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Session 4: There's No Communio Without u!

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Session 4: There's No *Communio* Without u!

Materials Needed

(handouts, markers, any materials needed for experiential elements, etc.)

1. 2 - 4 large sheets of newsprint (if not self-adhesive, then you also need masking tape)
2. Flipchart markers
3. Whatever you need to write out the *communio* explanation (chalk, whiteboard marker, another sheet of newsprint, etc)
4. One copy of each Augustine/Boyer Mash-Up Sheet (attached to this plan)
5. Post-it notes or scrap paper for wrap-up/learning capture
6. I think we are assuming students bring pens. They will need them for this session.

Top Three Areas

(what's most important to get to in this session)

1. Given its timing in the semester, and as an expression of *communio* itself, one of my three things is the extended check-in. Really taking the time and listening well to what the students are experiencing/needing as week one winds down.
2. The general idea that *communio* is a concept about depth relationships, and not just a superficial sense of niceness.
3. The final activity - working together to consider what *communio* means for how we act.

Person responsible for developing this session: Julie Massey

Session Title: There's No *Communio* Without *u*!

Session Date: Thursday, August 31, 2017

Plenary or Small Group? Small Group

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate understanding of the history, mission and traditions of St. Norbert, St. Norbert College and the Norbertines.
2. Articulate, defend and act on community and personal values.
3. Broaden and deepen the common understanding of *communio* as used at St. Norbert College - move beyond simple social expressions of the concept.
4. Help students encounter relevant content in the Rule of Augustine, and understand the connection of the Rule with Norbertine life.

Lesson Outline

2:00 Check-in (might break into two or three groups, with a leader in each)

We're still early in the life of the group, so invest time in a check-in discussion. As leaders, listen for things that might need follow-up. Remind students the add/drop deadline is today.

- Hi/Lo with attention to life in and out of the classroom
 - Best thing that's happened so far related to classes, related to the rest of college
 - Worst thing that's happened so far related to classes, related to the rest of college
- Ask if there are any questions/problems people are encountering.
- NOTE: make sure that each student speaks.

2:15 Opening Brainstorm

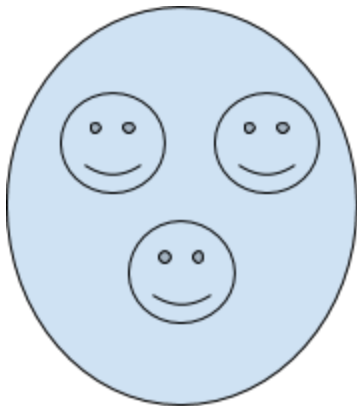
- Describe what you want the students to reflect on
 - Past experiences of belonging - of feeling they were part of something: a group, a team, a community
 - What contributed to those experiences - were there rules or expectations at play? Was there shared language or experiences?
- Have your student mentor give an example - verbally to the whole group while writing on the sheets, e.g.
 - Crew for our high school plays
 - We worked hard and had fun together...we made an important contribution
- Give the students markers and allow them to write briefly (single words or phrases of five words or less) on large sheets of newsprint (you may want two of each, just to help with congestion in the room) with the headers
 - When have you felt like you were part of something?
 - What made you feel part of it?
- When people are done writing, invite the group to look over all the responses
- Your call depending on your style and group dynamic - either while still standing/milling around, or having asked them to return to their seats, ask
 - What stood out for you?
 - Did anything surprise you?

2:25 Communio at SNC

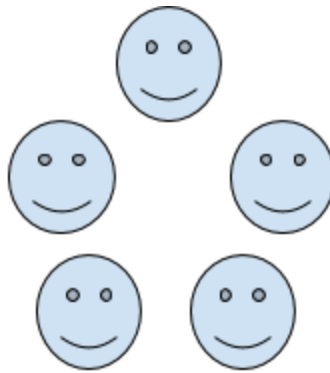
- [Communio video](#)
 - Set-up video by saying something like, "At SNC, we have a very particular vocabulary for how we talk about being part of something, and that is *communio*."

Let's hear from a few people about what they think *communio* means. As you watch, see what answers make the most sense to you"

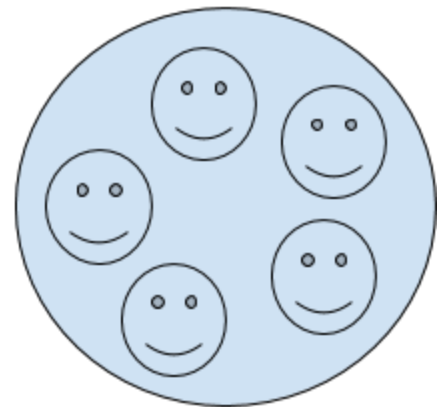
- Coming out of the video, invite a bit of conversation by asking, "Who do you think had the best answer?"
 - Whether or not you get responses, you can come out of that saying something like, "Trick question - they all had good answers! As a value we really try to live on campus, different people think about it and express it in different ways."
- A little mini teaching moment - determine in advance who from your teaching team will deliver this. Use your own words; these are the guiding ideas. Might find it helpful to be able to draw while you talk - so make sure your classroom has what you need for that, or bring it along. [Also, please know this: No one is asking you to be an expert in the theological understanding of the Trinity! Scholars spend lifetimes on this. You're spending, literally, 60 - 120 seconds! In the unlikely event that a student asks a stumper question, I think you can either: a) suggest they bring that into their THRS course this semester or next, or b) say you'll explore a little more and get back to them next week.]
 - But let's take just a moment to think about how our founders describe *communio*. As a Catholic, Norbertine order, the founders would say something like this:
 - We understand God as one God that is a community of persons - Father, Son, Holy Spirit
 - We believe people are created in God's image
 - Therefore, people are most fully living out who they are in community
 - This is why **relationships** are so important on our campus



"God"- 3 persons
in relationship



Humans created
in God's image



Most authentically
live what we are
created to be in
relationship

- That's a faith claim, and it's a central claim for our Norbertine founders
 - And some of us may understand it as expressing what we believe
 - While others of us might have a different perspective

- Whatever the case, it's important to know that this SNC value of *communio* has very deep roots...our challenge to live in relationship with one another springs from our understanding of what human beings are. *Communio* does include everyday kindnesses you experience on campus, but it calls us to even more!

2:35 Building *Communio*

- Split the large group into six subgroups
- Intro the Augustine/Boyer Mash-Up Sheet (these are created and included in this lesson; there is one for each of the six small groups)
 - Some important principles about building community on a college campus - written before you were born! These come from a guy who worked in higher education his whole career and served as the U.S. Commissioner of Education. ([Boyer](#))
 - Paired with other principals about building community - written way, way before you were born! This second set comes from the [Rule of Augustine](#). Is that random? No. Religious orders (of priests, brothers, or sisters,) follow guidelines for their common life. Norbertines follow the Rule of Augustine. So the Rule of Augustine tells us something about what community life should look like at SNC.
- Small group work time - instructions are on the sheets
- Groups report out - note each group has worked on a different principle

2:55 Wrap-up/Learning Capture

- Let students know this next part can be anonymous, but will be collected
- On a post-it note or scrap piece of paper have students write down one thing they learned about *communio*. They can turn this in or leave at their desk.
- Time permitting, they can turn to the person next to them to share what they wrote.
- Time permitting, look back at the name of this session. You might ask the students to explain why it's called: There's No *Communio* Without u! You might simply offer a wise and wistful thought, that emphasizes that communities are places where each person contributes something important and valued.
- Please collect and retain these post-it notes. We are thinking we may want to use for assessment purposes. Details TBD.

Background Information for facilitators, if applicable (short readings, links to relevant websites, videos, etc.)

- <http://www.snc.edu/magazine/2014summer/beingnorbertine.html>
- In addition, this plan has included links to the Times obituary of Ernest Boyer and a handy guide to The Rule of Augustine from our colleagues at Villanova!

Brief Narrative describing the session- This was the original version for the binders. While it didn't change radically, this should be considered less up-to-date than the outline above.

Session will begin with students brainstorming their past experiences of belonging, including the rules/behaviors that support a strong sense of group. Then we will show a video that depicts SNC community members responding to the prompt "communio is..." by writing a word or phrase on a whiteboard. (The photos were captured in April; we're still working on the video.) Leaders will provide a brief teaching on the theological foundation of the concept of communio (language is provided in the outline.) Next, the large group will be divided into six groups and each group will receive a sheet with one principle of community from Ernest Boyer coupled with one or more quotes from the Rule of Augustine. The sheet includes instructions on what the small group is to discuss and be prepared to report out. Large group reporting out is the last main part of this session. Finally, a moment of reflection/learning capture will invite students to note on a post-it (and leave behind,) what they learned about communio in this session.

Augustine/Boyer Mash-Up

With credit to

- Ernest L. Boyer - *Campus Life: In Search of Community*, 1990
- Augustine of Hippo, *The Rule*, circa 400



Purposeful

- A college is an educationally purposeful community, a place where faculty, staff and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on the campus.
- The main purpose for you having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart. (1.2)

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
- Come up with an action step or goal that can bring this principle to life - might start with language such as "Everyone should...", "Students will...", or something like that.
- This year's common theme on campus is *Fiat Lux: Let there be light!* What would it look like to bring more light to the campus by living out these principles?
- Be prepared to share what you discussed in the large group.

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Open

- A college is an open community, a place where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected and where civility is powerfully affirmed.
- Before all else...love God and then your neighbor, because these are the chief commandments given to us.

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
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Just

- A college is a just community, a place where the sacredness of the person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.
- Let all of you then live together in oneness of mind and heart, mutually honoring God in yourselves, whose temples you have become. (1.8)

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
- Come up with an action step or goal that can bring this principle to life - might start with language such as "Everyone should...", "Students will...", or something like that.
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Disciplined

- A college is a disciplined community, a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good.
- In your walk, deportment, and in all actions, let nothing occur to give offense to anyone who sees you, but only what becomes your holy state of life. (4.3)
- You should either avoid quarrels altogether or else put an end to them as quickly as possible; otherwise, anger may grow into hatred, making a plank out of a splinter, and turn the soul into a murderer. (6.1)

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
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Caring

- A college is a caring community, a place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.
- Whenever you go out, walk together, and when you reach your destination, stay together. (4.2)
- Whoever has injured another by open insult, or by abusive or even incriminating language, must remember to repair the injury as quickly as possible by an apology, and he who suffered the injury must also forgive, without further wrangling. (6.2)

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
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Celebrative

- A college is a celebrative community, one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared.
- When you find that you are doing all that has been written, give thanks to the Lord, the Giver of every good. (7.2)

Your group task

- Discuss how you have seen these principles lived out at SNC - think about summer orientation, fall athletic training, Week of Welcome, and your first week of classes.
- Come up with an action step or goal that can bring this principle to life - might start with language such as "Everyone should...", "Students will...", or something like that.
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