

Summary
Depth, Universality, and Learned Ministry: Challenges to Jesuit
Higher Education today
Adolfo Nicolás, SJ. Superior General of the Society of Jesus

The document is a speech delivered by Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, at the "Networking Jesuit Higher Education: Shaping the Future for a Humane, Just, Sustainable Globe" conference in Mexico City on April 23, 2010. The speech reflects on the evolving role of Jesuit higher education in a globalised world and calls for a renewed commitment to its mission of faith, justice, and intellectual rigour.

Key Points:

1. **Globalisation and its Challenges:** Nicolás highlights globalisation's dual nature—its potential for fostering collaboration and its negative effects, such as the "globalization of superficiality." He stresses the need for Jesuit higher education to address these challenges by promoting depth of thought, imagination, and commitment.
2. **Three Main Challenges:**
 - **Depth of Thought and Imagination:** Nicolás criticizes the superficiality brought on by instant access to information and social media, emphasizing the need for critical thinking and deep engagement in education.
 - **Universality:** He urges Jesuit institutions to embrace their universal mission by collaborating globally, sharing resources, and addressing issues like poverty, environmental degradation, and aggressive secularism.
 - **Learned Ministry:** Research and knowledge should serve humanity, especially the marginalized. Nicolás calls for Jesuit institutions to engage in "learned ministry," where academic rigour is applied to real-world problems, integrating faith and culture.
3. **Call for Networking:** Nicolás advocates for more robust global networking among Jesuit institutions to maximize their collective impact on global issues, emphasizing cooperation in areas such as ecology, poverty, and education.

By Susana Di Trolío, Spain, September 2025.