

Is it worth it? A business case for chaplaincy in universities

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Abstract

Since the introduction of the Commonwealth-funded National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) under the last Coalition government and its continuation under the subsequent Rudd/Gillard governments, there has been animated debate in Australia on the legality and the merits of such a scheme. Chaplains in universities preceded the NSCP by many years, yet somehow chaplaincy in universities flew ‘under the radar’. With the *Williams v Commonwealth of Australia* High Court case, the debate received even greater coverage. This article considers the operation of chaplains in universities outside the hotly debated issue of the separation of Church and State, the place of religion in current secular, in post-modern Australian society. Instead the present article focuses on university chaplaincy from a business perspective and tries to establish whether there is a business case, and if so, how chaplaincy would operate. In addition, the article discusses the nature of the argument and provides a verdict in favour, based on strong probability grounds.

Key words

Chaplaincy in higher education; business case; worth; benefit; Australian National University

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