2020

A Historical Narrative On The Formative Years And Organizational Culture Of Ave Maria University: 2003 To 2011

Patricia Lourdes Moran
William & Mary - School of Education, patricialmoran@gmail.com

A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ON THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY: 2003 TO 2011

A Dissertation

Presented to the

The Faculty of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Patricia Lourdes Moran

November 2020

A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ON THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY: 2003 TO 2011

By

Patricia Lourdes Moran

Approved November 16, 2020 by

PAMELA L. EDDY, PH.D.
Committee Member

LESLIE W. GRANT, PH.D.
Committee Member

JAMES P. BARBER, PH.D.
Chairperson of Doctoral Committee

Dedication

I dedicate this journey to my parents for their support and guidance as I navigate many paths in my life. I always choose the one less traveled and that has made all the difference.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my family and friends for all your support and for providing me a sounding board during this journey. Your listening ear and patience was invaluable. I would like to thank all the individuals who participated in my interviews. Your openness and willingness to participate made this study possible. I would also like to thank my committee, Leslie and Pam, for your guidance and drive to make this paper worth reading. Finally, I would like to thank my chair, Jim, as your belief in me to complete this arduous journey kept me going, even when I threatened to quit! I truly would not have completed this program without all of you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

In this study, I focused on the history of Ave Maria University during its formative years in Florida from 2003 to 2011 to answer the research question: How did a new, conservative Catholic university emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century? Understanding the history and culture of Ave Maria informs how the institution came about and is still operational today, even when other small institutions are closing their doors. The study utilized a historical narrative approach to uncover and document Ave Maria's early history, the physical transition of moving campus locations twice, the accreditation process, and the university's organizational culture. The study applied Edgar Schein's model of organizational culture to discover institutional insights from artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. The results yielded recommendations on the importance of long-term financial stability, the significance of a values-based mission, the importance of faculty and staff fit, and alignment of the curriculum with the mission.

A HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ON THE FORMATIVE YEARS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF AVE MARIA UNIVERSITY: 2003 TO 2011

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1998, the founder of Domino's Pizza founded Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti, Michigan. As a devout Catholic, Tom Monaghan had a desire to use his wealth to fund a new institution for what he saw as God's work, to get people into heaven (Breitenstein, 2014). By 2001, Ave Maria College (AMC) enrollment was over 100 students, and a need for additional campus facilities was identified to manage and promote future growth of the college (Ave Maria University, n.d.-a). When Monaghan was not granted more land in Michigan to expand the college in 2003, he moved the institution to Florida. Monaghan had a vision for a conservative, Catholic institution that was to be the center of a new community that promoted the value and mission faithful to the magisterium of the Catholic Church (Stinnet, 2015). To establish a new, conservative university within a town sharing the same conservative views was groundbreaking and garnered much media attention.

The purpose of this study was to examine how Ave Maria University (AMU) came to be during a time when many small, private colleges struggled to remain open. The historical narrative approach (Polkinghorne, 1995) utilized in this research aimed to explore the stories of individuals' experiences from their time at AMU and highlight social, cultural, and institutional aspects of this institution's history. In this chapter, I examine the history of AMU, then describe the higher education challenges facing small institutions during the 2000s, followed by an overview of Edgar Schein's (2004) approach to organizational culture that was used as the framework for this case study.

History of Ave Maria University

The founding of AMC was designed by Monaghan to ignite a return to the traditional Catholic institution organizational mission (Stinnet, 2015). AMC was founded in 1998 in Ypsilanti, Michigan as a small, liberal arts college and was the seed of the present AMU (Breitenstein, 2014). In addition to his pizza empire, Monaghan owned the Detroit Tigers from 1983-1992 (Lewin, 2003). Monaghan (1986) pledged $240 million of his personal pizza and sports fortune to begin the school, and he originally pledged to contribute an additional $300 million over the years to begin an endowment program for future operational costs (Lewin, 2003). In 1998, Monaghan sold Domino's Pizza, reportedly for $1 billion, to devote some of this money to funding AMC (Boyer, 2007).

Founding of Ave Maria College. Monaghan (1986) was born in 1937, and at the age of 6 he was placed into an orphanage when his father died. The orphanage was operated by the Felician Sisters, a Catholic religious order named for St. Felix. This religious upbringing led Monaghan to consider becoming a priest, but he was later expelled from the seminary as he did not have the necessary discipline to adapt to the daily outlined schedule and strict lifestyle of seminary life. Monaghan honed his sense of discipline when he served in the U.S. Marine Corps until he was discharged in 1959. At that point in time, he enrolled in classes at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to become an architect, as he was inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright, whose architecture would influence the design of AMU's Florida campus (Monaghan, 1986).

In 1960, Monaghan (1986) abandoned his educational pursuits to buy a pizzeria in neighboring Ypsilanti, Michigan that would later become known as Domino's Pizza. In 1992, Monaghan had a reawakening of his Catholic faith which led him to alter his lifestyle and fund

the start of a Catholic college, AMC, in Ypsilanti, Michigan (Lewin, 2003). This institution would later move to Florida and become AMU.

At the time of its founding in 1998, AMC was the first Catholic college founded in over 20 years. Its predecessor was Christendom College, which was founded in Front Royal, Virginia, in 1977. Monaghan had a specific conservative Catholic vision for a large university (Lewin, 2003). AMC was located in Southeastern Michigan near two other established institutions, Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti and University of Michigan in Ann Arbor; this was an area that already provided higher education opportunities and limited physical space to grow a campus. After expansion site zoning requests were denied by the Ann Arbor Township in April of 2002, Monaghan looked to Florida as the site for an expanded campus (Lewin, 2003).

Monaghan owned a home in Collier County, Florida and later knew that Barron Collier Company could provide thousands of acres to expand his institution (Buzzacco-Foerster, 2016). Monaghan met with executives from the Barron Collier Company, an agricultural, real estate, and landholdings firm established by the founder of Collier County and operated by his family, and made a deal on undeveloped land in eastern Collier County, outside the city of Naples (Reed, 2014). Monaghan was not content to build just a university on this land. He decided to create an entire town to surround it. In 2002, Monaghan and Barron Collier Company announced plans for AMU and the town of Ave Maria in Collier County, Florida (Soffian, 2017). The development of the university infrastructure was established through this partnership with the Barron Collier Companies (Thomas, 2004). Barron Collier and Monaghan each hold a half interest in the town development, and Monaghan committed his future earned profits from the town towards endowing AMU (Lewin, 2003). Residences were available in the town starting in late spring of 2007, built in partnership with several national builders (Soffian, 2017).

Campus moves from Michigan to Florida. AMC in Michigan transitioned to Florida in 2003. The Michigan institution was on track to receive accreditation from the American Academy for Liberal Education, but the focus of Monaghan and the college leaders had shifted from seeking final accreditation for the Michigan institution to seeking a preliminary decision for the Florida institution (Messaros, 2004). According to Messaros (2004), a professor of biology at the Michigan campus, faculty and staff were offered a choice between staying in Michigan or moving to Florida (although this was not always accurate in every case as some offers were withdrawn in mid-summer of 2004). Beginning in the fall of 2003, the Florida campus operated in temporary facilities in Naples in the clubhouse of a former retirement community with a student body of around 100 students (Reed, 2014).

The permanent campus in the town of Ave Maria, Florida opened in 2006 with about 600 students and an expectation to grow to 5,000. Monaghan and Barron Collier Companies formed a partnership where Barron Collier Companies donated the land to Monaghan to build the school and they would build the town property around the university (Lewin, 2003). The land on which the town and university are located was farmland acreage a few miles souths of Immokalee, Florida (Breitenstein, 2014). Some environmentalists raised concern that the new community, requiring new and wider roads and bringing more development, would disrupt the endangered Florida panther population. Frank Jackalone, staff director for Sierra Club St. Petersburg commented, “You're creating real trouble by placing massive development virtually right next to the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge” (Thomas, 2004, p. 24). University officials were sensitive to environmental concerns and brought in experts to ensure that the “controlled growth” of the new community would not damage the environment (Thomas, 2004, p. 25).

Conservative criticism of Ave Maria Town. Monahan's plans to create a traditional Catholic university that adhered to the Magisterium, the approved teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, in a Catholic-centric town drew criticisms about religious and academic freedom, with some even using the word “cult” to describe the town. The new town was created to promote traditional and conservative family values. Although Catholic-centered, it was open to people of all faiths. There was talk of some restrictions on what town stores may sell, reflecting Monaghan’s conservative religious beliefs (Skoloff, 2006). Local pharmacies, for example, were asked not to sell contraceptives or adult magazines, although not prohibited, according to Monaghan (Skoloff, 2006). According to a report by TeamSarah4Choice (2014), the town’s only OB/GYN allegedly refused to prescribe contraception to women. Although the town has no current bans on contraceptive medication, there are no pharmacies in which birth control can be purchased, and no clinics or hospital that perform abortions (Taylor, 2016). Whereas some see the project as a Catholic, pro-family utopia, others question whether the project represents a return to the "Catholic ghetto," an insulated environment that limits the kind of contact with the diversity of the world that is required for effective evangelization (Tracy, 2006, p. 11).

Governor Jeb Bush signed Ave Maria Stewardship Community District into law in June 2004 (Taylor, 2016). The designation of a stewardship is one used for planned communities that give developers government-like powers as the town is built, a level of control that raised concerns from critics (Taylor, 2016). The community and Governor Bush also drew criticism from the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida about those proposed bans of contraceptives in the community, questioning whether its existence was unconstitutional (TeamSarah4Choice, 2014). The spokesman for the Governor said in response, “While the governor does not

personally believe in abortion or pornography, the town, and any restrictions they may place on businesses choosing to locate there, must comply with the laws and constitution of the state and federal governments" (Skoloff, 2006, p. 19). Bush was the guest speaker at the university's groundbreaking event in 2006 and lauded the development of the town, where faith and freedom could merge to create a community (Skoloff, 2006).

Early administrative challenges. In late June of 2004, the federal Department of Education announced sanctions against AMC and AMU at both its Michigan and Florida sites. In a letter sent to the College, the Department of Education announced that it was putting AMC and AMU on "heightened cash monitoring" for its poor management of financial aid awards to students (Messaros, 2004, p. 5). The letter stated that the college would have to pay back $100,000 to $300,000 of grants and loans because AMC (Michigan) could not provide documentation that a substantial number of awards from 2000 to 2003 were made to "eligible students" (Messaros, 2004, p. 5). In the same year, Father Neil J. Roy, AMC's academic dean, sued Monaghan and the school's trustees in order to stall the closure of the Michigan campus, but a state court judge dismissed the suit (Hansen, 2006). The college kept its promise to leave the Michigan campus open through 2007, and after making cash buyout offers to students, there remained only three students and a handful of professors in this final year the school was open in Michigan (Hansen, 2006).

AMU faced a media firestorm on March 21, 2007, when the university announced that the Board of Trustees asked Father Joseph Fessio, SJ (Society of Jesus) to resign as provost citing "irreconcilable differences over administrative policies and practices" (Catholic Review, 2007, para. 3). Father Fessio was quickly reinstated as a theologian in residence after protests from students and staff, and he continued to participate in commencement exercises and teach a

summer course (Akin, 2009). The disciplinary actions were revisited on July 20, 2009 when Fessio sent an email to the AMU staff and student body announcing his final dismissal as provost due to his outspoken criticisms of the current administration (Akin, 2009). Dr. Jack Sites, who was the Vice President for Administration, informed him in person of the dismissal (Akin, 2009).

Accreditation. In 2010, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) announced that AMU had officially earned "accredited membership" status and was now a fully accredited member of the SACSCOC (Soffian, 2017, p. 2), which means they were now authorized to grant accredited bachelors, masters, and doctoral degrees. AMU joined the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) in 2008 and began athletic competition that same year (Soffian, 2017). In February 2011, nearly 14 years after its initial founding as AMC in Michigan, AMU announced major transitions in leadership: Tom Monaghan would be taking a step back from the school's daily operations and Jim Towey would replace Nick Healy as president in July.

Currently, AMU offers majors in theology, Catholic studies and early Christian literature, as well as majors in mathematics, biology, accounting, and others in which religion does not outwardly permeate class discussions. According to their website (Ave Maria University, n.d.-b), they currently have a total enrollment of approximately 1,200 students and have attracted students from 49 states and more than 25 countries. In December 2015, the institution was reaccredited by SACS for another 10 years (Pearce, 2016). Table 1 outlines the enrollment figures from 1998 to 2019 to illustrate the growth of the student body.

Table 1

Enrollment Data of Ave Maria University: 1998 to 2019

Year	Enrollment
1998	40
1999	76
2000	104
2001	147
2002	250
2003 (Move to Florida)	100
2004	300
2005	379
2006	363
2007	413
2008	548
2009	668
2010	816
2011	846
2012	976
2013	988
2014	1081
2015	1110
2016	1100
2017	1113
2018	1123
2019	1176

Organizational Culture Framework

To better understand AMU's institutional challenges during these formative years of 2003 to 2011, this study focused on the organizational culture and the conservative mission and values. The values of the culture are often shared in a narrative of organizational myths and sagas that are passed among coworkers (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Monaghan and the original leadership team built the institution from the ground floor and their collective experience created the culture of AMU during those early years.

Schein (2004) provided a conceptualization of culture in organizations and found that culture exists at three levels. The first is what he calls *artifacts*, which is the observable level, followed by *espoused values*, which are beliefs and feelings held toward individuals, things, or actions, and lastly *basic underlying assumptions*, which focus on how workers believe, feel, and act based on their beliefs (Bess & Dee, 2008). According to Schein (2004), overt behavior reflects the observed behaviors of individuals, in both a formal and informal role in the organization; for example, whether coworkers gather for coffee or stay within their offices illustrates a cultural value. Schein's framework was used to analyze and organize the findings of this study.

Artifacts. Schein's (2004) first level, artifacts, consists of the following categories (a) physical environment, (b) social environment, (c) technology, (d) written and spoken language, (e) overt behavior of members, and (f) symbols (Bess & Dee, 2008, p. 365). Culture is conveyed by the layout of physical offices from the interior and exterior spaces. The social environment focuses on the interactions that coworkers have with one another and their forms of communication. Culture can also emerge due to choices of technology in converting inputs to outputs. A symbol can represent an idea or concept that has meaning for the organization and help to highlight what is important (Bess & Dee, 2008). For example, the church in the town of Ave Maria is located in the center of the property between the campus and the town residential life. This physical layout can represent the adherence to the Catholic mission of the institution within everyday life.

Espoused values. Values, the second level of Schein's (2004) organizational culture framework, reflect deeply held feelings towards things, people, or actions. Values establish an important component of the organization's culture. The organization may promote a set of

values, which can be considered their belief system (Bess & Dee, 2008). The belief system can serve as a "guide and as a way of dealing with the uncertainty of intrinsically uncontrollable or difficult events" (Schein, 2004, p. 20). Organizations do need to be careful when hiring based on values or 'fit' into their prevailing culture, as this may lead to great homogeneity and groupthink or the socialization can appear to be coercive (Bess & Dee, 2008).

Basic underlying assumptions. The final level of Schein's (2004) organizational culture components is assumptions, the unconscious drivers that guide behavior. Individuals who act on assumptions rather than values have a difficult time explaining the reason behind the action (Bess & Dee, 2008). The assumptions of the organization members are in relation to how the organization is involved in the economic, political, and social environments. These may impact how and to what extent members react to internal or external factors that could position the organization. The structure of the organization in its authority relationships can determine how the hierarchy reporting may be necessary or not, which places assumptions on the culture of the organization that may dissuade collaboration in the workplace (Bess & Dee, 2008). Schein's (2004) framework guided my analysis and focused this study in order to present the impact of organizational culture and structure during a time of transition and growth. Culture change is ultimately a shift in assumptions and can be incredibly difficult to accomplish as a leader.

Research Question

To understand how AMU was founded during a time that presented many challenges in starting a new Catholic institution, the following question guided my research:

> How did a new, conservative Catholic university emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century?

The study included a particular focus on the timeframe of 2003–2011, the formative years of the institution in Florida through to the transition of the original leadership team. The timeframe is bound by 2003, when AMU first moved from Michigan to Florida, and 2011, when the founder and original President stepped away from their roles and ushered in a new senior leadership team.

Significance of the Study

The main components I explored in this study were the early history of the institution's founding and campus locations, the background and experience of the leadership team, and the challenges of accreditation and institutional growth. The significance of this study is to understand the history of the early years in establishing a new, conservative, and Catholic institution that has specific values and belief systems during a time when many small institutions were facing obstacles in remaining operational (Busta, 2019). The current challenges facing higher education of limited resources, decreasing enrollment, and increasing tuition costs provide an opportunity for Christian colleges and universities to have a place in the U.S. higher education landscape by guarding their core values and commitments and providing quality education and research-based answers to some of society's problems (Ewert, 2007).

The research relied on personal interviews with the founder, senior leaders, and student and staff members of AMU who were present during the formative years in Florida. The study focused on the physical transition of moving campus locations and transitioning to university status from 2003 to 2011. I also focused on that time and the growth of the institution, the physical move of campuses, the accreditation process, and the organizational culture, while utilizing Schein's (2004) framework to glean institutional insights that contribute to the literature on higher education institutions. I employed the qualitative research methodology of historical

narrative for this study. This approach was best for my study because of the clearly identified situation and timeline through which I sought to provide an in-depth understanding of this particular institution's growth and transition and the impact to higher education literature (Creswell, 2002). More details on the research methods are included in Chapter 3. In conclusion, I utilized the findings of Schein (2004) on the three levels of culture in organizations: artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions to frame the founding and transition of AMU from 2003 to 2011. The analysis outlined the hallmarks of AMU's founding and conservative mission that contributed to the creation of a new institution at the turn of the 21st century. AMU's humble beginnings and lofty ambitions that are still being actualized all occurred within a relatively short 8-year timeframe.

Definition of Terms

Accreditation: official certification that a school or course has met standards set by external regulators.

History narrative: a gathering of personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one or several individuals (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Catholic: a person who belongs to the universal Christian church, which is the Roman Catholic Church.

College: an institution offering a general liberal arts curriculum that confers a bachelor's degree.

Conservative: holding to traditional attitudes and values, cautious about change or innovation, typically in relation to politics or religion.

Encyclical: a letter written by the Pope pertaining to Catholic doctrine that is sent to all bishops of the Roman Catholic Church.

Magisterium: the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

University: an institution offering many branches of advanced learning, conferring degrees in various faculties, often embodying colleges and similar institutions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The focus of this chapter includes a literature review on organizational culture, institutional change, and the challenges of founding a new, conservative, Catholic university in the early 21st century United States. In this chapter, I examine the literature on the origins and history of Roman Catholic institutions, followed by research on institutional change and culture, then a review of societal factors during the time the institution was founded. I conclude with an exploration of Schein's (2004) organizational culture framework. As described in Chapter 1, this study intended to uncover the history of Ave Maria University (AMU) during a pivotal period in Florida from 2003 to 2011.

Origins of Roman Catholic Higher Education

According to Edward Grant (as cited in Woods, 2005), the creation of the university, the commitment to reason and rational argument, and the overall spirit of inquiry is a "gift from the Latin Middle Ages" (p. 18). The early institutions were identified with various characteristics, such as a core of required texts, lectures, well-defined academic programs, and granting of degrees (Woods, 2005). The origins of the first university are not confirmed, but the University of al-Qarawiyyin, located in Fes el-Bali, Morocco, is considered the oldest continuously operating university in the world since 859 (Cheng, 2016). The University of Bologna, in Italy, and the University of Oxford, in England, were established in the late 11th century and are considered the oldest universities in the Western world.

The papacy played a role in the establishment of medieval universities in Europe by granting charters, and by the time of the Reformation in the 16th century, there were 81 universities established: 33 by papal charter, 15 by royal or imperial charter, 20 with both types of charter, and the remaining 13 without a charter (Woods, 2005, p. 5). Catholicism permeated the culture of the early universities, with many possessing a papal charter, and theology held an uncontested place among the other disciplines (O'Malley, 2012). John Henry Newman, Oxford academic and convert to Catholicism, published *The Idea of a University* in 1852 championing a well-rounded education in a university setting (Kerr, 2008). Newman presented a vision of a secular university but stated religious truth as a condition of general knowledge (Deboick, 2010). A university that possessed a papal charter held authority to issue degrees that were considered valid throughout all of Christendom, unlike degrees awarded from a national monarch's charter, which were only considered valid in that particular kingdom (Woods, 2005). Medieval universities did not have formal mission statements like those common among institutions today, but some schools unofficially affiliated themselves with the task of moral development of the students. The College de Montaigu at the University of Paris where the future St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit religious order, lived and studied in the 1500s (O'Malley, 2012), was an early example.

The Church provided protection to university students, known as benefit of clergy, which afforded them a special legal status to have their cases of crime heard in an ecclesiastical court rather than a secular court (Woods, 2005). It was common for universities to bring their grievances to the sitting Pope in Rome, and the Pope would intervene at times in order to protect their "privileged status" in the world (Woods, 2005, p. 11). These universities offered studies on the standard liberal arts disciplines but also civil and canon law, natural philosophy, medicine,

and theology, and during the renaissance of the 12th century, translation effort brought forth works on geometry, metaphysics, natural philosophy, ethics, and medical work of Galen (Woods, 2005).

The Congregation for Catholic Education, composed of cardinals and archbishops, is currently responsible for institutions and higher schools of study that are dependent on ecclesiastical authorities and it receives bishops to discuss concerns pertaining to Catholic education in their areas of responsibility (John Paul II, 1979). Cardinals are former bishops and ordained priests that oversee several Catholic churches that fall under one diocese and have been handpicked by the Pope to advise him as a member of the College of Cardinals. Archbishops are bishops that serve in an administrative or diplomatic post. This congregation "erects or approves ecclesiastical universities and institutions, ratifies their statutes, exercises the highest supervision over them, and ensures that the integrity of the Catholic faith is preserved in teaching doctrine" (John Paul II, 1988, article 116). A university can call itself 'Catholic' when the Congregation for Catholic Education or a diocesan Bishop (John Paul II, 1990) approves it after a review of the curriculum is found to be in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, which is the body of laws for the Catholic Church.

Roman Catholic Higher Education in the United States

The creation of the university fostered an intellectual life that played a crucial role in Western Civilization (Woods, 2005). Georgetown College, the first Catholic Jesuit institution founded in the United States in 1789, became the Catholic model for offering postgraduate courses (Gleason, 1995). Jesuits, formally known as the Society of Jesus, are a religious order within the Catholic priesthood founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola in 1540 with a dedicated focus on education and intellectual research (Cheney, 2017). Changes in higher education and the

founding of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in 1899 affected Catholic institutions between 1899 and 1918 by forming Catholic secondary, collegiate, and graduate education institutions that served as voting representatives to the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities to strengthen the mission and character of Catholic higher education in the United States (Gleason, 1995). At the turn of the 20th century, 959 Catholic colleges existed, consisting of universities, colleges for boys, seminaries, and academies for girls (Gleason, 1995). Of the Catholic orders, the Jesuits were by far the most influential in the Catholic teaching order; however, the sitting pope, His Holiness Pope Francis, was the first Jesuit pope elected in 2013.

In 1955, Monsignor John Tracy Ellis delivered a criticism on the quality of American Catholic intellectual life at the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs meeting at Maryville College in St. Louis, MO stating, "in no western society is the intellectual prestige of Catholicism lower than in the country where, in such respects as wealth, numbers, and strength of organization, it is so powerful" (p. 353). American Catholic institutions appeared to many as concerned not in the penetration of truth but rather passing on the Catholic tradition of truth with little alteration (Greeley, 1969).

Between 1962 and 1965, Pope John XXIII held the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II), which was an ecumenical council consisting of Catholic leaders that met to discuss doctrinal issues, and this council released 16 documents that currently form the foundation for the Catholic Church today (Teicher, 2012). Vatican II is credited with shaping the modern Catholic Church, with particular emphasis on reinforcing mission and dialogue among other denominations, using other languages besides Latin during Mass, and a renewed engagement with education and media (Teicher, 2012). Vatican II also dealt specifically with formal Catholic education concerns by focusing on proper disciplinary methodology of freedom of inquiry, growth in understanding,

and advancing higher culture and witness to faith (O'Connell, 2017). According to Morey and Piderit (2006), administrators at Catholic institutions appreciated the Catholic approach to education, which is the search for truth as open and broad, not narrow and constrained, and traditionally rooted in the liberal arts that was emphasized by Vatican II. Leading up to Vatican II, Catholic institutions were more regulated in what students could read, excluding a great deal of modern literature and philosophy (Lewin, 2003). Vatican II opened much more positive relations to the modern world of science, technology, and politics (Lewin, 2003).

In 1967, North American Catholic university leaders came together and developed the *Land O'Lakes Statement*, which stated that each university must possess institutional autonomy and academic freedom but remain an institution that is perceptibly Catholic (Jenkins, 2017). The statement is known as such because the property where these leaders met, on the border of Wisconsin and Michigan, is named Land O' Lakes (Jenkins, 2017). The release of this statement and the legacy of the Vatican II created controversy among Catholic leaders regarding the standing of Catholic higher education (Jenkins, 2017). Catholic institutions throughout the United States had begun to move further away from their founding mission and heritage in order to attract students and minimize their connection to the Catholic Church by wavering on doctrines concerning abortion and birth control (Morey & Piderit, 2006). Critics of the *Land O'Lakes Statement* felt that it created an avenue for institutions to become more secular (Jenkins, 2017). Ave Maria College (AMC), as the first Roman Catholic university founded in over two decades in 1998, was designed to counter this culture shift and ignite a return to the traditional Catholic institution organizational mission (Stinnet, 2015; Thomas, 2004). AMU was officially approved with the Catholic institution designation by Bishop Frank Dewane, Diocese of Venice, Florida, on October 7, 2011 ("Ave Maria University granted official 'Catholic' status," 2011)

based on his authority by the Pope as a diocesan Bishop to determine an institution as Catholic. In the United States, there are 246 institutions identified as Catholic (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2010).From that listing, 226 of those participate in federal student financial aid programs and enroll an estimated 850,000 students (Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, n.d.).

Culture and Integration of Faith and Learning

Hemmings and Hill (2014) conducted a case study on an Australian, Christian institution and found that Christian higher education institutions are answerable to two worlds, one of which is church-based and the other of which is grounded in established higher education norms. According to Matthias (2008), Christian institutions combat a tension between "a desire to maintain the integrity of their spiritual identities on the one hand, and a push towards achieving excellence in their academic reputation" (p. 145). Christian institutions need to work through their respective visions and concerns in adapting to current challenges (Abadeer, 2009).

There is substantial literature on higher education about the culture within an institution and the effect on leadership and management. According to Tierney (2008), the study of culture has advanced and a shift has taken place from a linear and formalized decision-making process to a more collaborative system. Culture also includes the history of a campus; change agents can be easily blindsided by that history (Kezar, 2014). The leaders need to utilize shared leadership and understand the founding mission and values in order to determine why the change may or may not be necessary or risk confronting challenges and conflict. Culture defined in this study is, "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group views as a valid way to perceive, think, and feel" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 269). Culture, or key institutional elements that shape culture such as vision or mission, are modified because of change (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). Kezar and

Eckel (2002) highlighted the challenges and opportunities of managing change within an institution, such as the idea that values and beliefs are central because major alterations to an organization can usually impact the underlying belief systems by those leading the organization or, in this case, a higher education institution.

An institution's history and traditions can influence the change process and the way individuals make sense of things (Kezar, 2014). In utilizing Schein's (2004) framework focusing on what one can observe (artifacts), what someone can feel or believe in (espoused values), and the way one can act on these beliefs (basic underlying assumptions), one can gain an understanding of the organization's culture. Artifacts, as tangible representations of the value system of the organization, may influence change in policies and procedures, such as a family-friendly environment based on child-care offerings. Espoused values are often seen as aspirational, such as mission statements, and reflect more of what a campus would like to be. Behavior of individuals on a campus provide a better reflection of the values of an institution and the culture. Espoused values can be significant players in institutional change to represent areas that require more resources to achieve certain goals. Campuses are better prepared to engage with culture change when they have the organizational capacity, such as "training and professional development opportunities, healthy decision-making processes, strong communication, and stable employee base" (Kezar, 2014, p. 105).

In relation to the purpose of this study, to examine how AMU came to be during a time when small, private colleges struggled to remain open, it is important to understand the relationship between the values and beliefs of the institution. At a Catholic institution, faculty members play a critical role in an institution's struggle between the integration of faith in their teachings and the reality of the campus (Matthias, 2008). Catholic institutions profess the

Catholic faith, follow the teachings of the Magisterium, install theology as a core subject, and contribute to the development of a student's morality and commitment to the Catholic Church (O'Malley, 2012). The necessity to espouse humility in a community of believers is of utmost importance in bridging the gap between faith and learning, using hope to create that balance (Holmes, 1983; Moroney, Phelps, & Waalkes, 2007; Mouw, 1990).

Private Funding Growth in Higher Education

Funding of higher education institutions has traditionally relied extensively on the public sector, but private funding of private higher education institutions has increased since the mid-1980s (Muscio, Quaglione, & Vallanti, 2013). Private sources cover at least a 5% larger share of all direct funding for private higher education institutions than they did in the beginning of the 1990s, and more than 20% of higher education institutions' direct funding comes from private sources in almost half of countries that are members in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, including the United States (Kärkkäinen, 2006). Private 4-year colleges, where government support is not necessarily important, have shown a gradual rise in tuition costs as opposed to overall spending, "colleges and universities respond to reductions in rates of growth of government support in part by slowing their rates of growth of spending" (McPherson, Schapiro, & Winston, 1989, p. 255). At the beginning of the 21st century, the amount of funding from private sources in private higher education institutions in the United States was around 10%, comprised of unrestricted donations, endowments, and tuition (Kärkkäinen, 2006).

Societal Factors at the Turn of the 21st Century

At the start of the 21st century, higher education in the United States represented around 3% of the gross domestic product, including 4,000 accredited institutions and over 16 million students, and conferring two million degrees annually (Thelin, 2019). Higher education in the United States is tantamount to aspiration and the ability of institutions to accommodate some form of universal access, but it is also a source of criticism and debate on the breadth of resources required to keep an institution operational. Institutions must now support the development of professional expertise in fund-raising, as colleges and universities need additional resources as they extend their mission into new fields (Thelin, 2019). Colleges and universities reported spending roughly about $68 billion per year on research and development with $37 billion coming from federal agencies (Comen, 2017). Managing resources became particularly important during 1985 to 2000, when college and university presidents took advantage of every opportunity to spend large amounts of resources to attract the best in terms of faculty, students, doctoral candidates, and athletes, though this period mortgaged institutions' futures, exacerbated by declines in the stock market and state revenues. From 2000 to 2010, American institutions encountered financial problems as endowments, state appropriations, and donor contributions declined, and federal student financial aid programs were delayed because of congressional debates on loan and grant renewals (Thelin, 2019). During this time, small liberal arts colleges had been resilient in their ability to maintain the educational mission and remain financially solvent (Thelin, 2019).

Liberal arts colleges place an emphasis on broad general knowledge to develop intellect instead of professional, vocational, or technical coursework. Class size is usually smaller at liberal arts colleges and faculty typically focus on teaching more than research (Clemmer, 1997).

The oldest liberal arts college in the United States is considered Washington College, founded in 1782 in Chestertown, Maryland. There are 200 liberal arts colleges in the United States (Liberal Arts Colleges, n.d.). By 2016, more than 25 small liberal arts colleges in the United States had closed, and many others saw undergraduate enrollment on the decline and the rate of tuition discounts on the rise (Busta, 2019).

From 2003 until 2011, 131 higher education institutions have closed their doors, all but one were private institutions with 73 of them as for-profit institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). As recent as 2019, enrollment shortfalls were anticipated in the freshman classes at many private colleges in the United States, including, Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, that found the freshman class around 2% smaller than planned (Kelderman, 2019). After years of declining enrollment, Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts made drastic cuts to the institution's operating expenses by not admitting a full freshman class for the fall (Kelderman, 2019). Several other institutions, such as College of St. Joseph in Rutland, Vermont and Southern Vermont College in Bennington, Vermont, closed their doors permanently (Kelderman, 2019). Institutions found that students and parents were comparing small liberal arts colleges with one another but also to larger public colleges with similar programs but lower costs. In the 2018–19 academic year, AMU tuition was roughly 30% less expensive than the national average of private, non-profit 4-year colleges at $28,471 but around 37% more expensive than the average tuition for a Florida 4-year college, which is $14,570 (CollegeCalc, n.d.).

Interest in the role of faith and religion in higher education has been on the rise while current world affairs and foreign policies have increased national and international attention on religious groups, but for most of the faith-based institutions, the purpose of their founding was

ministry and betterment of their community (Daniels & Gustafson, 2016). AMU was in the early years of discussing growth and a campus move just as the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, occurred. This national tragedy affected the United States economy and global financial markets for several months following. See Figure 1 for a timeline of these events and challenges to help illustrate two different trajectories: the history of AMU and headlines in higher education.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
AMU History	Campus moved from Ypsilanti, MI to temporary campus in Naples, FL. Enrollment was 100 students.	Town of Ave Maria Stewardship Community District signed into law by Gov. Jeb Bush. Enrollment: 300 students	University Archives is established to collect, organize, preserve and make accessible historical AMU documents. Enrollment: 379 students	Groundbreaking for new campus and town, cornerstone of Oratory is laid in place. Enrollment: 363 students, incoming class at 126 students.	Move to permanent campus in Ave Maria Town, FL. Enrollment: 413 students.	Received American Academy for Liberal Education accreditation. Varsity sports begin competing in NAIA. Enrollment: 548 students.	Fr. Joseph Fessio, SJ fully dismissed from Ave Maria University. Enrollment: 668 students.	Received SACS accreditation. Enrollment: 816 students.	Monaghan & Healy step down, Jim Towey hired, total enrollment is 846. AMU recognized as an officially Catholic university by Diocese of Venice, FL
Headlines in Higher Education	*Gratz v. Bollinger,* the U.S. Supreme Court sets strict new standards for affirmative action in undergraduate admissions	Facebook launches for college students	Hurricane Katrina displaces thousands of students and causes college employees to lose their jobs	Margaret Spellings, U.S. Secretary of Education, issues report that criticizes colleges for not preparing students for current workplace	Mass shooting at Virginia Tech University leaves 33 dead; worst such massacre in modern American history at the time	Subprime mortgage crisis hits, U.S. economy in recession which greatly impacts the finances of colleges	Over 2,000 people register for first MOOC (massive open online course) at the University of Manitoba	The Federal Reserve Bank of New York reports that total student loan debt will top $1 trillion	Education Department's Office for Civil Rights issues new guidance to colleges on complying with Title IX
My Time at AMU	Family moved to Naples, FL, near the temporary campus and my mother began working at AMU in the Admissions Department	Volunteered for Admissions and Student Life events as well as in the Mail Room	Enrolled in January of 2005, commuted to campus and was a student worker in the Development and Provost Office	Moved on campus, was a member of the first women's basketball club team, student member of the accreditation team	Became a Resident Assistant, traveled to Rome as a member of the Rosa Mystica Household (Catholic sorority)	Continued as a Resident Assistant and student assistant in the Chancellor's Office for Tom Monaghan	Graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, major in Biology, minor in Chemistry and Certificate in Business Administration	In Summer 2010, I worked in the Admissions Department as an Office Coordinator.	Visited campus as an alum to speak at Freshman Orientation

Figure 1. Timeline of Ave Maria University history, in comparison to the history of higher education and my experience at AMU from 2003-2011, from Timeline: 50 years of higher education, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2016).

Schein's Framework

Universities, unlike businesses or other organizations, can possess unclear and difficult to measure goals, which correlates strongly with their respective cultures (Fralinger & Olson, 2007). Schein's (2004) framework focused on what one can observe (artifacts), what someone can feel or believe in (espoused values), and the way one can act on these beliefs (basic underlying assumptions) as three components contributing to an understanding of the organization's culture. Artifacts can be found on the surface level and include the language, products and technology, physical environment, rituals, and emotional displays (Schein, 2004). Artifacts are generally easy to observe but more difficult to decipher, which brings us to the next level of beliefs and values that help establish a basis for the narrative. Climate of the organization, considered by some to be equivalent to culture, is a product of basic underlying assumptions and, therefore, a display of the culture (Schein, 2004). The observed behavior lends itself to an understanding of how an organizational process allows certain behavior to become routine (Schein, 2004). I visually represent Schein's (1999) framework demonstrating a progression from the visible signs of an organizational culture (artifacts) toward the foundations of culture (basic underlying assumptions) that are difficult to identify but are powerful components (see Figure 2).

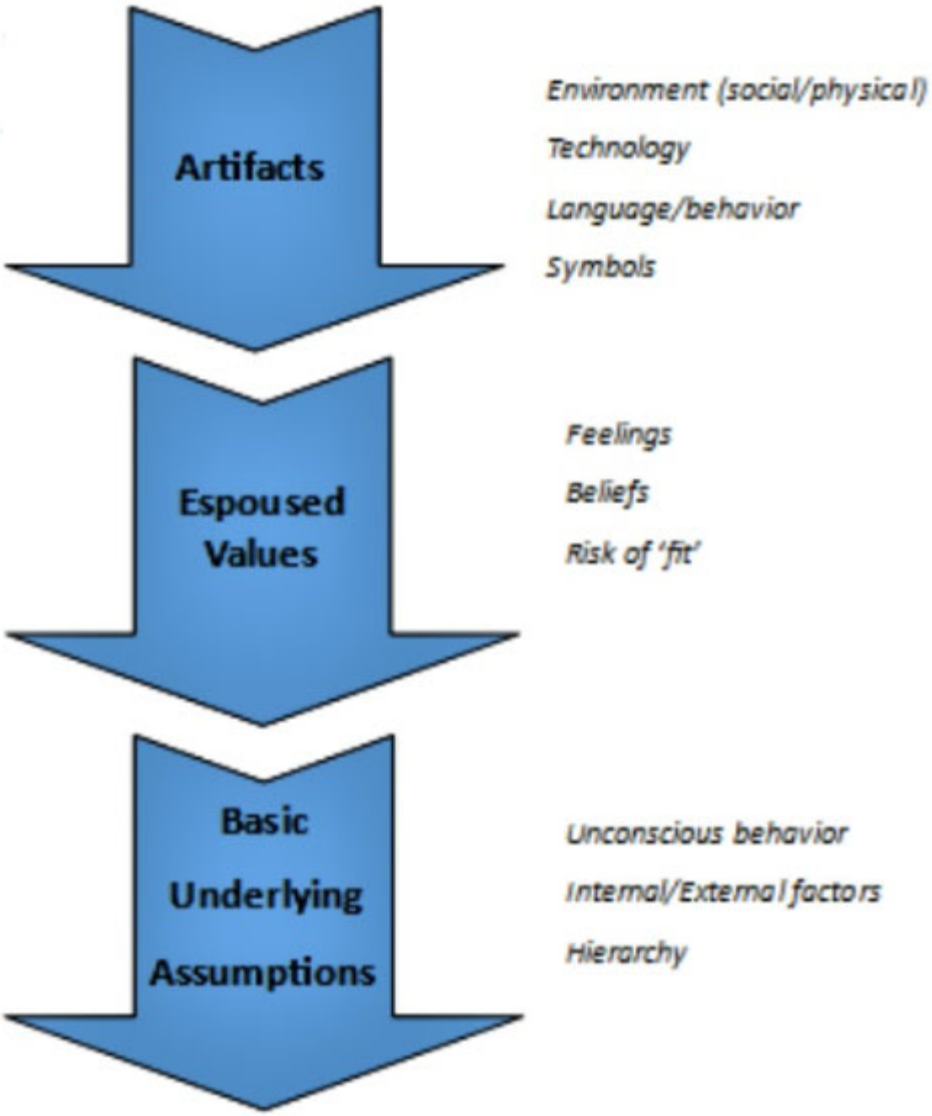


Figure 2. Based on Schein's (1999) levels for understanding organization culture.

Shared beliefs and values in an organization can initiate a course of action, but many organizations do not always have these values and beliefs in common (Schein, 2004). Social validation that endorses certain beliefs and values confirms the social experience of a group; the test of how these are accepted in the organization can be tested with how comfortable and anxiety-free the members feel within that culture (Schein, 2004). The beliefs and values become embodied in an organizational philosophy or mission statement to serve as a guide in decision-

making (Schein, 2004). Basic underlying assumptions can assist in understanding the espoused values and beliefs by deciphering a pattern or predicting future actions (Schein, 2004). Basic assumptions are unlikely to be debated and confronted and are normally difficult to change, but they play a role in developing the culture because they define what we pay attention to, how we react to what is going on, and may determine the actions we take (Schein, 2004). Each new group of members in an organization will develop their own assumptions that will make up the culture of that specific group. A leader must understand the deep levels of the culture and possess a willingness to deal with emotional reactions when assumptions are challenged (Schein, 2004).

Several studies on higher education have utilized Schein's (2004) framework to investigate the culture of their department, field, or institution. One study of engineering education applied Schein's framework to analyze the culture norms, shared assumptions, and understandings of the experiences of staff and students. This study found that they lived as manifestations of the culture of the program (Godfrey & Parker, 2010). Godfrey and Parker (2010) found that culture, a snapshot of it at a particular place and time, is open to shifting values and culture norms. In a separate study, Kuh and Whitt (1988) adapted Schein's framework to higher education and further defined it as

> mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institution of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions. (pp. 28-29)

Smart and St. John (1996) found in their study on organizational culture and effectiveness that the creation and management of an organization's culture, outlined by Schein (1985),

involves consensus of values, beliefs, and norms as well as management practices and that culture is influenced by the behavior of leaders, allocation of resources, and qualities of individuals recruited to or promoted in the institution. The performance of institutions is connected to their culture and is of great importance to the leaders of the institution to manage (Smart & St. John, 1996). Schein's framework can be a practical tool for evaluating and positioning culture in higher education and may assist in developing strategies for culture change (Godfrey & Parker, 2010).

Management of Institutional Change

Change is slow and difficult in higher education because of the decentralized and conservative nature of institutions (Miller, 2010). Bergquist (1992) stated that institutions need to cope with challenges and examine their institution to appreciate and engage diverse and conflicting cultures that reside within. Higher education institutional leadership is mainly about strategic direction giving and setting, whereas, management is about outcomes, achievement, and the monitoring of institutional effectiveness and efficiency in the distribution of resources (Amaral & Meek, 2003). Amaral and Meek (2003) highlighted the tradition of higher education as a social institution allowed to govern its basic teaching and research activities through a form of collegial self-steering. The intensity of media attention and access to news and information up to the minute appear to have changed that tradition. The rise of neoliberalism in higher education has shown the core education functions of a school become commodities that emphasize money, competition, measurement, and assessment (Saunders, 2007).

Those who seek to lead change need to understand how the current beliefs held within an organization can support change or frustrate their efforts, also known as "culture drag" (Dawson, 2010, p. 97). Change management is about reducing "drag" on the speed and direction of the

change effort, by finding ways to accelerate emotional acceptance and even embrace change (Dawson, 2010, p. 97). In order to generate change, cultural theorists offer the following suggestions: develop new procedures and rituals, communicate these procedures and rituals, and change the motivation of individuals so they adopt these procedures and rituals (Kezar, 2001).

Conclusion

There is a long history of higher education and, specifically, Catholic higher education in the world. The initial purpose of Catholic higher education has evolved from preparing future clergy to educating the lay people about the church (Garrett, 2006). American Catholic higher education has existed in the United States for over 200 years, but it has not been without its challenges of balancing academic freedom with Catholic tradition and teachings (Garrett, 2006). Defining an institution's Catholic identity and organizational culture by the chosen curriculum, an adherence to the Magisterium, and an understanding of the offered teachings of the *Land O'Lakes Statement* and encyclicals written by current or former Popes can only aim to strengthen American Catholic education without diminishing its rich history (Garrett, 2006).

Kezar and Eckel (2002) discovered that each institution demonstrates a relationship between culture and managing change. This combination of understanding the culture of the institution and managing change is the guiding principle of this historical narrative. Detecting and evaluating an institution's culture can provide informal clues to understanding what the institution stands for and why its members behave in different ways (Bess & Dee, 2008). Schein's (2004) conceptual framework on organizational culture is central to the analysis in this study because university culture brings together the beliefs and practices of senior leadership, faculty, and local campus and community members coupled with an understanding of tradition and history to help the academic social systems thrive (Fralinger & Olson, 2007). This

framework guided the research analysis in order to understand organizational culture and structure influence during a time of change and growth at AMU.

This study explored the history of AMU's founding, the original leadership team, the institutional culture, and the challenges faced from 2003 to 2011. The accomplishments of the institution during these years built a collective understanding among the students, faculty, and staff of the unique situation they were experiencing together. The organizational saga of AMU highlights these achievements and the organizational life (Clark, 1972). The desired result is to contribute to the literature on how a small, conservative institution could be founded within a time when more established institutions were closing from a lack of students and funding.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

For this dissertation, I used the qualitative research methodology of history narrative research (Polkinghorne, 1995) to study Ave Maria University (AMU) during the years 2003 to 2011. Qualitative analysis is a dynamic form of examining oral and visual data that is oriented toward summarizing the informational contents of that data (Altheide, 1987). I used narrative research to document the history of the formative years of AMU through examining individual experiences of leaders and students from that time. AMU relocated to Florida in 2003 after denied a zoning request in Michigan. This move began a new chapter in the institution's history. Therefore, this study focused on the beginning of the Florida campus in 2003 through to 2011, which was the final year of President Nick Healy's tenure at the helm of the institution since Michigan and when founder, Tom Monaghan, stepped away from the day-to-day operations. Between 2003 and 2011, the institution took up residence in Florida, sought accreditation as a university, began building a new campus and surrounding community, relocated to the new Ave Maria town, and finally entered into a new chapter with a leadership change.

I am personally and professionally connected to AMU. This relationship can cause bias; however, my relationship to the university is also the main reason I was interested in this research. I spent 7 years involved at AMU as an undergraduate student and in professional roles within the institution. I earned my bachelor's degree at AMU in 2009, and then worked at the university as an office coordinator for the Admissions department. I have unparalleled access to the key leaders and founder of the institution that allowed for an in-depth look at the early

Florida years of my alma mater. In this chapter, I outline my methodology, research question and participants, and I provide more detail on the institution. My data collection, analysis methods, and accounting for my own subjectivity are outlined in order to increase the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study.

Historical Narrative Research

Historical narrative research was utilized to connect "diverse events, happenings, and actions of human lives into thematically unified goal-directed process" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). The analysis of narratives demonstrates stories and paths that contributed to that goal. The goal of Ave Maria University was to provide a conservative, Catholic education at the turn of the 21st century. Institutions exist as broad constructions that adapt according to the particular standpoint of the person interacting with the institution. For example, a university is something about which we all share a general macro-level idea (LaFrance & Nicolas, 2012), but personal experiences with specific institutions may be different. To utilize a narrative approach, one must study willing, accessible individuals who shed light on the specific phenomenon or issue being studied (Creswell, 2013).

The use of artifacts and documents can assist in telling the story but need to be understood in the context of when they were written, as the words and phrases may now have very different meanings. In this method, the researcher can also propose that participants generate documents to study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Historical narrative and analysis cannot solely use direct observation and can be challenged in categorizing historical data, so the researcher must remain skeptic about such data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Riessman (2002) explained that "the meanings of life events are not fixed or constant; rather, they evolve, influenced by subsequent life events" (p. 705). Therefore, it is critical to have an in-depth

understanding of the events that occurred at AMU in order to understand the early history of the institution and how it operates today. The data collected in a narrative study must be analyzed in terms of the stories participants tell, a chronology of events, and any turning points or epiphanies that were presented (Creswell, 2013). According to Riessman (2008), the overall writing structure of a narrative approach consists of reporting what participants said, which can be cataloged into themes, and how they said it, which creates an order to their story. This approach assisted in creating a timeline of key events and guided my research question to uncover the rich history of the early years of AMU during 2003–2011.

Research Question

The following research question guided my study to gain a better understanding of how AMU came to be at a time when many colleges and universities in the United States were experiencing funding and enrollment challenges:

> How did a new, conservative Catholic university emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century?

Institutions facing high fixed costs and stagnant or falling state support experience decline in enrollment, which contributes to the loss of tuition revenues and forces schools to adapt or close (Vedder, 2018). My study included a focus on the timeframe of 2003–2011, which are the formative years of the institution in Florida through to the transition of the original leadership team. The timeframe is bound by 2003, when AMU first moved from Michigan to Florida, and 2011, when the founder (Tom Monaghan) and the original President (Nick Healy) stepped away from their respective roles and ushered in a new leadership team.

Site

AMU is a Catholic liberal arts institution located in Ave Maria, Florida. The institution boasts its adherence to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church (Stinnet, 2015), the church's authority to establish the true teachings of the faith. AMU relocated from Michigan to Florida to expand the physical size of the campus and later began to offer graduate degrees in Theology (Stinnet, 2015). As of 2019, AMU had 30 majors and nine pre-professional programs with an average class size of 20 and a student body just over 1,100 students, with 88% of students identifying as Catholic (Ave Maria University, n.d.-b). It also had 16 varsity athletic teams that compete in the NAIA-Sun Conference. The campus is in the town of Ave Maria situated between the cities of Naples and Immokalee, Florida.

Participants

The participants in this study were selected because they were members of the institution as either a staff member or student during certain key events and would allow for a unique first-hand perspective. These individuals were made aware of the purpose of the study and the years of focus in my interview questions, 2003 to 2011. Table 2 lists the participants, title, and the years they were involved with the institution.

Table 2

Interview Participants, Title(s), and Years Worked at Ave Maria

Name	Title(s)	Years at AMU
Tom Monaghan	Founder	1998–2011 (day-to-day duties)
Nick Healy	President	1998–2011
Dr. Jack Sites	Vice President for Academic Affairs	2004–2011
Julie Cosden	Resident Director, Admissions Counselor, Director of Student Life and Residence Life, Vice President for Student Affairs	2005–2016
Dr. Maria Fedoryka	Assistant Professor, Associate Professor (promoted in 2009), Chair of the Philosophy Department	2003–Present
Anne Hart	Director of Financial Aid	2007–2018
Dr. Carole Carpenter	Vice President for University Relations	2000–2011
Fr. Robert Garrity	Director of Campus Ministry, Assistant Professor of Theology	2004–Present
Dr. Rich Dittus	Director of Admissions, Director of Sophomore Success Program, Instructor of Mathematics	2002–Present
Rosemary Bell	Administrative Assistant, Coordinator of Admissions Operations	2003–2011
Jeremiah Belocura	Alumnus/Student Body President	2006–2010

Nick Healy served as President of AMC in Michigan starting in 1998 and assisted in the move of campuses and the transition from a college to a university (Sette, 2013). Dr. Jack Sites was instrumental in AMU's accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Committee on Colleges while also building the faculty and core curriculum. Julie Cosden worked at Ave Maria for 11 years serving as a Resident Director, Admissions Counselor, Director of Student Life, and finally, as Vice President for Student Affairs. Dr. Maria Fedoryka came to Ave Maria in 2003 as an Assistant Professor of Philosophy and is currently an Associate

Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department. Anne Hart was the Director of Financial Aid at the permanent campus and was previously employed at another state institution, Florida Gulf Coast University. Dr. Carol Carpenter was responsible for the fundraising and donor relations of AMC starting in 2000 and then at AMU until 2011. Fr. Robert Garrity served as the Director of Campus Ministry on the temporary and permanent campuses as well as Assistant Professor of Theology from 2004 to the present. Dr. Rich Dittus served as Director of Admissions during the early years of the Florida campus and is current Instructor of Mathematics. Rosemary Bell served in many capacities on both Florida campus sites from the beginning of the institution in 2003 and is the sister of President Nick Healy. Finally, Jeremiah Belocura is a graduate of AMU and served as Student Body President in 2009.

These individuals were selected to participate based on their years of involvement with the institution and the various offices or departments they worked in or oversaw. I also included a fellow alum that served in a leadership role as Student Body President in order to get his perspective from his time as a student and involvement with campus leadership. Fr. Fessio was not approached as an interview participant for this study due to the events surrounding his final departure from the institution. All of the participants had an amicable relationship with the institution and currently still work at the institution or left on their own terms.

The participants were contacted through email and phone to arrange an interview. Contact information was acquired through my pre-existing relationships with these individuals. Each participant was given an informed consent form to provide their written consent to be interviewed. The consent form is included as Appendix A. To accommodate the schedules of the participants, the interviews with Julie Cosden and Jeremiah Belocura were conducted in December of 2019, the interviews with Tom Monaghan, Rosemary Bell, Nick Healy, Anne Hart,

Carole Carpenter, Rich Dittus, Maria Fedoryka, and Fr. Bob Garrity were conducted in January 2020, and finally Jack Sites was interviewed in February 2020. I interviewed all participants myself, and all interviews were transcribed immediately after the conclusion of the interview utilizing the service Rev.com. The full transcripts were sent to the participants for member checking. These research interviews served as the primary source of research data in this study. The interview protocol is provided in Appendix B.

Data Collection Methods

I collected data for my research from multiple sources, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. It is important to accurately convey events in proper sequence, have descriptive validity that uses the account and something outside of that account to establish legitimacy of what the account is truly about, and include the meanings participants attributed to such events (Maxwell, 1992). This study used the framework of Schein (2004) on the three levels of culture in organizations—artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions—to analyze the key moments of AMU's early history, such as the move from Michigan to Florida, the temporary campus, the construction of the new campus, the accreditation process, and the transition of leadership. There was an emphasis to include detailed and rich descriptions for the observations in order to provide perceptions, inclinations, sensitivities, and sensibilities of my interpretation as the describer (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995).

I utilized Schein's (2004) framework to guide the coding of interview transcriptions, documents, and observations into three areas: artifacts (what one observes), espoused values (what one believes and feels), and basic underlying assumptions (how one acts on those values and beliefs). This framework guided me in developing an understanding of AMU's early history

categorized into five key events: (a) the move from Michigan to Florida, (b) the temporary campus, (c) the construction of the new campus, (d) the accreditation process, and (e) the transition of leadership (Bess & Dee, 2008).

Interviews. Prior to my interviews, I received approval from the respective Institutional Review Boards from William & Mary and AMU. Interviews were semi-structured and conducted in-person or via telephone based on the location of the participants. These conversations were approximately two hours with each participant. The interview protocol is included as Appendix B. There was one main interview and follow-up through email correspondence. The interviews were recorded electronically and transcribed verbatim. Once transcribed, these interview transcripts were sent to the interviewees for review with an established deadline for member checking (Creswell, 2002). The interviewee had the opportunity to edit, clarify, or elaborate on themes and patterns emerging from the data. They were also given the option to include any additional information upon reflection. Two of the participants, Bell and Healy, provided some additional context or documents to supplement their interview. I coded the interviews and observations utilizing Schein's framework shortly after the conclusion of the interaction with each individual. I completed a pilot interview with someone familiar with the history of AMU but did not include their data in my findings. At the conclusion of each interview, I documented my thoughts by recording them in electronic form and reviewed later, focusing on each interaction in order to glean insights on what the interview participants were feeling and thinking.

Document analysis. I analyzed various personal documents from my time involved with the institution and public records regarding AMU. The personal documents are articles from the campus newspaper, yearbooks, printed copies of emails sent to me, and private notes from my

time as a student and employee from 2005 to 2009. The public documents selected based on recommendations from the interview participants were an academic catalogue, newspaper articles, email correspondences, and promotional materials. These documents also contained items reviewed from the university archives at Canizaro Library at the permanent campus, which I visited. The documents were organized into these key events: (a) the move from Michigan to Florida, (b) the temporary campus, (c) the construction of the new campus, (d) the accreditation process, and (e) the transition of leadership, since these were related to the central question of my research.

The document data sources included: (a) AMU yearbooks, *Veritas*, from 2005 to 2009, from my personal collection; (b) articles from the campus newspaper, *The Angelus*, from December 2004 through January 2009; (c) articles from the fundraising newsletter to early contributors to the institution titled *Founder* magazine from January 2003 through December 2009; (d) SACS accreditation submission materials; (e) letters, notes, and emails provided by interview participants; (f) researcher's personal notes, admissions and fundraising department promotional materials; (g) *Monaghan* (Pearce, 2016), a biography on Tom Monaghan written by former Ave Maria faculty member, Joseph Pearce, given to me by Tom after we conducted the interview; (h) select issues of the alumni magazine; and (i) an AMU promotional and recruitment VHS video (Ave Maria Media Productions, 2008) and CD Rom (Ave Maria Media Productions, 2004-2005). Document analysis is an important tool in triangulating various data sources to help enforce credibility of the findings (Bowen, 2009). Utilizing documents of various types can be useful in painting a broad overall picture of the study, and they serve as stable data sources that can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged (Bowen, 2009).

Reflexive journal. I also maintained a field journal to document my reaction and initial thoughts after each interview and during the collection of documentation and media samples. The use of a reflexive journal encourages the researcher to glean insights through the collection of data in qualitative research (Phelps, 2005). I documented my thoughts and recollections from my time as a student and employee at the institution in written, note-taking format. According to Anderson (2012), utilizing journals serves as a pedagogical instrument to encourage reflection, criticism, and self-analysis. The reflective journal constitutes a point of departure from the writer's experience and a way to return to it within the context of those reflections (Bagnato, Dimonte, & Garrino, 2013). I also made note of my previous interactions and memories from my time at the university to help guide and focus some of the questions and documentation collected utilizing Schein's (2004) framework. According to Krefting (1991), reflexivity is "an assessment of the influence of the investigator's own background, perceptions, and interests on the qualitative research process" (p. 218) including my own personal history at the institution. These reflections can provide real, first-hand insights to my research, as it enables me to describe existing situations using the five senses (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). I also visited the former temporary campus, now Ave Maria Law School but a separate entity from AMU, as well as the current permanent campus to review archival documents at the Canizaro Library and noted my observations of documents reviewed. My notes provided descriptions without attributing meaning or interpretation and stated observations such as, the size and growth in the number of buildings on campus and in the town, the dress code of the students, and the overhead conversations while I reviewed documents in the archive room.

Data Analysis

I used the qualitative data analysis software, Dedoose, to summarize and find insights from the data collected from the interviews, document analyses, and my observations. This software was used to aid in data management and analysis by querying key words for comparison with coded categories and themes I had established. Coding the transcriptions was critical and was managed by breaking the data into meaningful and manageable groupings (Saldaña, 2009). The codes created during the research process, based on the data and Schein's (2004) framework of organizational culture, were conducted manually and utilizing Dedoose.

I reviewed the notes and observations from each interview and checked against my own field journal entries to cross-reference any themes that emerged among participants. I was open to the emergence of additional themes throughout the study, which allowed me to be guided by the research in a different direction than expected. The data were reviewed to demonstrate any links between the analysis and resulting themes. Interpreting the data to unveil a larger meaning of the story is a hallmark of narrative research (Creswell, 2013).

All of my audio recordings were submitted for transcription shortly after the conclusion of the interview, and then I read each transcript. This allowed me time to analyze each interview before moving to the next participant. I sent each interview participant a copy of their transcript; each participant had 2 weeks to edit, clarify, or elaborate on any topic and return it to me by email. After this member checking (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016), the transcript was uploaded into Dedoose, the qualitative data analysis software, for further examination. I read each interview several times as I moved through five rounds of coding. I utilized Creswell's (2015) approach to collapse my codes into five to seven themes that would become the major headings in my findings section. The process of coding the interviews several

times assisted me in remaining consistent in emphasizing key points. Quotes were noted in each round of coding as it pertained to those codes and may have had more than one assignment due to the depth of discussion by the interview participant.

After my initial read of the transcript, I performed a second read in Dedoose in order to code each corresponding heading related to the main events in AMU's timeline: temporary campus, permanent campus, accreditation, the move, and the participant's role at the institution. The third read of the transcript in Dedoose was to code discussion on subheadings related to the timeline: the move from Michigan to Florida, the temporary campus residency, the move and new campus, the accreditation process, and the transition of the leadership team. This third round of coding yielded substantial results and was used to present my findings below. Not all participants were asked about the campus move from Michigan to Florida, as not all were involved at the institution during that particular moment. The fourth read of the transcript in Dedoose was to identify references relating to Schein's (2004) organization culture framework of artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. The fifth read of the transcript in Dedoose was to categorize any additional themes that surfaced outside of the pre-determined codes listed in Appendix B: Interview Protocol. The following descriptive codes emerged from similarities among interview participants during early rounds of coding: athletics, divine intervention, experienced professionals, and financial. These additional codes are referenced during the analysis of each level of Schein's (2004) organization culture framework in Chapters 5 through 7. The coding process protocol and outline can be viewed in Appendix C.

Coding

Coding is the process of reducing data into units of meaning so that relationships can be formed with various data sources (Creswell, 2002). Saldaña (2009) contended that developing

codes assists in reducing data into a more manageable form that is conducive to seeking patterns. Coding is a process that may go through several cycles in order to fully detect patterns in the data. The same data sources may also be coded using different types of coding processes to continuously interrogate data, looking for many possibilities, meanings, and issues requiring further investigation. Utilizing multiple methods of coding can help the researcher develop a better understanding of the data (Saldaña, 2009). As Polkinghorne (1991) noted, one orders their experience by relating specifics to a conceptual whole. Narratives are constructed within an unfolding life history and incorporate the unplanned consequences of actions to give meaning to unintentional events as part of a bigger plot (Polkinghorne, 1991). Transcribing stories, locating epiphanies, and identifying contextual materials are all critical pieces of narrative research approach when classifying data into codes and themes (Creswell, 2013). "It is only by use of narrative conceptualization that we can produce out of our separate life events the meaningful whole" (Polkinghorne, 1991, p. 137).

Descriptive coding was used to gain a general understanding of the data. Saldaña (2009) stated that, "descriptive coding summarizes in a word or short phrase - most often as a noun - the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (p. 70). This helped develop a list of descriptive codes that are in line with the hallmark events and Schein's (2004) framework, such as, artifacts, values, assumptions, accreditation, permanent campus, temporary campus, mission, leadership, conservative, and Catholic. In-vivo coding was utilized based on words or phrases used by the interview participants that allowed me to use the participants' language alongside the descriptive codes (Saldaña, 2009).

All transcripts, documents, and observation notes were coded with the a priori codes from Schein (2004) in order to pull the material into more meaningful units of analysis. See Appendix

C for the coding process. Saldaña (2009) described the initial process of coding as first cycle coding, while reorganizing the codes into meaningful categories as a second cycle coding. In order to develop codes into categories, the second cycle method of pattern coding was utilized to represent categories that support the purpose of this study. The significant events that took place in AMU's history were set as categories, so I gathered the data for each individual and organized it to create a timeline of the beginning years of the institution from 2003 to 2011.

Subjectivity

My research focused on a new, conservative, university when AMC moved from Michigan to Florida in 2003. My experience in this research starts with my time as a volunteer at this university in 2003. I was raised in a Catholic, conservative family and found this university to be a good fit for my educational pursuits. My mother became an employee at the university shortly after it opened in 2003, and I served as a volunteer for administrative work and at events in the Admissions and Student Life offices. I enrolled as a student in the spring of 2005 and became highly involved as a student worker in various departments on campus throughout my four years. After my graduation in Spring 2009, I was employed as a staff member in the Admissions Office. I was able to form strong relationships with the faculty and staff and became knowledgeable about the inner workings of the university.

My assumptions from these experiences stem from my understanding of the daily operations of the institution and administrative challenges. Given my experience as a non-faculty member at this institution, it is difficult for me to comprehend all the challenges the faculty and staff faced. I was only privy to my experience as a student, so my personal views of certain faculty and staff members could sway my assumptions of their challenges. Because my experience at the institution was positive, I encouraged a peer reviewer to check my bias in my

data collection and analysis. This peer reviewer was a doctoral student in a Higher Education program that also has professional experience at an institution of higher education.

One of the advantages to being a part of this institution as a student and staff member is it allowed me to form relationships throughout campus that facilitated in the collection of data. I also found that my experience offers a unique perspective into the startup of a new, conservative institution at the turn of the 21st century. This inspired my decision to research this institution. The institution has continued to grow in student body, facilities, athletics, and mission outreach.

My experience has shaped my approach to this research in that I have a base for understanding some of the challenges and the impact on the students and staff. I guarded against questioning what was offered and used the data from multiple perspectives to build AMU's timeline and background. It provided me a starting point to focus my research on key moments of the institution's early history. As an involved member (student, employee, and now alumna) of AMU, I have a bias towards the mission of the institution. My experience as a student and student worker did not provide me the same level of exposure to institutional culture or administrative issues at the beginning of my involvement with the institution. My insight in these areas grew after continuous work in certain offices and then as a staff member after graduating. I did not agree with every decision of the institution or their handling of situations, but I did have a respect for those making the decisions. I mitigated any disadvantages to my assumptions by providing a well-rounded selection of individuals chosen to interview. I disclosed my connection to the institution to be transparent in my research data collection.

Member Checking

I spent around two hours with participants and had some follow-up written correspondence through email with them to review their transcript of our interview. Member checking is a technique for exploring the credibility of results where the results are returned to participants as a check for accuracy and resonance with their experience (Birt et al., 2016). Member checking is a crucial step in the research because it enhances the credibility of the data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Dependability and stability of my findings involved the participants evaluating the findings and interpretations of the study to make sure that they were supported by the data received (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). The participants were given a 2-week timeframe to review my findings and provide feedback. Each member responded back to me.

Peer Debriefer

I utilized a peer debriefer for an outside perspective. According to Spall (1998), peer debriefing assists in confirming that the findings and interpretations are worthy, honest, and believable. This peer debriefer was a doctoral student in a Higher Education program that also has professional experience at an institution of higher education. This academic and professional background provided additional insight into the field of my study but had an outsider perspective with no affiliation with AMU. Utilizing a debriefer from my same program with the knowledge and context saved time because detailed explanations were not necessary (Spall, 1998).

Trustworthiness/Authenticity: Researcher as Instrument

Guba and Lincoln (1989) researched five criteria for authenticity in data collection that include, (a) fairness, (b) ontological authenticity, (c) educative authenticity, (d) catalytic authenticity, (e) and tactical authenticity. Fairness includes making sure all viewpoints are

represented evenly. Ontological authenticity requires that participants are informed and understand their situation as a result of participation in the study. On the other side of ontological is the educative authenticity, which is that participants are informed and understand the situations of others as a result of participation in the study. Catalytical authenticity is making sure that participants have an understanding and options that they can take to change their situation as a result of participating in the study. Finally, tactical authenticity is achieved when participants feel empowered and enabled to act as a result of their participating in the study.

To promote trustworthiness and authenticity in my study, I followed an established interview protocol (see Appendix B) for each interview, utilized member checking of data, and enlisted a debriefer of my findings in order to minimize any potential threats of my role as a researcher in this study. Bracketing my background in this study allowed the participants' experiences to be prominent in the research findings outside of my preconceptions (Peters & Halcomb, 2015). The actions applied to establish my credibility included multiple data sources, multiple interview participants, and multiple contexts and views of observation (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). The use of member checking and peer debriefing also aimed to bring forth my subjectivity and manage bias. Understanding and being open about these threats helped to provide an ethical and valid study and establish a trusting relationship among participants, researcher, and reader.

As an active respondent in this study and research process, there is a need to outline my role as an instrument in the research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). The researcher-as-instrument approach is used in qualitative interview research because it allows the researcher's facilitative interactions with respondents to create a conversational space that can provide rich information for the study (Pezalla, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012). The researcher is key in

obtaining data from respondents; through that interaction, the researcher facilitates the flow of communication and can attribute to a therapeutic effect for the respondents (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). My previous relationships with the interview participants and involvement with Ave Maria University could affect my analysis of the data I collected. I was aware of the limitations and bias I brought to the study due to this history and relationship with my interview subjects. I also found the need to inform my reader and participants in order to contribute appropriately to the literature.

Conclusion

Utilizing Schein's (2004) organizational framework for this historical narrative allowed me to explore the growth of AMU from the perspective of individuals connected to the institution during the formative years of 2003 to 2011. This approach highlighted the key events and guided my research question to uncover the history of AMU utilizing Schein's (2004) framework focusing on the creation and continuation of the institution. The data collection from multiple sources, including interviews, observations, and through document analysis, aimed to reveal rich descriptions and interpretations of this specific time in the history of AMU. Finally, managing my subjectivity and establishing a trustworthy and authentic approach in my data analysis was paramount in contributing to higher education literature.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter outlines the results of the historical narrative qualitative study conducted to answer the research question: How did a new, conservative Catholic university emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century? This chapter outlines the history and timeline of main events of Ave Maria University (AMU). These significant events are chronicled with personal insight from individuals who have not previously documented their comments. The events are then outlined again through each lens of Schein's (2004) framework, in Chapters 5 through 7, to understand the perception of each interview participant as they detailed the early challenges, the dedication and call to AMU, and the mixed emotions of starting and operating a new institution.

Campus Visit

I traveled to Ave Maria, Florida, in January 2020 to visit campus and conduct in-person interviews with those still working at the institution. It had been several years since I had been to campus, and as I drove the 30 miles east from Naples to Ave Maria, I noticed more development along the way. When I was a student, it was a barren drive with limited infrastructure and a one-lane road. Now the commute was along a two-lane road passing a new high school, golf course, housing developments, a shopping center, and a medical supply company building. When I saw the familiar sign and bridge to enter the town of Ave Maria, it appeared to me more as a residential community instead of entering a college campus. Once I passed the sign, I drove a long and winding road with some residential communities to either side but plenty of open land

and some palm trees. It appeared more populated with residents than when I was a student from 2007–2009, given the number of trash bins I saw outside homes on one particular morning for garbage pickup. Unlike Monaghan's original vision of 11,000 households, the town of Ave Maria was not at full occupancy, but progress in residential occupancy had been made over the years with around 6000 households currently occupied (Point2Homes, 2018).

Appendix D includes several diagrams from original promotional materials on the new town and campus distributed from 2003–2007 that I had in my personal files. The first map shows the entrance from Oil Well Road at the bottom of the diagram and then the length of the drive leading to the heart of campus, near the top of the page. The second diagram outlines the architectural design for the town and campus. The third diagram displays the layout of the campus buildings in relation to the Oratory, situated in the center of Ave Maria town.

I parked off the main street between the Oratory and the Canizaro Library. Walking the campus grounds, I noticed a vibrant student body coming and going from the library, the student activity building/dining hall, and the academic buildings, including a new one since my time as a student. The weather in Florida in January was sunny and hovering around 70 degrees, so there were plenty of students sitting outside on the main lawn or riding bicycles to and from the dormitories. I noticed that several buildings had been repainted brighter colors of pastel orange and yellows, which was a change from the light gray during my last visit in 2012.

I spent time at the campus library, Canizaro Library, studying archival documents from the original SACSCOC accreditation process from 2007–2010 and issues of the campus newspaper *The Angelus* and *Founder* magazine. In walking to the library, I bumped into a few familiar faces and the siblings of classmates. It really is a small community in the "Ave Bubble," as we called it when I was a student. My contact to review the archive documents was Jennifer

Nodes, Director of Library Services, who was a staff member during my time as a student. We arranged that I would have four available sessions over two days to review materials. This proved to be a perfect amount of time that allowed me to peruse the materials provided. There was also a visiting exhibit in the Rare Books and Special Collections room that I had access to under the supervision of a staff member. This prompted a few current students and visitors to stop in and explore the collection, which made me feel less isolated in the room and reminded me that I was on an active college campus that was going about its normal routine. On my final day of being on campus, after completing my document review and final interview with Rich Dittus in a library study room, I began my drive back to Naples. It was a successful visit and a trip down memory lane that helped rejuvenate my interest in my study. As I drove away, I marveled at the physical growth of the campus and the robust student body, as well as on all it took to achieve this very moment, acknowledging the obligation I had to tell this story.

Timeline of Ave Maria

In the next section, I describe what I learned about the timeline of AMU's move from Michigan to Florida, the establishment of the temporary and permanent campuses of the university in Florida, the accreditation process, and, finally, the transition of the original leadership team. The specific historical details are from SACS accreditation submission materials and articles from the campus newspaper *The Angelus* and *Founder* magazine reviewed in the archives at AMU.

Move from Michigan to Florida

Discussion on the move of Ave Maria College from Michigan to Florida only included four of the interview participants who were involved with the Michigan campus: Tom Monaghan, Nick Healy, Carole Carpenter, and Rich Dittus. Each served in the same job capacity in Michigan and in Florida. As described in Chapter 1, AMC was founded by Tom Monaghan in 1998 as a post-baccalaureate educational institute in the Catholic tradition and was located in Ypsilanti, Michigan, with approximately 40 students enrolled initially. The AMC campus was small and landlocked in Ypsilanti, and several petitions to rezone and expand were rejected by the city and county. Rich Dittus stated, "We started small, simple, and very humble in a converted elementary school in Ypsilanti. We were locked-in based on our Ypsilanti campus in terms of maximizing our enrollment." As AMC faced opposition to re-zone the land Monaghan owned, he began to look for a new campus location, which resulted in a move to Naples, Florida. Carole Carpenter described the challenge,

> We were planning to build the campus in Ann Arbor, Michigan at the Dominos Headquarters. Our plan was to move to the Ann Arbor Campus but we just could not get zoning to move there. That began a journey of investigating where we might build this university.

In 2002, AMC graduated its first class of seven students, and by the Fall of 2003, enrollment had grown to 250 students. Monaghan had a mission to grow the campus of AMC in order to accommodate enrollment growth and expand degree offerings, but due to zoning issues, the AMC Board of Trustees began to reconsider the location of the institution in Michigan. Monaghan began to research Florida, as he vacationed there frequently and saw potential. He explained, "There are only eight Catholic schools in the South and only three in Florida, all of

which are relatively small, so it was an underserved market. At the time, [the Catholic population] was the fastest growing population moving here." Nick Healy recalled his conversation with Monaghan on the location of the school,

> In early 2002, [Monaghan] called me and said, "Nick, I've been thinking. We're not going to get Domino's Farms as a campus for Ave Maria College, we're not going to get it, why does it have to be in Ann Arbor? And if it doesn't have to be in Ann Arbor, why does it have to be in Michigan? Why don't we think of the most beautiful area of the country, and look for campus sites there?

The move from Michigan to Florida began a new chapter in AMU's history. Carol Carpenter described her role in the transition from Michigan to Florida as, "My basic job was to set up infrastructure, hire personnel, and raise friends and money for a new college/university."

In 2002, the Florida Commission for Independent Education licensure was approved and covered the launch and initial administrative operation of a Florida undergraduate institution, as well as an off-campus course location for the Michigan campus. Plans for graduate education developed more quickly than anticipated, so the institution decided to change the application to include graduate activities and change authorization from College to University. This approval was granted by the Florida Commission for Independent Education on August 14, 2003, and the new institution was legally founded and chartered as a Florida corporation, Ave Maria University, Inc.

During this time, tensions among the Michigan campus faculty and staff began to rise as the attention of top leaders was diverted to Florida. As Carol Carpenter described, the emotional outcry this move would generate from the Michigan campus community was overlooked:

> We thought we could just go to Florida, find a place to operate, and then just bring our students down and carry on. So that is the way we approached it. We took the President, his secretary, a facilities person, a CEO, and me to Florida and told the faculty and admissions personnel to stay in place. The plan was that they would come once we found a place to operate and had some of the information about Southern accreditation under our belts. In my perspective, this was a huge mistake we made, because we underestimated the human resource part of the deal.

At this moment, two institutions were co-existing under the Ave Maria umbrella, AMC in Michigan, accredited by the North Central Association, and the beginnings of AMU in Florida. While planning was underway for the Florida location, it was agreed upon that the Michigan campus could promise students that if they enter AMC as freshmen in 2003, they will be able to finish all four years in Michigan.

The relationship between AMC in Michigan and AMU in Florida became increasingly acrimonious, as a few members of the AMC faculty did not want to relocate to Florida. Nick Healy described his experience,

> We had a very, very difficult struggle over the college in Michigan because some of the faculty did not want to relocate, they wanted to stay in Michigan, and they wanted the college to continue. There were more lawsuits and it was a very, very unpleasant time because you had Ave Maria College in Michigan fighting with Ave Maria University in Florida.

Negative sentiments began to grow as some faculty members from the Michigan campus brought a lawsuit alleging that the move to Florida was illegal under bylaws of the corporation. Some of the other faculty did agree to make the move to Florida. Although the lawsuit was thrown out on

summary judgment, it highlighted, as Nick Healy stated, “the depth of feeling that had developed” on the Michigan campus. Healy’s message to the Michigan faculty was, “If you want to keep [the college] going after 2007, we’ll give you several million dollars, we’ll give the facilities and the license to operate a college in Michigan, we’ll give you what’s still there in the library,” but the offerings did not appease the emotions, and more lawsuits followed.

The Ave Maria Board of Trustees, responsible for developing and approving the mission, strategic goals and objectives, policies and the budget, ultimately decided to close the institution after several offers of assistance were denied by those remaining in Michigan. The Michigan campus remained open for recruited students through 2007 while the Florida campus of AMC opened in 2003 at the temporary campus location within the Vineyards community in the city of Naples.

Temporary Campus in Naples, Florida

Monaghan settled on Naples, Florida as the site for the temporary campus of AMU because he was familiar with the area and anticipated the generosity of the local population. He said,

> I thought Naples was the best area in the country to attract students and faculty. It's one of the most desirable places in the country to live. I thought it would be a great place for fundraising because it's got the highest average net worth in the country.

Nick Healy volunteered to find a location in Naples to house the campus and assisted in navigating important relationships,

> The first thing we did was meet the Bishop [of Venice, the diocese that included Naples], who was then Bishop Nevins, and asked him what he thought of a Catholic college. We were then still a college, being in his diocese, specifically in Naples. And he said, "This

> would be a great gift to the church." Great, we have the church's approval. I moved here in the summer of 2002, and we were immediately searching for an interim campus because we knew it was going to be several years before the [future permanent] campus out in Eastern Collier could be built. I came across this property at the north end of the Vineyards development.

The Vineyards community is located in the North Naples area of Collier County and is approximately 10 acres. After finding this location, Healy approached the governing body of the Naples area to gauge interest and any potential roadblocks.

> And we then went and met with the chairman of the Collier County commissioners. That's the governing body for all of Collier County, which includes all of Naples. And his name was Jim Coletta, and he listened to our plan and said, "What do we have to do to make this happen?" And we went and met every one of the county commissioners, I think there were five of them, and they all gave us the same positive response. So we started looking for land.

The temporary campus was a property in the Vineyards development that was originally designed as a senior, independent living community, but the builder ran out of funding and was looking for a buyer. As Carpenter recounted,

> [Healy] found an independent living center that was going to close. The builder had gone bankrupt and could not complete the project. He told Nick that if we wanted to buy it and pay for it to be finished he would give us a discount.

There was plenty of work ahead for the original leadership team and faculty in order to convert this Naples housing community into a college campus. Rosemary Bell, one of the first staff

members hired in Florida, recalled that there were “so many building permits needed to turn two large condominiums into dormitories, classrooms, biology labs, everything you could think of.”

The campus consisted of multiple buildings that would initially house a library, administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, laboratories, student and faculty residences, chapel, dining hall, and recreational facilities. Julie Cosden served as a Resident Director and lived in one of the female dormitories that was a converted condominium,

> It felt like a resort when I moved into my apartment. I was like, "These are the dorms? Amazing!" It was just a really tight knit community. It seemed temporary. We knew we weren't going to stay there, but that being said, there was a great sense of community on that campus.

Monaghan himself actually lived in one of the dorm rooms in the male residence hall on campus while he was in town in between travels to Michigan. He said of the dorm, “It took me a while to get used to that small bed. I almost fell off a couple times.” Healy described the temporary campus as “senior housing apartments that we converted into dormitories and finished other buildings, and brought in one temporary building for classrooms, and through a lot of grace we were able to open in the Fall of 2003.” Healy attributed the completion of converting a senior housing development into a college campus in time for the arriving students in 2003 as only occurring by the grace and assistance of God.

The temporary campus was designed to serve 200 students, 15 faculty members, and several support staff. Some faculty and staff members made the move from Michigan to Florida. Administrative offices were located in one-story homes, (referred to as villas or bungalows by staff and students) surrounding the community clubhouse, which became the main student activity building that also housed the cafeteria, weight room, and Mass celebrations. “I remember

when we started, I was in one of those bungalows, right next to the Admissions Office," said Jack Sites. Rich Dittus recalled the temporary buildings that were also used, "trailers were used for faculty offices and science labs." Maria Fedoryka's initial thoughts about the campus as a faculty member from Michigan that had made the move to Florida to teach Philosophy included, "I felt very lucky that we had such a beautiful campus, considering that we were just starting. And by comparison with the one that we had in Michigan, I thought it was a beautiful physical environment."

This was only to be a temporary location due to a new partnership with Barron Collier Companies to develop a permanent campus and town outside of Immokalee, Florida, about 30 miles east of Naples. The university began planning for the new campus as the interim campus became operational, and it was determined that the transfer of the institution to the new location would occur in July of 2007. After the move to the permanent campus, Ave Maria School of Law, also founded by Monaghan but as a completely separate entity and sharing name only, would inhabit the Vineyards property to this day.

Accreditation Journey

Before discussions of the new campus, there was a particular need to get a temporary campus up and running in Florida as soon as possible in order to begin the accreditation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). AMC had previously obtained North Central Association accreditation in Michigan, but the leadership team found that they would have had to make Florida a satellite campus to Michigan if they wanted to transfer the North Central Association accreditation. The leadership team decided that if the goal was to make the Florida campus the main home, they were better off beginning the application process now for the SACSCOC, as this was perceived as one of the

toughest accrediting agencies, rather than keep the Florida location as a satellite campus of AMC in Michigan. Carpenter described her discussions with Monaghan and Healy,

> We found out in order to obtain Southern accreditation, we had to offer some classes and get some kids going before we can apply for accreditation. We thought we could just transfer our work on accreditation with North Central to our university in Florida. If we were serious about building Ave Maria University in Florida, we had to start over and seek proper southern accreditation from the beginning.

The leaders submitted the initial application for SACSCOC for AMU in August 2003, prior to the matriculation of its first students. Meanwhile, AMC in Michigan continued operations with accreditation from the North Central Association.

As further progress was made in Florida with adding Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy sequences in Theology, it was deemed that a voluntary, automatic withdrawal of the initial SACSCOC application was needed, since these were considered substantive change requests. AMU withdrew the original application in order to work through these changes of graduate programming and some other recommendations they received from the Commission in April 2004, such as structure of Board of Trustees, planned courses and programs, and space limitations. AMU hired Dr. Jack Sites in 2004 to take the lead in earning SACSCOC accreditation. The work involved to apply for accreditation required assistance from all staff members, a large portion of that work occurring at the temporary campus. Rosemary Bell recalled, “I worked on that pretty much morning, noon and night, and weekends actually, because there just were so many hours and hours and hours. I used to call my husband regularly, ‘Well, I'm going to be late tonight.’”

As Sites and his team worked through the SACSCOC application changes, AMU applied for membership in the American Academy of Liberal Education in Spring of 2004. This was done to achieve a pre-accreditation status for its undergraduate programs, which enabled approval from the U.S. Department of Education to offer federal financial aid to students. American Academy of Liberal Education serves as a specialized accrediting body for liberal arts programming from post-secondary programs and PK-12 schools. As Dittus stated, "This became our form of acceptance for Federal or State aid for a number of years. It was very interesting to be a part of defining an institution that was a work in progress." This accreditation would remain while the institution submitted the application to the SACSCOC and worked through that process. In the 2007-2008 academic year, the institution received the second accreditation team from the American Academy of Liberal Education visiting campus. AMU received American Academy of Liberal Education accreditation in June 2008.

During the Fall of 2004, the institution received a visiting committee from SACSCOC and earned pre-accreditation status for a period of three years. Cosden recalled her involvement in the site visit and how prepared the institution had been, "I was in on a couple interviews where you'd sit down with the accreditation committee and answer questions, and it seemed as if to me all the boxes were ticked." During the 2006–2007 academic year, the university filed its Application for Membership with the SACSCOC. Fr. Robert Garrity, Assistant Professor of Theology, reminisced on his involvement in this process,

> Every department had to draw up a description of what you're doing, who's doing it, and how is it coming. And we had to explain what we were about. Jack Sites—I'm surprised the guy didn't lose his mind, really. The stacks of documentation were like two feet high! So it was a huge process.

Dittus, former Director of Admissions, recalled his clear memory of pooling all the application materials together to mail,

> When we all put together the accreditation documentation for mailing, days before you would pass it on electronically, there were several binders that we had put together and stayed up till quite late and made sure that it was postmarked by the required date, so that it was received on time.

A picture was taken of Jack Sites and the well-loved DHL delivery man to campus, Raoul (last name unknown), carrying out the boxes of initial accreditation materials to be shipped. Rosemary Bell shared the photo (Figure 3) from her personal collection.

Figure 3. Sites and Raoul carrying SACSCOC application materials to be shipped (May 2007).

After the submission of the application materials, Sites and his team waited in anticipation for a candidacy team visit from SACSCOC, which was a big step forward in receiving full membership. In February 2008, Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of SACSCOC, visited campus to meet with Sites, faculty, students, and staff. Additional requests for information were sent to the institution in the Spring of 2008, and AMU responded. After

answering the final round of questions and having completed the February visit, the application was now in front of the Compliance and Review Committee, which reviewed new applications for membership.

AMU was notified in December 2008 that they had been awarded 'candidate' status, which is only achieved after an institution of higher education (a) submits the application, (b) undergoes an internal review by members of the SACS staff, (c) undergoes an independent third-party review by peer evaluators from COC-member institutions, (d) is in compliance with Core Requirements and applicable Comprehensive Standards and Federal Requirements sections, and is, (e) judged by the Compliance and Review Committee as being in compliance (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, n.d.). Achieving the candidacy status as a Level V institution, three or fewer doctorates as the highest degree offered, enabled AMU to extend the Federal financial assistance opportunities to its graduate students. SACSCOC accreditation was fully attained in 2010.

Permanent Campus in Ave Maria, Florida

When the process of finding a new home for AMU began in 2002, Monaghan and Healy set their sights on Florida. The location for a new campus and town involved a vision and finding the right developer partner. After a successful meeting with the commissioners of Collier County, which includes the city of Naples, they began the process of looking for land. As Healy noted, the search for land was not just to house the campus, but the vision of Monaghan was to build an entire town surrounding the school,

> We hired a broker who was a specialist in large tracks of land for development. Tom had already mentioned that he not only wanted a campus with a typical set of buildings and

dorms, but wanted a golf course, maybe two golf courses, housing for faculty and staff, and maybe for alumni, shopping, et cetera.

An initial plot of land was found through a developer that would include around 1400 acres of buildable land for a price tag of $122 million with a $2.5 million broker fee. Healy recalled Monaghan's justification of the price, "Tom said, you only pay once for the land. We got to have the land" and Monaghan put down a $10 million deposit, and so began the clock on 30 days of due diligence, which occurred due to addressing an environmental concern. Due to a reported protected wildlife sighting of a bald eagle with a twig in its mouth, signaling a nest nearby on the property, the initial purchase was delayed while the area was reviewed. However, this delay provided time and opportunity for a new relationship to form between Monaghan and Barron Collier Companies. Paul Marinelli, CEO of Barron Collier Companies, approached Monaghan and Healy about interest in developing land east of Collier County on a new, different property. Jerry Roundhurst, who served with Monaghan on the Papal Foundation organization, facilitated a meeting with Marinelli. An article had recently been published about Monaghan's zoning issues in Michigan, so it was known that he had his sights on another location. Healy recounted the sentiment of Paul's conversation with the builders who stated:

> "We want to build a town, a very large development further east of Collier County. It would be 11,000 acres, and we think the new university would be a great anchor for that. And if you were willing to build your campus out in our town, we'll give you all the land you need." [Monaghan and I] met with [Paul] and told him the decision was yes and so [Paul] agreed to give us, I think it turned out to be a little over a thousand acres. So that began the process of planning and organizing for Ave Maria to be in Eastern Collier County. They graciously agreed to name the town Ave Maria.

On November 20, 2002, with a gift of land that saved Monaghan $122.5 million, the deal between the university and Barron Collier Companies was announced at a large press conference in Naples, Florida, featuring over 200 representatives of media, Florida businesses, and governmental agencies. This announcement also discussed the partnership between AMU and Barron Collier Companies, in which the proceeds of the development of the town land would be available to the university. Monaghan planned for that interest to build in an endowment for future operating costs of the institution. As of fiscal year 2017, the AMU endowment was valued at $4.5 million (Data USA, 2017). Marinelli had been working for years on land-use issues for east Collier County with the State of Florida. His efforts led to new rules of rural land stewardship that encouraged the development of new towns and villages while leaving a portion of property as a wildlife or agriculture preserve. The land where Ave Maria town now resides was included. Marinelli thought a new university would provide a catalyst for the development of a new town in that area and so began the partnership with Monaghan. The historic signing of contracts formalizing the joint venture between AMU and Barron Collier Companies occurred on August 22, 2003.

Phase I of the project was a $150 million investment by Monaghan on 850 acres to include 18 university buildings. With planning underway as early as 2003, university site work construction commenced in April 2005. There was an official groundbreaking ceremony in early 2006, and by August 2007, a historic ribbon cutting ceremony opened the school and town. The path leading to the opening of the new campus and town of Ave Maria did not come without challenges. One challenge was high construction costs in the area that took a toll on finances. Monaghan remarked,

> One [challenge] was the perfect storm that we walked into. When they were building the campus, Naples was a boom area, second fastest growing city in the country. You couldn't get tradesman and contractors. Construction costs were out of sight. And then there were a lot of hurricanes that made it worse. The one in New Orleans [Katrina] dragged the tradesman all over Florida to go up there. From the time we had our estimates for Phase I of the campus, and we had national estimators do the estimates, they got the actual bids [and] it cost actually double.

The housing crash that began in late 2006 into 2007 had a significant impact on growth of the town of Ave Maria and, consequently, the investment of AMU. House values peaked in early 2006 with an increase in valuation of property but was unstable and began to decline over the next few years. This resulted in homeowners' inability to pay their mortgages as their rate reverted to regular interest rates. There were increases in foreclosure and loss of value of their property. As a successful businessperson, Monaghan was able to talk through this challenge as it related to the growth of the town, which would redirect finances for the institution,

> The problem with the town is first of all when things were booming, they couldn't sell any homes because everybody was under water with their mortgages, so they had no equity in their existing homes. They couldn't get financing from banks, so we built this whole infrastructure and couldn't sell any homes. We'd go month after month without selling a single home. Meanwhile we got all these costs involved with that project. A big financial strain impacted many plans and projects. Downsized vision from 5,000 to 1,400 undergraduates (for the short-term).

Another challenge the leadership team faced was how to adapt to the new location that set the campus further from the offerings of the city of Naples, which was around 30 miles east. As Carpenter remarked, the campus community was impacted,

> When we moved out to the new campus, the move brought new challenges as well as new excitement. Now we were almost 40 minutes outside of Naples and away from our volunteers. A few still were able to drive out to work with us but not like the previous army that we had enjoyed. The new campus had a little bit of an isolating feeling.

As a student, it was noticeable how quiet the town and campus got when the normal workday concluded and many staff drove back into Naples. With little offerings of stores and restaurants at the time, it had a ghost town feel in those early years.

Nevertheless, the move to the new campus site materialized in time for Fall classes in 2007. The preparation and physical move from the Naples campus to the new town and campus of AMU was described by a few of the interview participants as the main event in AMU's history. Fr. Garrity recalled, "The move out to the new campus in 2007 was a significant moment. The significance was, we were going to be in our permanent home." The permanent campus also established a sense of validity among students and staff. Cosden said, "I think moving to the main campus lent that kind of legitimacy to the university." Anne Hart, Director of Financial Aid, remarked on the shift from the interim campus to a permanent home, "I looked at [the temporary campus] as just a holding station until I could launch into the new campus. [The permanent campus] looked like a real university." Jeremiah Belocura, 2010 graduate of AMU, had a similar reaction, "It gave the university its first permanent home and enabled it to start really solidifying its identity and its environment." In an issue of *The Angelus* newspaper, Nick Healy (2007) wrote in his "Letter from the President" section, "We have just begun classes at

[Ave Maria University's] facilities in the town of Ave Maria…The students are embarking on a great adventure." Several years after the historic move, Fedoryka reflected on the building of the new campus as a realized gift,

> I think, again, feeling the great gift of being able to do this almost overnight and finding ourselves in the full-blown facilities that were really suited to exactly what we were doing. And to me it just felt like a great privilege and a great gift.

The next milestone in the history of AMU was the transition of the original leadership team a few years later after the move. In completing such accomplishments as creating a new institution, moving locations from Michigan to Florida and then to the town of Ave Maria, it was decided that the visionary leaders could now step back and bring in new leadership. The resignations and retirements of Monaghan, Healy, Carpenter, and Sites in 2011 closed one chapter of the institution's history but set the course for new leadership to preserve what had been built.

Transition of Leadership

Four and half years after the move to the permanent campus, in February 2011, Tom Monaghan and Nick Healy announced plans to step down from their positions at AMU. Carole Carpenter also stepped down, followed by Jack Sites' retirement in late 2011. Monaghan, the founder, backed away from involvement in the day-to-day operations and Jim Towey, former President of Saint Vincent College, became AMU's second President, replacing Healy.

The leadership change came shortly after achieving some major milestones for the institution: full SACS accreditation and being named by *First Things* magazine as the 'most Catholic' Catholic college in the U.S., which was a source of pride for Monaghan. *First Things* magazine spent two years analyzing data and conducting surveys of more than 2,000 U.S.

colleges, factoring in academic, social, and religious components ("AMU ranked as most Catholic," 2010, p. 5*)*. As Monaghan noted, "my definition of the best Catholic university in the country would be to first of all be the best in catholic spirituality and academics. The first one's far more important."

Carole Carpenter reflected on the leadership change as one that was expected and necessary to take the institution into the next phase,

> Our jobs were dictated by our vision, our gifts, and what was needed to build. There came a time when it became more evident that in order to run the university, you had to have education in the field you were managing. Because in the early days, it was like a venture capital project. But when it became a more comprehensive university, you needed specific education for the office you were running. The challenge was to find new leadership because we were transitioning from building rapidly to maintaining and building at a more reasonable pace.

Sites had a similar point of view and was quoted in the Naples Daily News ("Ave Maria senior academic officer," 2011) saying, "I think it's time for someone else to take the baton and go forward. There's a time at every organization where you've done what you can do and it's time to move on."

AMU was officially recognized by Bishop Dewane as a Catholic University in the Diocese of Venice of Florida on October 7, 2011. Per canon law, an institution cannot deem itself Catholic until it receives the approval and consent of the ecclesiastical authority, which in this case was the Bishop of Venice. This was a big moment for the institution, and it achieved the main goal of Monaghan's vision. As Fr. Garrity remarked,

> This is a university, now. And when Bishop Dewane recognized Ave Maria University fully, in a written decree, as a Catholic university, well this just was a big moment of joy. Because it meant we were officially a Catholic university, we could be around for a thousand years. We could be around for a good long time. It was just a sense of solidness and strength and perpetuity, I would say.

When reflecting on the history of AMU, I asked each interview participant to respond with three words to describe their time at AMU; the most common response was "challenging." Each participant noted the difficulty of being part of an institution in those early years, but almost all found their time to be fulfilling, impactful, community-centered, and exciting.

Schein's Framework for Analysis

In analyzing the interview participants' discussions of the history of AMU, I used Schein's (2004) organizational framework to help uncover elements of this study as they pertained to artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. My interview protocol was designed to learn about the historical narrative and elicit information related to the organizational culture. The use of Schein's framework gave me a practical tool to examine the culture of AMU during 2003–2011. The next three chapters provide more detail through each of these lenses on the history of AMU.

Chapter 5 (Artifacts) provides a more concrete view of AMU's history through interview quotes and descriptions from campus literature, *The Angelus* and *Founder* magazine. The artifacts chapter dives into the physical location and layouts of the temporary and permanent campus, the areas of worship on each campus, and their importance to the mission of the institution. The chapter also reviews the start of an athletic program as part of Monaghan's vision to be the "Notre Dame of the South." Finally, discussion on financial components during AMU's

history and review of financial statements submitted to SACSCOC outlines the importance of private funds to creating an institution.

Chapter 6 (Espoused Values) outlines the close-knit community culture during the early years and the held values of those involved with the institution at this time. This chapter also focuses on the value of weaving the Catholic faith within the classroom teachings in an effort to promote faith and reason; the notion of legitimacy from building an athletics program, achieving accreditation, and financial support make an appearance as an emerging theme that held weight with participants in discussing the evolving culture of the institution over the years; and the trust and respect the administrative leaders had for Monaghan's management style and for one another. Interviews, university magazine and newsletter publications, faculty handbook, and policy and procedure manuals were the main data sources.

Chapter 7 (Basic Underlying Assumptions) focuses on the deeper, unconscious values, which are often overlooked. One that was quite common among the interview participants was that their work and Monaghan's vision was divinely inspired and assisted throughout the years. There was discussion on these early leaders and supporters of the institution as "pioneers" and the proper "fit" of staff, students, and faculty. There were high emotions by students, faculty and staff throughout the history when it came to administrative decisions and determining how Catholic the institution would be. The interviews and my own personal recollections and reflection were the data sources used in uncovering these findings.

Several themes emerged in the research that provided additional insight into the culture and reasoning for how the institution has adapted over the years to remain operational. The themes of athletics, financials, trust and respect among the leadership team, and divine

inspiration are referenced in the next three chapters and appeared in a minimum of 15 quotes in order to be considered observed.

Conclusion

The major moments in the early history of AMU can cause one to question how it all came together within a relatively short timeframe. The vision to expand a small campus in Michigan, hitting a roadblock and charting a course to build a new institution in Florida, can seem almost comical in plain writing. Imagine you make the decision to not only relocate to Florida, but also set your vision on building an entire new town to surround the institution. You throw in wildlife sightings, a housing crisis, accreditation stress, and still manage to open the doors to a brand-new campus and town a few years later. As the original leadership team looked back on all that was accomplished, it seemed the right time to usher in new leaders to solidify the future of the institution. The next three chapters provide an analysis of these milestones through each lens of Schein's (2004) organizational framework: artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions.

CHAPTER 5

ARTIFACTS

The next three chapters describe my analysis of the data I collected regarding the history of Ave Maria University (AMU). In order to uncover how AMU, a new, conservative Catholic university, emerged at the beginning of the 21st century, I utilize Schein's (2004) framework for organizational culture, which includes three levels: artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. The core of an organization's culture is a collective of shared assumptions, but the culture will manifest itself at the levels of observable artifacts and espoused values and beliefs (Schein, 2004).

In this chapter, I detail my findings relative to the first level of Schein's (2004) framework, artifacts. Schein defined artifacts as the visible products of a culture, such as the physical and social environment, written and spoken language, technology, symbols, and observable rituals or ceremonies. At AMU, these can include demonstrations of the Catholic faith in symbols throughout campus and the celebration of the Mass. Artifacts also include organizational processes of routine behavior and formal descriptions of how the organization works, such as charts or statements. During the major moments in AMU's history, there was much discussion as well as written materials of products and technology, physical environment, and Catholic rituals. There were also emotional displays, including campus community members' responses to administrative decisions they did not agree with (Schein, 2004). Table 3 outlines the artifacts participants in this study discussed, which were Monaghan's financial

contributions, the interim campus layout, places of worship on campus, the new campus and town, and documents of importance to the values and mission of AMU.

Table 3

Artifacts

Artifacts	Espoused Values	Basic Underlying Assumptions
Financial Resources	Close Campus Community	Catholic and Conservative Culture
Temporary Campus	Faith and Reason	The call of Ave Maria
Permanent Campus	Legitimacy through Athletics & Accreditation	Divine Intervention
Important Documents	Trust and Respect Among Administrative Leaders	

In this chapter, I detail the major artifacts that I uncovered through my research pertaining to: (a) financial resources; (b) the temporary campus; (c) the permanent campus; and (d) important written documents, along with the Catholic identity of the institution woven throughout. These were outlined in my interview questions and the focus during document analysis.

Financial Resources

Monaghan's financial contributions and business acumen were significant components of how AMU came to be, along with the creation of an entirely new campus and surrounding town. His generosity was vital to achieving his vision and growing the school. Dr. Maria Fedoryka, Chair of the Philosophy Department, remarked, "I think it has a lot to do with Tom Monaghan and his money and his persistence. There was a lot of financial incentive at the beginning that I think was very successful in attracting a lot of students." This financial incentive was providing scholarship aid and discount rates for families. Nick Healy, former President of AMU, expressed agreement when he said,

> Because of Tom Monaghan's wealth and his unprecedented generosity, they were obtainable in terms of the resources. This wasn't pie in the sky, this wasn't, well, if we get the resources, this can be achieved. We have the resources; we're going to achieve it.

The ability to rely on Monaghan's personal generosity provided a level of comfort to the leadership in pushing forward ideas and agendas that required funding. In the beginning, there was an infusion of cash to build the institution, which resulted in limited money worries.

Building a Donor Base

The donation of land by Barron Collier Companies provided a location and financial relief for the new campus. The partnership between Monaghan and Barron Collier Companies formed Ave Maria Development LLP to manage the build of the development of the university and town property and infrastructure. Outside support, however, was necessary for long-term university operations. Building a donor base for an institution that was just beginning required dedicated individuals promoting the vision and mission. Carole Carpenter, former Vice President for University Relations, who was tasked with the fundraising and development arm of the institution during this time, recalled the humbling beginnings of building a donor base:

> I think we started with a little newsletter that we would send out to people trying to begin to build [our] donor base. We were in tiny offices in this new [temporary] campus waiting for the first responses to the mailing. And the day the first mail came in, the postman kept bringing box after box filled with donations. We called the volunteers who sat on the floor and opened envelope after envelope with donations from all over the country. The comments on the letters were even more important to us that day. To hear so many people from all over the country say that they were giving to Ave Maria because it

> represented hope for the future of young people who would come to Ave Maria to receive an excellent education and a strong faith formation.

Carpenter also stated, “We were continuing our little newsletter and maybe we had a hundred people that gave us maybe a total of $3.00–10,000.00 a year by this time [2003].” In the early years, Carpenter mentioned that it was important to develop certain systems to operate,

> We have to build the systems before we get too far ahead of ourselves in fundraising. We needed a donor software computer system, a post office box, a 501(c)(3) status on our mailings, marketing materials, a system to acknowledge donor gifts and build relationships.

There was also a need to find experts in certain areas to assist in their development and fundraising duties when they were just beginning,

> We purchased Razor's Edge software [a gift accounting software program] and researched a colleague who was using the system and who agreed to come and help us start. This man corrected the errors we initially made and recommended an expert who agreed to work with us to build a robust system.

The original leaders needed assistance from higher education professionals to create the proper systems for the work of building a new institution. The day-to-day processes were just as important as spreading the word on the vision and gathering support.

By the 2006–2007 fiscal year, there were over 60,000 donors and supporters of the institution throughout the country. These donors ranged from small amounts to over $5 million gifts. Monaghan remarked, “It's unbelievable the way people supported us. And one year [the 2009–2010 fiscal year] we did have $18 million in fundraising, which in today's dollar that would probably be about 25 million.” The institution, building on an idea by Fr. Fessio, former

Provost, also developed a “Founders Club” to gather support for the vision of the institution around the country. Carpenter recalled the early discussions and planning of this club:

> When [Fessio] came up with that concept, he said, "Look, there's people all over the country who experienced a crisis in the Church and are looking for hope for their children. I believe we could challenge them to become Founders and build Founders Clubs across the country." We had pins on the map for how many donors we had from certain areas, and then we would attempt to form a Founders Club in that area with help from a key group of people. Tom [Monaghan] would go out and speak once a year to each one of these Founders Clubs.

In the fiscal year of 2009–2010, it was reported that Ave Maria received 31,500 gifts from 14,381 donors, including 3,760 new donors, for a total haul of over $22 million (Carpenter, 2010, p. 7). The Founders Club provided the foundation for the donor relations of the institution, and the return on their investment “is realized in stopping the tide of moral relativism in the lives of young people” (Carpenter, 2004, p. 3).

Additional Revenue Sources

As Ave Maria town faced difficulties in producing income due to the housing crisis of 2008 and the slow growth of the residences and businesses in the town, Monaghan sold some of his other businesses and properties to funnel money back into the institution. He said, “We sold off a lot of assets, the oratory…and then we sold the [temporary] campus to the [Ave Maria] law school. Sold the [Ave Maria] radio station, which I hated to see go. So that's what kept us going.” Monaghan was referring to the sale of the oratory, the church at the center of Ave Maria town, to the Diocese of Venice that occurred in 2017. This established the previous quasi-parish into a regular parish church and while it remains central to the town and AMU, the Diocese now

owns and manages it. This sale was an effort to maintain the institution as self-supporting without Monaghan's funds as achieved in 2015.

Another financial resource that assisted the institution was the scholarships provided by donors and the reasonable tuition costs offered to build enrollment. Tuition, fees, and room and board to attend AMU for undergraduates attending in 2007–2008 was $23,395, which was a 3.6% increase from $22,575 in 2006–2007. AMU undergraduate tuition and fees are much lower than other private, baccalaureate college arts and sciences institutions, which average a $41,500 price tag (CollegeCalc, n.d.). The 2019–2020 tuition was $23,210, signaling slow growth in fees since 2008. Fr. Garrity, Director of Campus Ministry, shared,

> It's very expensive to educate people. Now, we have a really affordable program here at Ave Maria University, we have a lot of financial aid… it's always something people have to look at. But we've been very blessed with generous donors. People, when they see our students, they see that this is really worth doing. And a lot of people want to contribute to that.

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, at the start of the 2017–2018 academic year, approximately 97% of AMU undergraduate students received grants or scholarships. The large number of discounts provided to families and student-athletes attending AMU was troubling for Anne Hart, Director of Financial Aid, so she made sure to offer her opinion as something that needed to be watched and refined. Hart, who left AMU in 2018, stated

> Having watched other schools close…it was very traumatic talking to the parents. And I worried about that because nobody wants to have their child suddenly have to go find a new school in the middle of a school year. And as we were doing our numbers, and that's what we were watching, what's the stability of some of these schools? And one of the key

> components was high discount rate. Looking at so many schools that have closed and looking at what they were giving out in aid trying to save themselves, it didn't work. We watched all the schools and tried to not fall into the same. [Ave Maria] still [has] their challenges, but the increase in majors, especially the nursing program is a plus. The institution's mission attracts and retains their families.

Hart expressed her concern of reluctance by some of the leadership to change. The discount rate on tuition hovered around 48% but was increased to over 60% to entice enrollment and recruit student-athletes. In Hart's opinion, there was a lack of control over the size of scholarships, particularly the athletic scholarships and large family grants. She said, "I don't think administration ever looked at financial aid and admissions as professions…that was disappointing." Hart came to AMU from a public institution and had a long career in the financial aid industry. Her background relied heavily on compliance and procedure, and she had to build most of those systems initially when she arrived in 2007.

The new campus did provide many naming opportunities during Phase I of the construction to entice donor giving. A few of these included the library, the student activities center, the visitor center, and even the recreational pool located in the middle of the three dormitories. The opportunities ranged from $75,000 to $6 million. The Canizaro Library was the first to be named in August 2007, in recognition of a $5 million gift from the Canizaro family.

Donor Relations Staff

I have a personal recollection to add to the narrative of the fundraising and donor relations staff. I worked for Carpenter as an undergraduate student and specifically assisted Kathryn Bickford, who managed the Planned Giving opportunities. I met countless donors, filed my share of paperwork, and witnessed the genuine appreciation that Bickford and Carpenter held

for each donor. They never forgot a name or a face. Continual support for donors to the institution was important, as well as the significant contributions Monaghan made over those first few years to keep the institution operational. He remarked,

> We still have a pretty good donor base, probably more than…maybe of the 15 Newman Guide schools [a ranking of institutions and their adherence to Catholic doctrine], maybe one or two raised more money. I think we were raising more than any of them but now we're still amongst the top three or four. Even though the other schools have been around a lot longer and have more alumni.

Monaghan's personal financial contributions made the dream of AMU possible and substantially sustained it through the first 10–15 years, while similarly sized institutions closed due to financial issues.

The financial resources of Monaghan, the contributions from donors throughout the country, and the reasonably low cost in tuition all played a role in the emergence of AMU in the early years of the 2000s. The observable and documented reliance on Monaghan's financial contributions highlighted the decision-making power he held among the leadership. There are individuals that made large donations, but one could not perceive heavy donor involvement in the day-to-day operations. The institution also received many smaller gifts from thousands all over the country. The financial statements, 5-year financial plan from FY2009 to FY2013, and financial plan assumptions I reviewed from the library archives outlined the need to cut expenses and raise tuition in order to become self-sufficient without Monaghan's personal funds. This approach symbolized a collective resolve by the leadership to have AMU stand on its own as an institution without having to rely on Monaghan's financial generosity.

Temporary Campus

The second artifact found in my analysis was the interim or temporary campus location. The physical layout of the temporary campus location in Naples, Florida provided insight into the close-knit community that formed the initial culture of the institution. “For the administration, it was always an open door. People knew you by name,” said Carole Carpenter. Jeremiah Belocura, graduate of AMU, recalled his first visit to the temporary campus during an orientation weekend,

> It wasn't a traditional institutional campus that consisted of a large academic building or a large student union with multiple amenities. However, the friendliness of the people, faculty and staff, really welcoming environment, and the very tangible Catholic faith was certainly appealing.

Recall that the temporary campus was originally designed as a retirement living community with several smaller residential houses and a few larger community buildings. AMU was able to transform this original footprint into a vibrant, small college campus.

The 10-acre campus in the Vineyards community had a central building (labeled A in Figure 4) located in the front area of the property called “the Ark” by students and staff, after the Ark of the Covenant. Catholics believe the Ark of the Covenant holds the Ten Commandments, the stone tablets first mentioned in the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament of the Bible. In the New Testament, Mary, the mother of Jesus and patron of AMU, is referenced as the Ark of the *New* Covenant according to Catholic scholars (Roman Catholic Church, 1994). The location of this building at the front of the property symbolized how the Ark of the Covenant was marched in advance of the Israelites, descendants of Israel in the Bible, when on the move or heading into battle. This building housed the initial library, chapel, dining facility, student activity and

recreational center, admissions office, adoration chapel, and had an outdoor swimming pool in the back. This was where students congregated for social gatherings.

There were two four-story mid-rise buildings (B), originally designed as assisted-living condominium complexes, now with classrooms, computer lab, and faculty offices on the first level and student residences above. These were called Loyola and Avila Halls after the hometowns of St. Ignatius and St. Theresa respectively. There were 15 homes surrounding these three buildings called 'villas' that housed administrative offices (C) as well as the homes of some faculty and staff (D). Carpenter remarked on her first impression of the temporary campus, "The wonderful thing to me was that, you walked on the (temporary) campus and it had mailboxes for the students, a cafeteria-like area, a guest house for visitors, and two towers that would become the male and female dorms. It was unbelievable."

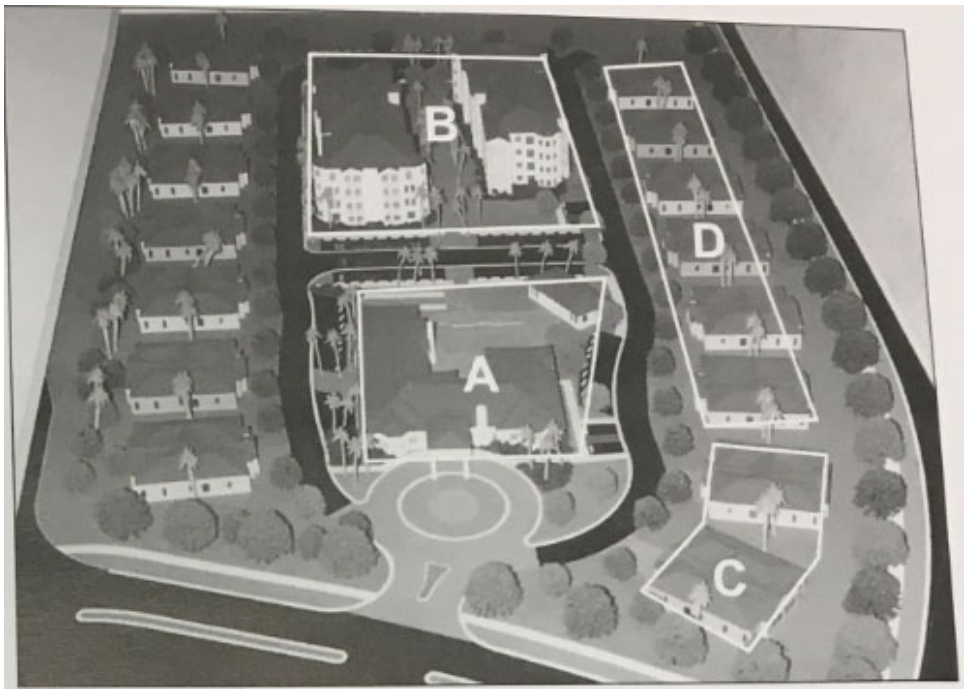


Figure 4. Architectural model of the interim campus by Ave Maria Media Productions from *Founder Magazine* ("Interim campus offers," 2003, p. 15). Image has been modified (cropped) and is in the public domain.

In the summer of 2004, a new multi-purpose facility was built on the land across the street from the temporary campus. This 16,000 square-foot building, called Stella Maris, became the main hall to accommodate Mass for up to 350 people, as well as host concerts, plays, and lectures. The building also housed classrooms, the bookstore, a visitor center, and the library. A temporary building was brought on campus, called Albertus Magnus, and housed the science and chemistry laboratories. I spent many hours in Albertus Magnus as a biology major and chemistry minor.

One more building was acquired on the far end of Stella Maris that would serve as the men's residence hall, called Canterbury House. Loyola and Avila Halls would become exclusively women's residence halls. The size of the temporary campus would not allow for all the amenities that larger campuses can provide, such as athletic fields for intramural sports, but Healy and team found a workaround,

> We were again very blessed because it turned out that right next to the interim campus was a public park…we were entitled to use the park and they agreed on certain hours when only our students could use baseball fields and soccer fields.

The temporary campus weathered Hurricane Wilma, a Category 3 storm, in late 2005, which not only tested the physical structure of the campus but also the administration leadership. Around 70 students decided to stay on campus while the rest evacuated north. The administration leadership developed an Emergency Hurricane Team that made decisions to cancel classes for the week, outline the student evacuation process, and gather supplies to sustain the remaining AMU students and staff who all huddled in three of the campus buildings that had been certified to withstand up to Category 4 winds (Harmon, 2005). These buildings were the two female residence halls, Avila and Loyola, and the multi-purpose building, Stella Maris.

The location and inclusion of places to worship throughout the campus was an important component in adhering to the mission of the institution. In discussing the importance of students having access to a chapel on campus, Julie Cosden, former Vice President for Student Affairs, noted, "I think given the mission of the university, the chapel would really be central." There was an adoration chapel in The Ark building, a chapel in Loyola Hall, and a chapel in Canterbury House. Mass services were held in Stella Maris. This left only two campus buildings without access to a chapel, Avila Hall and Albertus Magnus. This same commitment to the mission was carried to the new campus to ensure the access for prayer life by having multiple chapels throughout campus. As Belocura remarked, "Being that everything was so much more dispersed [on the new campus], it was essential that there be a chapel in the three dormitories so that people could maintain their prayer life." The presence of the Catholic mission could be found wherever you looked, from the names of each building, the reciting of the rosary as a group walking around campus each night called the rosary walk, the crucifix hanging in every classroom, and, certainly, the multiple chapels and places for prayer and reflection.

There were many local individuals in the town of Naples who began to volunteer to help perform jobs around campus, such as Moira Fennessey, who was one of the original volunteers and long-term supporter. This involvement from her and the locals was a big step in welcoming AMU into the community. Carpenter recalled her first volunteer, Maryann Lagonigro, who stayed with the institution for quite a few years, running the Visitor Center on the temporary and new campus,

> I brought a volunteer in who would answer the phone because we started to have so many calls about the school, and she ended up building a great visitors center. She got a core of volunteers [from her parish of St. Williams] who would help us do any job. They would

cut grass, they would make the priests' beds, they would clean, they would help hang things, and they helped get the dorms ready.

This community involvement was typical, and I had many jobs on campus during my time as an undergraduate student. One of my campus jobs was working in the Visitor Center with Lagonigro, answering phones, writing her emails as she gave me her dictation, giving tours and, most often, providing directions on how to get to the temporary campus. There were several volunteers who would cycle through the Visitor Center on weekly rotations to also assist Lagonigro while I was at class. Edda Evangelista, who was Lagonigro's right-hand, Maryann, and I developed a great friendship over my years as a student and then visits back to Naples to see my family. I remember giving them their first-ever tour of the residence hall, Loyola, where I lived during my sophomore year. It was around the Christmas holiday and there was a fierce decorating contest happening among all the dorm rooms. They brought me a gingerbread house to add to the décor! These women and the countless volunteers were part of our campus community, and their devotion to the Catholic mission was a great example to the young adults on campus. Their willingness to lend a helping hand was woven into the fabric of the temporary campus culture.

The layout and location of the temporary campus played a significant role in the family-feel and tight-knit community culture among students, faculty, and staff. The Naples location allowed for local community involvement as volunteers and donors. The layout of buildings—from the Ark of the Covenant student building at the front and center of the campus to the surrounding offices and proximity of faculty housing to student housing—symbolized an overlap in academic and social interactions. The adoration chapels in a few buildings and the Catholic teachings in the classroom signified the Catholic mission of the institution woven into campus

life, from faculty and staff attending Mass together, students babysitting the faculty and staff children, to everyone gathering for the rosary walk around the premises. These were observable artifacts of a routine, family, Catholic community element interlaced within the organizational culture of AMU from 2003 to 2007. Later, it was common to hear students wistfully utter a phrase of "remember at the old campus" as a fond remembrance of an emotional tie to that location and culture.

Permanent Campus

The new campus was a major change in the physical layout and size of the property compared to the temporary campus. It was located around 30 miles east of the bustling city of Naples and around 35 miles east of the temporary campus. Julie Cosden, former Vice President for Student Affairs, remembered her first visit to the site,

> I think the first time I was [on the permanent campus], I was just impressed. I was just impressed or maybe surprised at how big it was, how spread out it was. It was clearly designed to build several more buildings, but obviously at the time everything was just so spread out. And I think coming from the old campus that was a real change.

The move to the permanent campus and town did create a sense of legitimacy and stability to the campus community. Belocura said,

> I think gaining that sense of officialness was important and having the resources and facilities that people take for granted at other institutions, being able to share in that was important in feeling like I had chosen a legitimate school.

There were moments of attending classes and living at the temporary campus that felt just that, temporary, so there was always a sense that the next stage of the institution would begin the story of a real school. Accreditation and infrastructure would come and bring a real sense of

legitimacy when AMU now shared components that were common and in line with other established institutions.

The permanent campus and surrounding town were slow in development, mostly due to the housing crash of 2008 that began with the decline of housing prices in 2006–2007, but also due to the remote plot of land that was Ave Maria. Rich Dittus recalled those early trips to the new campus,

> Ave Maria town definitely had a rural feel. The two-lane Oil Well Road had very little traffic and you had to be careful to not hit an alligator or other animals that might be crossing the road at night. Once you turned on to Ave Maria Boulevard at night, you needed to make sure that you didn't hit one of the wild boar that roamed the property or one of the black bears that seemed to show their presence in the late summer or early fall looking for something to eat.

Wildlife sightings of non-protected species were common at first, but as development continued, those who were at the school during those early years were able to experience the growth of campus right before their eyes. Fr. Garrity recalled,

> I remember we pulled onto what is now Ave Maria Boulevard. And I'm looking, and here's a little ditch, and here's an alligator. Right next to me. So I thought to myself, "Man, I'm really out in the wilds here." But that was before the buildings were built. And then when they built the buildings, it just became a really, really beautiful place. It's a beautiful campus.

I recall classmates going boar hunting at night on the outskirts of the property. I also vividly remember the large mosquitos that were prevalent that first year at the new site. We had taken

over their home, and they retaliated by flying into the dorms whenever a door was opened. I can still hear all the smacks against the walls where the mosquitos met their demise.

The Oratory, the church of AMU campus and Ave Maria town, was built in between the divide of the campus property and the town. This reinforced the mission of carrying the Catholic teachings from the classroom into one's daily life. As Healy remarked, "The oratory will be the spiritual center of the university and town" ("Celtic cross placed," 2006, p. 1). The Oratory is located in the La Piazza, surrounded by an elliptical form of restaurants and shops, including the campus bookstore. A 10-foot tall Celtic cross, donated by Dian Jennings Mayo, sits atop the Oratory. Monaghan stated, "The Oratory's central location is meant to serve as a visible symbol that the church and its liturgies are to be at the core of the life of the university" (Carpenter, 2006, p. 11). On March 31, 2008, which is a Catholic holy day called the Solemnity of the Annunciation, the Ave Maria Oratory was dedicated by Bishop Dewane. This holy day commemorates the visit of the archangel Gabriel to Mary and her acceptance to be the mother of Jesus Christ, son of God. Over 2,000 people attended the ceremony, including myself, and there was a live video for those on a waiting list to watch. Figure 5 is the view of the Oratory at the center of the town and university property.

Figure 5. Aerial View from Campus Side of Oratory, Surrounding Shops and Restaurants by Ave Maria Media Productions. Image from "Cover photo," 2009 (p. 1) and is reprinted with permission.

The close-knit community of AMU that was forged at the temporary campus became more difficult to maintain after the move to the permanent campus. The administrative offices were now located on the third floor of the library, and this location did not lend itself to individuals dropping by casually. Belocura said,

> Things were certainly more formal and walled off. I think part of that stems from just the culture that was present with the upper administration being walled off on the upper floors of the library that were not welcoming to students,

Rosemary Bell recalled how the remote location provided some connectivity complications,

> Well initially on the new campus, granted there were growing pains and settling-in pains as it is anywhere. Yes, there's always glitches. You've got to get this wired up, and that's not working. The computers were okay but the cell phone [service] was terrible.

The new campus was also in constant transition while waiting for everything to be fully built, so creativity from faculty, staff, and students was necessary. Fr. Garrity stated,

> I really was excited about moving to the new campus in July of 2007… we didn't have a real chapel, so we used the ballroom. I bought these stage boosters and so we had the altar put up on some boosters, and we had Mass in the ballroom, there. It was exciting.

As construction was underway for the physical structures and the town and residences, there was a need to get the buildings situated for the arriving students in August 2007. This required faculty and staff to pitch in ideas and help.

The move to the new, expansive, and isolated permanent campus had an impact on the previous family-feel, small community culture. There was an air of legitimacy coupled with an expansive physical layout that altered the campus feel and interactions of the faculty, students, and staff that had moved from the temporary campus. The location of chapels and places to pray or worship in many of the campus buildings demonstrated the priority of the Catholic mission of the institution. Casual interactions among faculty, staff, and students required more effort because of walking distance and the unreliable cell phone network from 2007–2011. With roaming wild boars and the rural area surrounding around the town of Ave Maria, the inhabitants of the town and campus felt like early explorers and first settlers, a symbol of the long journey from Ypsilanti, Michigan to the Promised Land of Ave Maria in Florida.

Important Documents

As a part of the interview protocol, I asked participants to name documents that highlighted the mission, financial scenarios, and guiding principles of the leadership team, students, faculty, and staff. The following important documents were mentioned: (a) *Veritatis Splendor* and *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* papal writings; (b) the mission statement; and (c) SACS accreditation materials that included financial statements, organizational charts, academic catalogues, policy and procedure manuals, and enrollment data. These documents revealed the early decisions and guiding principles of the institution and led to what is standing today. These documents also highlighted the conservative and Catholic mission guiding AMU. The Bylaws of Ave Maria University, Inc. (2002), reviewed among the SACSCOC accreditation materials, noted

> The essential character of the Ave Maria University shall at all times be maintained as a Catholic institution of higher learning which operates consistently with *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, it being the stated intention and desire of the Trustees of the University that the University shall retain in perpetuity its identity as such an institution. (Article 1, Section 1, Part A)

A collective goal among the leadership and faculty and staff of AMU was to be included in the Newman guide for selecting a Catholic institution and was a top priority for Monaghan. The Cardinal Newman Society, founded in 1993, advocates fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church and recommends the top 26 institutions that meet those requirements (Cardinal Newman Society, n.d.). In addition to AMU, the Catholic University of America, Christendom, and Franciscan University of Steubenville also make the list. As Healy remarked, “The Newman guide is the gold standard if you are a serious Catholic institution, meeting all the requirements

of the Vatican document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, which sets out the rules for being a Catholic institution of higher learning." This goal guided the decision-making of the senior leadership team and was achieved in 2007. Carpenter provided another important document that was used in building upon the mission and vision of the institution,

> There was an article called, *An Idea of a University* by Cardinal Henry Newman that outlined those principles, and we tried to follow them. We read and reread the words and kept the vision in our minds. I think that as Ave Maria succeeds today, it has to hold onto those principles, because if we do, we will produce leaders, not because we have all of the endowments like some of these big schools have, but because we are striving after a vision to bring hope to our present culture.

Among these referenced important documents was the mission statement and the faculty and staff handbooks. These were mentioned the most among interview participants as documentation that would highlight the early years of the institution.

Mission Statement

The mission statement of the institution, included below, was mentioned the most by all interview participants and was printed throughout campus publications, such as the faculty and staff handbook, student handbook, promotional and admissions materials, SACSCOC accreditation application materials, *The Angelus* newspaper, and the *Founder* magazine. The mission statement reads:

> Founded in fidelity to Christ and His Church in response to the call of Vatican II for greater lay witness in contemporary society, Ave Maria University exists to further teaching, research and learning at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the abiding tradition of Catholic thought in both national and international settings. The university

> takes as its mission the sponsorship of a liberal arts education curriculum dedicated, as articulated in the apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, to the advancement of human culture, the promotion of dialogue between faith and reason, the formation of men and women in the intellectual and moral virtues of the Catholic ["response to local and societal needs" in the original SACSCOC materials] faith, and to the development of professional and pre-professional programs in response to local and societal needs. As an institution committed to Catholic principles, the university recognizes the importance of creating and maintaining an environment in which faith informs the life of the community and takes expression in all its programs.

The explanation of the mission was succinctly expressed by Fr. Robert Garrity, "We want to train people in all kinds of academic pursuits, and philosophy and theology as well, to make a difference by putting their Catholic faith to work in resolving problems facing our world today." Developing and following a mission statement was critical in applying for accreditation, as shown through the many binders of SACSCOC application materials I viewed in the archives.

The Division of Student Affairs had their own departmental mission as a subset of the institution's mission statement. The mission was serving to establish and promote a purposeful student culture stemming from the institutional mission. As Dan Dentino (2004), former Vice President for Student Affairs, said "Our ultimate goal is the education of the whole person" (p. 5). This approach also required the placement of the sacramental life of the Church at the center of the communal life on campus, in order to build on the faith.

There were Catholic sororities and fraternities, in a broad sense, called households that fostered a closer connection among students under the guidance of the patronage of a particular saint or creed. Every household had its own trademark of personality, so there was an

opportunity for every student to experience the household life, if they chose. I was a member of the Rosa Mystica household, which was named after Jesus' mother, Mary, who was also known as the Mystical Rose. We did not all live together but had weekly meetings, adoration hours, and went to mass together on weekends. We also embarked on a pilgrimage to Rome one summer where I got the chance to shake the hand of Pope Benedict XVI. When he rode by the front rows in the Pope mobile, everyone in the Vatican square came running and pushed up against us. We had arrived so early to the Papal audience that we were able to snag front row seats. I included the picture below (Figure 6) and, yes, this was used in plenty of AMU promotional materials after we returned.

Figure 6. Photograph of me shaking hands with Pope Benedict XVI in Rome, Italy, on May 23, 2007.

Handbooks

The faculty handbook included in the SACSCOC application materials had a specific section for the definition and role of academic freedom. The statement was to note that faculty members were guaranteed the freedom to inquire, discuss, research, and write as appropriate in the academic field but should do so in accordance with the letter and spirit of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Specifically, "Catholic faculty at Ave Maria University shall act in fidelity to Catholic doctrine and morals; non-Catholic faculty are expected to respect Catholic doctrine and morals in the discharge of their assigned functions (Section B, p. 11)." The inclusion of this section in the handbook was intended to highlight that AMU fosters intellectual growth by creating a community in which the Catholic teachings are present.

The employee handbook, included in the SACSCOC accreditation materials, required all employees to sign and date the acknowledgement form noting that they have received the handbook and will read and comply with the policies. It also noted, "I will not take any position or act in a manner that is contradictory to the mission of AMU or the tenants of the Catholic faith." The handbooks also included policy and procedure information. I was the student representative on the accreditation committee and compiled all the policy, procedures, reports, and handbooks to consolidate and align formatting for the initial accreditation application. I was immediately reminded of that experience when I reviewed the documentation in the archives at Canizaro Library and recognized my work.

The written documentation of AMU's history, policy and procedures, mission statement, and papal encyclicals showcased the visible products, or artifacts, of AMU. They also outlined the rules and expectations of faculty and staff that worked for the institution. These items set the

guidelines for the leadership on stability, belief, and vision of AMU as a Catholic institution with a strong adherence to the Magisterium, which are the official teachings of the Catholic Church.

Conclusion

This chapter described artifacts that attributed to the financial resources, the temporary campus, the new campus, and important documentation during the early years of AMU's history. The visible signs of the organization's culture were discussed among interview participants and highlighted in all campus-produced materials: the generosity and vision of one man that gathered followers to believe in his mission and work towards achieving his goal; the close community of the temporary campus that allowed for the family-style feel to the institution; the new campus, with a centrally located church to remind all of the Catholic mission, which added an air of legitimacy and stability to those that worked and attended AMU; and the development of important documents that outlined the mission, department objectives, and guiding principles that set the course and led to SACSCOC accreditation. Overall, there was a willingness of individuals to pitch in and do what was necessary to build the institution in those early days, which emphasized their commitment to the mission of the school. "My job maybe was building friends and raising money. However, in the beginning all of us did everything—housekeeping, answering the phones, events, marketing, public relations, travel, taking students to doctors, et cetera." said Carpenter.

The observed artifacts discussed in this chapter represent the first level of an organization culture. Artifacts can lead to the identification of major images and metaphors that reflect the deepest level of the culture (Schein, 2004). The physical layout, social environment, spoken language, and written documentation developed a meaning among the students, faculty, and staff of the institution. The meanings applied became clearer among those within the culture,

especially those who had been with the institution from the early years as they were able to articulate and recognize culture shifts during their time upon reflection. The AMU population that is identified as “old Ave” from either working at or attending the institution from the temporary campus, are easily identified because everyone knows one another from those early years, and that original culture of close-knit interaction and feeling like a pioneer is shared. The next chapter will examine the values, norms, rules, and principles of AMU through the lens of espoused values, the second level of Schein’s framework. These values establish an important component of the institution’s culture within the day-to-day operations.

CHAPTER 6

ESPOUSED VALUES

In this chapter, I detail my findings relative to the second level of Schein's (2004) framework, espoused values. According to Schein, espoused values reflect deeply held feelings towards things, people, or actions. Behavior at the artifact level emulates the beliefs and values of an organization (Schein, 2004). When a group or team first comes together, the solution or decisions reflect some individual assumptions about what will work or not work, but the shared knowledge of the group will only occur when the team takes joint action and together observe the outcomes of that action. As Schein states, "all group learning ultimately reflects someone's original beliefs and values" (2004, p. 28). The articulation of these values and beliefs into the operations of an organization can serve as the source of identity and mission.

The beliefs and values embodied in the organizational philosophy or mission statement of Ave Maria University (AMU) pertained to the Catholic faith and mission, which served as a guide in decision-making for the early leaders of the institution (Schein, 2004). This reflects the focus of Schein's second level in his framework- espoused values. Through analysis of the interview data, four categories of espoused values emerged, as shown in Table 4: (a) discussion of the close-knit campus culture, (b) desire to combine classroom teachings with the practiced faith, (c) the legitimacy achieved by building an athletic program and achieving accreditation, and (d) the trust among the leaders of the institution for one another.

Table 4

Espoused Values

Artifacts	Espoused Values	Basic Underlying Assumptions
Financial Resources	Close Campus Community	Catholic and Conservative Culture
Temporary Campus	Faith and Reason	The "call" of Ave Maria
Permanent Campus	Legitimacy through Athletics & Accreditation	Divine Intervention
Important Documents	Trust and Respect Among Administrative Leaders	

In this chapter, I detail the espoused values that emerged from the interview participants and documents analyzed: (a) close campus community (b) faith and reason, (c) athletics and accreditation, and (d) trust and respect among administrative leaders.

Close Campus Community

The first espoused value that I discovered through my interview data was the close-knit campus community of AMU. The culture and community of the institution was impacted by the move from the temporary campus to the new, permanent, and much larger campus. There was a desire to maintain the tight-knit community formed at the temporary campus. According to Dr. Carole Carpenter, former Vice President for University Relations, the beginning of the culture that began at the temporary campus at the Vineyards location was something special, "That built culture like none other than I've ever worked in. It was incredible. When we started at the Vineyards, we had a morning prayer and an evening prayer together." The connection that was shared among the students, faculty, and staff was often shown in Catholic practices of prayer and congregation. As Nick Healy, former President, noted, "Ave Maria is first and foremost a Catholic institution into compliance with *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*."

When conversing about the move to the new campus, in retrospect, there was a need to preserve certain aspects of the old, temporary campus. Jeremiah Belocura noted,

> It was important to retain a familial sense within the community, so between the students and the faculty and the staff. That's always been one of the most attractive things about the university, is just how tight knit everyone is.

To the leadership team, the original move from Michigan to Florida appeared to be a new start, as there was no discussion of retaining aspects from the original Michigan campus at the temporary Naples site. Carpenter recognized that the move to the new campus had an impact on the culture of the institution; "We lost that ability [to have morning and evening prayer together] when we moved out to Ave Maria, because the campus was just too big; our offices were spread out from each other."

In 2003, the institution announced recipients of the "Cost Cutter's Award" that would award faculty, staff, and students who contributed their time and talent to save the university money. The inaugural award winners of staff and students completed landscaping work and faculty members purchased, constructed, and installed whiteboards for the classrooms and labs ("Ave Maria University, 'Cost cutter's award,'"2003). This campus culture highlighted the early commitment and focus of the institution that fostered a community to work together and build a new institution. It was an all-hands-on-deck approach to build the institution and keep it growing, from the faculty building classrooms to the students and staff congregating for daily prayer. This dedication and mission-centered culture was a hallmark of the early years of AMU. When asked what she was most proud of from her time at the institution, Carpenter reflected on those early years:

> At Ave Maria when we were building, we didn't have inside politics. We just had the students and a committed people to a vision that had a lot of risk and therefore brought people together: eating together, playing together, listening, encouraging each other's gifts. If we didn't have a program, we'd start it or the students would start it. The culture was inclusive.

The core value of the campus culture was the Catholic faith, and that belief fueled a leadership team to create and grow a new, Catholic institution at the turn of the 21st century.

Faith and Reason

The second espoused value uncovered through my data analysis was the commitment to faith and reason in the classroom and beyond. The core values of the institution shared among the interview participants demonstrated a commitment to the faith and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church as well as academic excellence. As a former student, Belocura described the core values as "Faith and reason, to be able to not only practice religion but also rationally believe it and defend it." Fr. Garrity, Director of Campus Ministry, included a few more values that were important to him, "Faith, hope, charity, intellectual rigor. Service. Commitment to the truth. So that's part of our history, too, is that we want to be strong in our Catholic identity, have excellent academics and a strong spiritual life on campus, too." The combination of faith and reason provides hope for a new renaissance of our culture; as Healy (2007) wrote in *The Angelus*, it is the foundation upon which students will learn to "assess and engage with contemporary economic, political and cultural issues roiling our society" (p. 15). The Bylaws of Ave Maria University, Inc. (2002), made specific mention to guide "the promotion of dialogue between faith and reason, the formation of men and women in the intellectual and moral virtues of the Catholic faith" (Article 1, Section 1, Part A).

The initial core curriculum required students to take two courses in history, two in literature, two in Latin, two in natural sciences, one in American civilization, one in mathematics, three in philosophy, three in theology, and two non-credit practica in the fine arts. The core value of these requirements and the liberal arts education offered at AMU is to prepare students to think and grow in skills rather than focusing on a single career skillset. In 2007, AMU announced a certificate in Business program that would not be a full degree program but allowed students the opportunity to acquire basic business and entrepreneurial skills. The course load consisted of seven classes, including accounting, finance, management and business law, business ethics, marketing, and the principles macroeconomics and macroeconomics. I was the first student to fully complete the program and receive the certificate at my graduation in 2009. This program was in addition to my undergraduate major of Biology, with a minor in Chemistry. I was very much drawn to the practical nature of the Business courses, but those coupled with my liberal arts courses gave me a strong academic foundation to pursue a career in higher education and athletics finance.

AMU also founded a Pre-Theologate program for men discerning a call to the priesthood and a women's discernment program for those contemplating a vocation to become a nun or sister. These students attended classes and campus activities as any other student would but had specific living quarters and additional adoration hours or Mass duties woven into their schedules. A formal schedule of daily Mass and liturgical prayer was the cornerstone of their small community within the larger student body. Many graduates, including several from my own class, entered various orders of priesthood and sisterhood, per my recollection. Since 2005, every graduating class has had an ordained priest, seminarian, and religious sister, totaling more than 40 individuals (Crockett, 2015).

There were elements of faith and reason in practice on display from the old campus to the new. A bell was rung on the temporary campus at noon and 6:00 p.m. each day when students, faculty, and staff would stop and pray the Angelus prayer. Each night around 9:00 p.m., a rosary walk would begin around the temporary campus, and this tradition was brought to the new campus. Anyone could join in as they wished. Throughout the dormitories, library, and hangout spots, one saw students working on homework, quizzing each other in study groups, or picking a professor's brain about class that day. I recall working on my physics problem-set and being able to find my professor, Dr. Patrick Kelly, available in his office to answer my questions. This was around 10:00 p.m. (classic college student schedule!), and he never even hesitated to hang around for another hour to assist. As Dr. Michael Dauphinais, who was Dean of Faculty in 2005 and now current Chair of the Theology department, wrote in the Fall 2005 issue of the *Founder* magazine, "The role of the teacher displays faith and reason's common orientation towards the truth. Ave Maria University is dedicated to the unity of faith and reason through the contemplation of truth" (p. 6). For Jeremiah Belocura, 2010 AMU graduate, his proudest moment was "My personal growth at the university, having been able to grow personally as well as intellectually and spiritually." This union of intellect and spirituality was at the center of the core values of the institution.

Legitimacy Through Athletics and Accreditation

The third espoused value revealed in my interview data was the legitimacy that a higher education institution had by achieving accreditation and building a strong athletic program. AMU transitioned the athletic offerings from intramural sports to a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) program that now competed against other institutions. This was the first step of Monaghan's initial vision of building an athletic program to the level of Notre

Dame University; however, there was real concern about the approach and value of a program among the interview participants. The other component that brought a sense of legitimacy to the young institution was achieving final SACSCOC accreditation. These values highlight two important accomplishments of AMU during the formative years.

Athletics

There were mixed feelings on the approach of building an athletics program, but many brought up the subject of athletics when discussing the shift in culture over the years. Club Sports teams on campus developed in the Fall of 2006 in men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, and men's golf. The teams were fielded by current students and would pave the way for a formal program to develop (Burrows, 2006*)*. I was a member of the first women's club basketball team (Figure 7) and recall the early mornings waking up around 5:30 to load up the school van and head to practice at a local gym, since we did not have one at the temporary campus. Some of us had 8:00 a.m. courses, and with the availability of the public gym, it was necessary to have practice first thing in the morning. There was an excitement and pressure in being part of the beginning of the athletic program. We were a rag tag group of players, but we were committed.

Figure 7. Ave Maria University's women's basketball team. This action shot was taken at the Broward Community College Thanksgiving Classic. Patricia Moran is player #3. ("AMU women's basketball," 2006, p. 6).

AMU began the next step in that athletic club program and created a formal athletic department. When AMU began a formal athletics program in 2008 and began to recruit student-athletes, it created a new dynamic in the student population. From the standpoint of one student, Belocura, it was to generate enrollment,

> Part of that push for population growth was achieved through the growth of the athletic department. And while there's nothing wrong or immoral about that, it did bring in a different aspect to the student body that was not done as organically or as deftly as it could have been.

Anne Hart shared her perspective as the former Director of Financial Aid,

> Athletics brought kids in, so that's good. I probably would've done it with more experience because I think that at the time, the money was there. I would've really made sure that you had someone that could really help and have a good, solid foundation.

From a financial perspective, it was important for enrollment growth to expand athletic offerings, but even staff members recognized challenges with the initial roll out of the separate athletic program.

AMU's application to join the NAIA, founded in 1937, was approved in 2008 ("NAIA approves AMU," 2008). The NAIA consists of over 300 teams nationwide. AMU joined the Sun Athletic Conference, which spans Florida and Southern Georgia with eight institutions. The challenges of expanding an athletic program in a quick fashion created tension among those recruiting athletes and the faculty. Dr. Maria Fedoryka, Chair of the Philosophy Department, remarked on her experience,

> The athletics was the low point actually for me…that's what caused the biggest change in the character in the institution. And that was one of the biggest challenges, I think, is that having to deal with a decision that we had nothing to do with. And that was just the influx of these students. And those were the worst years for the athletes…those first years were absolutely terrible, because we were recruiting, and the standards weren't clear. And so we had students coming in with really…a conflict with the culture, with the Catholic culture and the mission of the institution, and academically.

With the population change, behavioral issues became more prevalent as they tried to acclimate individuals into a conservative, Catholic environment they were not familiar with. Fr. Garrity stated,

> We had some problems with quite frankly, a lot of it was, athletes. Some of our athletes were acting inappropriately and that kind of a thing. We had to recruit more carefully, people that were on board with the mission of the university.

Building an athletic program was always in the vision for Monaghan, who wanted to rival such programs as Notre Dame and Princeton,

> Getting the sports program going—big thing for us. And that was tough, too, because there was a lot of resistance from the faculty. And then getting football going was really a lot of resistance…we got a donor to give us half a million dollars to start it…and that really did cover to get it started.

Not only building a program but creating a successful athletic department was always important and often mentioned by Tom Monaghan. In his desire to be the "Notre Dame of the South," a popular football team program was anticipated. A successful program also entices recruitment of talented students that helps enrollment figures as well as donors that are sports fans. The club sports that laid the foundation of the athletic department were very popular among all students, and as official programs were added for NAIA competition, another layer of legitimacy was felt at the new campus. The campus now had recruited students with athletic talents, a field house, and several outdoor fields and courts for competition. From my interviews, there was never a sense that it was a bad idea to grow the programs, but the pressure to spend and grow quickly without factoring in the impacts to the current campus climate caused frustration among students, faculty, and staff.

Accreditation

The espoused value of legitimacy was also discovered when discussing achieving final accreditation by SACSCOC. SACSCOC accreditation would be attained in 2010 after several years of going through the process of application for membership, candidacy, and finally receiving full accreditation. As Sites noted, it was a long and involved process that needed to be done right,

> So all of that took, I guess from beginning to end probably five, six years. Because you have to operate for a while before you can even get the candidacy started. I was responsible for it so we ran it just like we would any other institution. We formed our committees and did the work.

Achieving accreditation gave the institution credibility, afforded an easier process for alumni to apply for graduate programs, and allowed the institution to investigate adding more majors and pre-professional programming. Carpenter remarked that this level of accreditation solidified the institution's authority to grant degrees,

> That one event gave us credibility. We were accredited and it gave us a real platform to build upon. Students could go on to grad school with confidence. Families could send their children with confidence. It gave us public recognition and credibility.

It was also an important feat for the staff. As Cosden indicated when recalling the importance of reaching that milestone,

> I just keep coming back to that word legitimate. I think for the students and for the faculty, being at a place that had accreditation was really important. Obviously, the students for both the value of their own degree as well as their ability to pursue other studies.

From the faculty perspective, Fedoryka noted the importance for enrollment, "We knew that if we wanted to attract students, more students and better students, especially more students, accreditation was just kind of necessary." Achieving accreditation was a constant topic of discussion in the early years of the institution among the student population. There was a fear that the degree would have no worth for those that graduated in the first few years. Belocura recalled, "It was a constant concern by the students of the viability and legitimacy of their degree

that they were working so hard on." I recall that once the candidacy stage was met and announced by Jack Sites, there was a shared feeling of relief throughout campus.

The value of having an athletic program superseded an understanding of the climate, or artifact, of the current culture and highlighted some underlying assumptions that will be explored in Chapter 7. The accreditation process included all faculty, staff, and some student involvement so the entire campus felt a responsibility and joy in the achievement. The legitimacy of the degree and the athletic opportunities were recognized as two big accomplishments and values shared among the campus during these formative years.

Trust and Respect Among Administrative Leaders

The fourth espoused value discovered in my research was the mutually held respect and trust the administrative leaders had for one another under the management of Monaghan. The trust and respect that the leadership had for one another was a hallmark of the culture at AMU even when they may not agree with one another. Discussion on the various background and focus of the staff who worked at the institution during these formative years was prevalent during my interviews. Jack Sites, former Vice President for Academic Affairs, recalled,

> We all worked together, and the people who were out there were good people. All they needed was somebody who knew how it operated, how the system worked, and how to do what needed to be done. We didn't pull any strings or anything. We just played it straight up, did what we were supposed to do, and that's all we had to do. And they're smart people, good people.

Monaghan's leadership and dedication to this passion project was a driving force to keep the staff moving in the right direction. Carpenter had this to say about her manager,

> In all of this, Tom Monaghan was a great leader. He was fair, and his greatest strength was that he never wavered from his vision. He knew where he wanted to go, what difference he wanted to make, and he could communicate that. That made him a very powerful leader. He not only had a vision, but he shared it; he wrote it down and he drew it on paper. I don't think the project would have survived without that.

Monaghan's management style was a unique approach to Sites, a seasoned higher education professional,

> I think his humble background taught him that everybody who worked for the university was entitled to respect as a human being. And he treated everybody pretty much the same way. He was never one of these Imperial presidents who only spoke to the chosen few... He just wasn't anybody that was worried about status. And he would wander over and sit down with students at lunch. If he didn't have something going on, he'd just get up and go wander around the campus and talk to people.

As the institution grew, some knew they had to adapt to the changing landscape of higher education and the makeup of individuals in the AMU community, while others did not. It required a dedication to the mission and a flexibility to adapt as the institution was still growing. Rich Dittus, former Director of Admissions and one of three interview participants still currently working at AMU, stated,

> Finding good people, that would also believe in that mission and vision, and sacrifice to be a part of it. Because there were people that could have made their living doing other things, but they saw the potential, their love for this opportunity, and they said yes. Some came and went. Some didn't find themselves seeking to be a part of what we grew to

> become and moved on. But others have embraced it, they have embraced change and are still thriving here today.

As Carpenter stated, “I think about the culture at the time is that it was more like a company than an institution. The management system was not run by committees but by a strong manager.” Carpenter was referring to Monaghan as the manager of AMU. Healy commented on the strength of a team working together towards a common goal, but when the devotion to the mission can be too stringent, conflict can occur:

> So you attract people of great passion, great ability and great commitment, and they have their own ideas; and so long as your ideals match with theirs, you've got a great worker and harness to achievement, but if you deviate or if they think you deviate from those ideas, you can have quite a difficult time.

Along with a dedication to the mission and guidelines of the Catholic Church paired with a rigorous academic standard, there also was an understanding to be adaptable as the school grew. Sites remarked,

> That was another thing that I loved about Ave Maria, for all of its rigidity and all of its strictness and all the times where it's kind of high-handed snootiness about a high quality education, it was very flexible and very adaptable and very open to doing whatever would make us a better institution.

Carpenter remarked on Monaghan’s approach to managing difference of opinion or conflict, which was to leave that to the senior leaders to work through,

> He said he picked good people to do the job and so we should have respect for what they were facing and give them the respect to respond to our concerns if we had them. He did pick good people.

The teamwork of the leadership and the management style of Monaghan was discussed as a contributing factor to the formative, early years of building AMU. The collective skillsets and experience each member brought to the table, with guidance and management from Monaghan, solidified all decisions as a reflection of their shared values and beliefs of what would create the institution and assist in its continual growth. Monaghan's management and the mutual respect the leaders held for one another reinforced their trust and relationships. This created a level of social validation among the administrative leadership and showcased how this organizational culture guided them and their decisions when dealing with challenges and unforeseen events.

Conclusion

The espoused values of the campus included: maintaining a close-knit community feel, centering faith and reason as the core mission of the institution, building a full athletic program and achieving accreditation to create legitimacy within higher education, and the trust and respect the administrative leadership team had for one another as they used their collective skillsets to continue to grow the institution. The institutional culture from the temporary campus to the new campus was impacted not only because of the move and physical layout change, but also because of the decisions made to grow an athletic program. This decision caused concern among faculty and staff but was a way to help manage financial challenges by increasing enrollment. The decisions were necessary and understood but not automatically welcomed. From Belocura's perspective as an alum, the institution is still finding its stability and identity while continuing to remain operational:

> [Ave Maria is] still trying to stabilize itself financially, but it is still growing and attracting new students. And while the core mission and values are still present, they may have been diluted in that quest for growth. As the university grew and made more of a

concerted effort to attract more of a mainstream average student, student personalities became more diverse and less strait-laced.

This discrepancy served as an opportunity to highlight the values of students, faculty, and staff of the institution. The combination of faith and reason through curriculum and campus activities was paramount. The adherence to a core curriculum, achieving accreditation, and adding pre-professional certificates demonstrated growth to meet the demands of the world that students were entering upon graduation, yet it did not sacrifice the founding principles set by the original bylaws. The experienced professionals learned that flexibility and adaptability would be necessary components in keeping the institution growing and operating but holding fast to the values and mission was a non-negotiable.

Espoused values provide insight into one piece of an organization's culture but identifying basic underlying assumptions can provide a deeper level of understanding. The next chapter details basic underlying assumptions, the third level of Schein's (2004) framework. Change of culture is a shift in basic underlying assumptions held by members of an organization, so identifying and understanding those is difficult but imperative.

CHAPTER 7

BASIC UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

The third level of Schein's (2004) framework, basic underlying assumptions, was more difficult to find in common across multiple interviews. Basic underlying assumptions are unlikely to be blatantly confronted, yet they are foundations of the organizational culture. This final level of Schein's framework consists of the unconscious drivers that guide behavior. The assumptions defined from my interviews are what the interview participants paid attention to, their reactions to main events during the early history of the institution, and some background on emotional reactions to decisions made (Schein, 2004). Schein's (2004) framework was used to analyze my research question and focused this study to present the impact of organizational culture and structure during a time of transition and growth.

In this chapter, I detail my findings (Table 5) regarding basic underlying assumptions based on participant interview discussions about (a) the Catholic and conservative culture that composed the Ave Maria University (AMU) community in those early years, (b), the "call" to be a part of AMU, and (c) the belief that divine intervention played a role in building and maintaining the institution**.**

Table 5

Basic Underlying Assumptions

Artifacts	Espoused Values	**Basic Underlying Assumptions**
Financial Resources	Close Campus Community	Catholic and Conservative Culture
Temporary Campus	Faith and Reason	The "call" of Ave Maria
Permanent Campus	Legitimacy through Athletics & Accreditation	Divine Intervention
Important Documents	Trust and Respect Among Administrative Leaders	

Catholic and Conservative Culture

The first basic underlying assumption was determined by discussion from each participant and their viewpoint on how individuals acclimated to AMU. There was an underlying assumption that the campus and culture would be Catholic and socially and morally conservative. Those who were practicing Catholics would feel welcomed and accepted, as they fit the profile of the community.

Student Fit

The student body population attracted students from Catholic families, including a strong population of homeschooled students. These original classes at the Florida location of the institution established the family-feel of the culture, both figuratively and literally, as many came from large families and had siblings in other classes at AMU. These students were oriented to a calm, conservative, and restrained type of behavior. The normal routine of many would find themselves between morning prayer, coursework, student club activities, attending Mass, rosary walk or evening prayer. There was not a desire for wild parties as one might find at other schools. Former student and graduate of AMU, Jeremiah Belocura stated,

> There was always a tension between trying to figure out the identity of the university, of the general student body. I think that the first few classes that attended the college and the university were certainly…more students that came from a very solidly and decidedly Catholic environment. And that were socially much more restrained.

The original student body also had to build the campus environment for themselves, especially the first classes at the temporary campus in Naples. There were no campus traditions, activities, clubs, or sports waiting for them. We had to create our own fun. Dr. Carole Carpenter, former Vice President for University Relations, noted,

> The students, I mean they had to be really flexible. They didn't have all the things that you would have if we thought you were going off to college. It wasn't like a robust cafeteria. I don't even think they were allowed to have cars when they first came because there was no place to put them or anything. They really needed to be flexible.

Fr. Garrity, Director of Campus Ministry, described his pride in the students that have come through AMU and praised the faculty for developing and caring for all students. This environment fostered ingenuity in creating clubs or activities and often included involvement from faculty and staff.

The typical AMU student was becoming less and less the norm in the later years at the permanent campus but in 2016, 80% of the students still identified as Catholic. I recognized this change during my visit back to campus in January 2020 when I witnessed the personal interactions of students and even the dress code. The early years of the institution had very modest clothing choices of long skirts and collared shirts and much meeker personal interactions among students due to the quiet and conservative nature of the student body. During my visit, I noticed students roaming about campus with the relaxed, Florida dress of shorts and t-shirts as

well as boisterous and energetic conversations. It was a noticeable change to me after not having visited campus in many years, and I found it to be a positive change that made me feel like I was around typical college students. Everyone was welcoming with a smile and a greeting, so it had held onto the community feel that I was familiar with from the original campus in Naples.

Faculty Fit

The fit of the faculty at AMU, according to Fr. Garrity, really came down to commitment,

> I would say above and beyond the call of duty in commitment to the students, their well-being. And the faculty who have bent over backwards for students and helped them, I think that's remarkable at this place. A commitment, a real commitment to the wellbeing of students.

The dedication of the faculty did not go unnoticed by Belocura,

> What I've always appreciated and cherished among the professors was their passion for education as well as a genuine concern for their students, a real desire to pass on knowledge, and also to be able to share their faith with them openly in the classroom and outside.

Carpenter reiterated the role that the faculty played in developing the students but also establishing the family feel,

> I think [students] fit in well because the faculty cared about them. Even in the new campus, the faculty would have them over for dinner or they'd have a discussion group at so-and-so's house, et cetera, et cetera. There's more of a family sense of it that they worked to make the students fit in.

The faculty played a large role in the culture as they spent much time with the students, especially the professors and their families that lived on campus. At the temporary location, their homes were steps away from the student dormitories and classrooms. At the permanent campus, many lived in homes that were as close as a short bike ride.

The campus culture shared among students, faculty, and staff was a family environment of conservative values, large families, full devotion to all Catholic teachings and requirements, and a need to voice strong opinions. Emotions and tension would arise when leadership decisions were made that some in the campus community did not agree with. On some decisions, there were many that took personal offense if they did not agree, and on other decisions many would stand firm by the word or actions of a religious brother or sister. It was a unique and learning experience for me to witness how some would hold religious persons in such high esteem without question. To revisit former President Healy's comment, attracting individuals with passion and commitment can produce great achievement, but when those individuals feel different about decisions or ideas, there can be conflict.

Conservatism Disagreement

There was a level of disagreement in this assumption as to *how* conservative and Catholic the institution should be. Students, faculty, and staff all had opinions regarding what level of conservative and Catholic behavior was acceptable. These varying opinions caused challenges on campus in making decisions that were in alignment with the mission of the institution but did not stifle the growth needed to keep the institution operational. Fedoryka, Chair of the Philosophy Department, highlighted tensions between the leadership team and those with daily interaction with students:

> I would say that the morale was challenged, put it that way, because of the tensions among the various administrators, in between the administrators and the faculty as to the vision of the institution. So as a fledgling institution, it was still trying to find its way. And the people who were on board or who came to the institution had sacrificed for this and knew that they were taking a risk.

The vision of the institution by some was the assumption that it would remain a small, super conservative institution that attracted only students of similar backgrounds and Roman Catholic affiliation. This was in contrast to making decisions to keep an institution open and operating during the early years of the 21st century. Fr. Garrity also experienced some challenges from individuals based on their opinion in celebrating the Catholic faith through Mass. Fr. Garrity, recalled,

> Well, one [challenge] that affected me, in Campus Ministry, were some fights about Mass. Some people wanted it all Latin, some people wanted it all English, some people wanted it all chants, some people wanted it all contemporary music. So we had some Latin liturgy. We had some combination of Latin and English. We had some English, we had some contemporary. So we had the spectrum of liturgical practice. But it took us a while to sort some of that out. As you know, people get sensitive about the way they pray in public.

This was another example of how individuals around the institution impacted key decisions about parts of the operation.

One of the early, emotionally charged, administrative challenges involved Fr. Joseph Fessio, who served as the first Provost and was initially fired from that role after disagreeing about the future direction of AMU. He was quickly rehired within two days of his dismissal in a

new role as Theologian in Residence after the leadership received much backlash from students, faculty, and some staff members. Belocura provided his concern from his time as a student,

> The resignation and/or ousting of the university's first and only provost was certainly a significant destabilizing event for me and for the community, the university. I'm not entirely sure it was ever completely resolved, but it was a challenge because there's very tangible evidence of a division in the direction of the school, and that it was a very visible sign that there was disagreement between the upper administration, and also showed the youth of the school in that a major leadership change was not handled professionally.

Fessio wanted to keep the institution small and attractive to the type of student that currently attended. This did not align with Monaghan's vision of growing the institution to the size he desired, which was around 5,000 students.

Fessio's initial removal as Provost, while the institution was still at the temporary campus, was met with strong emotions. I recall the gathering of students, faculty, and some staff that congregated in front of the Ark building and near the administrative villas of Monaghan, Healy, and Sites, former Vice President for Academic Affairs. Fr. Fessio had many strong supporters in the Catholic world, and having recruited some of the students himself, there was an outpouring of frustration and disbelief that this happened. We, as students, did not know the full picture or background of the decision initially, so Monaghan, Healy, and Sites took the brunt of the anger.

As Fessio continued to voice his opinion on the direction and growth of the institution, his final removal was necessary to align the growth with Monaghan's vision and Barron Collier Company's requirement to grow the town and student population together. The final dismissal of Fr. Fessio from the institution a few years later was seemingly critical to the vision and future

growth of the institution. Sites, who had to inform Fr. Fessio of the decision, provided some perspective,

> Eventually Father Fessio, who was one of the most interesting people I've ever known and who was a man of enormous capability and intellect and a wonderful person in many ways but had a real difficulty with people who disagreed with him, or if you didn't do it in the right way. And eventually he and Mr. Monaghan came to a permanent parting of the ways. But we were glad we were able to work something out for the time being.

Healy also provided additional context to Fessio's removal and how it played into the relationship and commitment to Barron Collier Company. This was something that I was unaware of as a student. Healy stated,

> One of the people that was attracted to Ave Maria and contributed mightily to it's being built up, especially in the area of academics, is Father Fessio…certainly one of the most knowledgeable and capable priests in the world, but one of his beliefs as it turned out, I don't know if he came with this belief, but it certainly was one that he developed while he was here, is that we should be small. That if we enrolled 400 or 500 students, that would be plenty, and we would have better [academically and conservatively] students for it and so on. The problem was that we had built the campus with the expressed intention of getting to 5,000 students. We had made that commitment to the Barron Collier Company, our partner, and therefore a small college would have been certainly in violation of the spirit of our partnership.

The Fr. Fessio firing, rehiring, and firing again was noted immediately by some of the interview participants as one of the greatest challenges that occurred during the years 2003–2011. I found

that the emotional tie these individuals felt towards this scenario made it even more accessible upon reflection.

The fit of an individual into the AMU culture was clearly defined in the early years but did evolve as the institution grew and moved to the permanent campus. The original, typical AMU student was met with consensus results from the student body, faculty, and staff. The majority of faculty also fit the mold of practicing, Catholic individuals that may have had large families of their own, homeschooled their children, and could be found in the nightly rosary walk. This is not to say that the campus was not welcoming, but it was common that when a student arrived that did not meet the fit (and was often found to be in violation of student conduct rules), they would later transfer to another institution. These non-confrontable assumptions of fit manifested the acceptable behavior of the student body, faculty, and staff members.

The "Call" of Ave Maria

Many individuals within the AMU community—either students, faculty, or staff—would mention how they felt a call to be a part of AMU. As a student, I remember many campus events where individuals would speak about their vocation story and how they had found themselves at AMU. This idea of having a call is rooted in the Catholic faith, for Mary, the mother of Jesus, answered the call to be the Blessed Virgin. Discussion about the overall mission of the institution was prevalent in my interviews and in the mission faculty, students, staff, volunteers, and donors felt to follow in becoming a part of the institution in various capacities. This highlighted a notion that some individuals felt a desire to spread the conservative Catholic faith and teachings to others and would come to be a part of AMU in whatever way they could be. Healy remarked,

> When you have a new university with a particular mission, it attracts people who share that vision or at least share a part of it and are willing to give their lives to it, and I think

> that was the reason why there was such passion on the part of the faculty in Michigan. They had been willing to give their lives to what they thought was a new liberal arts Catholic college that would be superior in vision and in the curriculum and in student life to most others, if not all others, and so some of the men sacrificed something to do that. They maybe gave up tenure elsewhere.

A few participants referred to themselves and others involved at the institution in the early years as pioneers. This seemed to be a categorization of the culture and mindset at the time, that one was blazing a new trail in creating a new institution and then a new campus and town. As Dittus remarked,

> The good news is that 109 students from 32 states believed in the vision of Ave Maria and joined us as the original pioneers taking a chance on a school where we had to not touch the still wet paint during orientation weekend as we began classes for the fall 2003 semester. The body of people that came out here to the permanent campus were excited. It was certainly a frontier land, and the early settlers were truly pioneers. We were living and working where the wild boar roamed.

Rosemary Bell, former Coordinator of Admissions Operations, also used the term 'pioneers' when discussing how the institution attracted students to fill those first classes,

> They knew they were there at the beginning of something great. I always call them the pioneers. I mean, they were just like pioneers. Taking their chances, having no idea where this was going, whether it was going to be successful or not.

Fr. Garrity also used the term "pioneer" when talking about how students took a leap of faith to come to AMU,

> In those very early years [each student] was a pioneer. And they really were pioneers. We didn't have accreditation at that time, it wasn't complete. We were in process, everything was a work in progress. So they went onto the limb, but they really learned and grew.

Monaghan founded AMU because he felt a call to give back to the Church and, in his words, send as many souls as he could to Heaven (Breitenstein, 2014):

> Well, [Ave Maria] was to be a beacon for Catholic higher education. We thought that Catholic higher education needed that, and I still do. I call it a lighthouse in the fog. And of course the overall purpose of all this is to help as many people as possible get to Heaven. And the best way to do that is to help the Church, and I thought the best way to help the church in my situation with my experience being on so many Catholic school boards was to—having the wherewithal that few people have—to start a university. And I thought that was an obligation that I was supposed to do. We can help the Church, pull more vocations, future theology professors at universities and seminaries. And good, strong Catholic marriages.

Fedoryka, Chair of Philosophy Department, also reiterated that the reason for the founding of AMU really came down to Monaghan's call and vision,

> It's really the kind of offspring of one man's vision. And I would almost say passion really of establishing a university that would have as its central goal the formation of young people primarily for their salvation and for their eternity, and secondarily for the leavening of the culture through their formation as they enter in and establish their own families and enter into their professional relationships and obligations.

The discussion and actions of many that came to AMU referenced a call to move to AMU, attend the institution, or work at the institution. I recall many coming into the Visitor

Center, when I worked there as a student, mentioning that they felt a call to be a part of the AMU community in any way they can be. This sense of action in the form of a call to AMU was an assumption that was held among many involved with the institution. One did not come to AMU on their own but rather as a response to serving a higher purpose, and this was never questioned.

Divine Intervention

Divine intervention was noted among the interview participants when events occurred that should have never worked out in the first place. It was a held belief that a divine being (God) allowed for so many successes and symbols in the history of AMU and starting a Catholic institution of higher education and then a surrounding town and community. There was recurring discussion among the participants on divine intervention in the founding of AMU and achieving its current operations. With the many challenges that the institution faced, there was an assumption held that this was God's will and was meant to be. As Belocura noted,

> I do believe that [Monaghan's] mission and his founding of the university was divinely inspired, and that the university is still around because of the supernatural guidance and protection, and that there are people, that there is administration, faculty, and students, that share this zeal and mission; we're willing to move it forward, are why the university is still around.

One specific mention of divine intervention was when discussing the decision to take the offer from Barron Collier Company on the land outside of Naples, closer to the low socio-economic area of Immokalee, to build the institution and the surrounding town. Healy recounted the story,

> So we're down now to the last day before the expiration of the extended to due diligence, and Jane and I and Tom met with Paul Marinelli, and before we met with them, we went to Mass and we were down at St Anne's in South Naples and we were praying, all of us

> very intently, for a sign. What decision should we make for the long-term good? And the Psalm response that morning was, "the Lord hears the cry of the poor." So for me, I knew in my heart immediately that that was God's message, that we should be closer to the poor than to the wealthy of Naples.

Another gentleman, Jack Donahue, a devout Catholic and very successful businessman, was also in attendance at this Mass. His opinion was well-respected by Monaghan, and it solidified the location of the permanent campus. Healy continued,

> Tom went in a beeline to [Donahue] after Mass, told him what our situation was and the decision that had to be made and, "Jack, what do you think we should do?" And Jack was very clear. He said, "Tom, if they're willing to give you the land for your campus, you can then use that money to build buildings and do much more than you otherwise could have. I think you should take it." So for Tom, that was all he needed to hear.

When asked for his opinion on how AMU was still operating in 2020, Nick Healy offered the following, "I really think because we are honoring the Blessed Mother both in name and in deed, this pleases God, and we are getting the grace needed to survive and I hope eventually thrive." This was reiterated by Fr. Robert Garrity when reflecting on his proudest moment during his time at AMU, "I'm most proud of the fact that, by God's grace, I with a lot of help from a lot of other people…we were able to set up a solid structure for the spiritual life on campus." From a professor and philosopher's standpoint, Maria Fedoryka explains her interpretation of the founding and continual operation,

> I don't think in the abstract. I just feel as though everything is unfolded along the lines of providence. And that's why it's hard for me to, in a sense, judge, because I think God is doing something here. And I believe that God is really using it for the good. And I would

> say I think it is successful and I would say it's miraculous that it is. Because when I look at the difficulties that we've had.

In her reflection on how AMU all came to be, Carole Carpenter stated plainly, “I think what has been accomplished is a modern-day miracle. I describe it exactly that way, a miracle.” The basic underlying assumption was that God’s will and inspiration created AMU, and His divine intervention allowed it to overcome the many hurdles along the way. This narrative of divine assistance drew many individuals either to come work, attend as a student, or donate to the institution as a charitable organization. This assumption was shared and never questioned. It was the accepted emotional response when various situations and challenges arose.

Conclusion

The basic underlying assumptions, or the thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and feelings, of those associated with AMU were identified as Catholic and conservative culture shared among a typical AMU student or community member, an emotional and spiritual call to be a part of brand-new institution, and the idea of divine intervention in overcoming the many challenges the institution faced. These assumptions were the essence of the culture of AMU from 2003–2011. The culture of AMU was built on these shared basic underlying assumptions and were mutually reinforced (Schein, 2004). As the institution grew, modified or new assumptions began to shift the original culture of those involved with the institution at that time. I myself noted a culture shift in the growth of the student body and the addition of an established athletic department. Though these beliefs and behaviors can sometimes go unnoticed in an organization, the emotional response from the community regarding leadership decisions highlights how one’s viewed adherence to the mission of the school or the Catholic faith were embedded in AMU’s culture. My discussions with the interview participants revealed that the dedication to the

conservative Catholic faith and mission of the institution, with a nod to receiving a little help from above, created the founding culture of AMU and laid the foundation for the institution and town to operate today. It is important to decipher the basic underlying assumptions, because it can allow one to interpret the artifacts and espoused values properly and help understand the institution's culture. An institution's culture is revealed with shared, basic underlying assumptions, observable artifacts, and mutual espoused values.

CHAPTER 8

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, I uncovered the history of Ave Maria University (AMU) during its formative years in Florida from 2003 to 2011 in order to understand how a conservative, Catholic institution emerged at the turn of the 21st century. AMU emerged due to the contributions of a wealthy benefactor, Monaghan, and the desire and divinely inspired call to create a faith-based institution. The institution was sustained during economic and leadership challenges due to a supportive donor base and building legitimacy through achieving accreditation and building an athletic program. The loyalty of the students, faculty, staff, volunteers, and donors comes from a collective belief about the saga of AMU and the accomplishment they all achieved together. Clark (1972) sates that in an organizational saga, "such a belief comes from a credible story of uncommon effort, achievement, and form (p. 183)."

Schein's (2004) conceptual framework on organizational culture was central to this study because university culture brings together the beliefs and practices of senior leadership, faculty, students, and local campus and community members coupled with an understanding of tradition and history to help the academic social systems thrive (Fralinger & Olson, 2007). In utilizing Schein's (2004) three-level framework, I focused on what one can observe (artifacts), what someone can feel or believe in (espoused values), and the unnoticed beliefs and behavior embedded into the culture (basic underlying assumptions). Completing this historical narrative using Schein's (2004) organizational framework provided a substantial approach to answer my

research question: How did a new, conservative Catholic university emerge in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century?

In Chapter 5, I outlined the defined artifacts of AMU, which were the visible representations of a culture, such as the physical and social environment, written and spoken language, technology, symbols, and observable rituals or ceremonies. The artifacts uncovered during my research included demonstrations of the Catholic faith in symbols throughout campus and the celebration of the Mass, and the processes of how the organization operated, such as financial statements and donor interaction. There was much discussion and data on the physical environment, Catholic rituals, Monaghan's financial contributions, the interim campus layout, places of worship on campus, the new campus and town, and documents of importance to the values and mission of AMU.

In Chapter 6, I revealed the espoused values held among employees and students of AMU, which were the close-knit community culture, the value of weaving the Catholic faith within the classroom teachings to promote a dialogue between faith and reason, and the legitimacy perceived from building an athletics program and achieving accreditation. In addition, the trust and respect the administrative leaders had for Monaghan's management style and for one another was uncovered as a hallmark of the culture and attributed to the success of accreditation and move of campus locations. However, my study also revealed some contradictions in the espoused values of the institution, including disagreement on the optimal size of the institution. This conflict resulted in personnel changes and a revisiting of the original vision of the university and requirements of the surrounding town.

In Chapter 7, I documented the basic underlying assumptions of AMU, which exposed the deeper, subconscious values often overlooked by those involved with AMU. These findings

included the assumption of a strong Catholic and conservative culture composing the AMU community, the shared call to be a part of AMU because of a devotion to the Catholic faith, and the understanding that divine intervention played a role in building and maintaining the institution. The basic underlying assumptions are the most abstract level of Schein's framework and difficult to capture at times. These assumptions were indispensable to the new institution and were rarely, if ever, questioned in the development of the university and surrounding community.

In order to understand the leadership and management model of a new, conservative, and Catholic institution that has specific values and belief systems, it is important to understand the relationship between the values and beliefs of the institution. These data revealed AMU's Catholic and conservative culture by understanding the shared basic underlying assumptions, observable artifacts, and mutual espoused values. The faculty, students, and staff of AMU built a founding culture of trust and loyalty to the mission. This was a valuable resource created through the saga of AMU from 2003 to 2011 and can give the institution a competitive edge in attracting individuals to the school (Clark, 1972).

To summarize Chapters 5, 6, and 7, these findings provide an important roadmap for the future of AMU. The artifacts of substantial financial resources set the stage for AMU's founding, beginning with Monaghan's personal fortune. The mission of the institution attracted a large base of donors spread throughout the country to donate funds for the operations. This long-term and vast support was critical in the continuation and growth of the new campus and town of AMU. The espoused value of the adherence to the Catholic faith and mission to combine faith and reason in the coursework drew support from individuals that felt a call to be a part of something bigger than themselves. This basic underlying assumption was a connection felt among the leadership team, students, faculty, staff, and community members. These artifacts, espoused

values, and underlying assumptions were uncovered as core components of AMU's culture and the reason the institution was able to grow and remain operational. These individuals worked together for years and shared a unique experience of building a new institution from the ground up. This is a hallmark of an organizational saga and one begins with a strong purpose (Clark, 1972). Monaghan founded the institution because of his desire and Catholic faith-driven determination to create a conservative, Catholic education school. The artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions express the unique history of AMU and are at the center of this organizational saga (Clark, 1972).

Implications of Organizational Culture

One of the major findings of the study was the impact culture has on an institution. The culture developed at AMU was foundational in the institution achieving success as well as when it struggled with challenges. In particular, the challenge of meeting expectations on conservatism and desire for an athletic department that challenged the existing student body makeup.

Conservative Culture

AMU struggled with differing expectations of just *how* Catholic and conservative the university should be. This was demonstrated by the varying opinions on the versions of the Mass that are celebrated. Some within the culture viewed the traditional Mass (with the priest facing away from the congregation) as being of higher esteem than a more modern praise and worship style of the Mass (with guitars and songs of praise). The firing, rehiring, and firing again of Fr. Fessio was met with frustration and disappointment by the faculty, staff, and students and demonstrated the difference in expectations. Fr. Fessio's lack of alignment with the other senior leaders on the conservative future of AMU led to his final dismissal. Schein (2004) found that many organizations do not always have alignment among these values and beliefs.

Student Body

The original expectation of what characterized the typical AMU student was an individual from a practicing Catholic family, probably homeschooled, from a large family with many siblings. The shift of the typical student and the emergence of a more diverse student population was met with hesitancy and speculation about the direction in which the institution was moving. When I discuss diversity, I mean a departure from the norm of a more socially reserved student, a practicing Catholic, and a student who did not attend a public high school. This shift to a more diverse population was mostly due to the student-athletes that came to AMU as the institution was beginning a robust athletic program. These new students were typically less conservative than their peers at the university. The addition of a legitimate athletic program was going to require changes in the type of students recruited to AMU. Faculty, students, and staff challenged the swift approach to building an athletic program and recruiting non-typical AMU students as this impact challenged the current culture.

The performance of an institution is connected to its culture. This was an important aspect to study about AMU and how it came to at the beginning of the 21st century. The cognitive side of values can become institutionalized beliefs that reflect the shared values of organizational members and can guide the institution through uncertain and difficult events (Bess & Dee, 2008). The move of AMU's campus locations, the accreditation process, and receiving the official Catholic institution designation from the Roman Catholic Church were such events that required a dedicated balance between the mission of the institution and outside entities, such as the accreditation committee, government officials, clergy, and campus developers.

Contribution to Higher Education Literature

What lessons are to be learned from this study for other institutions of higher education? Since 2016, more than 25 small liberal arts colleges in the United States have closed, and many others have seen undergraduate enrollment on the decline and the rate of tuition discounts on the rise (Busta, 2019). I outline other institutions that were recently founded in a similar way to AMU and either remain operational or have closed and can highlight attributes that assist in understanding how AMU came to be. Following that, I provide recommendations that institutions should prioritize: (a) long-term financial stability, (b) a values-based mission that inspires belief and attracts individuals who are committed on a personal and professional level, (c) the importance of faculty and staff fit, and (d) the alignment of the curriculum with the mission.

Similar Institutions

Ave Maria College (AMC) had 100 students enrolled the first year of the Florida campus in 2003, and by 2019 the enrollment at AMU was over 1,100. Several other institutions that share some common ground with AMU, such as, faith-based or newly established, have achieved various levels of enrollment growth, with online degree programs playing a large role. Newer institutions that provide many online programs have experienced large enrollments upwards of 75,000 students, such as Liberty University, Southern New Hampshire University, and Western Governors University (exclusively online).

Another recent university founding was in 2005. A public research university, University of California (2019), Merced, was founded as part of the University of California system and boasts a sizable endowment of $55 million for its research efforts). This institution also

participates in the NAIA, similar to AMU, and also looks to join the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the future.

AMU was not unique in the manner of its founding as there are a few other recent institutions founded by individuals and their personal wealth. Olin College, founded in 1997, is a private undergraduate engineering college in Massachusetts, was funded by engineer Franklin W. Olin. Olin College welcomed its first class of 75 students in 2002, one year before AMU in Florida. Like Monaghan, Olin had expressed the idea of starting a new institution so after his death, the trustees of his foundation proposed creating a college with his wealth. Soka University of America, founded in 2001, by Daisaku Ikeda, a Japanese Buddhist philosopher, is a private university with an emphasis on pacifism and human rights. This institution draws parallels to AMU because of the faith and values-based mission, Buddhism instead of Catholicism. Trump University, founded in 2005 by Donald Trump was not an accredited organization nor did it confer college credit or grant degrees, but the university was incorporated, like AMU. Trump University eventually closed in 2010 after several lawsuits had been filed.

Financial Stability

Monaghan personally subsidized the operations of AMU with significant contributions of around $400 million (Pearce, 2016). AMU evaluated long-term solutions in cost cutting and revenue streams in order to cease Monaghan's level of support and became financially independent in 2015 (Pearce, 2016). In the 2017–18 academic year, AMU tuition was roughly 31% less expensive than the national average for private, non-profit 4-year colleges, but it was around 35% more expensive than the average tuition for a Florida 4-year private college (Kelderman, 2019). Monaghan's personal funds, continued receipt of unrestricted donations

from individuals all over the country, and a low tuition cost proved to be a pivotal formula that contributed to the establishment and physical growth of AMU.

Having access to unrestricted funds and a strong long-term financial plan is critical in meeting the startup costs of a new institution as well as sustained operation and growth. AMU faced unanticipated financial setbacks through a housing recession and increased construction costs. An institution needs to have diverse revenue streams and contingency plans for financial coverage during times of economic recession. As institutions navigate the challenges of the current coronavirus global pandemic, financial stability will be paramount. Institutions that do not have a solid financial foundation will struggle to remain operational. A long-term financial plan with contingencies should be a baseline approach for institutions. AMU was able to rely on the personal finances of Monaghan but if this is not available to an institution, a broad and supportive donor base is critical.

Values-Based Mission

A main factor to AMU's founding and continued operation is the mission of the institution. The dedication of faculty, staff, students, and donors is vital to an institution's ability to survive and thrive. This mission does not necessarily have to be faith-based or religious but needs to generate a strong devotion among those involved with the institution. The mission of AMU was able to attract individuals from all over the country to grow their enrollment, provide strong academics through the professors, gain thousands of supportive donors, and create a town of individuals wanting to build community near the school. The enthusiasm of individuals to be involved with AMU because they felt a calling to be there was critical in the early years of the

institution. This type of following elicited by the mission of AMU made it what it is today and part of the reason it is still operational.

The interest in the role of faith and religion in higher education is another component of how AMU came to be, as current world affairs and foreign policies have increased national and international attention on religious groups (Daniels & Gustafson, 2016). Globalization has unintended consequences in which more money and technology can often cause global poverty and financial market crashes (Goudzwaard, Vennen, & Van Heemst, 2007). Groody (2007) suggested these problems be addressed through a renewal of lay people's relationship with God. In an era of globalization "religious educators have to be firm advocates of change, liberation, and transformation both within and without their respective faith communities" (Antone, 2002, p. 235). American faith-based colleges and universities are positioned to serve local communities and preserve a global good based on their faith and mission (Daniels & Gustafson, 2016). The mission of the institution is a combination of virtues and hope within education and adherence to Catholic doctrine. This combination is potent among supporters and produces higher engagement and incentive among students, staff, faculty, and administrators (Daniels & Gustafson, 2016). AMU saw this as their mission and responsibility and was able to generate the intended support to grow.

Faculty and Staff Fit

The fit of staff and faculty is also very important to the culture of AMU. It was their dedication to blend their personal and professional life with the students, other faculty and staff, as well as their genuine care and attention inside and outside the classroom or office. Many staff and faculty had large families, were practicing Catholics, and would vocally express concern about any campus decisions that they felt strayed from the conservative culture or academic

intensity. There was also a mutual respect held among the senior leaders for one another and a shared dedication to the mission and flexibility to adapt as challenges came along. There were nightly rosary walks, where students, faculty, staff, and community members would come together and pray the rosary while walking around the campus. On the temporary campus you had professors that lived next to the academic buildings so office hours could be really late at night—I went to see my physics professor in his office at 10 p.m., and that was normal! There was a strong belief in overlapping the faith and service within the educational experience for all at AMU. This is an important component for AMU to maintain as it can assist the institution in remaining open.

Alignment of Curriculum with Mission

There was a strong commitment shared among the interview participants of following the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and achieving academic excellence. Bringing the two together was a vital core value of the institution. AMU had a robust core curriculum that included three philosophy, three theology, and two Latin courses, to name a few. There were physical and spoken symbols that demonstrated the Catholic faith throughout the campuses, such as, the names of buildings, location of chapels, and the celebration of Mass and prayer that brought members of the institution together. As Clark (1972) noted, "upheld by faculty, alumni, and students, expressed in teaching practices, the [organizational] saga is even more widely expressed as a generalized tradition in statues and ceremonies, written histories and current catalogues" (p. 182).

Monaghan's call to use his finances to create a conservative, Catholic higher education institution was in response to his personal desire to reawaken the relationship between faith and reason in an educational setting. His personal mission of wanting to send souls to Heaven and the

use of his own personal wealth and connections attracted others throughout the country who shared this vision. The faculty, staff, students, community members, and donors who felt drawn to AMU helped build what is standing today. From financial donations and volunteer hours to professional expertise and recruitment of students, AMU was able to grow and remain committed to the Catholic teachings over these past two decades. The fierce dedication and commitment among these individuals called to serve AMU and its Catholic mission is a critical component to the creation and continued existence of AMU. AMU's organizational saga showcased that for this time of 2003 to 2011, those involved with the school were happy to accept their bond with one another and the call to be a part of this experience (Clark, 1972).

Looking Ahead

As a final question, I asked my interview participants to discuss why they believe AMU was founded and is still standing today. Jeremiah Belocura, 2010 alumnus, focused on the founding with an acknowledgment that the school will persist if it remains true to the original intention, stating "Ave Maria is a place that was founded with the intention of promoting good education with Catholic background to provide a liberal arts education in the traditional style with a more holistic and a non-vocational attitude towards education." Dr. Carole Carpenter, former Vice President for University Relations, brought the conversation full circle to the original vision and dedication of those at the institution, "The culture at Ave Maria, was focused on vision; a strong commitment to making a difference in the lives of the next generations." Monaghan's vision to build a brand-new Catholic institution with aspirations of a full community and impressive athletic program would seem unattainable to the ordinary person. Monaghan is certainly not an ordinary person, but with his personal fortune and devotion to

fulfilling his call, he has continued to grow the alumni and donor community of AMU University to this day.

The culture of AMU began with pioneers coming to either work at the institution or attend as a student. They all believed in the mission and felt a call to be there. An original faculty member in Michigan and current Philosophy department chair at AMU, Dr. Maria Fedoryka's, final thoughts were,

> I would just say that the brightest light in all of this is the student body that year after year [students] built an incredible student culture, which was in part fed by the outstanding faculty. I think that's probably the thing that I would want to say is the gift of the students and the culture that they have created and that has only continued to blossom.

This dedication, in particular from the students, built a culture that focused on bringing faith and reason together in the everyday. As a student, I witnessed and participated in the weaving of a liberal arts education with the Catholic faith teachings. The classroom went beyond the academic buildings and into the student body social events, athletics, and ministry opportunities. Dr. Jack Sites, former Vice President for Administration, stated in his closing remarks about looking ahead to AMU's future,

> The question is now once you got it founded and working, can it continue? And I think that's the great challenge as it goes forward. Can they maintain the commitment that all of us had when we started? Because we had Mr. Monaghan there as the founder, and I think we believed in him and we were committed to make [Ave Maria University] work.

Future Challenges for Ave Maria University

Several themes emerged in the research that provided additional insight into the culture and reasoning for how the institution has adapted over the years to remain operational. AMU will need to focus on two areas in order to meet future challenges (a) manage expectations about conservatism and (b) build a strong financial future.

The first challenge will require AMU to continue to manage the expectations of those involved with the institution to balance the founding conservative values while adapting to growth and cultural changes within the institution. Christian institutions need to work through their respective visions and concerns in adapting to current challenges (Abadeer, 2009). The student body at AMU changed over time as it became more diverse. Some questioned *how* Catholic or conservative the new students recruited to AMU were. This struggle of growing the institution while remaining conservatively Catholic was heightened by increasing enrollment and creating an athletic department.

The second challenge is securing the financial future. The continuation of the university depends on the long-term financial plan that allows the AMU leadership to keep tuition low, engage with a broad donor base, and monitor the growth of the town of Ave Maria. Per an August 2020 press release from Barron Collier Companies, Ave Maria town hit a record-breaking high and hit over 2,500 homes sold in the community, three more businesses opening for an estimated population of 10,000 that included university students. Monaghan's personal finances created the institution but cannot keep it operational for the long term. As we look to the next 5 years, the coronavirus global pandemic will be a factor in these financial challenges. Institutions will need to mitigate the financial exposure and reduction in traditional revenue

streams. The services a campus provides and the enrollment of students may be impacted for a few years to come.

Building an athletics program that could bring legitimacy among other institutions of higher education was an important factor in growing the student population. The emergence of an athletic program can also generate a fan base that includes new donors, alums, and community members. Attracting college sports fans can create a new level of excitement for the institution and opportunities for engagement and building community. Athletic programs can also produce additional revenue streams for the institution from donors, sponsors, and conferences, in particular at the Division I and II levels if sponsoring an NCAA football program.

My own involvement in the institution was driven by something I could not have planned. Rosemary Bell, former Assistant to the Provost and Coordinator of Admissions Operations, was a friend of my family in Pennsylvania, and we both happened to move to Naples, Florida, in the same year. When my mother was looking for a new job, Rosemary Bell had a brother who was starting an institution in Naples. It was Nick Healy, former President of AMU. Looking back almost 17 years later, with me and three of my sisters graduated from AMU, it has been incredible to witness the growth of the institution. It was certainly humble beginnings with significant challenges along the way, but a dedicated group of individuals took a chance, or maybe a leap of Catholic faith, and built the university and town of Ave Maria. As Fr. Garrity, Assistant Professor of Theology, stated in his parting words of our interview, “There are people that are eager to learn the Catholic intellectual tradition. I think the future is bright.”

Conclusion

The desired result of this study is to contribute to the literature on how a small, conservative institution was founded during a time when more established, liberal arts institutions were closing from a lack of enrollment and funding. AMU was founded by the personal contributions of Monaghan and his vision to create a faith-based institution. The institution survived through economic and administrative challenges because of the commitment of the campus community and donor base, while achieving SACSCOC accreditation and building a robust NAIA athletic program. The collective fit and call of the students, faculty, staff, volunteers, and donors to the mission of AMU was critical in how the institution came to be at the beginning of the 21st century.

This historical narrative allowed me to explore the history and culture of AMU from the perspective of individuals connected to the institution during the formative years of 2003 to 2011, including the physical transition of moving campus locations twice, the accreditation process, original leadership team, and the organizational culture. The study also applied Schein's (2004) framework to glean institutional insights from artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. Understanding this history of AMU can have a great impact on the field of higher education for the founding and building of institutions of higher education.

I am honored to tell this saga of AMU's early history. The story of AMU's beginning could never have been more than a vision, but through hard work, overcoming challenges, access to unrestricted financial opportunities, and a call to be part of something greater, AMU and the surrounding town became a reality. To quote the title of my graduating 2009 AMU University yearbook, "*A posse ad esse*: from possibility to reality."

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Study of Ave Maria University
William & Mary

This research project concerns your experiences as a member of the Ave Maria University institution, whether as a student, employee, or founder. In particular, the study will explore the formative years of Ave Maria University from 2003 to 2011 as a historical narrative of how the institution came to be. The basis of a final report regarding this study will build on the transcription and analysis of the interview audio recordings and interpretation of documents. Presentations and manuscripts may result from the analysis of these data. **You will be identified by name or in a manner that will disclose your identity, unless you choose to remain anonymous.**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact the principal investigator, Patricia Moran, plmoran@email.wm.edu, 208-954-6826; or Dr. Ward, chair of the Education Internal Review Committee (EDIRC), 757-221-2358, EDIRC-L@wm.edu.

Please read the following statements and indicate your consent below.

I understand that the interview will last approximately two hours and, at a later date, I may be asked some clarifying questions. The conversation will be audio recorded with my consent. I understand that I am able at any time during the interview to request recording to cease and/or to note that a particular interview contribution will remain confidential. I understand that I may refuse to participate in this research study at any time without prejudice or penalty. I recognize that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw my participation in this study at any time or decline to answer any question. Any artifacts provided may become part of the permanent research files unless otherwise requested.

By signing below, I give consent that the conversation can be audio recorded. I also give consent that my name will be used unless otherwise requested below. At any time, I may end my participation in the interview.

Please indicate your choice by initialing one:

_____ I wish for my identity to remain confidential

Participant _____ Date _____

Pseudonym (if applicable) _____

Researcher _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction/Rapport Building
Introduce myself and explain purpose of study.
Present consent form to participant to review.
With your permission, I will record the interview.
If at any time you want to share a story off the record or unattributed, just let me know and I will protect that confidentiality.
Let me know what questions you have.

Role at AMU
Tell me a little bit about yourself- professional and educational.
Tell me about your involvement with Ave Maria- former role(s)/duties of responsibility.
Tell me about how you came to be at Ave Maria and how long you were at the institution.
Tell me when you left, where you went, and why.

Time at AMU
Describe AMU for me. What is the story of AMU?
Tell me about organization morale and culture of the institution when you first arrived? When you were more seasoned? When campus moved to the permanent site? When you left AMU?
Describe your time at Ave Maria in three words.
How do you currently describe Ave Maria to outside people (friends, family)?
How would you describe the outcome of Ave Maria as a small university? As a new town? In what way?
What was the most important event in 2003-2011 timeframe? Why?
What is your best memory from 2003-2011? Why?
What was the biggest challenge from 2003-2011? Why?
What are you most proud of in the timeframe 2003-2011? Why?

Move to Florida
What was the mission of Ave Maria?
What artifacts (documents, videos, etc.) from that move should I look at?
What represents that move to you? Why?
How would you describe the reasons for the move?
What was most important in that transition? Why?
Looking back now, what was the overall significance of the move?
What was important to retain (or leave behind) in the move? Why?
What was your initial impression of Ave Maria when you first arrived?
Describe the involvement of religious personnel that were on campus in any decisions that were made.

Temporary Campus Site
How would you describe the physical original, temporary campus of Ave Maria?
Do you have any pictures or documents you would like to share from this time?

What was the process of recruiting and admitting students by selling them on a new institution with ties to a specific religion? OR What drew you to attend Ave Maria?

Construction of New Campus

Describe the first time you were at the new campus.
Looking back now, what was the overall significance of the move to you?
What was the overall significance of the move to the campus community?
What was important to retain (or leave behind) in the move?
What was the importance of having a chapel easily accessible?
What was your initial impression of Ave Maria when you first arrived at the new campus?

Accreditation

How would you describe the original accreditation process?
How important, and why, was achieving accreditation for the institution?
What were the core values?
What documents do you feel represent the values of AMU?
Describe the involvement of religious personnel that were on campus and their involvement in this process.

Leadership Change/Transition

How did a faculty member, 'fit in' as a member of the AMU community? What were the noticeable behavior traits or generally accepted skill sets?
How did a staff/administration member, 'fit in' as a member of the AMU community? What were the noticeable behavior traits or generally accepted skill sets?
How did a student, 'fit in' as a member of the AMU community? What were the noticeable behavior traits or generally accepted skill sets?
Talk me through speaking your mind or presenting opposing thoughts or opinions to the senior leadership team. Why do you feel that way?
Discuss the biggest challenge the institution faced while you were there? Why was it a challenge? Was it resolved? How?
Tell me about other underlying challenges that you faced in your role?
For former staff/faculty members interview participants- Did you ever sign or agree to certain values or behavior to be an employee at the institution?
What is your current opinion of campus culture and current leadership?

Conclusion

Why do you believe that AMU was founded and is still operating today?
Are there any additional comments you would like to add before we conclude the interview?

Wrap Up/Thank You

Thank you for your time.
Give contact information.
Explain next steps of study and timeline for review of transcript.

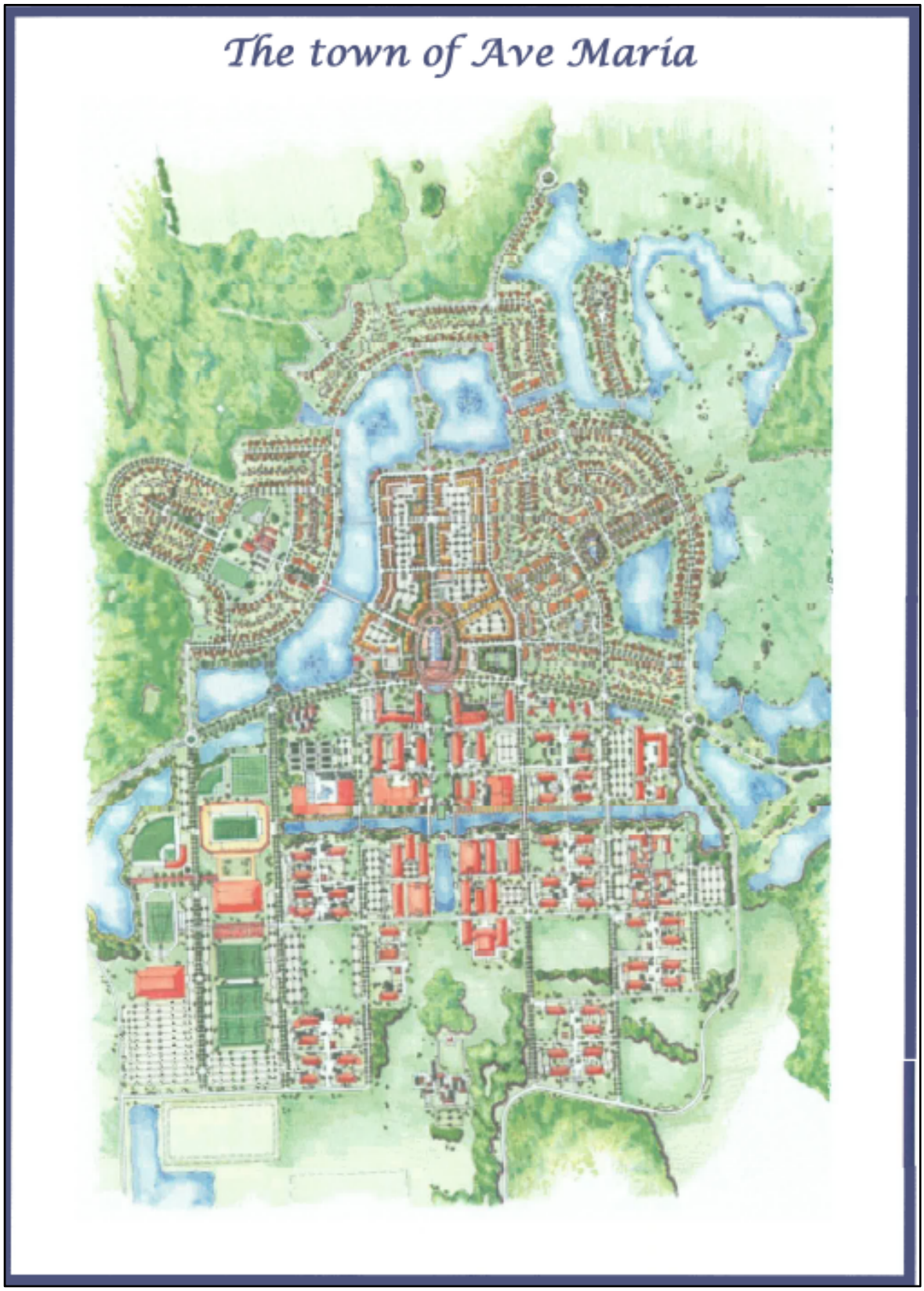
APPENDIX C

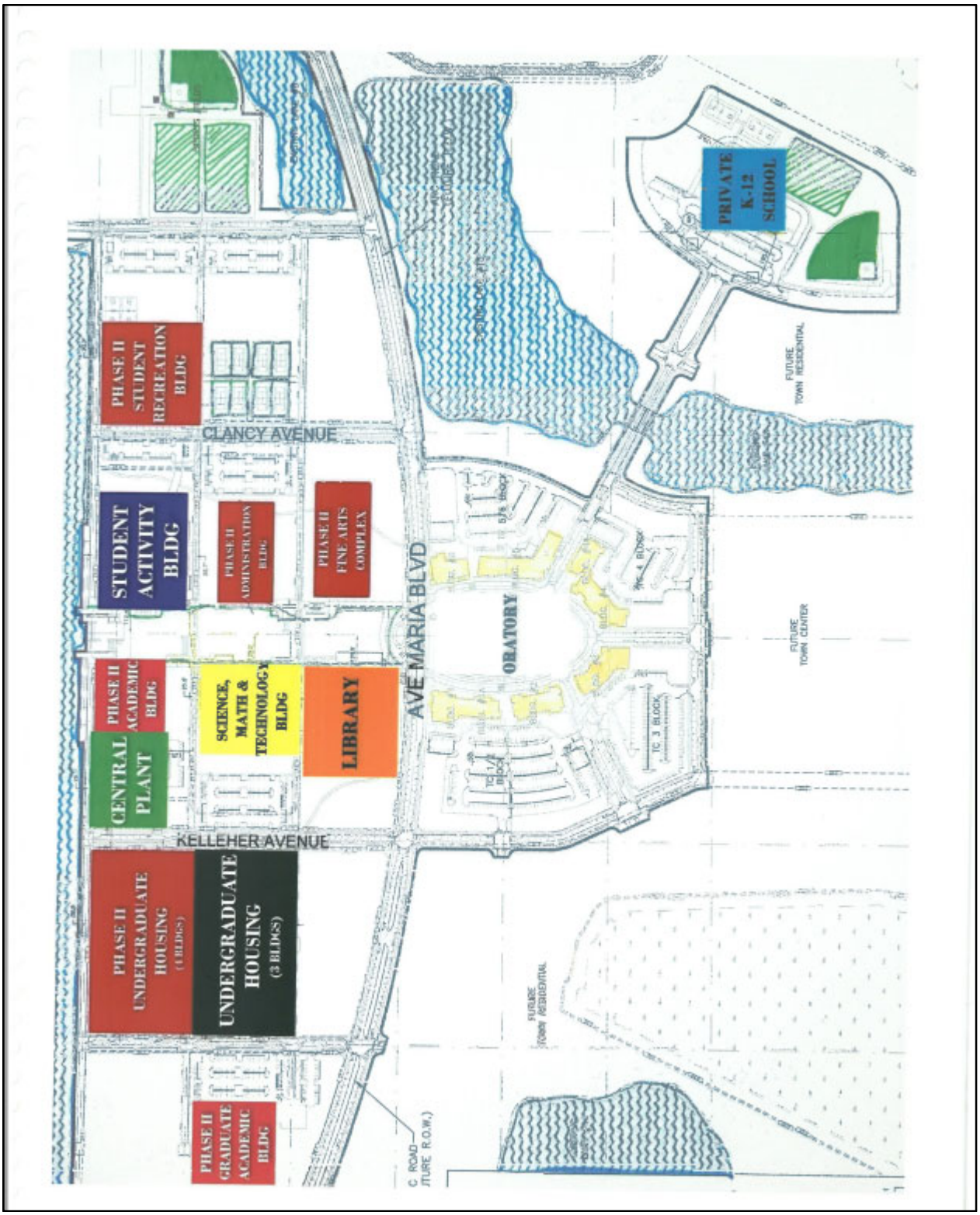
CODING PROCESS PROTOCOL

1. Conduct interviews.
2. Transcribe interviews within a few days after each interview, utilize transcription service: Rev.com
3. Read through interview transcripts after transcription.
4. Re-read interview transcripts and outline the timeline of the events and code each mention of event under the corresponding heading of: temporary campus, permanent campus, accreditation, move, their role at the institution.
5. Re-read interview transcripts to code discussion on (a) the move from Michigan to Florida, (b) the temporary campus residency, (c) the new campus, (d) the accreditation process, (e) the transition of leadership team.
6. Re-read interview transcripts utilizing Schein's framework as a priori codes to identify points to reference relating to artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions.
7. Read entire transcript again to categorize any additional themes that may have surfaced outside of timeline events and Schein's framework.
8. Identify the above mentioned codes and their frequency among interview participants.
9. Group specific quotes of each category to use in outlining Chapter 5 discussion points.
10. Create an outline of the history, themes, and chronology of AMU.

APPENDIX D

AVE MARIA TOWN DIAGRAMS FROM PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS


The town of Ave Maria


PHASE II STUDENT RECREATION BLDG
CLANCY AVENUE
STUDENT ACTIVITY BLDG
PHASE II ADMINISTRATION BLDG
PHASE II FINE ARTS COMPLEX
PHASE II ACADEMIC BLDG
CENTRAL PLANT
SCIENCE, MATH & TECHNOLOGY BLDG
LIBRARY
AVE MARIA BLVD
ORATORY
KELLEHER AVENUE
PHASE II UNDERGRADUATE HOUSING (1 BLDG)
UNDERGRADUATE HOUSING (3 BLDGS)
PHASE II GRADUATE ACADEMIC BLDG
PRIVATE K-12 SCHOOL
FUTURE TOWN RESIDENTIAL
FUTURE TOWN CENTER
FUTURE TOWN RESIDENTIAL

REFERENCES

Abadeer, A. S. (2009). Seeking redemption diversity in Christian institutions of higher education: Challenges and hopes from within. *Christian Higher Education*, *8*(3), 187–202. https://doi.org/10.1080/15363750902782373

Akin, J. (2009, July). Fr. Fessio no longer at Ave Maria University [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://jimmyakin.com/2009/07/fr-fessio-no-longer-at-ave-maria-universityagain.html

Altheide, D. L. (1987). Reflections: Ethnographic content analysis. *Qualitative Sociology, 10*(1), 65-77. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00988269

Amaral, A., & Meek, V. L. (2003). The higher education managerial revolution? In A. Amaral, V. L. Meek, I. M. Larsen, & W. Lars (Eds.), *Higher Education Dynamics* (Vol. 3, pp. 32–38). Manhattan, NY: Springer Science & Business Media.

AMU ranked as most Catholic, Catholic university in America. (2010, December). *Founder, 9*(2), 5.

AMU women's basketball team plays in first tournament. (2006, November). *The Angelus, 2*(10), 6.

Anderson, J. (2012). Reflective journals as a tool for auto-ethnographic learning: A case study of student experiences with individualized sustainability. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education, 36*, 613–623. https://doi.org/10.1080/03098265.2012.692157

Antone, H. S. (2002). The challenges of globalization to religious education: Some experiences and reflections from Asia. *Religious Education, 97*(3), 226-237.

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. (n.d). Catholic Higher Education FAQs. Retrieved from https://www.accunet.org/Catholic-Higher-Ed-FAQs

Ave Maria Media Productions. (2004-2005). In the beginning [CD-ROM].

Ave Maria Media Productions. (2008). In the beginning [VHS]. (2008).

Ave Maria senior academic officer to retire. (2011, November 18). *Naples Daily News*. Retrieved from http://archive.naplesnews.com/news/education/ave-maria-senior-academic-officer-to-retire-ep-390642114-342746872.html/

Ave Maria University. (n.d.-a). About Ave. Retrieved from https://www.avemaria.edu/campus/about-ave-maria/#history

Ave Maria University. (n.d. -b). Factbook. Retrieved from https://www.avemaria.edu/campus/about-ave-maria/factbook/#1494434056701-3d8b9830-3ca0

Ave Maria University "Cost cutter's award". (2004, Fall). *Founder, 2*(3), 8.

Ave Maria University granted official 'Catholic' status. (2011, October 7). *Catholic Culture*. Retrieved from https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=11989

Bagnato, S., Dimonte V., & Garrino, L. (2013). The reflective journal: A tool for enhancing experience-based learning in nursing students in clinical practice. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, 3*(3), 102–111. https://doi.org/10.5430/jnep.v3n3p102

Bergquist, W. (1992). *The four cultures of the academy.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Bess, J. L., & Dee, J. R. (2008). *Understanding college and university organization: Theories for effective policy and practice. Volume I- The state of the system*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, *26*(13), 1802–1811. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9*(2), 27-40. https://doi.org/10.3316/qrj0902027

Boyer, P. J. (2007, February 19). The deliverer. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/02/19/the-deliverer

Breitenstein, D. (2014, August 31). Ave Maria hits stride, enrollment target. *News-Press.* Retrieved from https://www.news-press.com/story/news/education/2014/08/31/ave-maria-hits-stride-enrollment-target/14914379/

Burrows, J. (2006, October). AMU fields first club sports teams. *The Angelus, 2*(9), 1.

Busta, H. (2019, May 23). How many colleges and universities have closed since 2016? *Education Dive*. Retrieved from https://www.educationdive.com/news/how-many-colleges-and-universities-have-closed-since-2016/539379/

Buzzacco-Foerster, J. (2016, October 12). Ave Maria: Has the leap of faith paid off? *Gulfshore Life*. Retrieved from https://www.gulfshorelife.com/October-2016/Ave-Maria-Has-the-Leap-of-Faith-Paid-Off/

Bylaws of Ave Maria University, Inc. (2002, October). Retrieved from Ave Maria University 2008 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges application.

Cardinal Newman Society. (n.d.). The Newman guide. Retrieved from https://newmansociety.org/the-newman-guide/

Carpenter, C. (2004, Summer). A year of firsts in fundraising. *Founder, 2*(2), 3.

Carpenter, C. (2006, May/June). Oratory to be physical and spiritual center of AMU community. *The Angelus, 2*(6), 11.

Carpenter, C. (2010, December). 2008-2009 annual report. *Founder, 9*(2), 6-7.

Catholic Review. (2007, March 23). Father Fessio dismissed as provost of Ave Maria. [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.archbalt.org/father-fessio-dismissed-as-provost-of-ave-maria/

Celtic cross placed atop oratory. (2006, November). *The Angelus, 2*(10), 1.

Cheney, D. M. (2017, April 13). Society of Jesus, Institute of Consecrated Life. *Catholic-Hierarchy*. Retrieved from http://www.jesuit.org/

Cheng, S. (2016, July 3). The oldest library on earth was started by a woman, and finally everyone can visit it. *Quartz.* Retrieved from https://qz.com/708139/the-worlds-oldest-university-and-library-in-morocco-founded-and-restored-by-two-women/

Clark, B. (1972). The organizational saga in higher education. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 17*(2), 178-184. https://doi.org/10.2307/2393952

Clemmer, J. (1997). The liberal arts college library director and the collegiate myth. *Journal of Library Administration, 24*(3), 79-88.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

CollegeCalc. (n.d). Cost to attend Ave Maria University. Retrieved from https://www.collegecalc.org/colleges/florida/ave-maria-university

Comen, E. (2017, April 4). 10 universities spending billions on R&D. *MSN Money*. Retrieved from https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/careersandeducation/10-universities-spending-billions-on-randd/ar-BBzjbN7

Cover photo. (2009, December). *Founder, 7*(3), 1.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *30 essential skills for the qualitative researcher.* Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Crockett, Z. (2015, Fall). Answering the call. *Ave Maria Magazine, 5*(2), 18-19.

Daniels, J.R. & Gustafson, J.N. (2016). Faith-based institutions, institutional mission, and the public good. *Higher Learning Research Communications (6)*2, 91-101. https://doi.org/10.18870/hlrc.v6i2.300

Data USA. (2017). Ave Maria University. Retrieved from https://datausa.io/profile/university/ave-maria-university

Dauphinais, M. (2005, Fall). Teaching faith and reason. *Founder, 3*(3), 6.

Dawson, C. S. (2010). *Leading culture change: What every CEO needs to know*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Deboick, S. (2010, October 20). Newman suggests a university's 'soul' lies in the mark it leaves on students. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/oct/20/john-henry-newman-idea-university-soul

Dentino, D. (2004, Summer). Promoting a truly Catholic student culture. *Founder, 2*(2), 5.

Ellis, J. T. (1955). American Catholics and the intellectual life. *Thought: Fordham University Quarterly, 30*(3), 351-388. https://doi.org/10.5840/thought195530331

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ewert, M. (2007). Christian higher education: Engaging society and culture. *Direction (36)2,* 174-191.

Fralinger, B., & Olson, V. (2007). Organizational culture at the university level: A study using the OCAI instrument. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning, 4*(11), 85-98. https://doi.org/10.19030/tlc.v4i11.1528

Garrett, M. (2006). The Identity of American Catholic higher education: A historical overview. *Journal of Catholic Education, 10*(2). https://doi.org/10.15365/joce.1002082013

Gleason, P. (1995). *Contending with modernity: Catholic higher education in the twentieth century.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Godfrey, E., & Parker, L. (2010). Mapping the cultural landscape in engineering education. *Journal of Engineering Education, 99*(1), 5-22. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2168-9830.2010.tb01038.x

Goudzwaard, B., Vennen, M. V., & Van Heemst, D. (2007). *Hope in troubled times: A new vision for confronting global crisis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Greeley, A. M. (1969). *From backwater to mainstream: A profile of Catholic higher education.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Groody, D. G. (2007). *Globalization, spirituality, and justice: Navigating the path to peace*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hansen, S. (2006, July 30). Our lady of discord. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/30/business/yourmoney/30monaghan.html

Harmon, C. (2005, November). AMU weathers hurricane Wilma. *The Angelus, 1*(12), 1.

Healy, N. J. (2007, September). The vision of Ave Maria University. *The Angelus, 3*(8), 2-15.

Hemmings, B., & Hill, D. (2014). Challenges to Christian higher education at a time of increasing emphasis on research. *Christian Higher Education, 13*(3), 183–198. https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2014.904653

Holmes, A.F. (1983). *Contours of a world view.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Interim campus offers advantages for students. (2003, January). *Founder, 1*(1), 15.

Jenkins, J. I. (2017, July 11). The document that changed Catholic education forever. *America Magazine.* Retrieved from https://www.americamagazine.org/faith

John Paul II. (1979). *Sapientia Christiana* [Encyclical letter]. Retrieved from http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15041979_sapientia-christiana.html

John Paul II. (1988). *Pastor Bonus* [Encyclical letter]. Retrieved from http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_19880628_pastor-bonus.html#CONGREGATIONS

John Paul II. (1990). *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* [Encyclical letter]. Retrieved from http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae.html

Kärkkäinen, K. (2006). *Emergence of private higher education funding within the OECD area*. Paris, France: OECD.

Kelderman, E. (2019, May 20). Enrollment shortfalls spread to more colleges. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.* Retrieved from http://www.chronicle.com/article/enrollment-shortfalls-spread/

Kerr, I. (2008, December 1). Newman on education [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://newmansociety.org/newman-on-education/

Kezar, A. (2001). *Understanding and facilitating change in higher education in the 21st century* [Digest post]. Retrieved from ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education website: http://www.ericdigests.org/2002-2/21st.htm

Kezar, A. (2014). *How colleges change: Understanding, leading, and enacting change.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Kezar, A. J., & Eckel, P. D. (2002). The effect of institutional culture on change strategies in higher education: Universal principles or culturally responsive concepts? *The Journal of Higher Education, 73*(4), 435-460. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2002.11777159

Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 43(3)*, 214. https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.45.3.214

Kuh, G. D., & Whitt, E. J. (1988). *The invisible tapestry: Culture in American colleges and universities.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

LaFrance, M. & Nicolas, M. (2012, September). Institutional ethnography as materialize framework for writing program research and the faculty-staff work standpoints projects.

College Composition and Communication, 64(1), 130-150. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23264923

Lewin, T. (2003, February 10). A Catholic college, a billionaire's idea, will rise in Florida. *New York Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/10/us/a-catholic-college-a-billionaire-s-idea-will-rise-in-florida.html

Liberal Arts Colleges. (n.d.). Liberal arts colleges in the US. Retrieved from https://www.liberalartscolleges.com/states/

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Matthias, L. R. (2008). Professors who walk humbly with their God: Exemplars in the integration of faith and learning at Wheaton College. *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, *12*(2), 146–157. https://doi.org/10.1177/205699710801200206

Maxwell, J.A. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review, 62*(3), 279- 299. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.62.3.8323320856251826

McPherson, M., Schapiro, M., & Winston, G. (1989). Recent trends in U.S. higher education costs and prices: The role of government funding. *The American Economic Review, 79*(2), 253-257. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1827766?seq=1

Messaros, A. (2004, September). Tom Monaghan's impending education disaster. *New Oxford Review.* Retrieved from http://www.newoxfordreview.org/article.jsp?did=0904-messaros.

Miller, B. (2010). *The course of innovation: Using technology to transform higher education.* Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED512292

Monaghan, T. (1986). *Pizza tiger*. New York, NY: Random House.

Morey, M. M., & Piderit, J. J. (2006). *Catholic higher education: A culture in crisis.* Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Moroney, S. K., Phelps, M. P., & Waalkes, S. T. (2007). Cultivating humility: Teaching practices rooted in a Christian anthropology. In D. V. Henry & M. D. Beaty (Eds.), *The schooled heart: Moral formation in American higher education* (pp. 171-190). Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.

Mouw, R. J. (1990). Humility, hope, and the divine slowness. *The Christian Century, 107*(12), 364-368.

Muscio, A., Quaglione, D., & Vallanti, G. (2013). Does government funding complement or substitute private research funding to universities? *Research Policy, 42*(1), 63-75. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2012.04.010

NAIA approves AMU membership. (2008, July/August). *The Angelus, 4*(6), 10.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2017). [Table 317.50 Degree-granting postsecondary institutions that have closed their doors, by control and level of institution: 1969-70 through 2016-17]. *Digest of Education Statistics.* Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_317.50.asp

O'Connell, D. (2017, July 20). Catholic higher education in the United States: A modern retrospective [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://newmansociety.org/catholic-higher-education-united-states-modern-retrospective/

O'Malley, J. W. (2012, May 14). Were medieval universities Catholic? The question is easier to ask than to answer. *American Magazine*. Retrieved from https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/5140/100/were-medieval-universities-catholic

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2007). Validity and qualitative research: An oxymoron? *Quality and Quantity, 41,* 233–249. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9000-3

Pearce, J. (2016). *Monaghan: A life*. Charlotte, NC: TAN Books.

Peters, K. & Halcomb, E. (2015). Interviews in qualitative research: A consideration of two very different issues in the use of interviews to collect research data. *Nurse Researcher, 22*(4), 6-7. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.22.4.6.s2

Pezalla, A. E., Pettigrew, J., & Miller-Day, M. (2012). Researching the researcher-as-instrument: An exercise in interviewer self-reflexivity. *Qualitative Research*, *12*(2), 165–185. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794111422107

Phelps, R. (2005). The potential of reflective journals in studying complexity 'in action.' *Complicity: An International Journal of Complexity and Education, 2*, 37–54.

Poggenpoel, M., & Myburgh, C. (2003). The researcher as research instrument in educational research: A possible threat to trustworthiness? *Education*, *124*(2), 418.

Point2Homes. (2018). Ave Maria Demographics. Retrieved from https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/FL/Immokalee-CCD/Ave-Maria-Demographics.html#:~:text=Ave%20Maria%20is%20an%20area,Maria%20and%2013%2C869%20female%20residents

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Narrative and self-concept. *Journal of Narrative and Life History, 1*(2–3), 135-153. https://doi.org/10.1075/jnlh.1.2-3.04nar

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 8*(1), 5-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839950080103

Reed, J. (2014, February). Ave Maria is finding its groove. *Gulfshore Life*. Retrieved from http://www.gulfshorelife.com/February-2014/Ave-Maria-Is-Finding-Its-Groove/

Riessman, C. K. (2002). Analysis of personal narratives. In J. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 695-710). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences.* Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Roman Catholic Church. (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd ed.). Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Saunders, D. (2007, July). The impact of neoliberalism on college students. *Journal of College and Character, 8*(5), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.2202/1940-1639.1620

Schein, E. (1985). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schein, E. (1999). *The corporate culture survival guide: Sense and nonsense about cultural change.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schein, E. (2004). *Organizational culture and leadership: A dynamic view* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Sette, P. (2013, May 20). Ave Maria University president emeritus helps start up college in Ireland. *Naples Daily News*. Retrieved from http://archive.naplesnews.com/community/ave-maria-university-president-emeritus-helps-start-up-college-in-ireland-ep-512856964-332123552.html/

Skoloff, B. (2006, March 1). New Fla. town aims to ban contraceptives. *Herald Tribune*. Retrieved from http://www.heraldtribune.com/news/20060301/new-fla-town-aims-to-ban-contraceptives

Smart, J. C., & St. John, E. P. (1996). Organizational culture and effectiveness in higher education: A test of the "culture type" and "strong culture" hypotheses. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 18*(3), 291. https://doi.org/10.2307/1164261

Soffian, S. (2017, May 5). Ave Maria athletics far from founding visions, but faith abounds. *News-Press.* Retrieved from https://www.news-press.com/story/news/2017/05/05/big-dreams-ave-maria-athletics-far-founding-visions-but-faith-abounds/100118168/

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. (n.d). Application Information. Retrieved from https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/application-process

Spall, S. (1998). Peer debriefing in qualitative research: Emerging operation models. *Qualitative Inquiry 4*(2), 280-292. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049800400208

Stinnet, P. (2015). *A call to deliver: Tom Monaghan, founder of domino's pizza and the miracles and pilgrimage of Ave Maria University*. Franklin, TN: Clovercroft.

Taylor, K. (2016, January 11). The Domino's Pizza founder created a Catholic paradise town with no birth control or pornography. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from https://www.businessinsider.com/dominos-founders-catholic-paradise-2016-1

TeamSarah4Choice (2014, September 22). Ave Maria University's strangle-hold on women goes way beyond suing Obamacare. *Daily Kos.* Retrieved from https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2014/9/30/1332354/-Ave-Maria-University-s-Strangle-Hold-on-Women-Goes-Way-Beyond-Suing-Obamacare

Teicher, J. G. (2012, October 10). Why is Vatican II so important? *National Public Radio*. Retrieved from https://www.npr.org/2012/10/10/162573716/why-is-vatican-ii-so-important

Thelin, J. R. (2019). *A history of American higher education*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thomas, K. (2004, June 6). Catholic college sets self apart. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2004/06/06/Catholic-college-sets-self-apart/0af095a1-6725-4a05-90bd-21db9d9f080c/?utm_term=.943bd24b2bd3

Tierney, W. (2008). *The impact of culture on organizational decision-making: Theory and practice in higher education.* Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Tracy, T. (2006, April 23). Ave Maria: Family-values utopia or Catholic ghetto. *OSV Newsweekly.* Retrieved from https://www.osvnewsweekly.com

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (2010). Catholic Colleges and Universities in the United States. Retrieved from https://www.usccb.org/committees/catholic-education/catholic-colleges-and-universities-united-states

University of California. (2019). *Annual endowment report: Fiscal year ended June 30, 2019* [data file]. Retrieved from https://www.ucop.edu/investment-office/investment-reports/annual-reports/annual-endowment-report-2018-19.pdf

Vedder, R. (2018, July 5). Why enrollment is shrinking at many American colleges. *Forbes.* Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/richardvedder/2018/07/05/academic-deserted-villages/#7fb1c8325121

Woods, T. E. (2005, May 16). The Catholic Church and the creation of the university. Retrieved from https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/education/catholic-contributions/the-catholic-church-and-the-creation-of-the-university.html

VITA

Patricia Lourdes Moran

EDUCATION

College of William and Mary- Williamsburg, VA July 2014- January 2021
- Ed.D. in Educational Policy, Planning, and Leadership- Higher Education Administration

Cornell University- Ithaca, NY Feb. 2012- May 2012
- Executive Leadership Certificate- concentration in Risk and Return in Capital Budgeting Decisions and Raising Capital, Strategic Thinking, Scenario Planning, Executive Decision Making

Georgetown University - Washington, DC Sept. 2009- May 2010
- MA in Sports Industry Management- Strategic Marketing, Communications & New Media

Ave Maria University - Ave Maria, FL Jan. 2005- May 2009
- BA in Biology, Minor in Chemistry, Certificate of Business Administration•

WORK EXPERIENCE

Virginia Tech University, Athletic Department – Blacksburg, VA
- Senior Associate Director of Athletics, Business and Finance July 2019- Present
- Associate Director of Athletics, Business and Finance Sept. 2018- July 2019

Boise State University, Athletic Department – Boise, ID
- Assistant Director of Athletics, Business and Finance Feb. 2017- July 2018
- Assistant Director of Athletics, Finance Nov. 2015- Feb. 2017

The College of William and Mary, Athletic Department – Williamsburg, VA
- Assistant Director of Athletics Business Operations Dec. 2012- Nov. 2015

Georgetown University, Athletic Department - Washington, DC
- Business Administrator Nov. 2011- Dec. 2012
- Business Operations Assistant Jan. 2010- Nov. 2011