

The Debate On Christian Higher Education



Emanuel University Of Oradea, Romania

A Case Study on Best Practices

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Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania

Acknowledgment

Thirty years ago, The Maclellan Foundation considered a proposal submitted by Emanuel Bible Institute for Christian higher education in Romania. Back then, it was just a dream based on faith and hope in what God could do in Romania. After careful consideration, they took a leap of faith and helped Emanuel Bible Institute raise its first building. The evidence of their faith and God's goodness gave rise to this book. In 2020, Emanuel University of Oradea celebrates 30 years of existence. Now, as Emanuel University of Oradea moves beyond infancy and childhood into adulthood, The Maclellan Foundation has the opportunity to see their faith in action as a fruit of labor for the Kingdom of God. This project stresses the possibility of replicating the Emanuel "God with us" model throughout the world. A university that rose from the ashes of Communism through the power of God now has the obligation of being a global beacon of light and truth.

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Introduction

One of the questions that arise when discussing Christian Higher Education Institutions is related to their future and whether they will survive in the long term (Green, 2016). While this question is a serious issue that should be the basis of debates and creative thinking, it can also become a deterrent in the development path. As Christians, one of the risks that we face in the postmodern era is discouragement, which can create a sense of futility.

The key is to keep our determination on the aspects that are important to the Christian faith and to have a Biblical worldview, in which we look towards the future with eyes of faith, even if the present might be difficult. Faced with challenges from financial pressures to political and social tensions, and the risk of losing their identity, Christian universities may start to feel overwhelmed and increasingly alone. In this context, it is essential to acknowledge that there are many encouraging Christian global initiatives in education. When bombarded with negative messages, we should remember the verses from 1 Kings 19. This passage presents us with the prophet, Elijah telling God that he is alone and afraid for his life, after which God lets him know that there are seven thousand other people that have kept the faith, that are alongside Elijah. This image is a powerful reminder that we often do not have access to the whole picture, but the important thing is to follow the One who holds the entire world.

With this Biblical ethos in mind, the following chapters seek to provide valuable information regarding the concepts, practicalities, and essentials of an accredited Christian University, using Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania as a case study. This study's scope provides a blueprint for Christians who have a passion for higher education and would like to open such an institution. While there will be slight cultural and legislative differences, we believe that most of the information provided could be efficiently applied depending on the geographic area. As a result, in the following pages, we will highlight the principal areas of a Christian university—from leadership structures to the teaching and research component, the importance of mentoring, the quality of student environment, and the importance of social impact. This volume may also be employed as a best practices handbook for emerging Christian universities looking to develop and sustain their institution.

We begin this endeavor by placing Emanuel University of Oradea in both a historical and current context, to address pivotal aspects of private accredited Christian universities.

1. The Debate on Christian Higher Education and a Global Overview of Private Accredited Christian Universities

In the last decades, the debates that have been witnessed regarding Christian education are closely tied to what some scholars believe to be a trend of secularization and a religious drift (Burtchaell, 1998). Besides this phenomenon, numerous studies point out that the more educated a person is, the less likely he is to have religious beliefs (Lehman, 1972). Even more alarming is the research that shows the correlation between attending University and religious apostasy. A study from 1977 highlights that attending college was a high-risk factor for negative attitudes towards faith and renouncing previous religious beliefs (Caplovitz and Fred, 1977). This study mentions that the type of college is a clear indicator of this correlation. There are multiple reasons for this reality, among which an important one is peer pressure. Young

people away from their families and church community have a more challenging time coping and filtering the influx of fundamentally adverse ideas to their Christian faith. Despite this information, there are still cases of young people attending non-Christian universities who remain steadfast in their faith and do not walk away from their beliefs, signaling that there are always exceptions to the rule. However, when looking at a world in which there is an increasing trend in secularization, and a growing number of young people walking away from their faith, there is a clear need to develop a quality Christian higher education.

At this point, it is necessary to underline some key concepts in regards to what Christian education means and what its role is in society (Pinkerton, 1950). First, it provides the freedom to incorporate faith in the learning program and to stand against the pressures against religious expressions. Second, it encourages Christian practices, which build the character of the student. For a Christian educational institution, the character is just as important, if not more important than academic excellence. Third, it emphasizes the individual student, as professors see their primary role as mentors. Last, and most important, Christian education promotes a comprehensive Biblical worldview in all aspects, from the professors, the staff, the curriculum, and the mentorship process.

Many new initiatives in this field point towards a positive outlook, even though there are reports of Christian Higher Education Institutions withering and fading. Additionally, as Glanzer articulates in an article for *Christianity Today* in 2012, Christian universities can offer an essential moral dimension to the educational process, which gives it a unique perspective and paradigm. Christian universities can stand apart from their secular

counterparts and provide a much-needed alternative to the young Christian generations.

In the following section, we shall give a short overview of some critical aspects and the global Christian Higher Education context.

Integrating faith in the learning process has many facets, and historically, it has gone through many variations. For example, in the 19th century, Catholics and Protestants considered that universities should concern themselves with integrating faith and education (Gleason, 1995). In the twentieth century, this paradigm changed, and universities were mainly responsible for the teaching component, while Churches remained the keepers of the faith (Sloan, 1994). However, there are notable examples of Christian Higher Education Institutions fighting to maintain their faith identity while also striving for academic excellence. In categorizing Christian Institutions of Higher Education, there are many aspects and variables to consider. Still, Robert Benne identified three crucial elements for defining Christian colleges or universities' public relevance. These three components are the vision of the institutions, the ethos (meaning practice), and people capable of expressing the vision and exemplifying the ethos (Benne, 2001).

For example, in England, there were four primary Christian Universities, namely Oxford, Cambridge, King's College, and Durham. Through several laws passed by the Parliament, these four universities were secularized and lost their primary affiliation with the Church of England. Other instances of smaller colleges or higher education institutions either lost their Christian identity through mergers with larger institutions or just drifted away from their identity since students were no longer interested in confessional institutions. In England, five universities identify with their church foundations, but in comparison to American Christian universities,

they are rarely named or recognized publicly as Christian (Glanzer, 2008).

Given such information, we may believe that the secularization of society has dramatically impacted Christian Higher Education. A study in 2011 (Glanzer, Carpenter, and Lantinga, 2011) highlighted that Christian Higher Education continues to develop and thrive throughout the world. The book mainly studied Christian Higher Education Institutions outside of the United States and Canada and found five hundred and seventy-nine such institutions. The authors mention that most Christian universities in Africa and Eastern Europe have occurred in privatization, which is also the case with Emanuel University of Oradea. This trend of establishing private Christian Higher Education Institutions is central to understanding how these institutions could maintain their faith identity. As a result, in situations where these institutions were allowed to remain private and outside of state control, except for quality assurance, they remained firm in their spiritual foundation.

To have a more unobstructed view regarding the current state of private confessional higher education and how Emanuel University fits into this global context, we conducted research based on online public information (see Note below).¹ The aim was to glean some general characteristics that these universities might share and place Emanuel University of Oradea in the current academic framework. Accordingly, we researched accredited Christian universities related to Emanuel University of Oradea, so we included institutions from the following religious categories: Baptist, Evangelical, Lutheran, and Pentecostal.

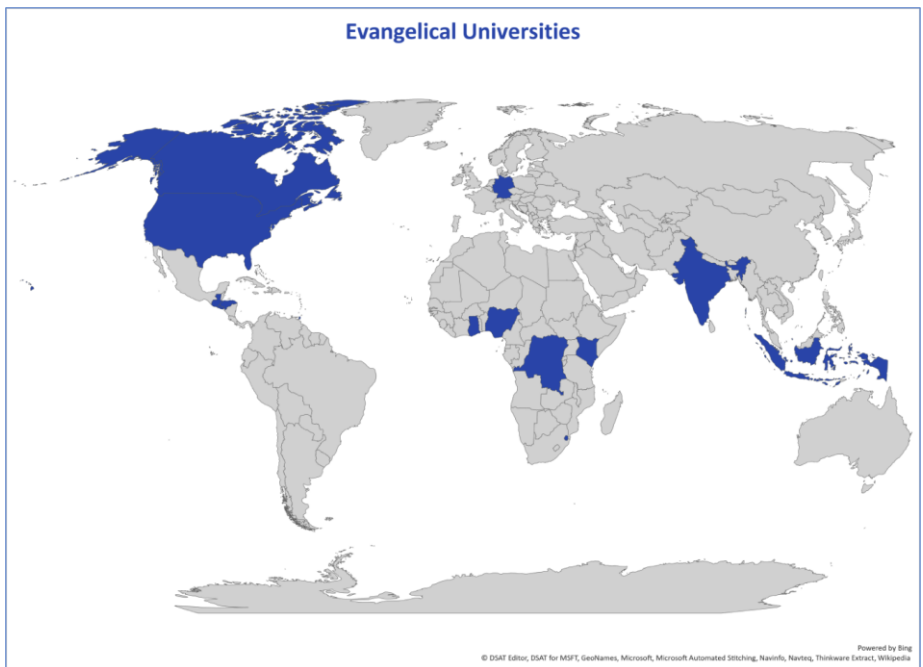
Note: the information for this research was taken from the following resources: <https://www.4icu.org/>, <https://www.whed.net/home.php>, <https://ourworldindata.org/global-education>, accessed April 23rd - May 5th, 2020. A special thank you to Ms. Simona Popoviciu for conducting this research.

An important aspect is that out of the total two hundred and nineteen universities within the four categories previously mentioned, there are only three public universities, with two hundred and fifteen universities being private, and one university did not report information regarding this issue. This aspect highlights the trend of Christian Universities to remain private to protect their moral and spiritual values. From a financial point of view, private universities have a significant challenge in raising the necessary funds to survive, and even thrive, while state universities rarely have that burden. However, two hundred and fifteen Evangelical, Baptist, Lutheran, and Pentecostal Universities that are private proves that some Higher Education Institutions have maintained their Christian identity.

Another important detail of these institutions, public or private, is that a legal and recognized authority accredits them. This aspect was selective in this research, as we only highlighted institutions that are subject to periodic quality control.

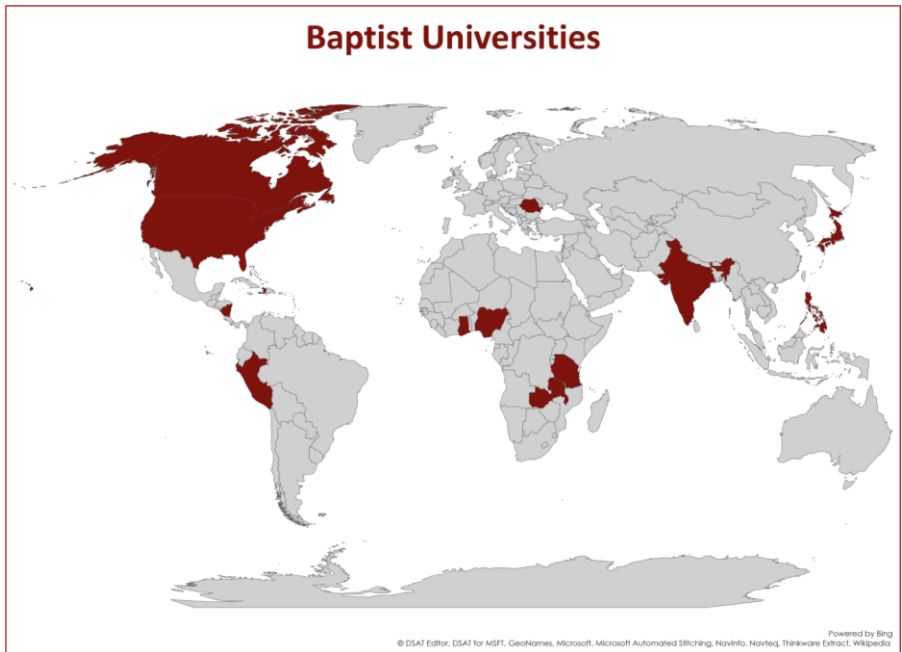
We first sought out to analyze how many universities existed in each category and found the following information. There are forty-five Evangelical universities globally (as seen in figure 1), with North America having twenty-four of them, at a significant distance, followed by Africa, with thirteen such universities. South America has four Evangelical universities, while in Europe and Asia, there are just two Evangelical universities, one of them being Emanuel University of Oradea.

Figure 1: Evangelical Universities in the world



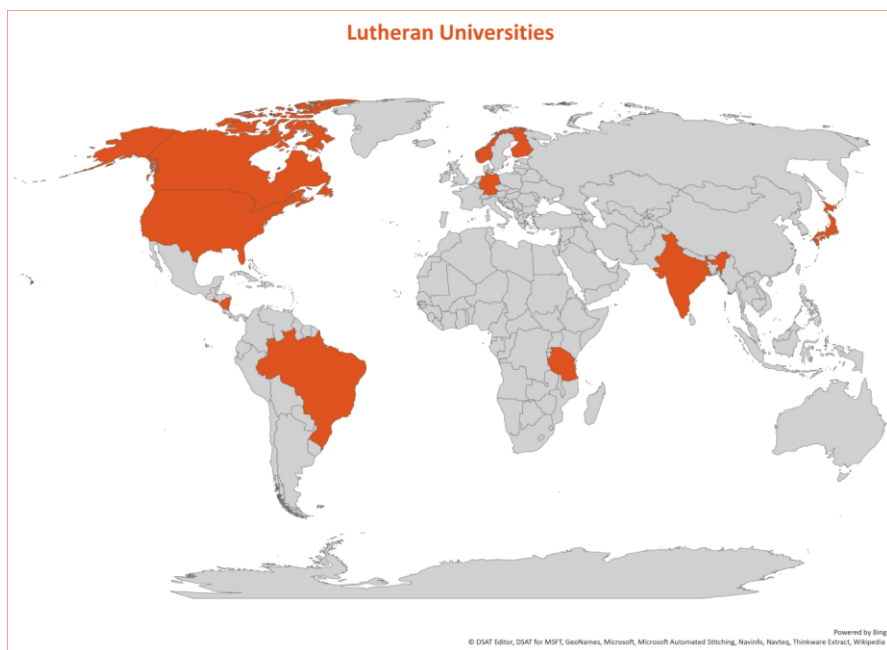
There are ninety-two Baptist universities globally (as seen in figure 2), with the highest number of seventy-eight in North America, three universities in South America, **one university in Europe** (Emanuel University of Oradea), five universities in both Africa and Asia.

Figure 2: Baptist Universities in the world



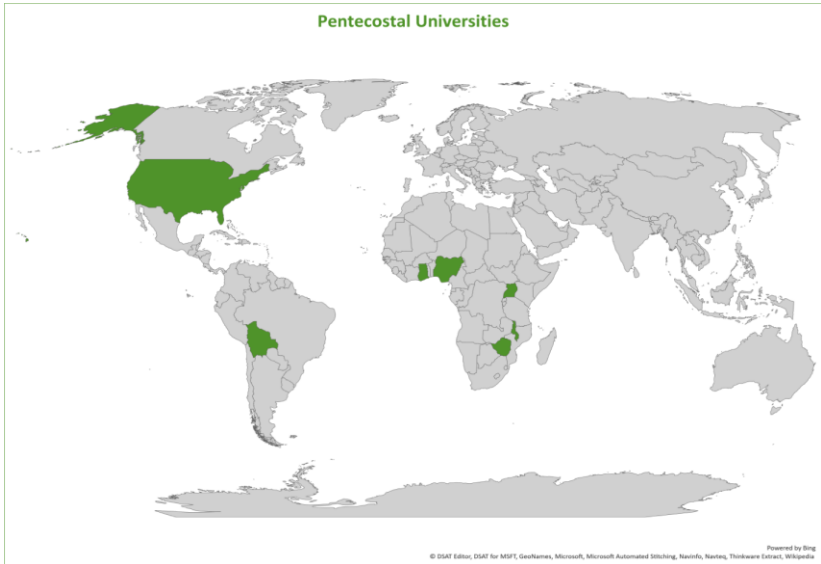
We also researched the global context of Lutheran universities, as seen in figure 3. The results found that the highest number was also in North America, counting forty-one such institutions. Surprisingly, Europe is a distant second, with six universities, and South America and Africa have three Lutheran universities.

Figure 3: Lutheran Universities in the world



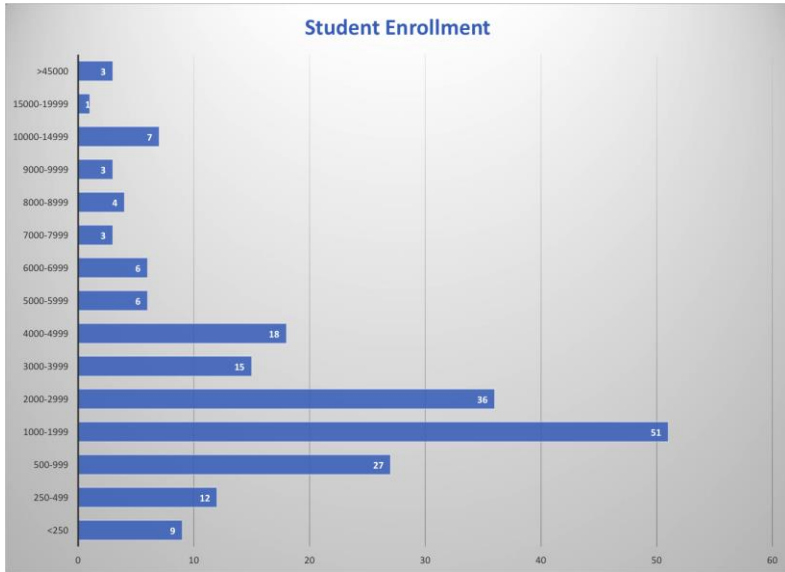
Regarding Pentecostal universities (as seen in figure 4), our research highlighted thirteen universities in North America, followed by nine universities in Africa and five in South America. Surprisingly, there were no Pentecostal universities in Europe, despite a significant Pentecostal presence in that region.

Figure 4: Pentecostal Universities in the world



After analyzing these universities' numbers and geographic placement, we also researched students' enrollment to determine the student body's count, as seen in figure 5. Most universities out of the two hundred and nineteen institutions analyzed fell within the 500 to 4999 count, with just twenty-one universities having less than 500 students, and thirty-three universities having more than 5000 students. This data indicated that most Evangelical, Baptist, Lutheran, and Pentecostal accredited universities are of medium size regarding their student enrollment.

Figure 5: Student Enrollment Numbers

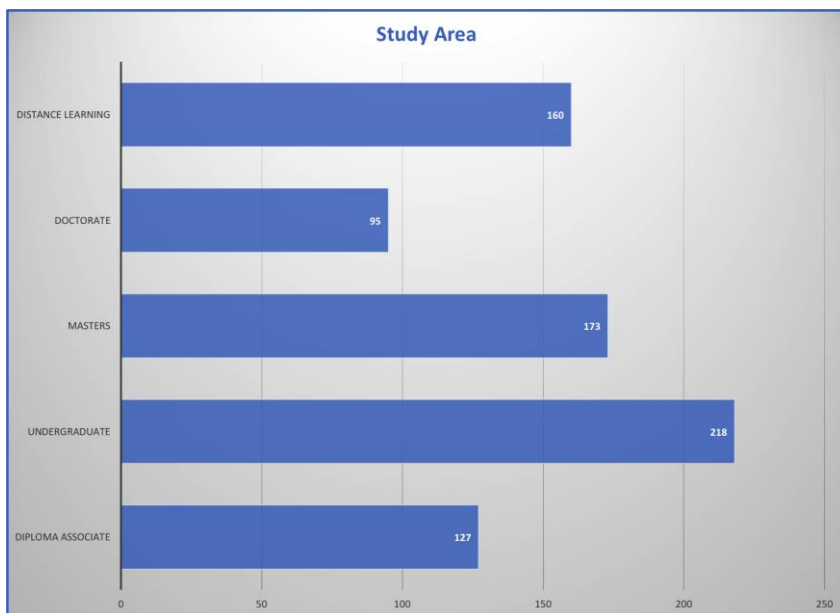


Given the numbers presented on student enrollment, we also considered it essential to highlight the numbers on the academic staff and how these aspects correlate. One of the challenges of providing this information is that not all universities have public information regarding their academic staff. However, some general statistics apply to the selected universities. Universities with less than 500 students usually have less than 50 academic staff, meaning that there is one professor for every ten students. Universities with a higher student body, between 500-1000, commonly have between 50 and 100 academic staff. As a result, the ratio of one academic staff per ten students is maintained. Universities with the number of students between 1000-1999 generally have from 100 to 199 professors on staff. Universities with 2000-4999 students have up to 299 academic staff, so the ratio varies from six to sixteen students per academic

staff, which is still the right balance. Larger universities have an increased number of academic staff. Most of these universities strive to have sufficient staff to mentor and offer adequate attention to each student.

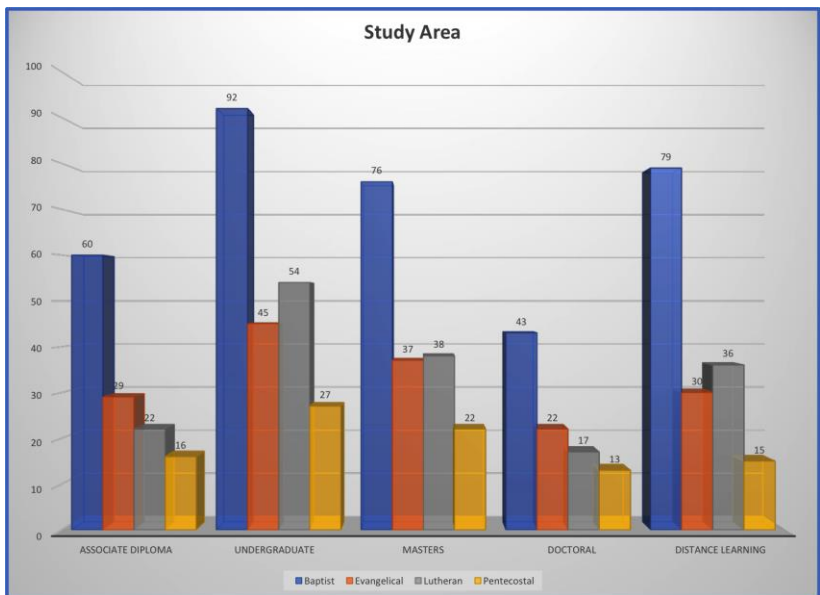
Another significant element to consider is the study areas that Evangelical, Baptist, Lutheran, and Pentecostal Universities have. As shown in figure 6, out of the two hundred and nineteen universities, one hundred and twenty-seven offer an associate diploma, two hundred and eighteen have undergraduate studies, one hundred and seventy-three offer a master's degree, and ninety-five also have a doctoral program. Also, out of the two hundred and nineteen universities, almost all of them, precisely, one hundred and sixty of them have distance-learning programs.

Figure 6: Study areas offered by the 219 sampled universities



Starting from this statistic and zooming in on each category's particulars, we have the following data, as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Study areas for Evangelical, Baptist, Lutheran, and Pentecostal Universities



Study Area for Baptist universities:

- 60 out of 92 offer an associate diploma
- 92 out of 92 offer undergraduate diploma
- 76 out of 92 offer a master's program
- 43 out of 92 offer doctorate program
- 79 out of 92 have a distance learning program

Study Area for Evangelical universities:

- 29 out of 45 offer an associate diploma
- 45 out of 45 offer undergraduate diploma

- 37 out of 45 offer a master's program
- 22 out of 45 offer doctorate program
- 30 out of 45 have a distance learning program

Study Area for Lutheran universities:

- 22 out of 55 offer an associate diploma
- 54 out of 55 offer undergraduate diploma
- 38 out of 55 offer a master's program
- 17 out of 55 offer doctorate program
- 36 out of 55 have a distance learning program

Study Area for Pentecostal universities:

- 16 out of 27 offer an associate diploma
- 27 out of 27 offer undergraduate diploma
- 22 out of 27 offer a master's program
- 13 out of 27 offer doctorate program
- 15 out of 27 have a distance learning program

Based on this information, we can observe that all Evangelical, Baptist, and Pentecostal Universities offer undergraduate programs, all but one Lutheran University offers undergraduate programs. Also, there are fewer master programs offered in every category, and even fewer universities offer a doctoral program, as this degree entails a more sophisticated academic structure. Although the research aspect was not mentioned in this research, the lack of a doctoral program could indicate that Universities are less inclined to emphasize the research component. Another essential aspect that we looked for was if these universities included Theology subjects in their curriculum. We found that thirty-three universities did not include Theology subjects in their curriculum, and one university did not

offer any information on this subject. Therefore, one hundred and eighty-five universities have incorporated Theology into their academic programs. We believe that this aspect is significant because it raises whether a University that does not emphasize Theological education can be called Christian. While in some cases, there are legitimate reasons for not openly including Theology, such as the cases in which universities are in countries where Christianity is persecuted, in other instances, it is merely the university's policy.

At Emanuel University of Oradea, regardless of the department in which students are enrolled, they all have at least one mandatory Theology subject they must take each semester. The Theology subjects are carefully selected to ensure that students have a doctrinal and biblical knowledge, which would help them in their future careers and ministries. We believe that the inclusion of Theology subjects, together with weekly chapel services and a clear Biblical emphasis, are the principal reasons Emanuel University stands apart from secular universities.

After presenting the global context in which Emanuel University of Oradea functions, the following section is dedicated to its history, mission statement, and motto. These aspects are paramount in understanding the spiritual and moral foundations which stand at the core of the University.

2. Emanuel University of Oradea – A Brief History, Mission Statement, and Motto

Emanuel University of Oradea began as a dream in the years 1974-1976. Under the threat and persecution of Communism, Romanian Christian believers from Emanuel Baptist Church (then known as 2nd Baptist Church) started praying and believing that amazing things are possible with God. Seeing the great need for Christian education and mentoring, the pastors of Emanuel Baptist Church, Nicolae Gheorghită and Paul Negruț, started a secret underground school to form pastors, evangelists, and missionaries for the cities and villages of Romania.

After the fall of Communism, this secret underground school known as the School of Prophets became a Baptist Theological Institute, which functioned at a university level. Encouraged by the significant number of young evangelicals who wished to study at Emanuel Bible Institute and by the support of prominent academic and public officials, the Institute developed into a University a few

years later. Throughout the years, it has expanded its vision to include alongside Pastoral Baptist Theology: Music, Social Work, Romanian – English Language and Literature, Management, and Business Information Systems.

Presently, Emanuel University of Oradea is the only accredited conservative Baptist University in Europe with a precise goal of training young evangelicals in a context that combines academic excellence with Christian character.

The Mission of Emanuel University of Oradea is linked to its didactic and research components, and has three main objectives:

1. Academic – The purpose of Emanuel University of Oradea is to train pastors and missionaries to serve the local churches and as specialists in other domains while being competitive in their scientific communities and excellent professionals who integrate their ethical-moral principles in their specialized area.
2. Research – Emanuel University promotes transdisciplinary research to capitalize on the relationship between Trinitarian theology and social sciences, economy, and the arts. Our research objective is to disseminate valuable written and published materials, which offer pertinent answers to today's challenges, especially in Evangelical churches and contemporary society.
3. Mission – Emanuel University of Oradea encourages its faculty and students to promote a relevant theology for the Romanian culture and beyond, intending to create a school of thought based on the embodiment of the Gospel in contemporary culture.

Initially, the motto of Emanuel University was "Integrity and Excellence," but after a few years, the administration included "Passion." The basis for this motto is found in Daniel's book from the Bible, where we are told about the young man whose virtue and integrity made him one of the highest moral characters in the world's history. Emanuel University has chosen this motto because we wish to see our students and graduates emulate Daniel in their attitudes and moral compass. Daniel was part of the conquered people, who were taken into the Babylonian captivity. Still, he proved to have the necessary qualities of integrity and excellence to become a key figure in the kingdom. Daniel was willing to sacrifice everything rather than compromise his integrity, and God honored him by making him an influential and excellent leader who came up with solutions to solve his days' problems. We hope that our alumni will go in the world and become the leaders of tomorrow through integrity in their decisions, excellence in their work, and passion in their approach.

For us, Emanuel University is a miracle and a blessing and is a unique opportunity for students and graduates.

3. Authority and Leadership Structures

One of higher education's critical goals is the training of ethical and moral people to better society (McWillaims and Nahavandi, 2006). Until the 20th century, most higher education institutions had this imperative of transforming society for good through their mandate of being "moral ventures" (Leroy Long, 1992). In the last decade, many universities have shifted their focus from the moral and ethical component towards a more pragmatic and corporate model, which despite having financial benefits, comes with dangers and challenges, such as being beholden to donors or other stakeholders (Lazzeretti and Tavoletti, 2006). Given the mission of Emanuel University of Oradea, the moral and ethical mandate is of utmost importance. As a result, the leadership and governance model was established to ensure an institutional moral and spiritual responsibility.

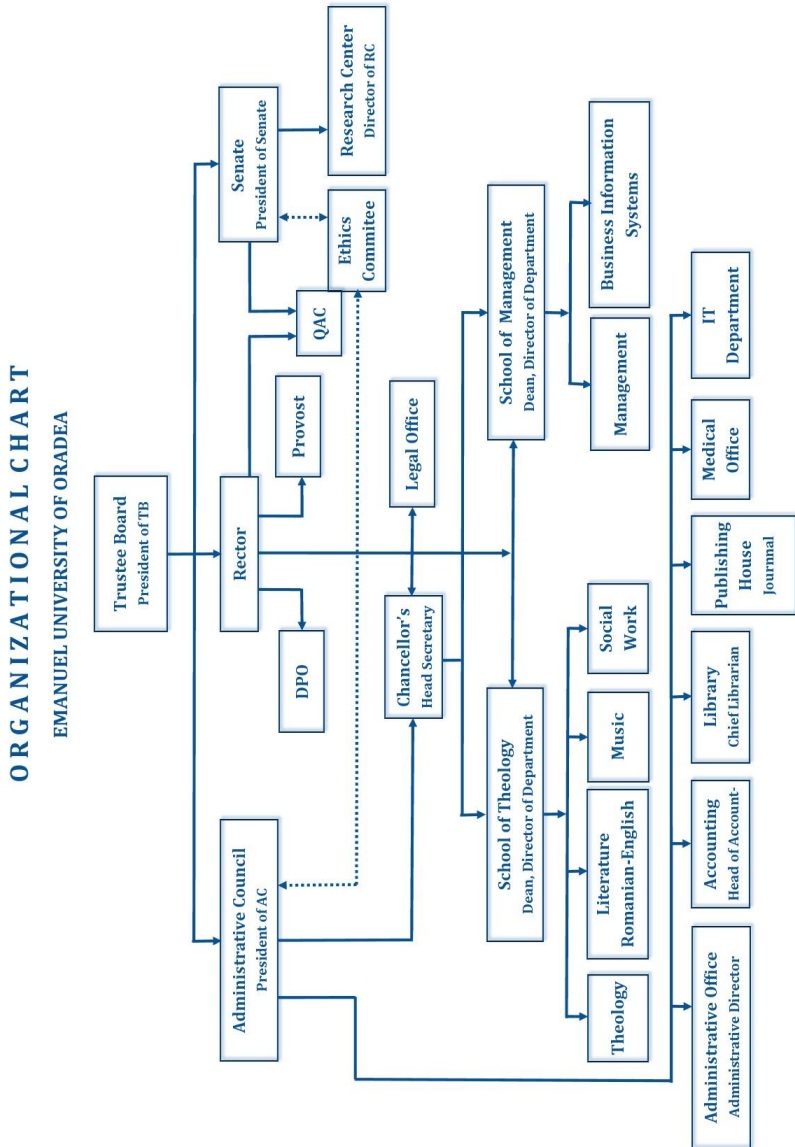
3.1. Leadership

As we shall further present, the key governing entities of Emanuel University are the Board of Trustees, the University Senate, The Rector, and the Administrative Council, as seen in figure 8 - Organizational Chart.

3.1.1. The Board of Trustees

From an organizational perspective, European universities have changed structure in the last two decades, transforming towards a more autonomous and entrepreneurial entity (Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson, 2000). An integral part of these reforms has been in regards to the governance model, with the chief executive (President or Rector) receiving more power and the introduction of university boards, composed mostly of external personalities, but with a strong decision-making capability (Kretek, Dragšić and Kehm, 2013). Emanuel University of Oradea, being a part of the European Union, mirrors some of the university reforms that have taken place in the last decades. However, given its spiritual and confessional dimension, the governance model ensures a moral and spiritual direction. The first measure taken by the founders of Emanuel University was to put the university's leadership under the spiritual authority of Emanuel Baptist Church of Oradea. The pastors of this Church, alongside a group of distinguished personalities from the evangelical sphere, comprise the Board of Trustees. We believe that this accountability model is essential to guarantee the School's spiritual welfare and moral direction.

Figure 8: Emanuel University of Oradea Organizational Chart



From a practical standpoint, as founder, Emanuel Baptist Church is recognized as the spiritual and administrative authority by which Emanuel University runs its whole activity, as stipulated in the University's charter. Emanuel Baptist Church is responsible for delegating the Trustee Board, constituted as an executive branch of the Church. The Board should ensure that the university fulfills its purpose as a confessional higher education institution to promote academic excellence and ethical-moral integrity within its community. The Board also serves to ensure that the physical assets of Emanuel University of Oradea are kept intangible and unaltered, with an exclusive right of property belonging to Emanuel Baptist Church of Oradea.

In Europe, there are diverse governance structures in universities, based on their specific mission and objectives. Still, most universities can be placed in either a unitary governance model or a dual governance model (Bennetot, Pruvot, and Estermann, 2018). The unitary model is based on one governing body with the decision-making powers, for example, a Board or Senate. Most Nordic countries have universities with unitary model governance. The dual governance model is defined as a structure that includes both a board type structure and a senate-type body with decision-making responsibilities. This model is frequently found across Europe, but with different distributions of power, as some universities emphasize the Board and others give more importance to the Senate. In most cases, both governing bodies have distinct and well-planned responsibilities, with the Board having more of a strategic responsibility, while the Senate is responsible for the academic aspects.

3.1.2. The University Senate

Emanuel University falls within the second category, with a dual governance model. It has both a board of trustees responsible for strategy and vision and a senate, which answers for the academic environment. The University Senate represents the academic community, and is a forum of debates and decisions, emphasizing academic values and standards. The Senate members are chosen through a universal, direct, and secret vote of full-time faculty and researchers. Also, the entire student population of Emanuel University elects the student senate members. Research shows that students are an essential part of the development of quality procedures, and their input has a significant impact on the quality assurance process (Bergan, 2003). Therefore, the Senate of Emanuel University comprises a minimum of 25% student representatives, with the remaining 75% being elected faculty and research members. To ensure the university's dogmatic and canonic considerations, the Board of Trustees must endorse every member of the Senate. This endorsement guarantees that the Senate's elected members are ethical, moral, and professional representatives interested in the university's well-being.

After the Senate is elected, a secret vote is scheduled through which a president is elected. The president's role is to chair and lead the Senate meetings in which significant decisions are made. Despite some critical voices, which have cast doubt over Senate meetings' efficiency, most universities find that these encounters are paramount in resolving significant university issues (Birnbaum, 1989), (Miller, Smith and Nadler, 2016).

The appointment of a university Senate is four years, and the position for a member of the Senate is also four years, but with the

possibility of renewal. For the Senate students, the mandate is finished once the students graduate or cease to be registered as part of the University student body. The Senate has regularly scheduled meetings. In exceptional circumstances, a meeting can be convened at the Rector's request, Chairman of the Administration, Chairman of the Board, or the appeal of at least a third of its members.

The attributes of Emanuel University of Oradea's Senate are numerous and varied, but among the most important, the following are mentioned:

- It guarantees the academic freedom and university autonomy, ensuring the dogmatic and canonic particulars of the Baptist Denomination in Romania by the whole academic community;
- After debating with the academic community of Emanuel University of Oradea, The Senate expounds and the adopts the University charter, the Quality Assurance Code and the Code of professional ethics and deontology, the Code for the right and obligations of students, and the methodologies and regulations of the organization of the University;
- Approves the strategic and operational plans for institutional development, which are advanced by the Rector and the Chairman of the Administration Council;
- Establishes, as the bequest of the Administration Council, the structure, organization, and operation of the University, in compliance with the legislation;

- Monitors, through specialized committees, the activities of the University;
- Approves the competition methodology for filling the vacant posts for faculty, and the proposal of the Quality Assurance Council periodically evaluates the human resource component;
- At the Administrative Council's request, the Senate approves the faculty's sanctions with substandard teaching and research results;
- Also, at the Administrative Council's motion, and through the advisory committees, it analyzes proposals to establish or disband any internal structures, such as departments or faculties;
- The Council also authorizes plans for associations or cooperation plans with national or international organizations and the affiliation of the University to other academic or professional entities.

3.1.3. The Rector

In today's challenging educational and moral environment, an academic leader's role becomes crucial (Jones, 2011). A university leader is known as a rector, Chancellor, or President, and his responsibilities vary depending on the educational system. In some universities, with multiple stakeholder boards, the President has more of a representative role, while in other systems, the position carries strong executive powers (Henard and Mitterle, 2010). In the latter case, the primary responsibility of a rector/president is to implement the decisions made by the Senate

or Board, or both. The Rector also has the difficult task of mediating between the academic community's interests and that of the external board and academic sponsors. This role is vital, as it connects the academic representatives with society's needs and interests. On the other hand, the Rector also has to champion and promote the university staff and the academic community's ideas, initiatives, and projects to receive the needed support (Shapiro, 1998).

At Emanuel University of Oradea, the head of the University is called a rector and is elected for four years, with the possibility of serving two consecutive terms. The Rector is the university's legal representative, based on the mandate derived from the managerial contract signed with the University Senate. The members of the Board of Trustees must validate the Rector before being voted by the University faculty.

The Rector assures the academic governance based on the University Senate and Board. One of the key mandates for the Rector is to present an annual report regarding the University as a component of public responsibility. This document must be validated by the Senate and subsequently made available on the University webpage. The report includes the University's financial situation, including financing sources and the expenses incurred during the year. It also presents each department's situation and the actions implemented to ensure the quality of the teaching and research component. These reports are done with the endorsement of the Quality Assurance Committee and the Administrative Council. The quality validation also presents the employability of the graduates, which is an important aspect. The annual report further presents the faculty structure, the primary research, and

teaching results that have added value to the University.

The following responsibilities are also part of the Rector's obligations:

- To submit the University's structure and regulations, endorsed by the Administrative Council, for Senate approval;
- At the proposal of the Administrative Council, to name or dismiss university employees;
- Sign all official documents, such as diplomas or collaboration agreements;
- To establish the responsibilities of pro-rectors, based on the Board of Trustees' recommendations and the University Senate.

If for any reason, the Rector is unable to exert his/her responsibility, or if the position is vacated, then the attributes of the Rector are taken over by the Administrative Chancellor, the Pro-rector, or the President of Senate. These decisions can only be implemented with the endorsement of the Board of Trustees. If the Board for valid reasons withdraws their endorsement of the Rector, the University Senate can dismiss him/her.

3.1.4. The Administrative Council

The Administrative Council of Emanuel University is the governing body that assures the university's operational management through the Chairman of the Council. The Board of Trustees names the Chairman and the members of the Administrative Council. The Council comprises five to eleven members, which have a mandate of four years, with the possibility

of renewal, based on the recommendations of the Board. The Chairman must be a renewed academic or ecclesial personality, with extensive managerial experience, national and international recognition, and a strong moral stance. Ideally, the Chancellor would be part of the tenured professors at Emanuel University.

The Administrative Council schedules regular meetings, in which the President of the Senate is invited to participate. Among the essential tasks addressed in the sessions are the following:

- To propose to the Senate long term strategies for the University;
- To approve the institutional budget, the budget execution, and annual balance sheet;
- Any financial involvement of the University is possible only with the approval of the Council, with the Chancellor applying the decisions by managing the funds and signing the necessary documents;
- Creates consultative structures composed of representatives of the economic environment and personalities from the external academic, cultural and professional environment;
- Approves the proposals for teaching and research positions;
- Approves proposals for new study programs and makes proposals to the University Senate for the termination study programs that no longer fall within the mission of the University or which are academically and financially inefficient;
- Proposes the appointment or dismissal of teaching, scientific or administrative staff;

- Establishes tuition, accommodation and meal fees, and the registration for admission, dissertation, and other such fees;
- Analyzes and approves applications for exemption from taxes or their reduction.

From an academic standpoint, Emanuel University of Oradea is integrated into the national educational system and functions under the authority and recognition of the Minister of Education and Research from Romania, through the accreditation awarded by the Romanian Agency of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior - ARACIS). Emanuel University of Oradea is also part of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

Emanuel University chose to follow the accreditation route for several reasons. First, an accredited university has the necessary quality check that ensures the standards and qualifications of the programs that it offers. Second, an accredited university provides the students with the reassurance that future employers would accept their degree and that our graduates would have abilities that are adequately suited for the workforce. Third, the periodic accreditation process requires the University to remain alert in maintaining its quality by continually meeting the accrediting agency's criteria. Finally, it helps the institution of higher education set realistic goals for self-improvement and development.

3.2. Internal Management

While the governance and leadership entities mostly establish and make sure that appropriate goals are achieved, the internal management is primarily responsible for administering institutional decisions (Neumann and Neumann, 2000).

3.2.1. The University Dean

Historically, the rector of a university would appoint a dean to help with different duties. Today, a dean concept varies across countries, cultures, and even among universities in the same country (Arntzen, 2016). Nonetheless, a dean is mostly viewed as a manager responsible for the leadership of a particular college.

At Emanuel University of Oradea, the Dean represents and is responsible for the management of the School. At Emanuel, there are two schools: The School of Theology and the School of Management, each with their respective departments. As a result, the University has two elected deans, one for each School. The Deans are elected through a public competition organized by the Rector, and those eligible for the position are either professors from Emanuel University or professors from other higher education institutions, as long as they have received the endorsement of the Board. One of the Dean's strategic obligations is to organize and prepare the School Council's meetings, in which the Senate's decisions, the Administrative Council, and the Rector are implemented. Once a year, the Dean has the charge to present a public report to the Council of the School regarding the most critical aspects related to the School.

The Dean is responsible to the Senate, the Council of

Administration, the Rector, and the School Council. The Dean may also be removed from office by the Senate, at the Rector's or Board's proposal, for not fulfilling the appointed tasks or upon retirement.

Among the responsibilities of the Dean are the following:

- To summon and coordinate the Council of the School;
- To coordinate and manage the subordinate structures, such as the departments;
- Proposes, when necessary, petitions towards the School Council to revoke the persons elected for subordinate management positions;
- Proposes and approves the employment or dismissal of the auxiliary teaching staff or the non-teaching staff of the School.

3.2.2. The Council of the School

The Council of the School represents the debate and decision body of the School and is formed of student representatives and full-time faculty members. The Faculty in the Council are elected through a universal, direct, and secret vote by all faculty members that are part of the School. The student body elects the students that form the Council.

The Council of the School is responsible for approving, at the Dean's proposal, the structure, the organization, and the operation of the School. It also ensures that the Dean's activity is per the objectives of the School, and it approves the annual report written by the Dean. Another important task that the School Council ensures is the endorsement of the study programs proposed within the School.

3.2.3. The Departments

The department is the School's fundamental structural unit, with its management being provided by the Department Director and Department Council. The Department Director represents the essential connection between the university leadership and department members. Frequently, an institution's influence depends on its department's accomplishments in reconciling the institutions' demands with those of the department (Hecht et al., 1999).

The Department director and the members of the Council are elected through a universal, direct, and secret vote of the entire full-time faculty. To apply for the Department director position, one must be a full-time faculty member from the respective department and be endorsed by the Board of Trustees. The Department director is in charge of the department's management and operational leadership, a task that is shared with the Department Council.

Among the obligations of the Department director are the following:

- Is responsible for the academic curriculum;
- Assigns the available teaching subjects to teachers and draws up the lists of staff positions;
- Is in charge of the research component and the quality of the educational process;
- Drafts and presents an annual report to the department to give essential and opportune information;
- After consulting with the tenured professors, he/she proposes the invitation of associate professors;
- Proposes and promotes programs and academic

collaborations with national and international institutions;

- Proposes and consults with the department members to award professors with exceptional results;
- Nominates people with outstanding performances for the titles of "Emeritus Professor" and "Doctor Honoris Causa";
- Periodically, the director evaluates the quality of teaching and research of the academic staff. Based on those evaluations, it has the right to propose the termination of the respective work contract.

3.2.4. Ethics and Professional Deontology Committee

The Ethics Committee is an integral part of Higher Education Institutions, and such committees are meant to be a regulatory entity to ensure research ethics (McGuinness, 2008). In the U.K., these panels are known as the Research Ethics Committees, while in the USA, they are called Institutional Review Boards. Still, both are commissioned with assuring moral practices in the research process. Beyond this uniform principle, many dilemmas and ownership questions shape the research ethics debates (McAreavey and Muir, 2011). Still, at Emanuel University, the ethical and moral component goes beyond the research facts applied in all activity areas.

At Emanuel University, due to the confessional specificity of Emanuel University in Oradea, the University Ethics Committee brings together those faculty and staff who also have the function of ordained pastors. The members of this Committee must receive

an endorsement from the Board and validation from the University Senate. The Pastor of Emanuel University leads the Ethics Committee to ensure the academic community's moral-spiritual identity and has the authority to apply the provisions stipulated in the Code of Ethics.

The principal role of the Ethics Committee is to evaluate any moral-spiritual or academic integrity misconduct of staff and students and to motion corrective or disciplinary measures. The Committee also aims to examine and propose the students' endorsement for leadership positions within Emanuel University of Oradea. To the same extent, the Committee endorses the hiring of administrative staff for the University.

3.2.5. The Technical-Administrative Body

It is coordinated by the General Administrative Director, who is elected via an open competition, with the Administrative Council's validation and the board's endorsement. The Rector of the University accepts the appointment for the job of General Administrative Director.

The principal tasks of the General Administrative Director are as follows:

- Exercises power delegated by the Board of Directors to fulfill the administrative tasks and implements the Directors' decisions regarding the university budget;
- Initiates projects for attracting complementary finance resources for the university while also coordinating the management of the University's patrimony;
- Is responsible for assuring the protection of the

- academic community within the universality space;
- Coordinates the flux of students and the social activities of the University.

3.2.6. Specialized Committees of the Senate

These Committees lead the academic component and periodically draft and present critical information regarding these matters. The reports are then debated and discussed in the University Senate to find solutions regarding the quality of the educational offers and establish a knowledge culture.

3.2.7. Consultative Structure

This structure comprises representatives of the economic, academic, cultural, and professional forums, through which the University receives advice needed to assure quality academic governance.

3.2.8 Commission for Quality Assessment and Analysis

Quality Assurance is one of the most critical ways universities can maintain excellence by ensuring that national and international standards are accepted in the educational process (OECD & World Bank, 2007). University Committees or Commissions for Quality control are mainly responsible for complying with quality criteria necessary for accreditation. If a higher education institution decides to seek accreditation, they need to achieve standards in diverse areas, such as faculty,

curriculum, student services, and administration, among others (Eaton, 2011).

Most Quality Assessment Committees or Councils are responsible for the institutions' research component, as university rankings are largely biased towards the research, more than the teaching process. One of the problems with this concept is that research rankings indicate the outcome, not the process. On the other hand, the quality of teaching is based on the process and the product (Brink, 2018). While there is no easy path to reconcile these two paradigms, Emanuel University is keen on having high standards that produce quality outcomes without sacrificing the educational process.

The Commission for Quality Assessment and Analysis at Emanuel University of Oradea answers for the academic and research activities' quality. The Commission was founded through the Senate's approval at a university level and a College level. Quality assurance in higher education is an obligation assumed by the University; this process also involves students. The students have at least one representative in these commissions, to ensure proper delegation.

The Commission's role is to evaluate how the quality standards for teaching and research are fulfilled and to monitor the professors, researchers, and students' activity in the university activities. After an appropriate analysis, the Committee presents reports to the University Senate and Administrative Council. Also, to ensure the relevance of the educational and research process, the Committee can invite employers and alumni representatives to become part of the Quality Commission.

Also, each study program is periodically monitored, revised,

and updated as part of the quality management activities, regarding the following aspects: the needs and objectives identified in the job market; the teaching-learning-evaluation processes; material, financial and human resources; results regarding progress and the success rate of the graduates; and the employability rate of the graduates in the field.

The statute of the Quality Assurance Commission specifies ten principles:

1. European Reference – Emanuel University is part of the Romanian higher education system and institutions belonging to the European Space for Higher Education. This adherence ensures that the university quality levels are following the requirements of European and international mandates;
2. Institutional responsibility – the responsibility and management that ensures quality is a mandatory feature for all higher education institutions, per university autonomy, and the national legislation;
3. Institutional diversity – this aspect, which entails the diversification of university objectives, are respected and encouraged through external quality assessments;
4. Cooperation with all the entities responsible for the educational system, through mutual trust and collaborative partnerships with other higher education institutions and partners;
5. A focus on results is essential in quality assurance and evaluation, in learning outcomes and performance in research;
6. Institutional identity – learning and research outcomes and performances can be achieved through various

practices, methods, or structures, designed and applied autonomously by each higher education institution. Emanuel University of Oradea evaluates its results and performances without neglecting the good practices in academic quality;

7. Internal institutional self-assessment – needed to establish and evaluate the institutional specifics and ensure their continuity and performance;
8. External evaluation – is based on the university's capacity to demonstrate its performance in learning and research and actively verifying that its educational offer rises above the assumed standards;
9. Quality improvement – the continuous improvement of educational quality is the main objective of the Quality Assurance Commission;
10. Transparency – the results of evaluations are finalized through reports, which are public documents, as part of Emanuel University's public responsibility.

4. Ensuring the Quality of Teaching

One of the paramount aspects of Higher Education Institutions is the quality of teaching. In an increasingly competitive environment, students look towards universities that rank high in the teaching component (Telford and Masson, 2005). The concept of Quality Teaching has different meanings, as highlighted by Harvey and Green (1993), but generally falls within the following definitions. A classic understanding of this concept is quality as excellence, through which teaching is a useful tool for learning. Another definition views teaching quality as "value for money," in the sense that the students receive the expected outcome from their education, and is validated through the marketplace. Third, the term "fitness for purpose" in teaching refers to the degree to which expectations are met and fulfilled, and it is a more practical term (Jung, Sasaki and Latchem, 2016). The last definition refers to the "transforming" power of quality

teaching, and it refers to helping students change their perceptions to employ their knowledge efficiently.

At Emanuel University of Oradea, we recognize the importance of the teaching component and seek to provide an invaluable education culture. The educational process is organized, taking into account modern methods used to integrate knowledge, lifelong learning, and combining the real with the virtual in the application of methods.

From an organizational standpoint, the academic year's structure is approved annually by the University Senate and is published at least three months before starting the new academic year. The academic year includes two semesters; each semester has 14 weeks of teaching activities followed by at least three weeks of exams. At the beginning of the study cycle, each student signs a study contract, which stipulates the study areas covered in the curriculum and the credits received each year. These study contracts cannot be changed during the academic year, so we advise that students seek guidance before signing the contracts. At the beginning of each university year, first-year students sign a study contract, which includes each party's rights and obligations while a student at Emanuel University.

From a strategic point of view, Emanuel University of Oradea considers that teaching quality is directly correlated with the teaching staff's quality. One of the critical aspects of any university is acknowledging that the faculty *is* the university (Barrett, 1963). Consequently, the University actively seeks to attract educators with competitive professional skills and high moral character. Over the years, Emanuel University has hired

professors with high achievements and results. For example, professors at Emanuel University have had significant accomplishments such as the "Torch of Freedom" awarded by the Prime Minister of Great Britain; A Knighthood of "Faithful Service," awarded by the President of Romania; The award "Man of the Year 1999" given by American Institute of Biographies, and numerous other national and international awards. Besides the professional qualification, Emanuel University strives to ensure that the hired professors are also moral, ethical, and spiritual. The University ensures that steps taken for eligible teaching positions include a mandatory interview with the Board of Trustees. Once the Board endorses a candidate, he/she can proceed with the job competition, meeting the specific regulations for each position.

Once hired, each professor is evaluated periodically and assessed from a professional and spiritual point of view, ensuring that the university's direction, mission, and objective are respected. Emanuel University places high regard on its professors' professional conduct. Even though it does not offer formal training in this regard, it has a system of checks and balances in place. For example, the teaching staff's evaluation system aims to analyze the teaching, research, and related activities to establish educational efficiency and effectiveness. Quality assurance in teaching is a fundamental requirement for Emanuel University, aiming to apply its strategy to improve its educational offering.

The Department Director, together with the Quality Assurance Commission from each School, carries out the professors' evaluation, as they are institutionally responsible for verifying the correct application of the evaluation procedure. The evaluation takes into account the following periodic assessments:

A. Self-assessment – each professor is responsible for completing a self-assessment form uploaded on the University platform, accompanied by an updated Resume and list of publications, as proof of the form's information.

B. Student evaluation – is completed by students at the end of each academic course or seminar through evaluation sheets, which indicate the satisfaction level for each subject matter. Historically, student evaluations offered an index regarding the educational process's quality and how professors can be recognized and appropriately promoted (Marsh, 1984). While student evaluations provide valuable feedback, there are also concerns regarding the accurate judgments made and certain biases towards or against professors (Alley, 1999). The results of the student evaluation are discussed individually with the professors, and then they are statistically processed and analyzed at the school and university level for transparency and the improvement in the teaching quality.

C. Evaluation by colleagues – this evaluation is also compulsory and organized based on criteria such as presence in the classroom, professional and research activity, professional behavior, and openness towards collegiate collaboration. Even though colleague evaluation is increasingly becoming more widely used in universities, there are essential aspects that need to be managed, such as defining explicit criteria and observing biased attitudes towards or against colleagues (Sorcinelli, 1984). Thus, the role of the Quality Assurance Committee is critical.

D. Periodic evaluation by the department director – This evaluation is done annually. It has multiple criteria for each professor and a system for classifying the performances in teaching.

research, and services provided to the institution and the community.

The teaching staff's promotion depends on the evaluation results, in which the final assessment considers the results of the collegiate evaluation and that of the students. Also, the evaluation must consider the fact that each professor's norm comprises 60% didactic responsibilities, which include teaching, guiding students in their dissertation works, any practical and scientific research activities included in the School plans, tutoring, and consultation with students. The remaining 40% of the norm comprises research activities, such as doctoral or postdoctoral research, publishing projects, research conference participation, and media appearances.

5. Ensuring the Quality of Research

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in universities' research component, one of the essential elements through which universities prove their quality and ranking. Research is vital because it creates new knowledge, but it has to be combined and complemented with the teaching component responsible for disseminating this new information (Dean and Clarke, 2019). There are primarily three reasons for which universities engage in research activities (Evans, 1997). First, it creates research outputs, which are subsequently useful in society. Second, it creates the possibility of teaching appropriate research methods and best practices and differentiates and filters the potential people who will teach academic courses.

There is also an essential aspect regarding motivating professors to undertake research projects activities, as they are generally time-consuming and require patience and perseverance.

Usually, professors are encouraged to accept the research component of their academic responsibilities to ensure their promotions and academic tenure, or to establish their position and reputation among professionals in their area of expertise. Some financial benefits and remunerations can help propel research grants and activities. Further, some professors have a natural attraction to research, either because they have a deep passion for their area of expertise or considerate it a significant area of their lives. Nonetheless, each professor at Emanuel University of Oradea must dedicate a portion of their time, effort, and expertise to research activities, as these account for 40% of their salary.

One of the most critical reasons Emanuel University strives towards maintaining and developing a research culture is to promote a Christian worldview in academia. It is becoming increasingly apparent that Christianity and God are excluded from universities' culture across the globe. Given that historically, universities in the West were encouraged to affirm God's authority, this paradigm change is significant, not only because it has eliminated the divine from the world of science, but also because it has often made Christianity antithetic to academia (Cobb, 2018). Therefore, Emanuel University of Oradea has a sustained transdisciplinary research activity to discover and capitalize on Trinitarian theology and socio-human, computer, economic, environmental sciences, and the arts. From this perspective, the research results, materialized in publications - books, articles, national and international scientific events, works of art - provides answers to the challenges facing evangelical churches and contemporary society. The research fields in which Emanuel University of Oradea is involved represent a specific and unique

contribution in the Romanian and European academic space.

The research component of Emanuel University is part of the university's operational and strategic plans, which are published periodically on the university website. The operational plan stipulates, among others, the commitment to establish research topics of interest for all research teams and to encourage the faculty through financial support to publish in prestigious publishing houses of indexed journals. To accomplish this task, the rector undertakes the responsibility of identifying new funding sources and developing the research fund. The strategic plan underlines the measures taken to ensure the development of research, and the measures adopted to encourage the faculty to publish.

The research topics are capitalized through research grants, published scientific articles, and other publications or manifestations such as books, manuals, doctoral theses, concerts, recitals, participation in art festivals, consulting services, and specific economic and financial expertise. The teaching staff of Emanuel University of Oradea carries out scientific research activities, visible through publications in ISI recognized journals, articles published in recognized databases, scientific papers presented at research conferences and symposiums, sessions, papers published in collective or unpublished volumes, contracts, consultancy projects based on contracts or national/international agreements.

The University aims to achieve an optimal ratio between teaching and research to ensure the balance between education, research, and impact in society while also being aware of student expectations regarding their training, which should increase their confidence. Emanuel University also addresses research activities

emphasizing student involvement, promoting student-centered research initiatives by increasing their participation in practical-applicative activities and scientific investigation. Also, Emanuel University appreciates that identifying and satisfying society's requirements and cultivating excellent communication with our graduates' potential future employees is essential for promoting close and mutually beneficial relationships.

From an operational point of view, The Research Center "Ethics and Society" coordinates and promotes the faculty's research from the School of Theology and the School of Management and Economic Information Technology, from Emanuel University of Oradea. Each department organizes its research process individually, through laboratories, and the research results are subsequently integrated synergistically to fit the university's research purpose. The research conducted within the Center is predominantly interdisciplinary, studying mainly the relationship between Christian theology and science (humanities, social, economics). Thus, the research materializes through the production of studies belonging to diverse branches of Christian theology. It also focuses on how Christian theology can influence the sciences, but also the arts.

The center's main objective is to research and promote Christian values in all fields of science and, in particular, those represented by the existing fields within the university. The center focuses its activity on research projects carried out on a contract basis and the publication of specialized studies. Some of the research projects results are published in collaboration with the Emanuel University of Oradea Publishing House.

The research center publishes three journals:

- The journal *Perichoresis* is the theology journal of Emanuel University, level B+ (BDI), indexed in the Clarivate Analytics Emerging Sources Citation Index and other international databases, under the auspices of Walter de Gruyter Verlag, in the Open Access system;
- *The Caesura* journal, in the field of philology and humanities;
- *The Sower* journal began in 2018, representing the results of scientific events, national and international conferences, doctoral theses, master's dissertations, and any other works that are carried out with the support of the teachers of the Emanuel University of Oradea and international collaborators.

The research center presents the research report for the previous academic year, the research plan for the new academic year, and a selection of grants and contracts, institutional agreements of the university, and individual agreements. The academic research process of the departments and laboratories within the Research Center "Ethics and Society" focuses on the following benchmarks:

- Publication of scientific articles in ISI journals and international databases indexed journals;
- Publication of academic books, both at prestigious international publishers and Romanian publishers, recognized in the international academic environment;
- Participation at national and international conferences;
- Organizing international conferences at Emanuel University in Oradea, in collaboration with the two

Schools, as well as with national and international universities and research centers;

- Organizing and participating in research symposiums, round tables, debates, and lectures in the virtual environment or through the media;
- Organization and participation in national or international concerts;
- Development of online and audio-video materials;
- Accessing and implementing research grants.

The purpose of organizing these events and endeavors is to create a collaboration and dialogue culture with representatives of the academic, cultural, social, and economic environment, both locally, nationally, and internationally.

Emanuel University of Oradea has its own publishing house called The Emanuel University of Oradea Publishing House, whose activity is nonprofit. The publishing house's main objective is to publish courses, materials for seminars, anthologies, and translations of reference books to ensure proper materials for the teaching process through specialized studies, and conference volumes.

Part of the research culture at Emanuel University is the Library, which provides 68,000 volumes and is divided into eighteen reading rooms with a capacity of 3-6 students per room. The library is equipped with the necessary computers and technologies, facilitating both professors' and students' research activities. The library has enough materials to fully cover the disciplines in the university's study programs' curriculum. To widen the spectrum of available resources, the leadership of Emanuel University has ensured that inter-library partnership

agreements were concluded with libraries of other universities in Oradea.

In addition to these sources, Emanuel University students and faculty have access to international databases, which provide approximately over two million titles.

6. Establishing a Mentoring Process

The concept of mentoring in a university is more frequently related to the students and guiding them through their academic journey. While this is an essential part of the university mentoring component, it is not the only facet. There is also value in the mentoring process of faculty members, through which senior professors advise and guide junior faculty members. This mentoring relationship in higher education has become more prevalent, starting with the 1990s, although the practice has existed much longer in private firms (Kee and Newcomer, 2008).

Mentoring junior faculty has a benefit not only for the development of the mentee's career but also for the entire institution. This aspect is because professors who had a pleasant mentoring experience are more likely to emulate that behavior towards their students, and later on, towards incoming junior faculty. It also seems that private universities have more formal

mentoring programs than public universities, and larger universities are more likely to have official mentoring policies than smaller universities (Fountain and Newcomer, 2016). At Emanuel University, faculty mentoring is done at an informal level and is strengthened by the spiritual and moral values that the senior faculty body shares with the junior faculty. The mentoring process takes place through periodic discussion groups, where the professors meet to discuss the educational process's teaching methodologies and issues. These meetings are also centered around the need for a continuous activity of identification, development, testing, implementation, and evaluation of new effective learning techniques, including new information technology applications.

Emanuel University also has mandatory weekly Chapel meetings, in which all the professors, staff, and students gather in a time of fellowship, prayer, and study. Chapel represents an important and pivotal time for personal spiritual growth and for developing a sense of community. Historically, the practice of chapel meetings was an integral part of American colleges and universities (Marsden, 1994), with institutions such as Yale, Harvard, and Princeton having this practice in their curriculums. However, with secularism on the rise, many higher education institutions renounced their focus on God and therefore stopped their practice of chapel meetings (Ringenberg, 2006). Despite the decline in the number of chapel services in universities, several schools and higher education institutions maintained their religious and spiritual practices, such as chapel. These institutions primarily regard faith as a primary goal on their campuses (Burtchaell, 1998). Emanuel University of Oradea considers that

weekly chapel meetings ensure that the university maintains its spiritual and moral values while strengthening community relationships.

Another informal way of promoting mentoring among faculty members is by occasionally scheduling a weekend retreat, in which professors and their families come together for relaxation, devotions, and fellowship. This informal time allows deep conversations, which otherwise might not be initiated, and it also gives the faculty an excellent opportunity to know each other better. While these retreats are organized less often due to scheduling conflicts, Emanuel University compensates this time by arranging periodic events in which the faculty comes together. These events are sometimes special receptions before the Christmas celebrations, shared meals in which there is time for devotional or weekly prayer meetings. The professors share their joys and burdens. Other times, the faculty gathers for training on interpersonal relationships, how to manage conflict, and other topics that are considered necessary. There are also periodic training sessions in which special international or national guests come to Emanuel to help the faculty perfect their abilities in diverse fields. These initiatives constitute the basis for a healthy mentorship program among the senior and junior faculty members.

One of Emanuel University's goals is to ensure that its professors and staff learn the importance and practice of mentorship, so they are equipped to mentor their students. In higher education, there is usually a combination of official and informal mentoring. Official mentoring refers to an organized center or initiative, through which the institution is committed to helping students (Chao, Waltz, and Gardner, 1992). Informal

mentoring is recognized as the extemporaneous act of mentoring students without a formal structure (Ragins and Cotton, 1999). Either way, students who benefit from faculty members who emphasize mentoring view their study years more positively and consider their experience enhanced (Łagowski and Vick, 1995). At Emanuel University, there is a formal mentoring initiative through The Center of Counseling and Career Planning, which is responsible for activities that help students make appropriate choices in education, training, or vocational retraining. The Center is comprised of five members, including three professors with expertise in Emanuel University's programs, a psychologist, and a university graduate. The director of the center has the responsibility of coordinating activities and is appointed by the University Senate.

The main objective of The Center of Counseling is to offer advice and opportunities for students to fulfill their calling and vision through career and life counseling and guidance activities aimed at:

a) Counseling students so that they can plan and manage their educational path optimally;

b) The university dropout rate is reduced, as most students renounce their studies due to a lack of professional or career guidance, personal reasons, or difficulty adapting to the university environment;

c) Facilitating the relationship between students and the labor market to acclimate to the workforce's real needs and challenges;

d) Increasing the employability of students in the graduated fields of study. To help students with this challenge, the Center

offers services such as organizing company and institutional tours or presentations to introduce students to possible employers; job interview simulation sessions; encouraging students to organize activities for their peers; the development of specific tools through which they monitor the insertion on the labor market.

Another essential part of mentoring students is motivating students with high performance and encouraging underperforming students. Professors are required to schedule at least 2 hours of weekly consultations and tutorial time to ensure excellent communication. Each group of students has a coordinating professor, whose responsibility is to supervise and guide his/her class throughout the entire educational process. Professors have the responsibility of monitoring students and signaling any potential successes or failures they notice.

Students who achieve outstanding performances in academia, research projects, or activities initiated and promoted by the university are rewarded differently, depending on the student. In some cases, Emanuel University grants scholarships or other forms of material stimulation; other times, students are awarded diplomas of excellence. Their work is disseminated on the university's website, Facebook page, and weekly chapel service. For students with outstanding academic results, the University supports them to participate in national or international scientific and artistic creation events, or participation in courses, master classes, and summer camps in their area of interest.

There are cases of students who struggle in their academic endeavors, and some are at high risk for university abandonment. For these students, Emanuel University has implemented measures, such as personalized strategies based on each case.

Tutorial actions are used in the recovery process, and professors are willing to stay overtime to help students academically. Contact between professors and students is also maintained through online channels to deepen in the knowledge of the teaching material. This process is facilitated by the use of modern teaching methods, such as using an online learning platform. Also, there are instances in which student associations or colleagues will tutor students with less than adequate results.

There are two associations at Emanuel University: "Beauty of Holiness" and "Men's Workshop." These associations work at an informal level, and besides the mentoring and spiritual side, they also serve as a means of socializing and bonding between students. Research has shown that Christian Educational Institutions that provide spiritual mentors have a high impact on students' religious faith and practice (Davignon and Thomson, 2015).

The association "Beauty of Holiness" began in 2000 with ten students who met regularly for Bible study. Each of these girls committed to being part of a small study group for a year. By their second year, these girls began their own small groups, which focused on prayer and Bible study. In the light of Scripture, special friendships developed, and some of our alumni have mentioned that they still keep in touch with the friends they made during this time. Another aspect of this program has a practical component, as the girls often help in projects. For example, they were decorating the campus for special occasions, such as the Christmas concerts. One year, the "Beauty of Holiness" group baked Christmas cookies for a special reception, and this activity was much appreciated by the reception's guests. Other times, when the University has large-scale conferences, these female students help out in the cafeteria or

serve during the coffee break. These practical activities are helpful because they offer a sense of accomplishment while also helping them develop essential abilities, such as teamwork, handling conflict, and developing a spirit of servanthood. The aims are for these young women to transfer the skills learned during their years at Emanuel University into their workplace and ministry, to be a witness and an example of beauty in holiness (1 Peter 1:13 – 16, 3:1-6).

The "Men's Workshop" is the other student association at Emanuel, which could also be presented as an informal school of peripatetic apprenticeship. This association's role is to form and develop the spiritual side while also working on the things that God has given us to administer. Some of the skills developed during this program aim to create an integrative mentorship model to help the youth deal with the modern world's challenges. "The Men's Workshop" exists mainly to counteract the effects of urbanization and industrialization by assisting young men in facing the temptations of today's world. Besides the spiritual and mentorship facets of this association, there are also many practical activities. For example, during the winter months, the young men will help chop wood for elderly sick people who cannot acquire the necessary logs to heat their homes. Other times, they participate in fun but educational activities such as planting trees or digging a garden. These enterprises help the young generation use their energy to develop practical skills while also aiding in social actions.

Since Emanuel University is passionate about reaching the young generation for the Lord, its scope goes beyond that of the student population. For the last seven years, Emanuel University has initiated and hosted a national youth conference called "Quo Vadis Juvenis," in which high school pupils come for three days of

training, mentorship, and fellowship. The conference aims to give information regarding future career and ministry options, and how the young generation can seek to find the Lord's will for their lives. During this time, Emanuel University professors and students are available to answer the high school pupils' questions and inquiries. In the last days, the high school students are encouraged to participate in sports, music, public speaking, and Scripture memorizing competitions, in which the winners are awarded a special prize.

Over the years, the "Quo Vadis Juvenis" conference has become a national staple for the young Christian generation. Some of the pupils who attended the conference have gone on to become Emanuel students.

7. Ensuring a Quality Environment

Part of the student experience is the campus life and environment, which is a significant part of their social life. While some universities do not have the financial possibility of building and sustaining a campus, primarily if they are privately funded institutions at the beginning of the road, there are numerous reasons for this endeavor. Even though the costs to build and maintain a university campus put significant pressure on an institution's budget, its benefits outweigh the costs. First of all, a university campus offers the necessary space to build a community and encourage social interaction. Students have the opportunity to bond, form life-long friendships, and spend quality time with their peers and professors. Students also have a safe environment, as Emanuel University offers on-campus dormitories. Given the statistics about campus violence (Fisher, 1995), safety is a paramount aspect when choosing institutions of higher learning.

Second, a campus gives students the necessary environment which is conducive to understanding and deepening their research.

Knowing the importance of such aspects, Emanuel University provides sufficient classrooms for all its student. These are equipped with plasma televisions with Internet connection, to ensure a complete educational experience. There are specialized study laboratories, such as the computer lab and the media lab, in which students have access to software and technological skills. Another vital study space is the Library, which is a place where students have quiet study rooms, a large number of volumes and journals, and a room for listening to music or audiobooks.

To ensure students' health and safety, Emanuel University also has a medical office with a doctor on staff, who is available to consult students on various health issues, and send them towards specialized care, if needed. There is also a dental office with a dentist available to treat and help students. Besides the medical care that the University ensures, there are also other essential facilities, such as soccer, basketball, and volleyball courts, where students can relax, and a workout room where students can focus on their fitness. One of the most popular spaces on campus is probably the cafeteria, where students can opt for both lunch and dinner, which are served according to nutritional health standards.

Fourth, and most importantly, a campus should offer a space for prayer, worship, and fellowship for a Christian university, whether that is done in a communal space or a designated chapel. At Emanuel University, a chapel building on campus houses the chapel services and hosts important events, such as the Christmas concert, the Graduation ceremony, and conferences. The chapel also has classrooms below where the Theology students study and learn.

8. The Social Impact

One of the critical aspects of ensuring an excellent university is the impact it has on society. A university should be capable of delivering societal value through its programs and its graduates. One of the most known universities' functions is their capability to produce and disseminate information, but there are many other areas through which universities can establish their importance in society. The impact that Emanuel University of Oradea has can be structured into three main categories: human aid and ministry projects, alumni global influence, and public recognition.

8.1. Human aid and Ministry Projects

Every department at Emanuel University of Oradea initiates and implements projects with a humanitarian aid and ministry component. We believe it is crucial for our students to contribute to the broader community. They should be involved in projects that

have an impact on the world and an echo in eternity. The University's projects are various and depend on the specifics of each program. We encourage programs related to students' area of study because it gives them a glimpse into possible outreach areas for the time they graduate.

Specifically, Theology students are involved in mission trips to disadvantaged areas, both nationally and internationally. These trips aim to present the Gospel, but also to offer material support to people in need. Besides these missionary expeditions, the Theology students are also part of local evangelism initiatives, through where they provide spiritual support to people who might otherwise never hear the Gospel.

Social Work students have started working with the international organization Child Life, through which they offer play and art therapies to children diagnosed with progressive chronic illnesses. The students and faculty go into the local Children's hospitals and a local non-profit hospice and work with hospitalized or terminally ill children, who have a heightened degree of fear and anxiety. The Social Work program also involved students in projects that help the Roma population, who often face discrimination and persecution. Some of the students have continued this work even after graduating, by opening foundations that cater to this population.

There is a growing music therapy initiative in the music department, through which students and faculty offer music therapy sessions to children diagnosed with life-threatening or chronic diseases. This project has received support and national recognition and has won grants awarded by the Hungarian Petrol Company MOL and its Foundation for Community for three years.

The Music Therapy initiative has also received attention in the media, as it has had a lasting impact on the local hospitals and the local hospice program.

The Literature Department has partnered with the Music Department in a creative writing project, through which they wrote personalized stories based on children diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses. Each story was illustrated to highlight the child's preferences, ending with an appropriate Bible verse. The Music students also composed personalized songs for the children, and these heartwarming artistic initiatives were all published in a volume called "Stories of Courage." For Christmas, the students went into the local hospitals and gave them as gifts to the children to encourage them. The book was also sent to palliative centers throughout Romania to comfort children who are suffering.

The students from the Management and Business Information Systems took a different approach by getting involved in projects that aim to reduce corruption and promote ethics in business and public administration. Together with their professors, they attended national events, such as Business Days, and were actively involved in Transparency International conferences. In many of these public events, the professors of the Management and Business Information Systems departments were invited as keynote speakers, an occasion which they used to promote spiritual and moral values in the Business world.

8.2. Alumni Global Influence

An efficient university produces graduates who can strengthen the workforce and make the world a better place. The graduates of Emanuel University of Oradea work in 40 countries globally, and they have had numerous initiatives, which have brought significant benefits in their local communities. Among the new businesses opened by our graduates some of them include: The Informal School of Information Technology, Typing DNA, Alcom Corporate Finance, Source Match, Persolog, QoDemo, Visual Edge, Avison Young Romania, BrandUp Media, Adenandra, Salad Box, RomCom, Piata9, Grain Bags and Heritage Farms. Also, the Department of Management alumni has launched 40 start-ups, which have generated over 600 new jobs.

Some of our graduates have opened human aid organizations, such as Emanuel Hospice that provides palliative care to families who have a loved one diagnosed with terminal cancer. A graduate of the Social Work program opened the "Casa" Foundation, which offers support to children that are in disadvantaged families. Some of the Theology alumni have decided to go into the Romanian villages to encourage people in more impoverished rural communities. Music graduates opened the Betania Educational Center in Pucioasa and the Logos School of Music in Oradea. Both are illustrative examples of initiatives through which children in local communities receive music education and spiritual care.

Some Emanuel graduates have been helping the Romanian community from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and others are active in projects with national visibility, such as Operation

Christmas Child. Other notable projects initiated by Emanuel graduates are private kindergarten services in Oradea, Arad, and Dej, and centers for elderly care in Oradea and Salonta.

The Theology graduates of Emanuel University of Oradea have positions in churches all across Romania. They also serve and work in Italy, Greece, Austria, Germany, Spain, France, The United Kingdom, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation, where they are salt and light in their communities. Some of our graduates also serve as missionaries in Ethiopia, Malawi, Mongolia, and numerous countries around the world.

8.3 Public Recognition

Emanuel University has increasingly received public recognition over the last thirty years in various capacities and forms. One of the honors Emanuel University has had over the years was to receive endorsement by respected and renowned Christian personalities and institutions. Besides the local professors who teach at Emanuel University, there have been several valuable and prestigious guest lecturers and associates who became partners of the University. These people have been comparable to Aaron and Hur, who supported Moses when his upraised arms grew tired, and he could no longer keep them raised (Exodus 17:12-14). Aaron and Hur's role was to stay with Moses throughout the battle and ensure that he did not get tired so that Israel could prevail. Through these 30 years, there have been many blessings and challenges, and we thank God for the Aarons and Hurs of Emanuel University, who have stood alongside us and

encouraged us to stay strong. This community of partners has also been instrumental in putting Emanuel University of Oradea on an international radar, as they have publicly supported and mentioned the university in many instances.

For example, from Wheaton College, USA, Dr. Walter Elwell has said that:

Emanuel University is a special place of God in Romania. In this place, the Word of God is clearly taught and strongly defended, in a rigorous academic atmosphere, by qualified professors. Here, the leaders of the next generation are being trained.

Also, Lord Brian Griffiths of Fforestfach, member of the House of Lords, in Great Britain had declared:

In the last decade, Emanuel University has developed as a first-class academic institution, training the young generation with a high professional standard, but with a Christian perspective on the world and life. I believe that the University has a vital economic, social, and spiritual importance for the future, not just in Romania, but also in the whole region. I wholeheartedly encourage the mission, objective, and leadership of Emanuel University.

Another area that has given Emanuel University international credibility is notable mentions in prestigious publications. Several doctoral theses, articles, and publications have presented or analyzed different aspects of Emanuel University. For example, a doctoral dissertation (Pierson, 1999), whose primary subject was a case study on Emanuel University,² mentioned that its graduates have significant contributions. Their impact is visible in "church and church-related ministries, scholarship efforts and projects, involvement with private social agencies, and through their personal lifestyle" (Pierson, 1999, p. 153). Another doctoral thesis (Mathena, 2017), which was done regarding Emanuel University's music program, presented some solutions to including worship studies in the curriculum. The author, Dr. Gary Mathena, associate professor at Liberty University, USA, notes that as "a result of the university's commitment to spiritual integrity and academic excellence, it has gained considerable influence and respect in the academy throughout Romania, Europe, and the world" (Mathena, 2017, p. 94).

Another notable publication is the article "The First Baptist University in Europe: An Explanation and Study (Glanzer and Cimpean, 2009) in which the authors declare Emanuel University to be a *unique* institution that has the vision of producing redemptive communities, and "it has managed to become the first Baptist university in Europe to embody that vision while facing and overcoming numerous barriers." Other articles mention Emanuel University as being part of higher education institutions from post-communist countries that stand strong to resist secularization (Glanzer, 2011).

Note: At the time of publication, the institution was called Emanuel Bible Institute.

Besides publications, Emanuel University of Oradea has also been present in local, national, and international media appearances, through which professors, students, and staff had the opportunity to highlight important aspects of the university. For example, over the years, there have been hundreds of radio appearances, in which Emanuel University professors and students have been invited to speak on various topics. Some of our professors have also been invited as special guests on television shows on subjects that pertain to significant social, political, and religious aspects, highlighting the fact the Emanuel University has become an essential sounding board for critical issues.

The reason for featuring the above information is not to be boastful about Emanuel University's achievements over the years, but to stress the point that a University that wishes to be known for its quality must produce tangible results, which are recognized as necessary by the local, national, and if possible, international community. More than that, a Christian university facing the challenge of maintaining its spiritual and moral identity will face numerous barriers and impediments. One way a Christian university can *thrive* in this postmodern world is to borrow Daniel's biblical model. In other words, we should aim for *excellence, integrity, and passion*, which become indispensable for the surrounding communities, offering a protective shield against the pressure of secularization. This endeavor is easier said than done, and we do recognize that there are numerous pressures and negative influences in today's world. Still, we also underline the fact that to *be* a Christian university, the most crucial aspect is to safeguard Christian integrity.

Concluding remarks

Many stakeholders proclaim to be worried about the future of higher education in today's global context, as society is changing, and the role of a university is put in question (Blumenstyk, 2015). Christianity has to answer the question regarding the role and the future of Christian education in this challenging environment. As postmodernism and secularism pose thought-provoking challenges, some Christian universities respond through either antagonism or withdrawal, but neither of these attitudes is ideal. As some scholars argue, one of the ways Christian universities can be relevant to today's challenges and keep their identity is through wise and thoughtful engagement (Sterk, 2017). Christian universities should first keep their spiritual and moral identities and not succumb to the pressure of losing their "*salt and light*" for financial, social, or political gains. Historically, Christian universities have renounced their identity once they reached a crossroads in choosing between expansion and their moral values. There have been universities, which have remained Christian only in name. We believe that a Christian university should primarily be a beacon of light and maintain and protect its biblical values. Second, to remain relevant, a Christian university should be academically excellent and provide scholarly answers to pressing societal problems. Contrary to some beliefs, it is possible to

combine these two contradictory facets, and even if not entirely, Emanuel University's thirty years of existence is testimony to this fact. This handbook of best practices and guidelines encourages future Christian higher education initiatives.

Our hope and prayer are that Christians worldwide value mentoring and training the next generation of missionaries, pastors, teachers, authors, scholars, musicians, business people, and information technology experts that will benefit society and focus on building treasures in heaven.

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Who we are

Emanuel University of Oradea is an accredited, private institution of higher education which currently awards:

- Bachelor's degrees in: Pastoral Baptist Theology, Music, Social Work, Romanian – English Language and Literature, Management and Business Information Systems;
- Master's degrees in: Pastoral Theology and Missiology, Programs and Community Projects in Social Work, Musical Art and Entrepreneurial Management.

Committed to Integrity, Excellence and Passion in all its academic, ecclesiastical and market endeavors, Emanuel University of Oradea is the only accredited Baptist university in Europe since 2002. Following institutional evaluation by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS), Emanuel University attained a **High Confidence Rating** in 2009 and 2015.

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