

Of the Mission Guiding the Destiny and Identity of NDSCS

The Daily News the weekend of Sept 7th printed a copy of the new NDSCS Mission Statement of the principles that will guide our beloved college through the challenges of the coming decade. I liked much of what I saw there, especially the stressing the higher values crucial in insuring that our graduates succeed at every level as they face the daunting challenges awaiting them in our present, stressful world.

I saw real wisdom in the mission's stressing the need for "integrity, vision, transparency" to build a "culture where compassion and kindness are actively practiced." No one can argue against such virtuous goals.

But what troubled me not a little was the omission of any mention of the ASP (Arts Science and Preprofessional Division.) After all it is the arts and humanities that teach those less than "practical" virtues, instilling peace and good will among men. It is in the study of the great essays, dramas, stories, paintings and music that inspire and uplift the human soul creating civilized behavior. Students also need to learn history so they don't repeat the mistakes that bring on wars. Presently there are people out there with the technology to guide a missile through the picture window of any building on the planet. But do they have the compassion, wisdom and understanding that keeps them from wanting to kill anyone who doesn't share their religion? Sadly, too few of the terrorist-inspired killers have read I Corinthians 13 on love, or heard a rousing sermon touting the rewards gained by loving one's neighbor.

There are lost souls out there who don't believe there's a devil or hell. Thus they have no fear of the eternal torment awaiting their Satanic ("steal, kill, and destroy") behavior.(John 10:10) I assure you, few terrorists have seen *Macbeth*, or read Dante's "*The Inferno*."

So if the new mission statement's omission of any mention of the ASP signals that division's, future elimination from the school's catalog, I would seriously suggest holding off on such a decision.

Over my 40 years teaching at NDSCS, I've seen "seasons" of popularity or decline for all four of our present divisions. As a student here in 1958 and 59, the Junior College classes were packed with people taking liberal arts courses, where they often discovered the field of work they truly wanted, before transferring to the college, business, trade or tech school that fit their dream.

Such versatility is what gave our 4 division 2 year college a big advantage over less diverse schools.

Today the Tech Division has the lime light, and of course we should take advantage of that while the "big iron" is hot to keep our enrollment numbers up. But the way things are changing, it would be short sighted to eliminate many of the course offerings NDSCS is famous for. And now every field requires expertise with computers.

Given life's sheer complexity, demanding constant choices, wisdom and spiritual guidance are crucial. Certainly students, you should hone the skills needed for your career, but if you try to go it one your own, leaving God out

of the equation, you're missing the guidance He would love to give you to help you make the right choices.

I was given this scripture from Isaiah 30:21 for you to consider: "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, 'this is the way, walk ye in it when you turn to the right or to the left.'"

Don't develop mentle and manual dexterity; discover the miraculous empowerment waiting your soul and spirit, "yoked" with the God whose loved you from the start, who says, "Cast all your cares upon Me, for I care for you." Remember, "The battle belongs to the Lord."

Gene Pinkney 24-09-11- for The Daily News