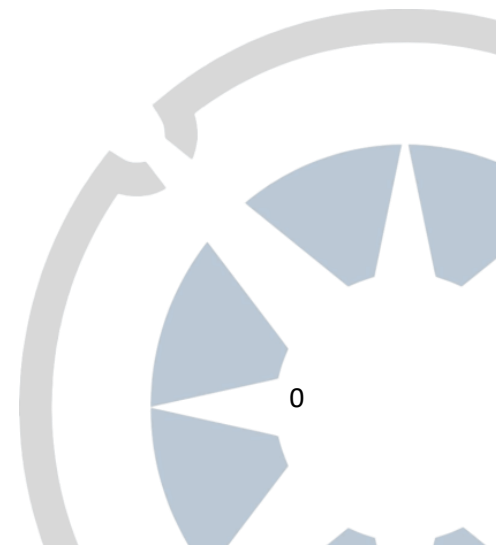
Uniservitate Service-learning Global Network: learning to love "*in deed and in truth*" (1 Jhon, 3:18).

María Nieves Tapia

Introduction[1]

This paper will present one of the programmes currently implemented by Porticus for Catholic Higher Education, *Uniservitate*[2].

Uniservitate mission is to

> "*Generate a systemic change in Catholic Higher Education Institutions, through the institutionalization of Service-Learning as a tool to fulfil their mission of an integral education, to generate agents for social change who critically engage for a better society according to the social teaching of the Church.*"[3]

Uniservitate focus in SL spirituality considering multicultural contexts, and offers funding and technical assistance to selected Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs), online and onsite training for administrations, faculty, and students, research and exchange opportunities, a Uniservitate Award and a wide range of multimedia resources also available for all Catholic and non-Catholic institutions.

The first part of the paper will present the theoretical framework underlying the Programme, discussing its definitions of "quality service-learning", "service-learning spiritual dimension" and "service-learning institutionalization". The second part will describe *Uniservitate* lines of action, global organization and the activities and some of the results for the first four years of the Programme, based in public information available in *Uniservitate* website and social media, as well as in internal monitoring and evaluation resources.

1. Theoretical framework

1.1 - Why service-learning:

In the past five decades, the concept of service-learning has spread around the world, generated an active global academic community, and acquired different meanings in different cultural contexts. As a reference, here are definitions from three different continents:

- "*An educational proposal that combines learning and community service processes in a single well-articulated project where the participants learn to work with real needs of their environment with the purpose of improving it.*" (Spain)[4]

- "*In this proposal solidarity is both an objective, content and teaching strategy. (...) Service-learning promotes a comprehensive educational intervention, through the development of a community service that integrates curricular contents, contextualizing academic learning and*

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promoting the training for citizenship based on solidarity, critical attitude and participation." (Uruguay)[5]

- *"Service-Learning is a pedagogy that combines rigorous academic study with meaningful community service and reflection. It is a high quality teaching and learning strategy that aims to facilitate student learning in terms of students' academic knowledge and personal development."* (China)[6]

Over the decades, the term has embraced very similar practices in different parts of the world but has also been used for different kind of projects, some of them rather lacking both in the learning dimension and in their social impact. Critics have signalled paternalistic approaches in many of the Global North SL experiences, and international SL programs have frequently been identified as "voluntourism" more than effective social initiatives.

Due to these and other concerns, many Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs) who initially embraced the service-learning concept, have started to use other terms to describe programmes involving academic and social activities, such as "Community-based learning", "Community Engagement"[7], "University Social Responsibility"[8], and others.

No matter how it is called, service linked to academics appeals to Catholic educational institutions because it easily relates with their fundamental goal of an "integral education"[9], as discussed in Dr. Jörg Schulte-Altedorneburg's paper in this mini-Symposium.

Indeed, reciprocal love is Jesus' "new commandment" (Jhon 13:33-35), and service is in the core of the Gospel teachings, from the Parable of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37) to the Final Judgement description (Mt. 25, 31-46). As Saint John of the Cross said, "*At the end of our life, we shall all be judged by Love.*"[10]

> *"So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love"* (1 Cor, 13).

Cultivating all virtues is fundamental, but learning how to love "*in deed and in truth*" (1 Jhon, 3:18) may be the most essential learning for a good Christian, and specially for a good leader.

Higher Education, meant to educate leaders, has a unique opportunity to educate "servant leaders" through service-learning, as described in Dr. Schulte-Altedorneburg's paper. As he mentioned, the Catholic Church, especially after the II Vatican Council, has encouraged Higher Education to be at service to society, and in the last decade service-learning has been explicitly embraced by Vatican orientations, religious congregations and in educational institutions practice.

St. John Paul II, defining the four central characteristics of Catholic Higher Education, included:

> "… *an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life*"[11],

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[5] CVU. (Centro del Voluntariado del Uruguay). Proyecto aprendiendo juntos. Juan Pablo Balbi-Nahir Chamorro-Sergio Márquez (ed.). *Aprendizaje-Servicio Solidario: una propuesta pedagógica*. Montevideo, CVU, 2007:15-17.

[6] Lignan University, Hong Kong. https://www.ln.edu.hk/osl/aboutus_what_is_service_learning.php (Consulted on July 6, 2021)

[7] For example, De Paul University (USA): https://resources.depaul.edu/teaching-commons/partners/Pages/steans-center.aspx

[8] As in AUSJAL, the Latin American Association of Jesuit Universities. https://www.ausjal.org/red-de-homologos-de-responsabilidad-social-universitaria/

[9] Isola, M. Beatriz and Peregalli, Andrés (comp.). *Service-learning pedagogy and the teachings of the Catholic Church.* Buenos Aires, CLAYSS, 2021 (Uniservitate, 2) https://www.uniservitate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2-Service-learning-pedagogy-ENG.pdf

[10] San Juan de la Cruz. *Avisos y sentencias espirituales.* Madrid, Club de lectores, 1991, 59.

[11] *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Apostolic Constitution of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on Catholic Universities. Vatican City, 1990, 13:4. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae.html

and stated:

> "*A Catholic University, as any University, is immersed in human society; as an extension of its service to the Church, and always within its proper competence, it is called on to become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society.*"[12]

> "*The Christian spirit of service to others for the promotion of social justice is of particular importance for each Catholic University, to be shared by its teachers and developed in its students. The Church is firmly committed to the integral growth of all men and women. The Gospel, interpreted in the social teachings of the Church, is an urgent call to promote "the development of those peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic diseases and ignorance; of those who are looking for a wider share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are aiming purposefully at their complete fulfilment". Every Catholic University feels responsible to contribute concretely to the progress of the society within which it works*"[13]

When launching the Global Compact of Education (GCE) in 2019, Pope Francis asked to take three fundamental steps towards an "educating global village". The third one is:

> "*… the courage to train individuals who are ready to offer themselves in service to the community. Service is a pillar of the culture of encounter (…). In this regard, all institutions must be open to examining the aims and methods that determine how they carry out their educational mission.*"[14]

In this context, Service-learning is specifically mentioned and encouraged in the GCE Vademecum:

> "*… educators cannot succeed fully in their educational action unless they commit to forming and shaping – in the people entrusted to their care – a full and real openness to the service of others, of all others, of the whole human community, starting with those who find themselves in the most exhausting and challenging situations. The true service of education is education to service.*

> *Moreover, educational research also increasingly recognizes the central dimension of service to others and the community as a tool and as an end of education itself. Think for example about the great development of Service-Learning. This kind of research shows how service can be not only be a training activity among others (…), but more radically how it can become the fundamental method through which all knowledge and skills can be transmitted and acquired. We could point to this process as a development from education to service to education as service, whereby our brethren are both the way and the goal of education.*"[15]

It is known that Pope Francis has synthesized the concept of integral education in the image of "*the languages of the head, heart and hands*" coined by Pestalozzi[16]. The same image was used by the American researcher Shelley Billig to synthesize the positive impacts of service-learning on students.

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[12] *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Cit., 32.

[13] *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Cit., 34.

[14] *Global Compact on Education. Vademecum. English*. Rome, Congregatio de Institutione Catholica (de Studiorum Institutis), 2020, p. 5. https://www.educationglobalcompact.org/resources/Risorse/vademecum-english.pdf

[15] *Global Compact on Education. Vademecum, cit.*, p. 34.

[16] Pestalozzi, J. H. (1805) *Pädagogische Auseinandersetzung mit Pfarrer Karl Witte*, 1805. En*: J. H. Pestalozzi. Sämtliche Werke*. Zurich, Orell Füssli, 1973, Volume 17A, p. 141-176.

In her 2004 article "*Heads, Hearts and Hands. The Research on K-12 Service-learning*"[17], Billig organized research in these three categories, valid also to include more recent studies on the impact of SL in students, both in basic and higher education[18]:

- *Academic and cognitive skills ("head"):* students who participated in SL activities increased their grading performance and obtained better results on standardized tests than those who did not participate.

- *Abilities on leadership, citizen participation and work capacities ("hands"):* the research shows the impact of SL practices in the development of basic skills needed for both citizen participation and work world[19]. Many projects in universities show students' appraisement for practices that allow them to experience the field of their professional action, in connection with real people and institutions, and with the possibility of involving in a level of personal initiative that traditional programmes do not always allow[20].

- *Personal development and interpersonal relationships ("heart"):* Several studies reveal the strong impact of SL in strengthening of self-esteem, collaborative skills, ability for teamwork and development of prosocial attitudes. They show impacts in resilience capacity, lower incidence of risk behaviours and growing of leadership skills. Professionals in socio-emotional development have underlined the capacity of SL in development of the five fundamental socio-emotional capacities: self-awareness, social conscience, personal autonomy, abilities for interpersonal relationships and responsibility in decision-making.

As part of her conclusions, Billig underlined that "Quality Matters":

"… many of the studies cited here found that quality of service-learning matters in terms of the relative impact of service-learning. (…) (Klute & Billig, 2002; Billig & Klute, 2003)."[21]

The importance of "integral" education as core to the Catholic Church's teachings is widely recognized, as well as the important contribution that SL can provide, but CHEIs not always have the tools to achieve it. *Uniservitate* is working in providing effective tools for CHEIs to be able to implement quality service-learning institutional programmes.

1.2 - Why "quality" service-learning:

Knowing that "Quality Matters", in launching *Uniservitate* we were conscious that not all projects calling themselves "service-learning" are really such *stricto sensu*, and that not all SL practices are up to quality standards proposed by scholars. In many CHEIS, SL is confused with just volunteerism, is practiced without links to rigorous academic content or challenging reflection or is not yet

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[17] Billig, Shelley. *Heads, Hearts, and Hands: The Research on K-12 Service Learning.* In: *Growing to Greatness: The State of Service Learning Project 2004 Report*; St. Paul, 2004, NYLC & State Farm, pp. 12-25.

[18] For SL impact in students see also: J. Eyler & D. Giles. *Where´s the learning in service-learning?* San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999; S. Billig. *Lessons from Reseach on Teaching and Learning: Service-learning as Effective Instruction.* In: *Growing to Greatness: The State of Service Learning Project 2004 Report.* St. Paul, NYLC & State Farm, 2006, pp. 25-32; A. Furco, 2005, op. cit; A. Furco & S. Root. *Research Demonstrates the Value of Service Learning*. In: *Phi Delta Kappan,* February 1, 2010. Phi Delta Kappa International, USA; B. Jacoby. *Service-learning Essentials. Questions, Answers, and Lessons Learned*. San Francisco, Jossey Bass, 2015; M. Ierullo (comp.). *Informe de Evaluación del Programa de apoyo a escuelas solidarias Natura-CLAYSS "Creer Para Ver" 2013.* Buenos Aires, 2013. ZIGLA CONSULTORA. *Programa de aprendizaje-servicio como política educativa nacional en Uruguay. Evaluación de resultados.* Buenos Aires, CLAYSS-Porticus, Diciembre 2017.

[19] Programa Nacional Educación Solidaria. Dirección Nacional de Políticas Socioeducativas. Ministerio de Educación. *Orientaciones para el desarrollo institucional de propuestas de enseñanza sociocomunitarias solidarias.* Buenos Aires, 2013, p. 16.

[20] J. Eyler & D. Giles, *cit.*

[21] Billig, S.. *Heads, Hearts, and Hands*, *cit,.* pp. 22.

institutionalized in such a way that it could influence students' education and community lives in a systemic way.

The "Service-learning Quadrants"[22] -initially developed by Stanford University- are being used to differentiate academic field trips, occasional charitable activities, institutionalized volunteering, and service-learning. Based in the Quadrants and in current global academic consensus, *Uniservitate* defined quality service-learning as a social intervention and educational project, with three main features that are aligned with the three main characteristics of an integral education according to Catholic thought:

1. Measurable contributions to solve social-environmental problems, identified and addressed in solidarity with community partners (heart);
2. Active student participation and leadership at all stages of the project (hands);
3. Clear and rigorous articulation between social activities and academic contents intentionally planned by educators. These should include curriculum contents, skills development opportunities, planned reflection and research (head).[23]

Quality SL is determined according to[24]:

- Duration (at least 6 months to produced significant results[25]) and frequency of the activity according to the goals.
- Measurable positive impacts on students' academic and personal development and in the community's quality of life.
- Possibility to develop rigorous, contextualized, and meaningful research directly linked with community needs.
- Development of networks with community organizations, civil society organizations, governmental institutions.
- Effective satisfaction of recipients and all actors involved in the project.
- Possibility to bring about social change in the middle or long-term, and not just address one-time urgent needs.
- Sustainability.

Solidarity service-learning (SSL)[26], as it is called it in Latin America and other parts of the world, emphasizes that quality service should not be paternalistic[27], but establishes "horizontal" relationships with local actors, recognizing human dignity in every circumstance, and learns to learn from the poor

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[22] Avruj, Luz et al. *Service-learning in Central and Eastern Europe handbook for engaged teachers and students*. Buenos Aires, CLAYSS, 2017, p. 34-36.

[23] Tapia, María Nieves. *Calidad académica y responsabilidad social: el aprendizaje–servicio como puente entre dos culturas universitarias.* En: Martínez Martín, Miquel (comp.), *Aprendizaje Servicio y Responsabilidad Social de las Universidades.* Barcelona, Octaedro, 2009:27-56. Tapia, María Nieves, con Bridi, Gerardo; Maidana, Paula y Rial, Sergio. *El compromiso social como pedagogía. Aprendizaje y solidaridad en la escuela.* Bogotá, CELAM, 2015:32.

[24] CLAYSS. *Manual para docentes y estudiantes solidarios. Cuarta edición revisada*. Buenos Aires, Agosto de 2016. https://www.clayss.org.ar/04_publicaciones/manual_docentes_LATAM.pdf

[25] Billig, Shelley-Mcknight casey, Karen-Davidson, Georgia (Editors). *Advancing Knowledge in Service-Learning: Research to Transform the Field.* Advances in Service-Learning Research, Information Age Publishing, 2006.

[26] Tapia, María Nieves. *Social Engagement in the Higher Education Curriculum*. Buenos Aires, CLAYSS, 2021, p. 26-31. https://clayss.org/sites/default/files/material/SE-HEIs_OK.pdf. *'Servicio' and 'Solidaridad' in South American Spanish.* In H. Perold, M. Sherraden, and S. Stroud (Eds), *Service Enquiry: Service in the 21st Century,* First Edition, Johannesburg: Global Service Institute, USA and Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa, 2003, pp. 138-147. http://www.clayss.org.ar/04_publicaciones/SE1-Service-in-the-21st-Century.pdf

[27] UNESCO. *Reimagining our futures together. A new social contract for Education.* Paris, 2021:52

and marginalized[28]. This concept of solidarity has a long tradition in the teaching of the Catholic Church and is a strong feature in both St. John Paul II and Pope Francis teachings[29].

Quality SSL projects should be based in participatory research on the real needs and priorities of the community and carried out "with" the community and not only "for" it. Appropiate networking allows educational institutions to establish positive work alliances with local leaders and organizations, NGOs, governmental agencies, companies, or other institutions. Authentic solidarity, common work and achievements strengthen sustainability of the projects, and further contributes to civil engagement for the common good.

The global survey developed by ZIGLA used the SL Quadrants and quality SL criteria to analyze the answers of CHEIs around the world. The study showed that 89% of CHEIs consulted declared they were developing service-learning projects, but only 27% of the respondents were really doing service-learning according to academic standards[30].

According to ZIGLA mapping, in all the regions, CHEIs were asking for faculty training and new tools to strengthen their institution's social engagement[31]. Considering these findings, *Uniservitate* assumes that quality service-learning may offer a specific pedagogical contribution for CHEIs, helping them articulate their social outreach and spiritual identity with the academic activities and offering innovative ways to achieve integral education[32], and aims to provide faculty training and capacity building adjusted to different cultural contexts.

1.3 – 1.4 - Why focus in SL spiritual dimension?

As it was mentioned by Dr. Jörg Schulte-Altedorneburg, *Uniservitate* initial diagnosis included the fact that many CHEIs are suffering an identity crisis**.** Afraid of losing ground in relation to other Universities, concerned about global rankings that does not measure values nor engagement, some CHEIs have adopted academic and business models that are not always coherent with their Catholic mission and identity. In the already quoted ZIGLA survey, some interviews mentioned they feel a kind of "schizophrenia" between formal statements and documents and usual practice in their CHEIs.[33]

In fact, institutional fragmentation between academic and pastoral goals and departments, and contradictions between the formal statements and the institutional practices make some CHEIs lose credibility and effectiveness in offering a truly "integral education".

This situation has produced in some cases SL programmes with no connection whatsoever to the core identity of a Catholic University. Instead, in other cases, specially in CHEIs belonging to Congregations,

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[28] Pope Francis. *To the delegation of the "Pro Petri Sede" Association*. Vatican, 16 February 2015. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/february/documents/papa-francesco_20150216_pro-petri-sede.html

[29] Biela, Adam et al. *St. John Paul II and solidarity. From personal experience to testimony of service.* In: Isola, M. Beatriz and Peregalli, Andrés, (Uniservitate, 2), pp. 23-48 https://www.uniservitate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2.3-Service-learning-pedagogy-ENG.pdf Cardinal Mario Aurelio Poli. *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti. On Fraternity and Social Friendship.* In: Isola, M. Beatriz and Peregalli, Andrés, (Uniservitate, 2), pp.   15-22. https://www.uniservitate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2.2-Service-learning-pedagogy-ENG.pdf

[30] ZIGLA. *Study: mapping, identification and characterization…* cit, p. 53.

[31] ZIGLA (2019), cit., p. 12; 15.

[32] Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). *Educating to fraternal humanism. Building a "civilization of love". 50 years after Populorum progressio. Guidelines*. Rome, 2017. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20170416_educare-umanesimo-solidale_en.html

[33] Cf. ZIGLA. *Study: mapping, identification and characterization. Service-learning in Higher Education. Final Report - Executive Summary (English version).* Buenos Aires, May 2019, p. 42.

there is a stronger presence of the founder charisma across university life, and spiritual dimension is present in SL practice and reflection[34].

Facing this diverse context, *Uniservitate* decided to focus research and reflection on the spiritual dimension of SL. A significant part of Uniservitate Symposia and publications[35] have been dedicated to this central question.

Around the world, CHEIs welcome students with very different beliefs. In Western countries, they may be secularized, adopting syncretic versions of Christianity, declared agnostics or atheists. In Asia, a vast majority of students come from other faiths, as Islam or Buddhism. Taking that into account, *Uniservitate* prefers to speak in first term of "spirituality" and not only "religion", to embrace an ecumenical, interreligious and humanistic dialogue with all different beliefs[36].

> "*By "spirituality" we mean being engaged in a dynamic process of inner reflection to better understand myself (Astin, et al., 2011b). The first aspect of spirituality is–precisely–understanding oneself to find the meaning and purpose of one's life. When this raises awareness, one can connect it with the other aspects of spirituality.*
>
> *The second aspect of spirituality is connecting to a higher power. Some of us who believe in Jesus Christ says, "Jesus is Lord," and that connection helps us find meaning and purpose in our lives. Even those who do not believe in God say that there is some higher power. We believe service-learning helps to achieve that.*
>
> *The third aspect of spirituality is the interconnectedness of humanity. When anyone knows the purpose and meaning of life, they get connected with others. They love and serve others as they want to be loved and served. Being interconnected with humanity, we get the desire to serve others.*
>
> *Finally, spirituality is living one's philosophy of life. The philosophy gives direction and shows the meaning of life*. (…)
>
> *Spirituality asks for the meaning of life, how to connect with oneself and others, and how to live. Service-learning takes us through this journey of spirituality which inevitably entails a personal transformation.*"[37]

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[34] For example, the Jesuits in Latin America and Spain have produced interesting reflections on the Ignatian charism and service-learning, and in USA there are several studies on SL and the spirituality of St. Francis, the Mercy identity, and others. Wodka, Andrzej. *Charisms and solidarity learning: a symphony of four University testimonials*. In Isola, M. Beatriz and Laura Gherlone (comp.). *Spirituality and Higher Education: Perspectives from Service-Learning*. Buenos Aires, CLAYSS, 2022 (Uniservitate, 3), p 68-134 https://www.uniservitate.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/03-Espiritualidad-y-Educacion-Superior-ENG.pdf.

[35] Isola, M. Beatriz and Peregalli, Andrés (comp.). Cit. (Uniservitate, 2). Isola, M. Beatriz and Laura Gherlone (comp.). *Spirituality and Higher Education: Perspectives from Service-Learning, cit.* (Uniservitate, 3). Sosa Caballero, M. (comp.) *Proceedings. I Global Symposium Uniservitate*. Buenos Aires, CLAYSS. https://publications.uniservitate.org/en/proceedings/1.%20Proceedings_I_Symposium.pdf

[36] Tapia, M. Nieves. *An approach to the spiritual dimension of service-learning*. In: Sosa Caballero, M., Cit., pp. 101-111.

[37] Pushpalatha, M. (2020). *Spirituality and Service-learning*. In: Sosa Caballero, M., *cit*., p. 97.

Transformative Leadership and spirituality- St Paul University, Ottawa

"In the diagram taken from Saint Paul University titled "A Transformative Leadership and Spiritualitysee that combining critically reflective practice and social and spiritual engagement leads to Transformative Leadership. Reflection is an essential component of service-learning.

Therefore, the professor engages the students through the process of reflection in service-learning. On reflection, the students become socially conscious, and they continue to get engaged in the community. It is not a linear engagement but rather a positive cycle that does not stop."[38]

An open dialogue around spirituality does not contradict, but facilitates, presenting the Catholic spirituality of service. As it was stated in 1.1, Love is in the core of our faith, and in that sense, there is nothing more Catholic -also in the sense of "universal"- than the interreligious and human spirituality of the "Golden Rule", the principle of treating others as one would want to be treated by them.

In the plural environment of a Catholic University, service-learning projects offer Catholic students and professors the opportunity to work along with others for the common good, and both in service and in the reflection spaces they can be witnesses of Jesus' spirit of Love and offer the experience of the nearness of God for everybody, while open to others' visions and beliefs. Professors can use SL projects to present Catholic Social Thought, just not as a theory, but incarnated in the actions done for and with the community.

A testimony of a student from Argentina Catholic University in Buenos Aires reflects what happens to many others through quality service-learning with a spiritual dimension:

"This year, I was lucky enough to find faith in the least expected place: a university course, a Seminary focusing in Social Problems and Social Engagement (an elective service-learning course)."[39]

1.4 - Why quality SL institutionalization

Institutionalized SL requires not only the development of "nice to have" testimonial projects, but the building of institutional policies integrating quality SL into the mission, policies, practices, and budgets of HEIs[40].

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[38] *Idem*, p. 98.

[39] UCA. Dirección de Compromiso Social y Extensión. *Anuario 2022*. Buenos Aires, UCA, 2022, p. 7-8.

[40] Jacoby, Barbara. *Service-learning essentials*. San Francisco, Campus Compact-Jossey Bass, 2015. Furco, A. *Institutionalizing service-learning in higher education*. In: Journal of Public Affairs. *New Directions for Higher Education*. Volume 2001, Issue 114, January 2002. John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 6:39–47.

> *"Service-learning achieves institutionalization when it becomes an ongoing, expected, valued, and legitimate part of the institution's intellectual core and organizational culture."[41]*

Institutionalization means to go from projects lead by educators and students' good will and isolated efforts to university interdisciplinary programmes and policies that encourage, monitor and support projects through all university[42].

Figure 1: From the "pillars" fragmented model to the articulated missions in an engaged Catholic university[43]
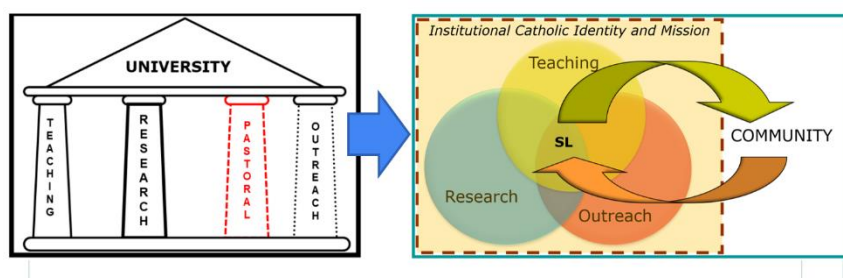
It also means advancing towards a greater articulation of the "three missions" -teaching, research, social-, to overcome fragmentation and become an engaged university as a whole. As pointed by British specialist P. Younguer:

> *"Engagement is <u>not</u> a "third strand": rather, engagement is a critical approach to how we do our teaching and research activities."[44]*

Institutionalization gives the possibility, in fact, to stablish a circular relationship with communities and the territory, allowing university not only to "give", but to be able to revise curriculum to include new knowledge acquired through the SL projects, to reorient research priorities to attend social needs, and to stablish a fluid dialogue between academic knowledge and popular, indigenous, or traditional knowledge[45].

As F. Vallaeys has shown, to successfully articulate the traditional "three strands" it is necessary a fourth one, that he calls "the ethical management"[46]. In other words, administrators and policy makers should oriented the three missions towards engagement with the common good (see fig. 1).

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[41] Furco, A., & Holland, B. *Institutionalizing service-learning in higher education: Issues and strategies for chief academic officers.* In M. Langseth & W.M Plater (Eds.), *Public work and the academy: An academic administrator's guide to civic engagement and service-learning*, (pp. 23-39). Boston: Anker Publishing, Co. 2004:34

[42] Jouannet, Chantal and Arocha, Luis (ed.). *Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education.* Buenos Aires, CLAYSS, 2023 (Uniservitate Callection, 4). https://www.uniservitate.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/4-Institutionalization-of-Service-Learning-in-Higher-Education-EN.pdf

[43] Tapia, M. Nieves. *Educar a la fraternidad en la Educación Superior: Uniservitate.* Uniservitate III Symposium, Rome, October 22nd, 2022, PPT slide 9.

[44] Younger, Paul. *Developing an institutional engagement strategy for a research-intensive civic university in the UK.* Presentation at Campus Engage International Conference. Dublin, 4th-5th June 2009. PPT, Slide 22.

[45] Muñoz, Manuel Ramiro & Wangoola, Paul (2014). *Enlarging the conception of knowledge: the dialogue between ancient knowledge and sciences.* In: GUNI. Global University Network for Innovation. Edited by GUNI, Budd Hall and Rajesh Tandon. *Higher Education in the World Report 5: Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education: Contributing to Social Change.* New York, Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 65-68.

[46] Vallaeys, François y Carrizo, Luis. *Responsabilidad Social Universitaria-Marco conceptual, Antecedentes y Herramentas.* Washington DC, Red Ética y Desarrollo, BID, 2006.

> *"It is necessary then to establish a new social contract between university and society, overcoming the voluntary social outreach paradigm, and moving forward to an integral, more complex and demanding model of management (…). We need to establish an ethical and intelligent administration, involving the different sectors of the institution, to serve the world and not to be served."[47]*

In many CHEIs, the Catholic mission and identity has been operating as another "pillar", in parallel with the academic missions and even with the social activities (see fig. 1), not as the overall policy guaranteeing the Catholic identity.

Institutionalizing SL in a CHEI means overcome fragmentation and designing SL programmes as an opportunity to articulate teaching and research with social initiatives, and also to reflect in the spiritual dimension of service. The vision is to build Catholic universities where the whole institutions is teaching core Christian values, and they are not encapsulated only in the Theology class or the Campus Ministry.

Research has shown service-learning sustainable institutionalization –as any other major cultural change in educational institutions- may require different amounts of time and particular processes in each university, but in general there is the need for three consecutive stages of institutionalization development:

1. Critical Mass Building stage.
2. Quality Building stage.
3. Sustained Institutionalization stage[48].

> *"Because the institutionalization of service-learning requires a sustained, carefully planned effort that develops over a five- to seven-year period [for each stage of development], a period that often outlasts the tenure of a chief academic officer, assurances need to be put in place that allow the institutionalization effort to continue smoothly as the campus leaders change."[49]*

Planned as a ten-year initiative, *Uniservitate* is offering tools, technical support, and a global community of practice to CHEIs wanting to introduce SL policies oriented towards their mission and identity.

Uniservitate is exploring the specific characteristics of SL institutionalization process in Catholic Universities, comparing different models around de world[50]. "Institutional spirituality"[51] is emerging as a central part of these processes for CHEIs. To measure advancement in the institutionalization processes, most of the hubs have adopted the Furco rubric[52], to which we have included a specific item to evaluate how SL spiritual dimension is incorporated at the institutional level.

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[47] Universidad Católica del Uruguay. *Es urgente lo importante. Reflexiones para el trabajo de la Universidad en la comunidad. Memoria de Extensión Universitaria 2014/2015*. Extensión y Servicio a la Comunidad. Vicerrectoría del Medio Universitario Universidad Católica del Uruguay. Montevideo, Universidad Católica del Uruguay, 2016, p.21-22. Translation by the author.

[48] Furco, A. *Self-assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of service-learning In Higher Education*. A Campus Compact Project at Brown University. (revised 2002). Service-Learning Research & Development Center, California University at Berkeley, 2002:2.

[49] Furco, A., & Holland, B. *cit.,* p.34

[50] Jouannet, Chantal and Arocha, Luis (ed.). *cit.,* (Uniservitate Collection, 4), specially Chapters 9 and 12-15.

[51] Humphrey, Barbara & McCrabb, Donald R. *Living Identity and Mission through Service Learning*. In: Jouannet, Chantal and Arocha, Luis (ed.). *cit.,* pp. 121-147. Ian De Vera, Fritzie; Gargantini, Daniela; MacCrabb, Barbara: Rossa, Carina. *A Christian, interreligious and humanist spirituality for service-learning*. Panel at the III Uniservitate Symposium, Rome, 27th October, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/live/feTc74wdmeU?si=YkA9Gvk, 2:20.

[52] Furco, A. *Self-assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of service-learning In Higher Education*. Cit.

2. Uniservitate

2. 1 Uniservitate Goals and Lines of action

As already mentioned by Dr. Jörg Schulte-Altedorneburg, the Programme includes three main levels of action, with specific activities, developed in three phases, as seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Uniservitate lines of action

The three levels of the Programme are:

- *Theoretical level:* Research and reflection on the spiritual dimension of SL in CHEIs around the world, to develop appropriate models for CHEIs identity and mission considering multicultural contexts. An *Academic Sounding Board* of specialist from different regions contributes directly with this level.

- *Global level: Implementation of a CHEIs SL global network*. A central coordination works in close collaboration with seven regional hubs, to contribute to a permanent promotion through critical mass building, a communication system including a digital platform, and a Global Award to offer recognition and visibility to best practices and propose global standards of quality SL.

- *Development of a capacity building program to institutionalize SL*: in a combined effort of the global coordination, the Academic Board and the Regional Hubs, Uniservitate offers online and onsite training for trainers and practitioners, technical assistance and a capacity building program. In the first phase the beneficiaries were 33 selected Universities, in different stages of development of their SL institutionalization processes. In the second phase, a membership program and institutional alliances with Congregations and other actors aim to provide training opportunities and access to Uniservitate resources to at least another 100 institutions.

The first phase of Programme Building was developed from 2019 to 2022. Two months into the formal launching, the COVID pandemic forced to redesigned and reschedule many of the first stage activities, but in a way the circumstances contributed to stablish a horizontal dialogue with all the main protagonists of the Programme, no matter where in the planet they were. As a member of the Board

stated in our first on-site global meeting in October 2022, "*during the pandemic we very quickly evolved from a Programme to a Network, and from a Network to a true Community*".

At the time of writing this paper, Uniservitate is closing the first year of the second phase, planned to last till 2026. At this point, several new activities and developments are being added to the first stage plan, as seen in Figure 1 (see also 2.3).

Specific activities and achievements in each of these levels will be described in 2.3.

2.2 - Uniservitate: a "polyhedric" organization

Usually, global programmes of any kind are run from a central office located in the North of the planet. One of the most original features of *Uniservitate* is that Porticus chose to coordinate the Programme a Latin American NGO with offices in Buenos Aires and Montevideo: CLAYSS, the Latin American Solidarity Service-learning Centre.

It was a first for Porticus, but not a leap in the void. By the time CLAYSS was chosen to coordinate *Uniservitate*, the organization had grown from a little Argentinean group of academics and volunteers to a 20-year-old institution, working from Latin America with most of the world, developing programmes from Kosovo to Kenya and with strong alliances in the five continents with regional and national service-learning networks.

CLAYSS' "Latin American way" to service-learning is defined as "Solidarity Service-learning" (see 1.2), with significant research, publications and good practices[53] backing its wide dissemination around the world.

However, while designing Uniservitate with Porticus "Vital Catholic Thought" Portfolio, CLAYSS did not want the Programme to become a way to impose the Latin American service-learning model to other regions, but to create a global community where different cultures and perspectives could learn from each other, and voices usually not heard could find an equal standing with those who usually have the leading role in the global scene.

Inspired in Pope Francis reflection in *Evangelii Gaudium* on the difference between a "spheric, uniform" model for globalization and a *"*polyhedric" model of unity in diversity[54], Uniservitate logo takes the polyhedric form. It also includes references to "head, hands and heart".

The governance of Uniservitate was designed to ensure that all seven regions were represented and play a significant role in the life of the programme. Porticus general coordination through "Vital Catholic Thought" Portfolio and CLAYSS management work along with:

- The *Uniservitate Academic Sounding Board:* a multicultural working group that meets periodically to contribute to the design and development of the theoretical level of the Programme. Their 15 members represent the seven regions of the programme and include both Catholic and non-Catholic members. They contribute specially with research, publications, the repository, symposia and the Uniservitate Award. In the Second Phase of the programme, new specialists were incorporated from under-represented regions, and periodical meetings and collaboration in regional activities are creating greater interaction among the members of the Board and the Regional Hubs[55].

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[53] See CLAYSS Resources: https://www.clayss.org/en/resources/
[54] Pope Francis. *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, Rome, 2013, 236-237.
[55] See Academic Sounding Board members at https://www.uniservitate.org/what-is-uniservitate/

- *The Regional Hubs:* seven regions (Figure 3) were designed based in obvious geographical and cultural reasons, and also in the number of Catholic Universities in each region (Europe, for example, is divided in three regions because of the concentration of CHEIs in Western Europe). There was a close call for applications to become a hub, selected based on ZIGLA mapping and a series of international consultations. Porticus and CLAYSS made the final selection, evaluating the level of SL institutionalization and Porticus regional offices advice. The USA & Canada hub is the only exception: instead of one University, the hub is led by ACCU (Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities) and its Community Engaged Scholar Practitioner Network (CESPN), integrated by representatives of different institutions.

Figure 3: Uniservitate Regional Hubs and supported universities
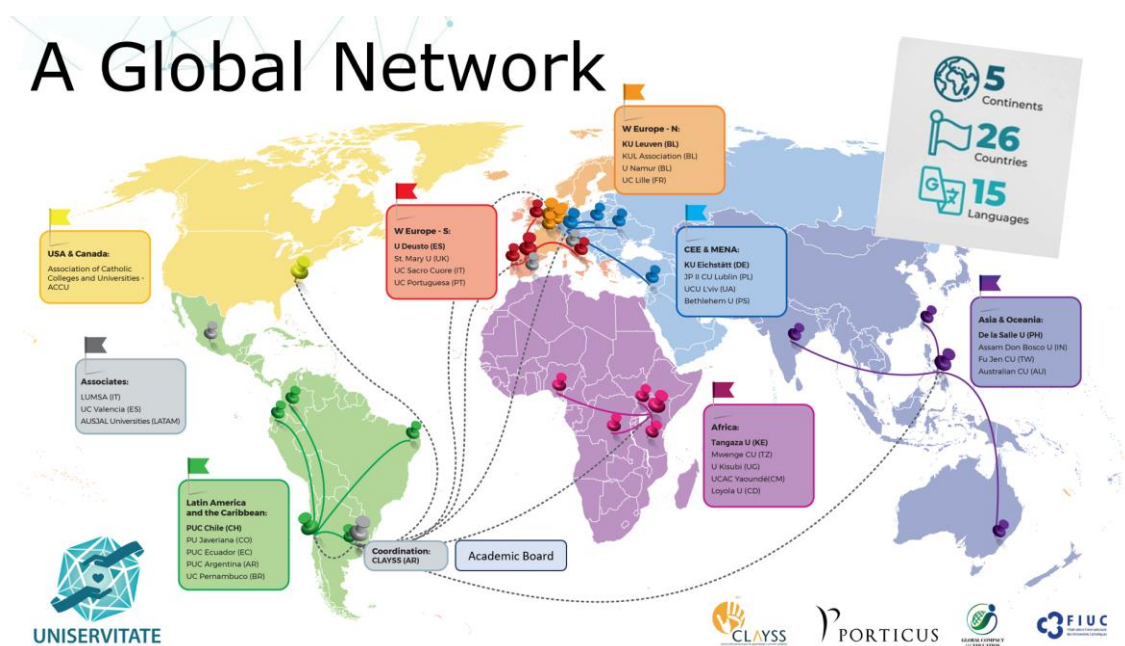
- *The Supported universities:* during the first stage 33 institutions were selected to receive funding, training and capacity building technical assistance. In each region, they interact directly with their hubs.
- *Partners and allies:* IFCU, the International Federation of Catholic Universities was a key partner since the beginning of the Programme. Close dialogue was held in the first phase with the Congregation for Catholic Education in the Vatican, and more recently with the new Dicastery of Culture and Education. Uniservitate is part of their Higher Education Network for the Global Compact of Education. AUSJAL, Scholas Chairs and other Catholic international organizations have been also partnering with *Uniservitate*.

Several religious orders (such as the Jesuits, the Lasallian, the Salesian and the Marists) have been promoting SL as part of their own institutional policies, or are now interested in doing it, and we have started a fruitful dialogue with them.

Dialogue with non-Catholic SL Networks at regional level, as well as with international organizations like IARSLCE[56] and the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education[57] has also been very fruitful.

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[56] International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement, https://www.iarslce.org/

[57] https://www.unescochair-cbrsr.org/

- *Membership:* in the last years, many institutions have shown their interest in being part of Uniservitate community, even if that did not involve direct funding. Accordingly, the Programme will be open to receive applications for membership starting February 2024, and will offer some special services (like a newsletter and free access to the learning platform) to all members.

2.3 - Results for the first four years of the Programme

Figure 4: Uniservitate in numbers (2022)
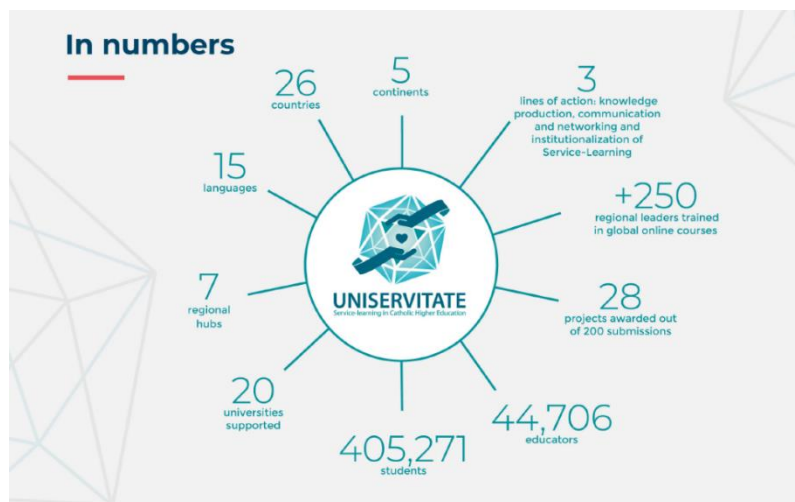
2.3.1 – Theoretical Level:

a) The Uniservitate Collection[58]: is an editorial project aimed at Catholic Higher Education professors and authorities, other educational institutions, specialists in service-learning, ecclesiastical leaders, as well as the general public interested in education and social change. With the contributions of the Uniservitate Academic Sounding Board and international academics and experts, its objective is to gather knowledge from different regions and to share multicultural perspectives on topics of interest related to spirituality and the pedagogy of service-learning in the world, and not only for a Catholic audience.

Uniservitate Collection is offering a valuable and original reflection on issues like the links between the Catholic Church teachings and service-learning, the spirituality of service, the processes of institutionalization in Catholic and non-Catholic institutions, and a global perspective on service-learning history. It also includes the proceedings of the Uniservitate Symposia. The Collection is open access, and volumes can be downloaded as .pdf or e-book. Collection is published in English, Spanish and French (most French translations are still pending).

The Collection currently includes 7 books, including 170 articles by 150 scholars from all over the world, and in the second stage of the Programme new efforts are made to make it more visible in the field.

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[58] https://www.uniservitate.org/publications/

b) Uniservitate Repositorium[59]*:* contains theoretical and practical resources on service-learning and its spiritual dimension in Higher Education, from a multicultural perspective. The Academic Board, the Regional Hubs and other scholars contribute to the building of this "Clearinghouse" of different types of data: written text, audio, video, multimedia, web developments, social media content, etc. The Repository is the result of a permanent process, consisting of three main moments: "search, cure and share", and it's curated by Uniservitate central team. So far it has collected more than 700 open access resources in 23 languages, published in 37 countries and offered by 11 regional and international organizations and networks.

c) Symposia: Uniservitate Symposia have three distinct goals:

- Promote global research and discussions on service-learning, specially around the spiritual dimension of service-learning and its contribution to the identity and mission of CHEIs.
- Build a community of practice connecting CHEIs authorities, researchers, teachers and students from different cultural contexts to share service-learning experiences and cases of community engagement and service-learning institutionalization.
- Contribute to the visibility and dissemination of Uniservitate's contributions both to Catholic and non-Catholic audiences, and to the wider service-learning global community.

Due to the pandemic, the first two Symposia were only virtual. The second was organized in alliance with the Catholic University of Portugal. The third Symposium, held in Rome in October 2022 in alliance with LUMSA, was the first to be hybrid, as the fourth one, held in Manila with La Salle University in November 2023. Next one is already in planning, to be organized in Rome with LUMSA and Urbaniana Pontifical University in October, 2024.

The first four Uniservitate Symposia have gathered:

- +2100 participants
- +100 speakers
- +180 peer-reviewed papers
- +1400 views in YouTube

d) Small Research Grants: in the second stage, in 2023, with a 70,000 euros budget globally distributed, each one of the regional hubs are distributing these resources to support research about service-learning in Catholic Higher Education according to the requests received and evaluated by a scientific committee. The call was open for all the researchers that meet the regional requirements and who presented projects aligned with the objectives. Regional hubs set deadlines according to their academic schedule, and the selection process is still ongoing in some regions. Research proposals should focus on some of the following topics:

- The spiritual dimension of SL.
- SL contribution to CHEIs mission and identity.
- SL institutionalization processes in the specific contexts of CHEIs.
- Evidence of SL impact towards an integral education.

2.3.2 – Global Level

a) Global Network

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[59] https://repository.uniservitate.org/

Coordinating a global programme of these dimensions has been as rewarding as challenging. However, the common faith and the fraternal community established between the coordination, the Board and the Hubs has so far helped us to overcome the inevitable conflicts.

Regional Hub's structure proved to be efficient to manage a "polyhedric" programme according to different regional needs and expectations. It allowed the Programme to be flexible to the very different conditions and regional cultures, and to the diverse regional knowledge of SL (very much known in USA-Canada, and just beginning to be known in most of Africa). Work plans and activities were very much defined autonomously in each region, who set their own priorities and strategic planning within the global programme.

Soon after the pandemic, Central-Eastern Europe and Middle East region had to face war involving one of their supported institutions, Ukraine Catholic University. Another supported institution in the region, the Lasallian Bethelem University in Palestine, was from the beginning facing a tense political situation, and is now also suffering a war. The chain of solidarity among Uniservitate members to attend these and other conflicts has been very concrete and goes from institutional decisions to offer jobs and scholarships to displaced professors and students, to service-learning projects like the one in Jhon Paul II Catholic University in Lublin, where students teach Polish to Ukraine immigrants. In November 2023, an Erasmus+ project was granted to several European *Uniservitate* members and CLAYSS, to contribute with Ukraine Universities to use SL as a tool to face the war and the hoped reconstruction.

With participants speaking 15 different languages, one of the initial decisions was to use the three official languages of IFCU (English, French and Spanish). We did not want to assume English as *lingua franca*, when we knew many valuable scholars are not comfortable communicating in English. Investing in the translation of publications, and in simultaneous interpretation for Zoom meetings and Conferences has been one of the keys for the successful dialogue established among people from all the continents since the beginning of the Programme.

As a testimony of the vitality of our global community, new initiatives are flourishing from the dialogue among different regions and the global coordination: a series of weekly webinars offered from Eichstatt in Germany to all the regions; a document compiling the lessons learned in the management of the regional hub, written together by three hubs (Chile Catholic University, Deusto and Eichstatt University); a Global Chain of Prayer for Peace lead by Deusto, and others. These initiatives were not part of the careful initial planning, but they are welcomed signs of the vitality of *Uniservitate* global community.

b) Communication Platform: includes all the necessary means to disseminate and highlight what is done in the framework of the programme and to generate a large global community.

The global platform (website + online training platform + social media) gives institutional presence to the programme and allows news of actions and activities to be disseminated in the 5 continents. On the other hand, social media makes possible closer contact with the large community of followers that grows exponentially after each new event such as the Global Symposia and the Uniservitate Award.

- *Website*: More than 120 pages of content and 1 news blog. More than 100.000 visits in the last 2 years from more than 100 different countries
- *Online training platform* (Moodle): 4 courses developed (Training of Trainers, Training for Leaders, Training for Evaluators, SL in Higher Education -with CEE&ME Hub- + Regional Hubs virtual room)

- *1485 followers/subscribers in social media*: Facebook (376). Instagram (374). Twitter (172). Linkedin (202). Youtube (361). A Facebook closed group (only for Uniservitate members:118)

Most regional hubs have their own websites and social networks dedicated or associated to Uniservitate.

c) Uniservitate Award: it aims to promote service-learning in Catholic Higher Education Institutions by recognizing quality service-learning practices and give them visibility. It is globally coordinated and regionally implemented. Quality criteria for the evaluation of the experiences were validated by the Academic Sounding Board. Hubs and selected evaluators participated in 4 weeks of training and the winning experiences have been chosen by prominent jurors from the academic environment of each region.

In its first edition, the Award received 200 Applications from 76 Institutions in the 7 *Uniservitate* regions. It distributed a total of 84,000 euros to 28 selected projects, to be used to give continuity to the awarded projects or to initiate new ones. Twelve students representing the regional winners had the opportunity to meet Pope Francis in Rome in October 2022, in occasion of the III Symposium in Rome.

2.3.3 – Institutional Level

a) Training for Trainers and Leaders: Two global courses are offered within the programme:

- The *Training for Trainers* brought together the Regional Hub teams. It offered a unique opportunity to build a global community among Uniservitate leaders, share reflections and research from diverse regions of the world on an equal basis, and to start a multicultural dialogue for future understanding. The theoretical and spiritual foundations were established for regional capacity building, technical assistance plans and a global exchange network that continued to be strengthened through the symposia and the Training for Leaders.

  An 8-weeks virtual training was offered in English and Spanish for 38 participants from 9 institutions. A new group is currently attending the course.

- The *Training for Leaders* is a global activity to promote the institutionalization of service-learning in CHEIs, as well as to stimulate interaction and sharing among participants for the growth of the global network. Is part of the capacity building programme provided to selected CHEIs by the CLAYSS-Uniservitate Team.

  The activities were designed to diagnose and plan the institutionalization of service-learning, reflect on the spiritual dimension, promote the production of knowledge, and articulate with the support plans led by the Hubs in each region. Participation in symposia and other activities of the programme were included as part of the training. Until 2022, 200 participants from 26 institutions participated in 14 weeks of training offered in English, Spanish and French.

b) Support Plans & Technical Assistance: are a set of actions coordinated and led by the Reginal Hubs to promote service-learning institutionalization among the Supported Institutions. They are designed for each institution according to the needs and state of progress of their service-learning institutionalization process.

All the activities -online and onsite- that reach the supported institutions are articulated with the global and regional network, the Uniservitate Global Symposia, the regional meetings and the capacity building programme (Training for Trainers & Training for Leaders).

Five of the regional Hubs used Furco's rubric[60] as a starting point for the development of the Plan to identify dimensions and categories for accompaniment. They organized their work plan including a Training plan (wokshops, technical assistance meetings, regional meetings, accompaniment and visit to projects), the call for the Global Award, Training workshops and other global meetings.

During the first stage of the Programme were developed more than 150 regional and institutional capacity building and technical assistance activities, and 13 new resources were created.

c) Regional meetings

The face-to-face regional meetings have been defined by *Uniservitate* as strategic for supporting the process of institutionalization of service-learning, the creation of networks and the production and dissemination of knowledge.

Each hub organized regional meetings for their supported institutions, with the participation of Board Members from the region and community partners. These encounters probed to be an effective strategy to address all the dimensions defined by the program to strengthen the creation of capacities and critical mass through communication, the exchange of resources and knowledge between educational institutions, community organizations and other stakeholders.

At the end of the first three years of the Programme, and according to the M&E assessment, all Hubs and supported institutions have made progress in one or more dimensions of the institutionalization of service-learning. Team action, strategic planning and the use of programme resources were identify as directly linked to these advancements.

Some of the changes introduced in institutional policies because of the participation in Uniservitate include organizing specific offices to manage SL at the institutional level, introducing new curriculum directives across the University to guarantee all careers include a minimum of SL projects, organizing new joint efforts linking academic areas with Campus Ministry, establishing monetary rewards for professors including service-learning projects in their courses, establishing new alliances with civil society and Church organizations to develop institutional SL programmes, and many more.

At the end, the most important results of the Programme are showing in the kind of quality SL projects and programmes that are being developed, of which the Uniservitate Award highlighted only a few. And, of course, in the personal impact of these projects in CHEIs' students, which will be object of further study in the second stage of the Programme.

Over these past four years *Uniservitate* already had the opportunity to collect many valuable testimonies from students[61], educators and administrators. As a conclusion, I would like to quote a few of them:

> *"Service-learning is important because students in class only learn on the theoretical frameworks, there is no opportunity for students to go out and practice whatever they've learn. What service-learning does is give us the opportunity to integrate with the community and give us a real-life experience of how solutions are made out there, service-learning gives students the opportunity to engage in practical aspects, therefore linking theory and practice for the common good."* Student, Tangaza University College, Africa Hub.

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[60] Furco, A. *Self-assessment Rubric… Cit.*

[61] See Uniservitate YouTube Channel for some of them: https://www.youtube.com/@UNISERVITATE

"This service-learning experience brought me more for my formation: First of all, the collaboration with the members of the community allowed me to be closer to my community and to understand the problems that my brothers and sisters suffer with household waste. Develop the social awareness of the university community, expand our circle of relationships, learning by giving service, gain self-confidence and experience, discover the strengths and talents of students. Experience exploring various career options, increase autonomy of students and develop skills, with alumni, help to build a network of job-seeking contacts." Student, Catholic University of Central Africa, Cameroon, supported university Africa Hub.

"In service-learning projects students can gain so many additional competences and can see that what they learn is really important (…) The feedback you receive for your practical work helps you work on yourself". Student, Eichstatt University, Germany, CEE-Middle East Hub.

"I believe solidarity service-learning is key for all students, because with this we learn our profession is not only for ourselves, but to give to others and to those who need it the most.". Student, Javeriana University-Bogotá, supported University Latin American Hub.

"It became fascinating for me to learn about so many institutions' service-learning in many different national, socio-cultural, political, and educational contexts. As we learned more about the different stages of the institutionalization journey, and reflected on this in a contextually considered way, this has created spaces for understanding our own contexts more richly through comparison and exploration. This truly is a gift! (...) Uniservitate has also opened us up to a global community of academics and practitioners who are passionate about the transformational power of service-learning. Dr. Matthew Pink, Associate Director, ACU Engagement, Australian Catholic University, Supported University Asia-Oceania Hub.

"I believe that there is a force of Unservitate that has been demonstrated with such a powerful horizontal structure, with so much life in so many different places. This does not normally occur in many organizations. It is an absolutely cooperative structure, horizontal, where it is an example of collective intelligence at the service of service-learning. This is thanks also to the distributed leadership of those of you who have initiated the process". Miquel Martínez, Academic Sounding Board Member, Barcelona University, Spain.