

Leadership (Patrice Brodeur - 2009)

The leadership style I have developed at the CRC-IPG belongs to what is called “bridging leadership”, *an approach to partnership building characterized by the capacity to initiate and sustain a collaborative process designed to achieve meaningful social change through the collective action of multiple and diverse stakeholders.* (Synergos 2004 : <http://www.synergos.org/bridgingleadership/>) In 2007, Lyse Brunet, vice-president at Centraide du Grand Montréal, summarized this kind of leadership as: *Savoir mettre ensemble des savoirs et des compétences pour créer une valeur ajoutée à l'action de changement social afin de relever les immenses défis sociaux que chacun ne peut relever seul.* Rooted in this approach, I make bridges between different spheres and dimensions, especially across the theoretical and applied dimensions of research and action in the field of Religious and Peace Studies in many different places around the world, primarily through the practice of interworldview dialogue. In practical terms, my leadership can be summarized through the following seven interrelated categories: a) scientific community invitations; b) research grants; c) organizations of academic colloquia; d) expert consultations; e) participation at major events; f) partnerships with other academic institutions; g) institutional development. These activities, and many more not directly mentioned here, would not have been possible without the significant and varied contributions of the dozen or so colleagues I have gathered at CRC-IPG.

a) Scientific community invitations

At the American Academy of Religion this past week, I was invited to be on a panel with Diana Eck and Tariq Ramadan to discuss religious pluralism from a comparative perspective (USA, Canada, Europe) as well as present the religious diversity of Montreal for the meeting of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University. A month ago, I was invited by the Center for Lebanese Studies at Oxford University to present at an international conference on *Education for Social Cohesion* at the American University in Beirut a paper on the new “Ethics and Religious Culture” program of Quebec’s Ministry of Education. This past July, I was invited to be the opening speaker for the annual conference of the International Academy of Practical Theology in Chicago. Other invitations have come from a variety of academic institutions, including three times from McGill University, such as being the co-chair, with Professor Arvind Sharam, of a major international conference on *World’s Religions after 9/11*, in September 2005, at the Palais des Congrès in Montreal. This past year alone, I had to turn down eleven invitations to various international academic events.

b) Research grants

Over the last four years, my personal or joint research grants from outside UdeM total over 350,000\$. They have come twice from the United States Institute of Peace (over US\$60,000), twice from SSHRC (over CAN\$100,000), once from UNICEF-GNRC (Global Network of Religion for Children) (over US\$120,000), and several times in the form mostly of travel grants from GHFP (Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace)(over US\$50,000). These grants have allowed me to present papers and conduct research in a number of countries worldwide, but especially in the Balkans and the Arab world. The UNICEF-GNRC grant in particular funded my coordination of twelve scholars for an international research initiative on *Children in World Religions*, which included convening and facilitating three international workshops (Tokyo; Florence; Marrakech).

c) Organizations of academic colloquia:

With the help of my research team at CRC-IPG, and in addition to several panels and round-tables in over a dozen academic conferences, I have organized three one or two day long academic colloquia in the last three years, including one at Université St-Joseph de Beyrouth on *The management of religious diversity in plural societies*, another one at Carleton University on *Islam*,

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pluralism, and globalization, as well as one I co-organized with Professor Marie McAndrew (CRC Tier 1) on *Islam and Education*.

d) Expert consultations:

The Quebec Ministry of Education has invited me a few months ago to renew my three year appointment on the CAR (Comité sur les Affaires Religieuses), an advisory committee to the Minister of Education, as well as on the expert committee for the revision of school books for its new program "Ethics and Religious Culture." The Commissioners Bouchard and Taylor invited me for a personal three hour session, and later invited me to be the lead expert at their Public Forum on Islam in Quebec. The Quebec Association of Judges has invited me twice to participate in their annual professional training sessions. On a Canadian level, two examples are worth mentioning. I was invited by the Global Center for Pluralism in Ottawa to facilitate its first official event gathering 20 leading scholars on pluralism in Canada. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also invited me to facilitate and help plan its annual training course on Islam.

e) Participation at major events:

I was invited to participate, lecture at, and be secretary in several leading international conferences, such as the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations in Istanbul, Turkey (5-7/04/09), the General Assembly of the United Nations: "High Level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace," New York, USA (4-5/10/07), "The future of interreligious dialogue," at the World Council of Churches, Geneva, Switzerland (7-9/06/05), Kyoto, as well as preside a panel at the 3rd International Congress of *Imams et Rabbins pour la Paix*, UNESCO, Paris, France (16/12/08).

f) Partnerships with other academic institutions:

I have developed two kinds of institutional partnerships: research and teaching oriented. In terms of the first kind, there are now strong links between CRC-IPG and the following academic institutions: Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at the Université St-Joseph de Beyrouth, the Pluralism Project at Harvard University, the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University in Washington, DC, and, more recently, the "Islam and the West" project at the Center for Middle East Studies at Harvard University as well as the Center for Islamic Studies at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA, USA. In order to enhance our new minor in Islamic Studies, the CRC-IPG has developed links with the Institut Al-Ghazali de la Grande Mosquée de Paris.

g) Institutional development:

At FTSR, I have participated directly in the development of an MA program in Applied Religious Studies, a first in Canada, as well as a minor in Islamic Studies, a first in French Canada, with the help of my CRC-IPG team. I have personally made it possible for UdeM to acquire most of Professor Jacques Waardenburg's private collection in Islamic and Religious Studies (more than 2,000 books). This acquisition has greatly improved UdeM's holdings in the sciences of religions. Finally, upon arriving at UdeM, I made it possible for UdeM's library acquisition team to meet with their peers at McGill University's Institute of Islamic Studies Library to develop a complementary strategy, based on linguistic, geographical, and thematic differences in acquisition policies. These decisions help strengthen Montreal as the second largest concentration of scholars of religions in North America, after Boston.