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# growth

ACSD



Association for Christians  
in Student Development

# Mission and Introduction to The Association for Christians in Student Development:

The Association for Christians in Student Development (ACSD) is comprised of professionals who seek to bring their commitment to Jesus Christ together with their work in college student development. Through the exchange of ideas, encouragement of networking, regional and annual conferences, and application of scriptural principles to developmental theory, ACSD seeks to enable its members to be more effective in ministering to students.

The roots of ACSD go back to the 1950s with the formation of the Christian Association of Deans of Women and the Association of Christian Deans and Advisors of Men. The two groups merged in 1980, reflecting a commitment to work together with mutual respect. ACSD has grown and currently represents more than 1,100 individuals from more than 250 institutions. While membership originally centered in Bible institutes, Bible colleges, and Christian liberal arts colleges, the Association has committed itself to linking up with colleagues in all institutions of higher education, both public and private. In support of this emphasis, the Association has sponsored prayer breakfasts and workshops in conjunction with annual conferences presented by major student affairs associated organizations.

Membership in ACSD is open to all persons who have or are preparing for responsibilities in student development areas in higher education and who are in agreement with ACSD's doctrinal statement, constitution, and bylaws. Members receive the Association's newsletter, free access to placement services, reduced rates at annual conferences, and copies of *Growth: The Journal of the Association for Christians in Student Development*.

In keeping with the mission and goals of the Association, the purposes of *Growth: The Journal of The Association for Christians in Student Development* are:

- To provide a forum for members to publish original research.
- To encourage the membership to be active in scholarship.
- To provide members with access to beneficial resource material intended to inform good practice.
- To stimulate research in Christian student affairs.
- To promote the ideals of ACSD and Christian student affairs



Dear Readers:

We are pleased to share with you this the sixteenth edition of *Growth: The Journal of the Association for Christians in Student Development*. For over a decade and a half, *Growth* has endeavored to provide readers with relevant original research and professional development literature to aid them in their work in service to college students and the institutions which serve them. We trust you have found this information useful to your work and that you will find the articles and book reviews in this current issue to be helpful in informing your work as educators.

This year you will discover seven feature articles including research on program review and prioritization procedures for Student Development offices, the value of campus traditions, collaborations between student affairs and academic affairs, monastic practices and spiritual disciplines in leadership development, the vocational development of introverted college students, the issue of masculinity and depression in male college students, and the motivations of students of color for pursuing leadership positions. These articles are followed by a collection of book reviews intended to introduce us to new publications that will guide and shape our efforts as student development practitioners.

We are grateful to those who work to make *Growth* possible, including Dr. Jason Morris, Associate Professor of Higher Education at Abilene Christian University, who serves in the role of Book Review Editor. We are also grateful to three graduate students from Taylor University, Austin Smith who has served as the Graduate Editor in Chief and editorial associates Jessica Martin and Eli Casteel, who have supported *Growth* this year. They, along with our peer review team, have put forth great effort to produce a volume that represents strong and topically diverse scholarship.

We particularly want to encourage our readers to consider submitting manuscripts for possible inclusion in future issues of *Growth*; the next edition will be published in the spring of 2019. Publication guidelines are included on the inside back cover of this issue and are also available via the Association for Christians in Student Development web site: [www.acsd.org/participate/write-for-growth-journal/](http://www.acsd.org/participate/write-for-growth-journal/). We are especially interested in manuscripts presenting original or basic research and encourage anyone who has recently completed a graduate thesis or dissertation to consider submitting an article for publication.

The editorial team would like to thank you for your support of *Growth: The Journal of the Association for Christians in Student Development*. We hope your read will be both engaging and challenging.

Sincerely,

Dr. Skip Trudeau, Co-Editor

Dr. Tim Herrmann, Co-Editor

growth



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# A Campus Model for Student Development: Program Review and Prioritization

C. Skip Trudeau, EdD  
Taylor University

Britney Graber, MA, MAT  
Baylor University

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## Abstract

The current financial climate for higher education is one of constrained and declining resources, causing many institutions to turn towards a retrenchment strategy that often includes reducing expenses and, in more extreme cases, eliminating programs. A review of existing literature reveals few models colleges can utilize in conducting comprehensive analyses of programs to determine how to proceed with these cost cutting measures. Additionally, the authors could not find any existing approaches focused on student development or other non-academic programs. In this article, the authors provide a review of relevant literature, a review of the Dickeson Model (2010), and build the case for an assessment-based program review and prioritization model designed to specifically address the nuanced needs of student development programs. This model is presented in a three-step process that should enable student development professionals to assess their programs and make prioritization decisions within a framework pertaining to student development professional standards as well as aligning with individual institutional contexts.

## Introduction

The financial forecast for higher education is at best murky and, at worst, a potentially cataclysmic storm that will result in an increasingly difficult time for many colleges and universities. Reductions in state assistance, increased demands for compliance with federal regulations, changing student demographics, the economic downturn in 2008 and resulting lag in recovery, and the growing sense of mistrust that higher education is not successfully producing expected results are all factors contributing to this current state. The demands for accountability and the need to provide proof that the college experience is worth the cost have caused many institutions to critically examine their programs with the idea of creating more sustainable models streamlined to meet the economic demands. This climate is forcing colleges and universities to react in an unprecedented fashion, and many educational forecasts call for a reshaping of higher education, which may result in the closure of many existing institutions.

One approach in responding to this environment has been the program prioritization review model as introduced by Dickeson (2010). The Dickeson model calls for a systematic and comprehensive review of an institution's programs with the goal of identifying areas that need to be strengthened and areas that are under-performing, thereby ascertaining areas in need of reduction so resources can be funneled to higher performing programs. The Dickeson model, as well as other assessment approaches (e.g., Banta's (1997) Best Practices approach, Barham and Scott's (2006) Five-Step Comprehensive Model), provides useful theoretical frameworks for the development of a systematic approach to student development program review, such as the University of Texas at Arlington approach (Moxley, 1999). However, to date no one has offered a model that accounts for the unique context for this endeavor from the perspective of student development work in the Christian higher education setting. This article will propose a model developed at one Christian university designed to provide a systematic review and prioritization of student development programs. Before discussing this program, the authors provide a brief literature review that outlines the theoretical framework used to develop the model.

## Literature Review

Student affairs has continually been a focal point in higher education. While many student development theories have been established through

research, colleges and universities have struggled to assess and evaluate applications of the implications. Roberts and Banta (2011) highlight this dichotomy stating, “. . . the interplay of theory and practice is a necessity in delivering on a commitment to student development” (p. 54). A need exists for a comprehensive assessment model that can encompass and apply to all areas of student affairs (Barham & Scott, 2006).

Through assessment and evaluation, student affairs can “. . .shape the educational and interpersonal experiences and setting of their campus in ways that will promote learning and achievement of the institution’s educational goals and to induce students to become involved in those activities. . .” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 648). The already-developed assessment models are cyclical, but perpetually changing as new policies and practices are implemented all over the country (Shutt, Garrett, Lynch, & Dean, 2012). In order to better inform an assessment model to be applied to Christian higher education, one must examine the need for a best-practice model, themes in assessment, and the promotions of and barriers to student affairs’ assessment.

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#### Need for Best-Practice Assessment Model

While assessment in student affairs has received attention in the last decade, a consistent best-practice student affairs or student development assessment standard for all universities to model has yet to be developed. Moreover, the question still remains if a best-practices model is warranted due to institutional differences (i.e., size, student demographics, values) and the nature of student affairs being a continuously evolving department (Shutt et al., 2012). Shutt and colleagues (2012) state,

It is critical to establish a process to ensure the efficacy of programs and services. This focus on accountability gives other professionals the means to evaluate whether such practices might be a fit for their campus. . . [and] provides professionals with the justification for resources to support programming. (p. 68)

Thus, accountability and improvement go hand-in-hand. However, institutions and departments must develop a means of being able to provide evidence that they have achieved their objectives (Shutt et al., 2012).

Institutions, specifically student affairs departments, must be able to provide evidence that programming is reflective of and contributing to aiding students and their needs. In order to do so, planning clear, measurable goals and objectives must be set and used in evaluation (Banta, 1997; Bresciani, 2010; Hugenberg, 1997; Roberts & Banta, 2011; Shutt et al., 2012). All stakeholders must be involved in this process, as assessment is a responsibility of all who are involved (Roberts & Banta, 2011). Assessments can take various forms, but “two of the more common forms include program evaluation and outcomes assessment” (Shutt et al., 2012, p. 70). A program evaluation examines the design of the program and if it has achieved its intended purpose or goal. Outcome assessments analyze the results as seen in the students, specifically what they have learned (Shutt et al., 2012). It is important that the process and results of these assessments be communicated to stakeholders in order to achieve maximum success (Roberts & Banta, 2011).

Various institutional assessment types exist and can be implemented for evaluative purposes. Bresciani, Gardner, and Hickmott (2010) list the following outcome-based assessment types: benchmarking, quantitative, qualitative, interviews, observations, and documents. By utilizing more than one type of tool—triangulation—the assessment process gains validity (Bresciani et al., 2010).

In her work, Banta (1997) discusses ten principles for best practice in assessment. These principles, along with other researcher’s principles, include concepts about encompassing university values and goals, having clear objectives and standards, understanding assessment as a continuous process, emphasizing cross-departmental collaboration, using assessment to enact change, and facilitating a supportive campus community (Banta, 1997; Hugenberg, 1997; Kuh, Gonyea, & Rodriguez, 2002; Roberts & Banta, 2011). In addition to these principles, Bresciani (2010) includes examining existing trend data to seek successful patterns, prioritizing assessment concerns, and implementing an outcomes-based assessment plan.

Additionally, Kuh and colleagues (2002) studied and compared several different colleges’ and universities’ assessment protocols. In examining these assessments, the researchers charted each institution’s student development theory assessed, the assessment instrument used, the results and use of the assessment, and the changes made to policy and practice within student development (Kuh et al., 2002).

Thus, when reviewing themes across research regarding assessment practices, no clear-cut methodology has been achieved. However, some models have been developed to address assessment practices.

#### Barham & Scott's Modell

Barham and Scott (2006) argue that an assessment model must be the following: comprehensive (i.e., inclusive of the three philosophies of student development—service, development, and learning), intentional and systematic, and replicable (p. 212). This five-step model is built on a foundation of the university's mission and goals and includes: (1) selecting a philosophical area to address, (2) creating accountable objectives, (3) setting accountable outcomes, (4) assessment, and (5) evaluation (Barham & Scott, 2006, p. 214-216). Building on the mission and goals of the university and department, one student development philosophy integrates itself as the focal point for the development of objectives in this assessment model. Once objectives have been established for the specific philosophy, the department can move toward creating a list of desired outcomes and work to purposefully develop programs that would tackle those objectives and outcomes. By creating specific objectives and outcomes, assessment becomes easier. Therefore, through different forums and tools, the assessment data can be gathered and evaluated (Barham & Scott, 2006).

#### University of Texas at Arlington's Modell

Due to “demands for accountability, the need to make decisions on the basis of facts, the desire maximally to respond to students’ needs and preferences, and a keen interest in wisely using the divisions’ financial resources and personnel talents . . . ”, the University of Texas at Arlington’s (UTA) Vice President for Student Affairs formed a research and evaluation office in the early 1980s (Moxley, 1999, p. 11). UTA’s Student Affairs Planning Model, developed by their research and evaluation office, consists of four guiding principles: (1) information is required in order to be effective (e.g., goals, mission), (2) data collectors must collaborate (i.e., different departments share collected data for efficiency), (3) collect diverse data (e.g., surveys, interviews, evaluations), and (4) gather increasingly sophisticated data (i.e., changing the nature of the data collected based on previous data in order to make more effective and efficient changes) (Moxley, 1999, p. 12-20). Through these principles—the ongoing process of incorporating

the university's and/or department's mission statement, setting goals, researching and evaluating, and applying findings—UTA is progressively improving the student affairs department. Additionally this model moves interchangeably at the institutional, departmental, and individual sector levels (Moxley, 1999).

#### Dickeson's Model

Dickeson's (2010) research has focused on academic program prioritization. Like many other researchers, Dickeson believes strong leadership that keeps the institution's mission and goals at the forefront of the assessment process is vital in implementing effective changes. Furthermore, determining clear, stated objectives assists the assessors in establishing appropriate assessment materials for evaluation (Dickeson, 2010).

Once assessment materials have been established and administered, the evaluation process takes place through means of analysis and prioritization. Dickeson (2010) discusses the use of various ratings and scales (e.g., Likert; "high, medium, low") to categorize assessment questions or concepts. In doing so, Dickeson also developed a point system in which ratings and scales were combined for an overall point value to determine program prioritization within a specific department. Once implemented, changes made programmatically could be evaluated according to their effects (Dickeson, 2010).

#### Promoting Assessment and Barriers to Effective Assessment

Seagraves and Dean (2010) discuss four research findings that contribute to promoting assessment in student affairs: (1) having support from senior level administrators, (2) informal assessment procedures so as not to skew the responses, (3) belief that the assessment procedure will lead to improvement(s), and (4) a supportive working environment (p. 314-316). If all four items exist, assessment procedures are more fluid, effective, and timely.

While providing effective principles of assessment, Banta (1997) also discusses barriers that can exist and hinder successful assessment procedures. A lack of support from staff and faculty as well as leadership transitions can negatively impact assessment (Banta, 1997). Furthermore, staff members may lack time or familiarity to implement assessment methods effectively (Bresciani et al., 2010). Changes to the institution itself can also disrupt assessment, altering

the results. Often, smaller colleges and universities lack resources and access to complete comprehensive evaluations. Students can impact results depending on the seriousness with which they participate in assessment processes. Lastly, assessment tools cannot be used effectively if data is not used to enact change (Banta, 1997).

### Summary

Reviewing the current literature on student development assessment makes clear that a comprehensive model does not exist that can be applied to all areas of student affairs (Barham & Scott, 2006). Furthermore, a model for Christian higher education is needed. Through examining assessment themes, various assessment models, and the promotion of and barriers to effective assessment, a better informed program review and prioritization for student affairs was developed through a collaborative process.

### The Formulated Model

The model developed for a Christian college context was implemented as a part of a university-wide program review instituted at one campus. Every area of the university, including Academic Affairs, Student Development, and Intercollegiate Athletics as well support areas such as Enrollment Management, University Advancement, Finance, and Business Affairs underwent this comprehensive review process as a campus-wide initiative to insure long-term sustainability. It is important to note that this institution engaged in this process as a proactive means of attempting to stay ahead of economic and other negative influences facing all institutions, rather than out of an immediate need to cut budgets in the short-term. Doing so allowed the institution to proceed at a slower pace and develop this model in a more reflective time frame. Hopefully, this model will help other institutions gain head starts, thus providing for quicker processes. This model is presented in three steps: (1) The Institutional Process, (2) The Departmental Process/Model, and (3) Implications and Discussion.

#### Step 1: The Institutional Process

As previously stated, this institution instituted a campus-wide program review in an effort to proactively respond to the current economic environment from a position of relative strength as opposed to budget crisis. This allowed the institution to adopt a reflective approach, taking

two years to develop and implement. It is surmised that this approach allowed for ample time to consider a host of factors that a more truncated approach would not allow. From the perspective of the Student Development review, this allowed for the reflective development of the resulting model. The principles of this model are implementable in a shorter time frame, if necessary. The university established the following overarching goals for this process: to evaluate all programs and support areas campus-wide in order to identify best practices and create resource reallocation strategies. Achieving these goals would foster excellence on a larger scale in:

1. Purposefully striving for educational excellence through innovative programming and effective faculty/staff development;
2. Strategically addressing on-going resources issues—most importantly, faculty and staff salary/compensation; and
3. Proactively meeting budget challenges to make [institution redacted] as affordable as possible without derailing mission or diminishing quality.

The Academic Affairs program review at this institution relied heavily on the Dickeson Model (2010) in developing the review of all schools, departments, and programs in their area. In an effort to promote uniformity in the reviews, the Student Development program review also reviewed the Dickeson Model. As stated earlier, Dickeson (2010) is primarily focused on academic program reviews. As such, it was helpful in developing the student development model, but was inadequate to implement in full. Therefore, the student development review was developed utilizing elements of the Dickeson Model as well as elements from other assessment approaches. In addition, unique characteristics associated with the specific university mission and Christian Student Development best practices were utilized in the development of the Student Development Program Review.

All institution program reviews followed a similar timeline with milestones and goals that led to the completion of all review reports being submitted to the institution's President's Council concurrently. Throughout this process, there were many checkpoints in which the various areas reported progress and maintained accountability with the process. The Student Development faculty and staff spent approximately 500 hours in the development of the review that will be outlined in the next section.

## Step 2: The Departmental Process

The departmental process consisted of five of phases that concluded with a template and rubrics for evaluating all programs associated with Student Development. The first phase was to create a list of all program areas to be included in the review. At this institution, that list included a fairly standard listing of program areas associated with student development departments at Christian colleges: Chapel, Calling and Career Office (Career Development), Campus Ministries, Counseling, Housing, Leadership Programs, Office of Intercultural Programs (Diversity Programs including American Ethnic and International Students), Residence Life, and Student Programs (Activities and Student Government). Additionally, two other program areas not typically associated with student development—Campus Police and Honors Programming— were included in this review.

The next step was to develop the criteria for evaluation and the matrixes for evaluating these criteria. A leadership group within this department, The Student Development Deans Cabinet (SDDC), began this process in the spring. The SDDC utilized a recently published strategic vision plan for the department as the starting point for developing the evaluation criteria. The strategic plan outlined the guiding principles and core values for the Student Development area. This process solidified the core values of the department and the alignment of these values with the overarching institutional mission, providing the framework for developing the specific criteria to be evaluated for the program review. The core values identified are outlined in Appendix A.

Next, the SDDC went through a process of aligning this foundational departmental information with institutional documents to develop seven criterion for reviewing Student Development as a part of the university program review. The criteria are as follows:

- Connection to university mission: Does the program align with the institutional mission and strategic directions/initiatives? Does the program foster inter-departmental collaboration and engagement with other program areas on campus?
- Connection to departmental focus on discipleship: Does the program align with the Student Development focus on discipleship and incorporate significant discipleship-enriched opportunities for students?
- Promotes student learning: Does the program have clearly articulated educational outcomes that promote student learning,

enhance curricular programs, and provide unique learning opportunities for students?

- Program uniqueness: Is the program providing a unique service program to students? Is the program broad in its impact in terms of the number of students engaged? Are the program offerings in part or in total uniquely offered by the specific program area?
- Program efficiency: Does the program utilize both budget and human resources in designing and implementing programs? Do program personnel seek opportunities to work collaboratively with other areas?
- Student satisfaction: How do students rank programs offered by the area both in terms of how often they engage in these programs and their satisfaction with the programs that they do engage?
- Benchmark comparison with other institutions: How does the program compare to similar programs at benchmark and aspirational institutions?
- General campus perceptions of program: How is this program generally perceived by students? Academic Affairs faculty? Student Development faculty? Other Administrative/program areas?

Each program area developed a report based on these criteria and utilized existing institutional assessment data, or gathered additional data when necessary, to prepare a report that was submitted to the Dean's Council.

The Dean's Council developed a scoring rubric for the criteria and a weighted scoring system that resulted in a ranking of all programs for each criterion. This data was utilized by members of the Dean's Council to compare the programs and place each in one of four main categories: Enhance, Maintain, Restructure, or Retire. Programs in the Enhance category were those that represented a strategic need or opportunity for the department but needed additional resourcing to achieve the strategic goals. Those in the Maintain category were programs judged as meeting departmental goals at a high level and as having an adequate level of resourcing. Programs in the Restructure category were those that emerged as critical to departmental and university program success, but were either under-performing, under-resourced, or a combination of both. Those falling into the Retire category were programs that were not able to demonstrate that they were meeting current Student Development program goals.

The results of this process were compiled into a comprehensive

report and submitted to the institution's President's Council for further review and analysis. The President's Cabinet evaluated reports from all university areas and developed a university-wide review report to be implemented across the campus. Thus, the resulting model included a combination of a focus on institutional and departmental priorities based on an integrated use of best practices and theory, which was then infused with data enriched decision-making.

### Step 3: Implications and Discussion

*Applicability.* This model was developed at one institution for the purpose of reviewing the programs within the Student Development division. However, there are at least three aspects of this process and model that may prove helpful to others. First, it provides a starting block for those contemplating a similar process. As stated earlier, there are lacking existing models to guide student affairs professionals in this process, and an even scarcer supply of those focusing on the Christian college setting. Second, it provides a framework to build upon. Every campus will have unique program characteristics that will need to be incorporated in a review; it is hoped that the process outlined here will provide a guide for others as they develop the model suitable for their own institutional contexts. Finally, it provides a useful list of important elements to consider. The focus in this process on departmental strengths, values and priorities, alignment with institutional mission and priorities, integration of best practices and theory, and the use of data enriched decision making are all worthy of consideration.

*Timing.* This review took place over a two-year period. This deliberate pace allowed ample time for the development of a reflective program review that incorporated a multitude of variables. Often, institutions faced with more immediate financial issues do not have the luxury of a two-year process and must make budgetary decisions in a much shorter time frame. The authors offer two suggestions for consideration regarding the timing aspect of a program review. First, this discussion allows others to use the suggested framework and processes as a head start in the development of a process of their own. In this process, there were many times when the pace was deliberately slow to provide time for analysis, and to provide the ability to add and delete items from consideration. While this process yielded beneficial results, it was also—at times—slower than necessary. However, having this model as a starting point will aid others in accelerating their pace. The second

suggestion is to consider engaging in this process prior to being in the position of doing so out of financial necessity. The process of clarifying departmental values, strengths and weaknesses, and aligning the department with institutional priorities was a very valuable endeavor in its own right. Much of the work done for this review was valuable whether a part of a program prioritization review or not. The authors encourage student development programs to adopt many of these tasks as a part of a comprehensive and ongoing assessment protocol. This could also provide a quicker route to a program prioritization review.

*Resourcing.* The main resource necessary for this process was student development staff time. As mentioned earlier, this process included hundreds of hours work and as such was a drain on the staff and the program. Additional resources were utilized from various campus areas including the Assessment Office, Institutional Research, Academic Affairs faculty, Academic Affairs administration, President's Cabinet, and other administrative and staff areas. All of these areas provided valuable insight and contributions to the process. Utilizing on-campus resources allowed this review to not require a significant budget expenditure.

*Collaboration.* Collaboration was the most significant aspect to the success of this review. Without the concerted efforts of those both within the department and across campus, the review would not have achieved the desired outcomes. The most important collaboration came in the form of working with Academic Affairs administration and faculty. As previously mentioned, this student development review was a part of a campus-wide program review. Academics and Student Development constitute the major program offerings at this institution. A good deal of effort is expended in making these two areas as seamless as possible. Therefore, great care was taken to ensure collaboration between the two throughout this review. There are several notable examples of this collaboration. First, the time frames for Academic Affairs and Student Development were as identical as possible in terms of milestones, preliminary reports, and final reports. Second, the format of the reviews—including report formats, program categorizations, use of assessment data, and terminology—were also nearly identical. Finally, the student development review team included multiple opportunities for academic faculty to participate in almost every phase of the process. The academic faculty input and expertise were valued and utilized in significant ways throughout the review.

*Summary.* This model for a student development program prioritization

and review process is not presented as a completely replicable model for other institutions. Rather, it is suggested as a starting point for other colleges and universities, providing a framework that others can build upon to develop a unique process for their own institutions. Timing is a critical element in this process and student development departments would be well-advised to engage in some of the preliminary work prior to being forced into the work by financial exigencies. However, this model can be helpful even in a shortened time frame by providing a head-start and framework upon which to build. The most necessary resource for this endeavor is staff time, which cannot be ignored; this process should not require a good deal of additional budgetary resources. The most critical element for success is working collaboratively with other areas on campus, most notably Academic Affairs administration and faculty. This collaboration will help ensure campus-wide support for the review while also providing valuable additional insight and expertise to the process.

## Conclusion

The financial future of higher education—at least in the foreseeable future—is murky at best and may more likely be described as stormy. This is true for all sectors and areas, including Christian higher education and Student Development departments. Many institutions are utilizing, either out of choice or budget necessity, a program review and prioritization process. Many of these processes are based on the Dickeson Model (2010), but this approach— focusing primarily on academic programs—is only partially helpful to student development programs. The model presented in this article integrates portions of this model, as well as other best practice approaches in student affairs assessment and theory, into a comprehensive program review and prioritization at one Christian college. This review focused on this student development department's core values and strengths, alignment with university priorities, and a collaborative methodology that incorporated best practice and theory application utilizing data infused decisions. While it was designed uniquely for the context of this particular college, there are principles and processes that maybe transferable to other institutions. The seven criteria developed for this project serve as a potential template for initiating a program review and prioritization process that can be a valuable tool in seeking student development program vitality and sustainability in these uncertain economic times.

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# Tradition with a Capital "T": The Value of Campus Traditions

Morgan K. Morris, MA

John Brown University

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## Abstract

Tradition with a Capital "T" explores the value of campus traditions in higher education. Literature regarding tradition and campus traditions answers the question "what is tradition?" and investigates the role of tradition in higher education. Original research sought to survey student, personnel, and general perceptions of the value of campus traditions in higher education through a qualitative, phenomenological approach focused on a single campus tradition. In order to obtain a holistic perspective, the researcher conducted a review of archival resources and interviews with students, faculty, staff, and administrators connected to the campus tradition. Three themes surfaced from the archival research regarding this campus tradition: change, growth, and criticism. Five themes emerged from the interviews regarding the value of this tradition, and campus traditions in general: community, bonding, unity, connections, and identity. Based on these findings, several implications for practice and research also surface for higher education practitioners. This research confirmed the value of campus traditions and identified their specific value in higher education.

## Introduction

The room is dark until spotlights shine on two people on a stage who share a few lines to introduce their group. The lights begin to dim again. Soon, voices start to sing, lights come up, and music begins. Bright colored costumes, perfectly synchronized choreography, and medleys of clever parodies to popular songs cross the stage and fill the room. The students continue in song and dance for several minutes with broad smiles across their faces. This energetic and fun experience is Step Sing, a campus tradition at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama (Sigma Chi “Alley Cats” Step Sing 2015 Sweepstakes Winner, n.d.).

Campus traditions exist throughout higher education, on virtually every college or university campus. Bronner (2012) argues, “The idea of tradition on campus refers inevitably to connection—to the past, to people, to place . . .” ( p. xiii). These connections are significant as they allow students to come together and “feel a part of something larger than themselves” (Bronner, 2012, p. xiii).

While many campus traditions center on athletics, others focus on academics, Greek societies, or student clubs. Regardless of their affiliation, campus traditions are an essential aspect of the campus environment and folklore (Bronner, 2012). In particular, campus traditions reflect the campus culture, which is impacted by a variety of factors, including the surrounding community and region.

Higher education professionals must ensure institutional traditions provide positive and meaningful experiences for students. These professionals play a key role in upholding the community built through campus traditions by preserving these valuable traditions (Strange & Banning, 2001). Campus traditions not only contribute to campus community and culture, but “a large part of American culture involves college tradition” (Bronner, 2012, p. 6). Such traditions, often parts of statewide and national societies, carry great significance and value.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study was to understand the value of campus traditions in higher education. In particular, the study explored the campus tradition known as Step Sing at Samford University. The study analyzed student and personnel perceptions of the value of campus traditions and was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the student perception of the value of campus traditions?
2. What is the personnel perception of the value of campus traditions?

### 3. What is the value of campus traditions?

#### Literature Review

##### What is Tradition?

One can spell tradition with a capital "T" due to its significance and importance in culture and life (Fearn-Banks, 2002). Many individuals believe traditions are not just repeated events, but also serve as connections from the present era to generations past (Bruns, 1991). The word tradition is from the Latin meaning "something handed over" (Graburn, 2001, p. 6). Even today, "tradition [is] the name given to those cultural features which, in situations of changes, were to be continued to be handed on, thought about, preserved and not lost" (Graburn, 2001, p. 6).

Especially when spelled with a capital "T," tradition can prove meaningful to individuals and entire people groups. For many, traditions are "almost equivalent to inheritance," as they are passed on from one individual, group, or generation to the next (Graburn, 2001, p. 6). Traditions carry weight and significance as they give "both identity and status" (Graburn, 2001, p. 7). The existence and importance of traditions provide "a strength to draw upon, a source of historically defined identity, and a source of a sense of safety, specialness, or difference" (Graburn, 2001, p. 9).

##### Tradition in Higher Education

While always unique, campus traditions were not always the large community gatherings often thought of today. In fact, Frederick Rudolph (1962) notes campus traditions first came about in the 1840s among a select few Greek letter organizations. By the early 1900s, campus wide traditions for all students outside of Greek organizations began to emerge, especially athletic traditions. Students would wear school colors, support their team mascot, and sing fight songs and alma maters at sporting events (Thelin, 2004). Other more inclusive campus traditions, specifically focused on generating institutional loyalty and unity among students, also continued to develop (Van Jura, 2010).

The culture of a university is an important and unifying part of the student experience. Higher education culture is unique and comes in many different forms, all of which impact students. Kuh and Whitt (1988) define culture accordingly:

Culture in higher education is defined as the collective and mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and

assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups in an institution, providing a frame of references for interpreting the mean of events and actions on and off campus. (p. 162)

Campus culture is a significant part of the college years and serves many purposes during a student's experience. In particular, Kuh and Whitt identified four such purposes:

(1) it conveys a sense of identity; (2) it facilitates commitment to an entity, such as the college or peer group, other than self; (3) it enhances the stability of a group's social system; and (4) it is a sense-making device that guides and shapes behavior. (p. 161)

Campus traditions are thus deeply rooted in campus culture and, therefore, accomplish many of the same meaningful purposes.

The idea that culture is reflected in traditions applies to individuals, groups, generations, and even organizations throughout society (Komives & Voodard, 2003). Like any other area of society, the culture of a higher education institution influences the traditions on campus. While some campus traditions are official and others unofficial, all traditions are significant to the campus environment (40 tremendous college traditions, 2014).

As a result, campus traditions not only prove valuable for students, but also the campus community as a whole. Kuh and Whitt (1988) clarify, "Because culture is bound to a context, every institution's culture is different" (p. 162). Institutions' unique cultures often draw students in and make the colleges or universities special to their communities. Many campus traditions further this significance by incorporating "members in a common purpose" (Komives and Voodard, 2003, p. 39). Campus traditions create opportunities for the entire community to come together, even at large institutions where this possibility seems unlikely (Komives and Voodard, 2003).

Over time, established practices become official tradition and are repeated simply because they always have been (Horowitz, 2013; Birnbaum, 1988). Administrators, faculty, staff, and students are expected to know traditions of the institution and continue them for years to come (Komive & Voodard, 2003). In fact, many institutions associate orientation and new student programs with the role of educating new students about campus traditions and affirming the importance of those traditions (Boyer, 1987; Komives & Voodard, 2003).

## Methodology

### Context

Samford University, the focus of this study, has a unique song and dance tradition that celebrated its 64th anniversary in 2015 (Flynt, 2001). This tradition, known as Step Sing, has almost 1,000 student participants each year (Traditions, n.d.). With an undergraduate student body of just over 3,000 students, nearly one-third of Samford students participate in Step Sing annually (College Search-Samford University, n.d.).

Each year, at least three Step Sing shows are performed for sold-out audiences. Current students, prospective students, employees, alumni, and members of the Birmingham community attend the shows (Step Sing 2015, n.d.). All of the proceeds from the ticket sales are used for philanthropic purposes (Traditions, n.d.).

Step Sing is coordinated under the Division of Student Affairs and is directed by students in various capacities (Step Sing 2015, n.d.). Each year, Step Sing “is developed, written, choreographed, rehearsed and performed by students” (Traditions, n.d., para. 6). Additionally, Step Sing is an “educational activity in which students participate through leadership development, organizational administration, and time management” (Step Sing 2015, n.d., para. 2).

Like other campus traditions, Step Sing is “socially connective and culturally rooted” (Bronner, 2012, p. 5). Step Sing compels students to perform, or to support their peers, and thus furthers culture within the campus and surrounding community. For over sixty years, with thousands of students involved, Step Sing has become one of the most significant campus traditions at Samford University (Flynt, 2001; Traditions, n.d.).

### Approach and Design

The study examined the topic of campus traditions and their value through phenomenological research, which seeks to understand individuals’ experiences pertaining to a specific phenomenon (Anderson & Spencer, 2002). One specific campus tradition was chosen and students and personnel involved with or who experienced this tradition were interviewed. These interviews, along with archival research, served as the data for the study and assisted in generating a “description of the experiences about the phenomenon that all individuals have in common” (Creswell, 2013, p. 122). The research portrayed “the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences,” specifically regarding the chosen campus tradition (Creswell, 2013, p. 76).

## Participants

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have perceptions of the value of campus traditions. Therefore, the study sought to include participants with a variety of connections to the tradition. The research included an equal amount of student and personnel perspectives (ten students and alumni as well as 10 faculty, staff, and administrators) in order to gain a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the value of campus traditions for the campus and surrounding community.

## Instruments

A set of interview questions was created to assess the value of the campus tradition from the perspective of both students and personnel. These questions were developed after a review of the literature identified current trends and areas of interest. Two questions asked of all participants were, “What is Step Sing’s enduring value?” and “If Step Sing were to cease to take place, what void, if any, would it leave in the Samford community or in Samford’s fabric of traditions?”

## Analysis

Archival research helped the researcher understand the historical context of the campus tradition. Together, interviews and archival research informed the researcher’s wider perspective of the value of the campus tradition within the campus culture. The recordings of interviews were transcribed and then coded for themes. These themes illustrated “what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p. 76). These commonalities were essential in drawing conclusions from this qualitative, phenomenological study.

## Results

### Introduction

Tradition, especially in higher education, is passed on from one generation or group to the next (Graburn, 2001). This pattern of transmission creates both a historical and present context for tradition in higher education. Thus, the current study sought to explore both contexts. Archival research revealed aspects of the historical context while interviews described characteristics of the present context.

Archival research was conducted through a document review at Samford University, where the interviews also took place. This exploration of the archives included an analysis of memorandums, letters, procedures

and regulations, newspaper articles, yearbook pictures, programs, and posters from throughout the history of Step Sing. This research revealed the historical context of Step Sing, an event with over fifty years of history.

Interview research was then conducted amongst students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni of Samford. These interviews asked questions to understand the value of Step Sing from the perspective of various individuals in the Samford community. The research revealed the present context and value of this beloved campus tradition.

### Archival Findings

Documents related to Step Sing date back to the tradition's origins in the 1950s ([Step Sing leadership]). Initially, this archival review revealed how much the campus tradition developed in over fifty years of existence. Moreover, the number of documents collected demonstrates the role of this tradition at Samford. In particular, these documents contributed to an understanding of the value of Step Sing as a campus tradition at Samford University in its change, growth, and criticism over the years.

*Change.* Ironically, the Step Sing tradition has a history longer than the name of the institution—Samford University. In fact, Samford was still known as Howard College for over ten years after the first Step Sing ([Miss Reba Sloan]). When the institution's name changed, so did many procedures and regulations of the tradition. The categories Step Sing groups entered, time limit, song requirements, instrumentalist use, judging criteria, and—of course—ticket prices encountered numerous changes over the years ([Regulations & Procedures]). The longevity of this tradition is most apparent in a review of Step Sing programs, dating back to 1965. These programs were originally black and white paper copies of hand-drawn designs ([“Sound of Music”]). Now, these programs are professionally printed, full-color booklets with numerous photographs of current participants ([Step Sing]).

*Growth.* Publicity for Step Sing dates back to 1951 according to the campus newspaper, the Howard Crimson ([Campus step-sing Tuesday at 7 p.m.]). This publicity continued for years to come and began to establish this event as a campus tradition as early as 1952. That year, it claimed, “all campus sings [will] resume . . .” as if this was an expected tradition ([All-campus sings resume Tuesday]). Attention to this event was especially important in relation to the on-campus dancing policy at Samford. At many institutions, especially historically Baptist institutions like Samford, dancing was disputed. Yet, in 1988, dancing was officially

sanctioned at Samford (Easterling, 1988). As a result, the publicity and excitement for Step Sing only continued to grow.

**Criticism.** The final archival theme highlighted is not due to its frequency, but its importance in the context of campus traditions. Step Sing, like almost any other campus tradition, experienced its fair share of criticism. Some disapproval resulted from the dancing dispute, while other forms of ridicule stemmed from the tradition itself. In 2000, the campus newspaper, the Samford Crimson, published an article entitled “Lose Step Sing, find some real collegiate tradition” (Holmes, 2000). While this example is extreme in nature, it demonstrates the pushback this tradition, like many other traditions in higher education, receive.

**Interview Findings.** As previously noted, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni of Samford University were interviewed in relation to Step Sing. A total of twenty interviews were conducted—ten specifically with students and alumni and ten with faculty, staff, and administrators. All of the participants were in some way connected to the Step Sing tradition, ranging from being as involved as the coordinator for the event to just being a one-time spectator. Five themes emerged from interviews to describe the value of Step Sing and of campus traditions in higher education: community, bonding, unity, connections, and identity.

**Community.** Participants believed the value of Step Sing is found in the community it creates. The broad reach of this tradition even extends to the surrounding Birmingham community, from which many audience members come. A Samford alumni and staff member experienced this community engagement as a former Step Sing participant, saying, “This was my tradition. My part of adding to the Samford community.”

**Bonding.** Interview participants also saw value in Step Sing through the bonding that occurred during the experience. Each Step Sing act involves at least forty students, creating opportunities for new relationships to form within the acts. Additionally, during the performances, members of different acts often interact and support one another, creating bonds between all participants. Another Samford alumni offered, “I would say there is definitely kind of a family bonding experience that goes on within the groups [involved].”

**Unity.** Interview participants also saw value in the unity Step Sing creates at Samford. Participants span from Greek organizations, independent groups, and even campus ministries, contributing to the unity that is experienced. One campus administrator claimed, “Step Sing is our most significant unifying event for students and alums.” The administrator

even referenced how more alumni often return to Samford for Step Sing than for Homecoming each year.

*Connections.* Interview participants also believed in the valuable connections made through Step Sing. In addition to former students making their way back to Samford for this event, a prospective student visit is also hosted on campus. Many of these students see the show and factor the experience into their choice to come to Samford. Moreover, many students' parents visit during this weekend and feel more connected to the institution as a result. A faculty member acknowledged these connections on campus, explaining the value of Step Sing exists in "community and group involvement, getting students to be involved in the tradition. And keeping that tradition alive. And bringing back alumni—another way of connecting students to alumni and alumni back to their alma mater."

*Identity.* Interview participants recognize the value Step Sing carries in creating Samford's institutional identity. Part of the institution for many years, Step Sing persisted as a critical campus tradition through waves of change and is truly a part of the culture and identity of Samford. One Samford alumni and staff member recognized the value of Step Sing within their own undergraduate experience and current work, saying, "Everything else has just come and gone throughout the years. Step Sing has been the one consistent thing. So yeah, Samford would not be Samford without Step Sing for sure."

## Discussion

### Implications for Practice

In light of these research findings regarding the value of campus tradition, a number of implications for practice among higher education professionals emerge. To begin, practitioners should promote beneficial campus traditions. Campus traditions like Step Sing involve a great deal of the community, generate positive results, and are generally well-received, making them worthy of institutional encouragement. The promotion of these traditions can come in the form of verbal support, finances, or provision of other resources to uphold the tradition. Institutional support for campus traditions not only demonstrates buy-in, but also belief in the value the tradition carries.

Additionally, many campus traditions continue each year simply because they are rituals their respective institutions "have always done." Higher education professionals should ensure these traditions are

prioritized not simply for the sake of rote habit, but because of their value and significance. Identifying the value and importance of traditions provides more opportunities for support, ensuring their enduring futures. When the value of these traditions is not identified, traditions may lose their value or larger purpose within the campus community.

Moreover, communicating the value of campus traditions should become a priority. Rather than just stating traditions have value, practitioners should pinpoint the value and communicate it to the institutional community. Identifying specific value encourages practitioners in the importance and significance of the work they do promoting campus traditions. Furthermore, when students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni understand the value, purpose, and significance of a tradition, they are more likely to take part in and encourage it. Informing others of the value of traditions creates more support to rally around and further traditions for years to come.

Finally, if certain campus traditions become detrimental, higher education professionals must respond. Detrimental campus traditions are harmful to students, create barriers rather than unity, encourage negative habits, and leave the community in a worse state than before the tradition occurred. Campus traditions posing such challenges must be eliminated or reinvented to carry value at their college or university. Moreover, eliminating or reinventing traditions needs to be clearly communicated to the campus community. Higher education professionals should explain why the tradition is detrimental in its current state and how they intend to remove or improve the tradition.

#### Implications for Research

As a result of these findings, multiple implications for future research also surface. Further research could explore ways to alter existing traditions to enhance their value and strive toward achieving the identified themes. Research could identify one or more existing campus traditions in higher education and utilize strategies to enhance the community, bonding, unity, connections, and identity associated with the tradition.

Moreover, future research should continue exploring beneficial campus traditions—as well as harmful campus traditions—identifying how to clearly distinguish between the two. Traditions are generally identified as beneficial because of the value they carry or harmful due to the value they lack. However, because all students are different, a campus

tradition benefitting one student may cause harm to another. Therefore, further research could continue to investigate how to promote valuable traditions and eliminate or reinvent harmful traditions.

### Limitations

While the study identifies the value of campus traditions in higher education, it also comes with limitations. First, the breadth of the study was relatively small. Just as all colleges and universities are unique, so are their campus traditions. While most of the identified themes of the value of campus traditions could prove applicable to the traditions of other institutions, the current research was limited in scope. As a result, efforts to extend the research need to also factor in the unique qualities of each campus and the individuals represented.

Second, the student involvement in the Step Sing tradition is relatively incomparable because it involves one-third of the undergraduate student population. With such vast involvement, every person in the Samford community knows the Step Sing tradition. In fact, very few would likely offer anything negative, or would likely offer such remarks hesitantly, in regards to Step Sing. Lastly, the sheer size of this tradition possibly generated bias in the interviews due to the tradition's powerful and commanding presence on campus.

### Conclusion

Research at Samford University regarding Step Sing revealed the value of this campus tradition. Students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni alike understand this tradition's long-standing history, powerful presence, and enduring future due to its value. The value of Step Sing, and many other campus traditions, rests in community, bonding, unity, connections, and identity.

Simon Bronner, a professor of American studies and folklore at Pennsylvania State University-Harrisburg and author of *Campus Traditions: Folklore From the Old-Time College to the Modern Mega-University*, believes whole-heartedly in the value of campus traditions in the lives of students. In particular, Bronner claims, "With very few ways of acknowledging adulthood in American society, campus traditions serve as important coming-of-age events" (Schmalz, 2015, para. 1). Higher education practitioners must see these events as significant and begin to understand the value of campus traditions. Samford University's Step Sing campus tradition, in many ways, provides a unique window into the nature of that value.

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# A Redeeming Obligation for Christian Administrators: Advocating for Student Affairs-Academic Affairs Collaborations

Ryan W. Erck, MA  
Baylor University

## Abstract

The larger purpose of a Christian college education is to guide students towards developing a love for God and neighbor. One way to articulate such a vision is to focus on the development of the whole person as student. A practical method for this holistic education is to promote and practice student affairs-academic affairs collaborations. As such, Christian administrators have a unique obligation to promote a culture of collaboration on their campuses. While partnerships are healthy for student success, they serve an additional purpose in Christian higher education: a redeeming purpose. This paper will address this redemptive opportunity for administrators by outlining the background of student affairs-academic affairs partnerships, situate collaboration in a Christian worldview, offer qualitative interview context on current triumphs and challenges of collaboration from the field, and propose four unique recommendations for policies and practices that administrators can use to help them fulfill the call to collaborate.

## Introduction

Scholarship on college student success has long promoted the development of the “whole” student. This holistic approach to education is outlined in the ample body of literature on student development, transition, success, retention, and similar research threads (e.g., Astin, 1984; Baxter Magolda, 2004; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Kuh & Pike, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). However, the current landscape of higher education does not exhibit a picture of practice aligning with many of the recommendations offered through this body of knowledge. In fact, many argue that colleges and universities are split into silos, or divided into very loosely-coupled parts that rarely interact. One of the most recognizable areas of fragmentation is between student affairs and academic affairs divisions. Since the early 20th century, these two divided domains have united only on an ad hoc basis and typically under administrative mandate (Brown, 1990).

Collaborative efforts have arisen at several institutions in attempts to promote holistic college experiences (Kellogg, 1999) and seamless learning environments (Keeling, 2009). O’Conner (2012), however, finds that “academic and student affairs may be collaborating less, and the lack of such collaboration may be impacting the students’ holistic experiences” (p. 2). The push for more collaboration, while a noble effort in secular institutions, should be an obligatory practice for Christian administrators due to their calling toward a higher standard. Addressing efforts to educate the whole student through collaboration is clearly not a modern concern or one reserved solely for Christian institutions, but it is a valuable and necessary goal for Christian higher education because of its redemptive capacities.

This paper addresses this redemptive opportunity for administrators by first offering a general context for collaboration. Detail will then be presented as to why partnerships are important and how they play roles in student development, specifically in relation to holistic success. The next section positions collaboration within a Christian worldview. Reasons for why Christian colleges should partake in collaboration beyond mere student success, along with how it helps institutions better fulfill their Christian missions, are discussed. The third section presents voices of current Christian administrators detailing what they find to be advantageous and challenging about the practice. In the final section, four unique recommendations will be proposed for policies and practices, which could be used by administrators as a part of fulfilling their obligations to advocate for collaboration.

### Offering Context: Student Affairs-Academic Affairs Partnerships

As evidenced by the diverse arrays of classes offered and the variety of programs promoting various forms of social, emotional, spiritual, mental, or physical development, student support is clearly present across entire campuses. However, this support should be a more cooperative effort among the individuals who are experts in their particular roles of student success. While there are indeed poor examples of collaboration (see Eaker & Sells, 2007; Magolda, 2007), appropriate implementation through the support of wise senior leadership from both divisions would allow for a more well-rounded approach to educating. O'Halloran (2007) offers a summation of evidence in noting how partnerships between academic and student affairs may be especially effective in promoting student success by seamlessly connecting: (1) in- and out-of-class experiences; (2) cognitive and affective learning goals; and (3) intellectual, social, and emotional learning processes (Banta & Kuh, 1998; Blimling & Whitt, 1999; Brady, 1999; Engstrom & Tinto, 2000; Grace, 2002; Kellogg, 1999; Newton & Smith, 1996; Schroeder, 1999; Schuh & Whitt, 1999). Likewise, Schroeder, DiTiberio, and Kalsbeek (1989) posit that partnerships between student affairs and faculty "may no longer be simply a desirable option, but, rather, an absolute necessity" for colleges to ensure students are seeing adequate levels of success (p. 19).

Shushok and Sriram (2010) likewise highlight collaborations as beneficial to student development, contending, "Partnerships between student and academic affairs best align the mission of the institution with the personal mission of the student, thus leading to a stronger bond between the two and a promotion of student success" (p. 76). However, this pathway to student success is not an easy one to traverse. Soden and Storm (2012) note co-curricular priorities "can feel like diversions. And yet institutional life...demands constant commitment to the whole" student (p. 154). If administrators wish to champion the cause of collaboration, they must commit to developing this "whole" student. Friesen and Soderquist-Togami (2008) see this necessity in articulating, "A powerful way to invigorate Christian student learning on college campuses is to promote collaboration...in new and creative ways that capitalize on each profession's strengths" (p. 117).

As cross-campus partnerships surely invite challenge, it is important to put the onus on upper-level administrators (i.e., Directors, Deans, Vice Presidents, Provosts). Although the bulk of this work will not come from

these individuals—it will surely come from the faculty and staff working in tandem—the motivations should emerge from the top. Administrators serve as sites of wisdom for faculty or staff as they participate in the partnership process. This shared wisdom and support from campus leadership is an essential component for fruitful partnerships (Magolda, 2005; Morales, 2007; Ozaki & Hornak, 2014; Whitt, Nesheim, Guentzel, Kellogg, McDonald, & Wells, 2008). In a discussion on faculty and co-curricular educators, Ream and Glanzer (2013) suggest both groups need to work together to provide students with the kind of education a Christian university is charged with cultivating. In other words, in order to cultivate, direct, order, and enrich the loves of students in the context of their most important relationships and human practices, faculty and student affairs staff must find ways to partner in their work to address the larger goal of Christian higher education.

#### Getting Specific: Collaboration Within a Christian Worldview

Although O'Halloran (2007) argues that the primary reason for collaboration is student learning, Christian colleges have an additional motive. Christian higher education, note Ream and Glanzer (2013), “comes closest to fulfilling its mission when the curricular and the co-curricular...work in an integrated fashion to cultivate the whole being of all community members” (p. 98). The mission, or end, for Christian universities is to cultivate a love for God and a love for neighbor. Therefore, the charge for promoting academic affairs-student affairs partnerships is likewise. Ostrander (2012) articulates Christian education as a workshop in intentional and robust Christian living. In this sense, bridging the gap of knowing and doing—the in-class and out-of-class experience—helps guide a Christian institution towards its overarching telos of fostering a love for God and neighbor.

If educating the whole student—heart, mind, body, and soul—is a call for the Christian institution, these partnerships are a starting point in more seamlessly merging these responsibilities. Finding feasible ways to connect the curricular and co-curricular allows students to engage in their education in ways that shape them as whole, as opposed to splintered, persons (Hindman's, 2012). Specifically, Hindman notes, “Splintered lives’ (are) a powerful and troubling image for the lives of students,” and to address them students must have “opportunit[ies] to imagine possibilities for who they may become, given the talents and gifts they possess. They must be able to see themselves as having a place in a larger story which gives meaning and shape to life” (p. 172). This

“larger story” is the Christian narrative of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. While collaboration, as demonstrated, is beneficial for student success, it is a good thing for student success in a Christian institution when perceived and planned from the perspective of this story. Labors of redemption are augmented and enhanced for students when they imagine the larger vision of their academic discipline and where it stands in relation to the larger vision of their life. Hence, holistic development from collaboration can be argued to enhance the redemption process for students. Additionally, redemption efforts are seen when administrators collaborate in attempts to redeem the important work accomplished for and with students.

Trudeau and Herrmann (2014), through an extensive review of literature and practices, insightfully capture the vision of Ernest Boyer in regard to collaborative work. The authors note how his work “inspired many advances in American higher education, and he remains a model for those who see the collegiate experience as a holistic venture in which students are developed and prepared to live fulfilled lives” (p. 71). Trudeau and Herrmann highlight the specificity and importance of collaboration in a Christian college by suggesting:

This hope is perhaps even more compelling for those of us operating within the context of Christian higher education as we seek to joyfully embrace our responsibility to partner with Christ in his redemption of the creation. We do not just educate students for jobs or for relevant service or even to live fulfilled lives. Rather, in the words of Wolterstorff, Joldersma, and Stronks (2004), we “educate for shalom.” We educate with the hope of both motivating and empowering our students to participate with Christ in the reweaving of the fabric of his creation. Needless to say, such an important vision requires that we employ all of the resources available to us in the education of whole persons. A vital element of Christian higher education is the integrative process in which faith and learning, and consequently the curriculum and co-curriculum, cooperate in full partnership to accomplish this goal. (p. 71)

The authors capture the essence of why collaboration is imperative for Christian higher education. The holistic development of students allows for greater understandings of their roles in Christ’s redemptive process

and a better awareness of where they fit in the “larger story.”

The fragmentation of campus displays a human expression of fallenness as fitting in with the Christian metanarrative. This can be particularly seen in the intentional separation from “others” (Cook, Eaker, Ghering, & Sells, 2007) by both faculty and staff in often avoiding one another. Partnerships, though, can be a source of living out a Christian institution’s mission of cultivating students’ love of God by demonstrating efforts of redemption on behalf of administration and faculty. Furthermore, the development of certain virtues can be seen as a result. Creativity, love of learning, and teamwork (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), to name a few, are virtues which can be exemplified in this collaborative work.

A brief hypothetical example might look like a business course partnering with a student activities service center. Students learn the theory and practice of business from their instructor, which might be supplemented by a visiting staff member to speak on the process and reflection of service-learning. A final assessment might bring out the virtue of creativity in designing a business consulting project with a non-profit organization in the community. A love of learning could further be developed by students participating in experiences which would allow them to apply their academic coursework in real-life situations with legitimate impacts on community agencies. Teamwork might be practiced in a group approach to such projects, with each member doing their share and holding one another accountable. Though just one example of how collaborations address virtue development in students, there are numerous other possibilities for faculty and student affairs partnerships in which virtue development, as a part of holistic student development, can play a central role.

Ream and Glanzer (2013) articulate the divide among these two divisions as forcing “students to navigate an institution which appears to house independent nation-states requiring them to learn a new language each time they cross a border” (p. 96). If the road to whole-student development is not easily navigated, students might not experience the desired impact of holistic formation. Additionally, if administrators avoid addressing collaborations, they are missing what Trudeau and Herrmann (2014) would call a high and worthy calling, or the effort to “fully integrate the curricular and co-curricular experiences of students within the context of faith/learning integration to the glory of God” (p. 71). The authors continue in suggesting that Boyer’s (1987) proposition

to see “academic and nonacademic functions as related” (Trudeau & Herrmann, 2014, p. 293) is an example of using integrative language equivalent to the long-held faith/learning integration that is foundational in Christian higher education (Holmes, 1987).

### Administrative Voices on Collaboration

Several qualitative interviews conducted by Perry Glanzer and Todd Ream for their book *Christianity and Moral Identity in Higher Education* (2009) were analyzed for reoccurring themes around the concept of curricular and co-curricular collaboration efforts. The interviews, conducted at multiple CCCU institutions, including Eastern Mennonite University, Xavier University, Calvin College, Bethel University, George Fox University, St. Thomas University, Seattle Pacific University, and St. Olaf University, represent the voices of many different administrators—Provosts, Chaplains, and Deans of Students—to list a few. Although these interviews were structured around questions of moral education at the selected institutions, many illustrations of collaboration were revealed. The present analysis focuses on three institutions—Calvin, Bethel, and George Fox—and insight from three different administrators at each location is offered. This set of campuses and respective administrators was utilized as they specifically addressed the benefits and challenges of collaboration. While collaboration was also discussed in other interviews, this sample offered the most salient detail for the collaborative process, as opposed to mere examples of where collaboration was happening.

One administrator at Bethel University mentioned, “faculty have been very responsive, for the most part, to working with student development.” In referencing the institutional covenant, he noted that faculty and staff might approach interpretations of certain elements differently. However, by declaring, “What it boils down to is, what are the values that we hold most dear?” this administrator recognized that a shared value of students learning to love God can bring two different “silos” of an institution together. It is this type of faith that Heie and Sargent (2012) recognize in noting that “in Christian higher education . . . our faith can provide coherence that overcomes the disciplinary sprawl and fragmentation of the modern university” (p. 244). Nevertheless, even though this administrator felt valued and accepted by the faculty, challenges did not simply disappear. He stressed, “I feel like we have very, very good faculty here, and I feel like we are in partnership, but we are not always in agreement. I guess that’s the best way to put that.” While disagreements

might arise, as in differing interpretations of certain elements of the institutional covenant, shared values regarding students developing a love for God demonstrate the significance of partnerships.

Another Bethel administrator discussed a similar awareness of collaboration on campus:

Let me just mention one area where I think faculty and student life have really shown some wonderful collaboration—our campus counseling center. The folks that staff that are almost exclusively our psychology faculty members. Most of the faculty members who have counseling skills in psych serve in the counseling center as part of their job. So there is this strong sense that they are valued by student life, they make a great contribution to student life, there's partnerships there that are pretty important.

Although the positive components of collaboration are acknowledged, this administrator also recognized that “one of the biggest tensions that exists on Christian college campuses can be between Bible faculty and campus ministry staff.” Again, as Magolda (2005) stresses, partnerships are not easy. In fact, leaning into the tensions mentioned by these administrators might be the first step towards successful collaboration. Administrators, and faculty, should realize that “simply getting along is insufficient. Partners must become more comfortable with difference and conflict, recognizing that, in the end, avoiding conflict does more harm than good” (Magolda, 2005, p. 21).

This tension was similarly seen in the faculty's negative perception of student life by an administrator at Calvin College. Due to turnover in a Dean position, staff morale was low and faculty interaction with student life was limited. Morales (2007) reverberates this need for solid administrative leadership support in the discussion on top-down commitment. However, a different administrator at Calvin perceived the atmosphere of collaboration in quite an opposing way, noting:

The student life division is constantly working on [collaboration], because of our commitment to the whole-person formation as done outside the classroom and we want our work to be both echoes and shadows of that conversation in the classroom. We work closely here. Calvin is fortunate to have a long tradition of an academic and student life division collaboration.

The obligation of partnerships, to develop the “whole person” in promoting a love for God, is clearly seen in this administrator’s approach to collaboration. A third Bethel administrator spoke to the effort of addressing the fallenness of a fragmented campus through a focus on relationships between staff and faculty, noting the importance of doing “so to help think about how we can cross the lines between classroom and co-curricular kinds of things, let’s do that first on a relationship level.” This is also a great demonstration of how collaboration is a way of participating in redemption.

One George Fox administrator identified a reality of the partnership struggle: “I don’t think that we’re ever going to win all faculty to the cause that we need to be true partners in this effort. Student life has been talking about that for a long time and will be for longer.” However, partnering faculty are seen by this administrator as supporting the larger ends of the institution:

We’re all on the same page in terms of thinking character is central to what we’re doing, that’s what makes a place like Fox unique. That’s as important, the academic piece is critical but we want people to go out to be ethical businesspersons and not just people who know how to be good businesspersons.

After detailing collaborative projects such as a living-learning community, a spiritual life committee, and an academic center, the administrator noted that, though “there is a relatively good relationship with faculty from my perspective,” there is much room for improvement.

Another administrator from George Fox recognized the tension between academics and student life, but does not let that stop him from trying to form partnerships. He stressed the importance of the connection with faculty that “plays into, obviously, the development of that student, not just academically but also in developing the whole person, we talk about that a lot. What does that look like and how do we help that student.” A third George Fox administrator also acknowledged the struggle of staff and faculty partnerships. He claimed salient reasons such as student affairs professionals often lacking doctorates or not being viewed as equal players in the game. With faculty often categorizing these practitioners as young, unmarried, and lacking families, a prejudice between the divisions caused a “sort of power game that faculty will play in reference to student life.”

Though the struggles many of these administrators experienced or perceived were particularly noticeable, the benefits of collaboration in regard to the mission of Christian education were likewise evident. Holistic development, striving for shared values, and developing moral character were all reasons voiced by these administrators as appropriate to forming campus partnerships in a Christian context. The redeeming obligation of administrators to advocate for collaboration is evident in one Calvin administrator's idea of "being a good neighbor for the sake of, again, God's kingdom." Through a Christian worldview, collaboration becomes much more than an effort for student success from administrators. It becomes an opportunity to participate in the larger story of redemption, for the administrators, the students, and the faculty and staff involved. The efforts to make such an obligation feasible, though, are not without hardships. Rocky relationships, disagreements on the benefits of partnering, and negative perceptions of "the others" were seen as notable challenges. Therefore, specific practices and policies must be applied if Christian administrators wish to do this successfully.

#### Moving Forward: Practices and Policy Recommendations

Though a variety of tactics are available in current literature for cultivating partnerships between student affairs and academic affairs, four feasible practices are offered.

#### Reflecting on the Moral Elements of Identities

Cook, Ghering, and Lewis (2007) state, "Recognizing that institutions of higher education are complex systems and not simply aggregations of their parts is the first and most essential step in building successful and sustained academic affairs and student affairs partnerships" (p. 5). While these scholars offer great practical insight into collaboration, Christian administrators attempting to promote collaboration should start with a different—and most essential—first step: a recognition of who they are as administrators. Glanzer (2013) highlights how this first step might be difficult in suggesting that "one of the major ways moral conflict occurs is when the moral elements of one of our identities clashes with the moral elements of another identity" (p. 182). Avoiding collaboration might arise from a distorted understanding of what it means to be a good administrator. Personnel conflicts, meetings, or jumping bureaucratic hurdles can easily become the tunnel vision within an administrative position. However, identifying who one is such a culture of collaboration.

However, identifying who one is as an administrator and as a

redemptive agent in Christ's redeeming work is a vital place of starting the collaborative process. Heie and Sargent (2012) note how "stresses and frustrations of academic duties can drown out inspirations" (p. 242). These inspirations can enhance the moral imagination of administrators regarding collaboration and can help them refocus on the "whys" of their vocations. Being a "good administrator," and therefore also an advocate for collaboration, starts with first knowing who one is. In this sense, the administrative identity cannot be caught up in the minutiae of administrative tasks—though those tasks are indeed very important—but must apply to the larger vision of administrative work. Cho and Sriram (2016) stress the importance of an institutional collaborative culture for the success of partnerships. However, reflecting on identities and the moral commitments of those identities is important to practice prior to embarking on creating such a culture of collaboration.

### Using Ethical and Faith Lenses

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) suggest the utilization of certain ethical lenses in the process of educational leadership decision making: the ethic of justice, the ethic of critique, the ethic of care, and the ethic of the profession. While all lenses are helpful in making decisions, the ethic of the profession—or professional standards, as it is often phrased—is the current focus. NASPA and ACPA, two of the largest student affairs associations, present "collaboration" as a competency for professional practice. In addition, "Representation of Professional Competencies" is outlined in the NASPA Standards of Professional Practice (1990). Therefore, collaboration in the development of "integrated learning opportunities" (NASPA & ACPA, 2015, p. 32) is approached by these associations as a professional ethic. While it is noble to adhere to these ethics from the perspective of student affairs staff and administration, a further understanding of ethics is needed for the Christian administrator. King (2012), in discussing the four ethical lenses above, posits, "If we exercise our faith, relying on our personal relationship with Jesus and the working out of this relationship in community, we realize these ethical lenses are not fully sufficient for a community of faith" (p. 201). Therefore, as King (2012) would suggest, certain "faith lenses" are also needed from the Christian administrator. In regard specifically to collaboration, three faith lenses are helpful to consider: respect, responsibility, and stewardship. The first, respect, is beneficial to exercise in regard to current institutional practices and the current work of faculty and student affairs staff. Administrators should not attempt to

overhaul a system to incorporate collaboration overnight. Respecting the time and effort of the campus community is an important early step in developing a collaborative campus culture. Recognizing, encouraging, and praising areas where partnerships are already happening, if at all, can be uplifting for those involved. The second, responsibility, is important for the administrator to recognize regarding where collaboration might be possible. Forcing a staff or faculty member into a partnership would not be responsible or healthy, especially if their courses or programs did not connect to one another. Responsibility can also be practiced in an administrator's sense of responsibility, as previously discussed, to educating the "whole student." Seeing this charge as a Christian responsibility in their vocation could help administrators approach collaboration with more motivation.

The third faith lens, stewardship, applies to an administrator's use of time and resources. In short, this lens is the effort of ensuring these things, as belonging to God, are being utilized in an attempt to glorify God and promote the Christian mission of the institution. Although numerous other virtues might be important to practice or could be practiced as a result of working to establish a collaborative culture, these three provide a salient starting point for using "faith lenses" to complement "ethical lenses." One must remember practicing these virtues in this context does not necessarily translate into embodying them in other contexts. These three faith lenses manifest themselves in a third administrative consideration—rewarding faculty.

### Rewarding the Faculty

One of the more difficult challenges of being an advocate for collaboration is the current reward structure for faculty. Dependent upon institutional type, the classic tripartite of teaching, research, and service is hardly uniform. However, even when advertised as three equal areas, that truth can be difficult to see. In regard to specific policy, if an administrator is going to uphold the task of creating a culture of collaboration, faculty reward structures must be addressed. While the mission of "educating the whole student" may be on their minds, faculty simply do not have the time to take on additional projects, especially if they are not rewarded for such efforts. Soden and Storm (2012) note, "Faculty are seldom rewarded for the risks they take in teaching or for the ways in which they encourage students to think outside the norms of the academy" (p. 155). Incentives such as course load reductions, recognition on campus for their efforts, or a release from certain service

requirements are potential areas to reward faculty for collaboration. Though a policy change in this area might be difficult, Morales's (2007) suggestion for top-down commitment proves crucial in fostering collaboration. Addressing faculty rewards in promoting partnerships would be unrealistic without extensive administrative support. Faculty, however, are only half of the equation for successful partnerships.

### Evaluating Student Affairs Professionals

If student affairs practitioners likewise desire to be involved, and if a truly collaborative culture is going to be established, these staff members need to be evaluated according to their efforts to partner with faculty on programs and projects. NASPA (2016) has an existing competency to address collaboration, as mentioned above, and if the motivation for partnerships is going to be lively, these professionals should be held to a standard of participation and contribution. This practice might include listing collaboration on job descriptions, training staff on the inherent differences in student affairs and faculty (Caruso, 2007), or developing an orientation for both new student affairs staff and faculty to learn about partnership practices.

Perhaps a partnership fair, allowing faculty to meet with staff from different departments in order to discuss ways to promote holistic development together, could be established to cross institutional boundaries. Student affairs staff could hear from faculty about what they are doing in the classroom and faculty could hear from staff about programs which could be implemented to integrate learning and development. Staff members could, essentially, market their programs to faculty in efforts to find partners. With this last illustration as an example, administrators will clearly need to tap their moral imaginations in thinking about how certain efforts might promote collaboration. In attempting initiatives such as these, administrators will be creating student life cultures that embody and value collaborative mindsets when designing programs, resulting in positive steps toward campus cultures that do the same.

### Conclusions

The purpose of a Christian education is to guide students toward developing a love for God and neighbor. A healthy vehicle for articulating such a vision is to focus on the development of the student as a whole person. A practical method for this holistic education is to practice

collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs. Therefore, Christian administrators have an obligation to promote a culture of collaboration on their campuses. Trudeau and Herrmann (2014) emphasize the opportunity of Christian colleges to partake in this call by highlighting the ideal environment for integration to flourish. The immense opportunities to collaborate exist, but it is on the shoulders of administrators to decide if they will take up this challenge.

Administration is not easy, and although there are numerous other initiatives competing for available time and resources, deciding to pursue a collaborative campus culture is an important, purpose-driven decision. Trudeau and Herrmann (2014) highlight that the changes necessary to adopt a collaborative culture are apparent in Christian higher education for two reasons:

First, the integrative climate intended to meaningfully unite faith and learning is very conducive to building connections between the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Second, the whole-person focus inherent in a Christian conception of education implies a total or complete approach including every aspect of a student's experience. (p. 65)

While partnerships are healthy for student success, they serve an additional purpose in Christian higher education, a redeeming purpose. Learning through the struggles voiced by current administrators and the recommendations outlined above, Christian administrators ought to be the biggest champions of collaborations between student affairs and academic affairs.

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# Impact of Monastic Practices and Spiritual Disciplines on Student Leader Development

Haley B. Williamson, MA.  
Whitworth University

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand if practicing monasticism and spiritual disciplines impact the development of student leaders. The research was conducted through grounded theory qualitative interviews with eight student leaders who participated in a monastic trip for the duration of January 2016. Therefore, the present study seeks to answer the question:

What impact does monasticism and spiritual disciplines have on the development of student leaders at a private Christian liberal arts institution?

The eight students were interviewed before and after their monastic trip, answering questions about monasticism and spiritual disciplines, student leadership, and trip expectations/experiences. Themes derived from the pre- and post-trip interviews conclude that participating in monasticism had a positive impact on the students in three core areas: inhabiting time, shift to other-oriented leadership, and whole-person development. Therefore, this study seeks to present implications for how educators can effectively incorporate monasticism into student leader training in order to better equip students emotionally, mentally, and spiritually as they begin their year serving as a leader on campus.

## Overview of Research

This study seeks to assess the impact practicing monastic disciplines has on a student leader's approach to his or her role on their respective institution's campus. Three main variables are thus being explored: monasticism, spiritual disciplines, and student leadership.

To begin, monasticism, in regard to the Desert Fathers, was a movement in the 4th century from populated towns to the deserts surrounding the Roman Empire (Merton, 1960). Groups of men, and later women, retreated from their daily routines to live lives controlled by spiritual disciplines with the end goal being radical and spiritual connections to God. These men lived as cenobitic monks, practicing disciplines and living in community with one another (Gonzalez, 2010).

Spiritual disciplines include, but are not limited to, silence, solitude, and celebration. These disciplines build off of one another. Silence is the foundation for solitude (Foster, 1998) and celebration is the culmination of practicing spiritual disciplines. These disciplines, in turn, produce hope (Merton, 1955), strength, humility, trust, joy (Foster, 1998), compassion, gratitude (Brown, 2012), laughter, empathy, and the ability to see and interact with others in the ways God intends. The practice of these disciplines produce the inter- and intra-personal qualities educators desire to see cultivated in student leaders on their campuses.

Most colleges and universities possess a large population of student leaders serving in a variety of areas on campus while developing skills like responsibility, self-awareness, and communication. Through training, student leaders unlock leadership potential (Kouzes & Posner, 2008), collaborate with members of a team, and advance academically as well as interpersonally (Dickman, Fuqua, Hallenbeck, 2003). Additionally, when executed appropriately and effectively, student leader training results in positive cognitive, emotional, and behavioral growth in the students while increasing their abilities to become emotionally intelligent leaders.

An example of student leadership on campus is the role of a Resident Assistant (RA). An RA's goals revolve around the residents he or she serves, desiring those students to grow, acquire resources, learn to live in community, feel included, and engage educational topics outside the classroom (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1984). An RA undergoes extensive training in order to learn how to effectively and appropriately lead and serve his or her hall. Many of the results of practicing spiritual disciplines coincide with the growth and learning outcomes educators desire RAs to foster as a result of training.

The current study aims to appraise the potential correlation between the implementation of monastic practices, modeled after the cenobitic practices of the Desert Fathers, and a student leaders approach to their leadership role. As previously argued, monastic practices and spiritual disciplines produce inter- and intra-personal qualities that are viewed as desirable traits for student leaders to possess. These traits affect student leaders' abilities to connect with the students they serve, engage in self-care, and contribute to a leadership team. If student leaders are able to engage these spiritual disciplines, the potential exists to positively strengthen their leadership foundation and, in turn, serve and care for the students at their respective institutions more effectively.

Therefore, the question this research aims to answer is: What impact do monasticism and spiritual disciplines have on the development of student leaders at a private Christian liberal arts institution?

### Methodology and Results

The current study used a qualitative grounded theory with a constructivist approach to provide a subjective approach to the data and use of the resulted theory. Participants were selected through purposeful sampling in order to further understand the specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Interviews occurred over the phone and data was collected, coded, and themed.

At a private Christian liberal arts university, students had the opportunity to enroll in a monastic course for the duration of January 2016. This course took place at an off-campus site in central Washington. For the month, students engaged in a monastic routine involving times of service, study, worship, meal preparation, spiritual disciplines, small groups, and lecture. Students studied both spiritual disciplines and historic monastic practices, reading texts from Saint Augustine and Saint Basil. When initially contacted, eight students from the course self-identified themselves as a student leader, serving their campus in one of a variety of positions (i.e student government, residence life, small group leader, etc.). Those eight student leaders participated in a pre- and post-trip interview regarding their monastic experience. The results displayed are based on three themes which emerged from transcribing and coding participant interviews. Each theme is defined and subsequently broken down into codes derived from the data. The three themes include: perception of time, a shift to other-oriented leadership, and overall whole-person development.

## Inhabiting Time

The data collected outlined a drastic shift in students' perceptions of time upon returning from their monastic experience. Before the trip, students viewed their current campus and community culture as busy and fast-paced. However, students returned home with an increased awareness of what it means to inhabit time, be present, and not become overwhelmed by schedules and deadlines. Student leaders learned to become emotionally, physically, and mentally present where they were, in what they were doing, and who they were with.

The concept of inhabiting time was introduced and modeled on the trip through a rhythm and rule of life defined by consistency and cenobitic community. Establishing a rhythm allowed students to schedule time for meals, study, service, and spiritual disciplines. This type of rhythm at first felt forced, but eventually resulted in freedom to inhabit time and practice presence. Gaining an ability to inhabit time as a result of experiencing cenobitic monasticism allowed students to enjoy meals, engage one another's stories, turn off their phones, and create rhythms to their lives.

## Other-Oriented Leadership

Participants in the present study exemplified a shift from self- and achievement-oriented approaches in leadership to an other-centered mentality. This shift was affirmed through an increase in value placed on humility in leadership and an emphasis on social justice from studying St. Basil while on the monastic trip. An other-oriented approach to leadership affirms Kouzes and Posner's (2008) study on what creates potential within a student leader. According to Kouzes and Posner, five main practices cultivate an exemplary leader: being a good role model, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Each practice touches on empowerment, encouragement, and inspiration surrounding the interaction between student leaders and those they serve and work alongside. Additionally, Merton (1955) concluded in his writings that practicing spiritual disciplines produces humility, affecting the ways individuals interact with one another.

Several participants returned from the experience noticing a change in their relationship with team members. Those relationships began growing, which Gibson and Longo (2011) conclude is an imperative part of being on a leadership team. Working well on a team is an integral part of the leadership experience and growth. By experiencing

monasticism, student leaders returned to their leadership teams paying more attention to how to support and communicate well to teammates, which strengthened team relationships and dynamics.

Additionally, Allen and Shankman's (2008) Emotionally Intelligent Leadership (EIL) claims student leaders need to continually grow in the awareness of context, self, and others. By experiencing monastic practices, the students in this study demonstrated a growth in awareness of others. Several students specifically commented on their awareness of self, which in turn impacted their relationships with peers. Furthermore, participants' heightened understandings of social justice in relationship to monasticism and student leadership demonstrated a development within the context of EIL. Research on EIL also proposes that student leaders must be aware of their context and others. This awareness can be accomplished through an expansion on Kouzes and Posner's study inspiring their peers to think critically and emotionally about social justice and its role on campus.

#### Whole Person Development

Student leaders participating in monasticism and spiritual disciplines returned from the trip experiencing growth not only as student leaders, but as whole persons. Recognizing whole-person development is imperative to moving forward with the present research, findings, and implications. According to research by Dickman, Fuqua, and Hallenbeck (2003), student leaders engage holistic development by acquiring leadership skills and advancing both academically and interpersonally. This research is affirmed by students participating in monasticism exhibiting a growth personally, communally, and academically.

Furthermore, research conducted by Gohn, Murray, Newgent, and Paladino (2005) concluded educators need to "create an environment of continuous training programs and support" (p. 25). When seeking to incorporate monasticism into student leader training, educators must be aware of the big picture, taking into consideration the entire being of students and how they are impacted beyond their leadership roles when seeking to incorporate monasticism into student leader training. Consistent implementation of monasticism and spiritual disciplines fosters both personal and leadership development resulting in whole-person development.

## Implications of Research

Understanding the impact of monastic practices and spiritual disciplines on student leaders and their whole-person development has several implications for both student leadership training and ongoing forms of training that occur throughout the school year. The data reveals positive impacts on student leaders having engaged monastic practices. Therefore, concerning student leader training, educators have the opportunity to take themes embedded in the data and incorporate them in three ways.

First, training sessions can cover a variety of topics implemented on the monastic trip including social justice, service, inhabiting time, being present, and various spiritual disciplines that translate to multiple faith backgrounds. Training sessions can explicitly look at historical monasticism, replicate the communal pieces of monasteries, study leaders in church history (i.e. St. Basil), and spend time in silence, solitude, and reflection. Moreover, these training sessions can take place outside of the institution, removing the students from campus and engaging these topics while unplugged from everyday life.

Second, educators must be aware of how to continually challenge their student leaders to make monastic values and spiritual disciplines consistent parts of their lives. Several participants commented during the interviews on the value of having a consistent rhythm and routine along with taking their studies one step further into a space of reflection. While there may not be time each week to fully engage monasticism, educators can use their weekly or monthly student leader meetings to reinforce monastic practices by setting aside time to partake in reflection or a specific discipline.

Finally, educators can implement monasticism half-way through the year by facilitating a retreat for their student leaders. Creating intentional time to leave campus and engage monasticism half-way through the year, as the participants of this study did, can allow students to take a break, check their priorities, and re-center themselves. A common theme among the participants' experiences and the presented implications is the focus on consistency and reflection when implementing monastic practices and engaging student leadership.

## Conclusion

Practicing monastic values and spiritual disciplines positively impacted the development of student leaders. With the use of grounded theory qualitative interviews, the current study explored a specific event, remaining subjective with a constructivist lens in order to produce a theory regarding student leader training. By going on a monastic trip, participants discovered rest, healing, presence, strength, humility, and peace that affected them, their relationships, and their views of leadership. The current study proposes incorporating monastic practices into student leader training, consistently and with intentional reflection, as a means of equipping student leaders emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, as they begin their times of service and leadership on campus.

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# Vocational Development of Introverted College Students

Alex T. Crist, MA  
Baylor University

## Abstract

While vocation is an increasingly popular research topic, research has not addressed how one's personality shapes his or her vocational development. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to explore the vocational development of introverted college students. Using a two-part qualitative study, 101 participants provided online essays and nine participants participated in face-to-face interviews to understand the influences and process of introverts seeking to discover their vocation. Results suggested various external and internal influences of vocational development, as well as the perceived relationship between vocation and introversion. Based on the results of the study, the Vocational Development Model for Introverts was created to explain the process introverted college students undergo to discern their calling. Implications for university faculty and staff members are discussed to inform and advise introverts in their vocational development.

## Introduction

Resilient, committed, and reserved: Abraham Lincoln stands out as one of the most revered U.S. Presidents in history. As the “embodiment of virtue during the Culture of Character,” Lincoln spoke with quiet sincerity rather than gregarious gusto (Cain, 2012, p. 42). Lincoln was a master listener and “had always been a slow, deliberate thinker, examining an issue from all sides” (Koehn, 2013, para. 17). Lincoln was an introvert.

At some point between growing up as a boy in Indiana and reciting the Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln discovered his vocation. With purpose and duty, Lincoln would eventually emancipate slaves throughout the country as the 16th President of the United States. Like Lincoln, college students are at the critical moment between childhood and adulthood, seeking purpose and meaning in their lives. And like Lincoln, roughly half of these students are introverts (Cain, 2012).

How do introverted students begin to discover their vocation, finding purpose and meaning for their lives, as Lincoln once did? Literature often cites both internal and external influences as meaningful in students’ vocational development; however, no research exists to describe how the internally-oriented, introverted students discover their callings. Do they discern their vocation relying on their internal thoughts and emotions, or do they rely on other people and experiences to help them find purpose in the world? The current study examines how introverted college students in their final semester discern their vocational aspirations. Through electronic essay responses and face-to-face interviews, various influences on vocation emerged, establishing a model for introverted students’ vocational development.

## Literature Review

### Vocation

Discovering one’s calling is the “most profound motivation in human experience” (Guinness, 1998, p. 7). However, the concept of a calling, or a vocation, is often culturally ambiguous. Though the popular understanding of vocation is often synonymous with the term career, the current body of literature conceptualizes one’s vocation as more than a career (Dawson, 2005; Neafsey, 2006; Schuurman, 2004). The sense of purpose and meaning in one’s work are key components of the understanding of vocation (Hirschi, 2011). Therefore, a vocation does

not need to be an extravagant endeavor. Ordinary people doing ordinary yet meaningful things describe the essence of vocation (Garber, 2014; Veith, 2002).

Palmer (2010) described a vocational development process: “Vocation does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am” (pp. 4-5). With this idea, the key to developing a vocation lies in first discovering the source of the call, and in response, making personal meaning of it. From a secular perspective, the call originates from the true self of one’s personality and one’s conscience, while from a Christian perspective, God is the caller that enlightens the individual of his or her vocation (Neafsey, 2006).

As many individuals ponder how to make sense of this calling, understanding the contributing factors is essential. Hirschi (2002) captured the importance of the internal and external factors in the understanding of vocation:

All of the definitions seem to agree that a sense of calling entails a sense of purpose and meaning in work. However, they disagree over whether a calling stems from an external summons or can also come from within the individual as a result of intense self-reflection. (p. 5)

Certain personality dimensions may influence the process of utilizing external stimuli or internal reflection to understand one’s vocation. The current study aims to examine the impact of introversion on the process of understanding one’s vocation.

#### Introversion

The personality dimension of extraversion-introversion relates to one’s source of energy and orientation to the world (Kroeger & Thuesen, 1988). While extraverts are externally-oriented and gain energy from others, introverts are internally-orientated and gain energy from within (Morris, 1979). Introversion has been a longstanding area of interest in personality psychology, dating back to the early work of C. G. Jung and Hans Eysenck (Cain, 2012; Ewen, 1998).

There are several differences between introverts and extraverts. Whereas extraverts prefer having many social interactions and high levels of life satisfaction, introverts tend to be introspective and careful

decision-makers (Ewen, 1998). Henjum (1982) stated, “the introvert’s self-sufficient, hard-working attitude and introspective, analytical styles equips her/him very well for the demands on rigorous, abstract activities” (p. 41). In the abstract activity of vocational development, discovering how introverted students experience the process of understanding their vocations, as well as the influences of those vocations, is the primary goal of the current research project.

## Methodology

### Participants

Data collection occurred at a faith-based, liberal arts institution in the Midwest. The institution is residential and enrolls approximately 2,000 students each year. A total of 151 students enrolled in their final semester completed an online essay response as a component of a required capstone course. From the population of students who completed the essays, 101 participants (67%) self-identified as introverts and their responses were used in the study. Ages ranged from 20 to 24 years old, with an average age of 21.6. From this sample, nine individuals also participated in a semi-structured face-to-face interview with the researcher.

### Procedure and Analysis

**Phase I: Online essays.** Participants completed an online qualitative survey as a part of the Vocation in College Project, an ongoing research initiative exploring vocational formation in the college experience (Moser & Fankhauser, 2015). Participants were presented with definitions of introversion and extraversion, and were asked to self-identify as an introvert or not based on the given definition. Next, the survey asked participants to respond to two essay prompts: “How do you define/understand the word vocation?” and “What has shaped/influenced this understanding of vocation?”.

**Phase II: Interviews.** From the population who self-identified as introverts and indicated a willingness to participate in an interview, 35 participants were contacted via email and asked to complete the Introversion Scale (McCroskey, 1997). Nine participants responded and scored as “moderately” or “highly” introverted, and were contacted to set up an interview. During the interview, participants responded to a series of questions related to their personality and vocational development.

Using a systematic grounded theory design, the researcher used an open coding process to code the interview transcripts. The data from the interviews provided the foundation for a theory, as the researcher had

the ability to probe and further explore the participants' answers when needed. The researcher chose the open code of external confirmation while discerning a vocation to investigate via axial coding. Next, the researcher selectively coded online responses to discover and understand the specific elements and influences related to the chosen open code. As a result, the Vocational Development Model for Introverts was established by examining the process of vocational discernment in the interview data and its specific influences in the online responses. By drawing upon multiple sources, the data better informed and established a credible theory between vocation and introversion through the process of triangulation.

## Results

Aligned with the current literature of vocational development, the participants in the study described both external and internal sources as significant influences on their vocation. These external and internal sources followed a pattern among many of the interview participants, establishing the Vocational Development Model for Introverts.

### External Influences

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External influences on vocational development were classified as influences removed from the participant's internal thought process. Three themes emerged as external sources: coursework, university faculty and staff interactions, and family relationships.

The opportunity to read, learn, and reflect upon new material was the most common influence of vocation among the participants, with 40% of essays mentioning it. These participants commented on various aspects of the curriculum and the application of it. When asked about how his coursework has shaped his vocation, an interview participant stated, "Truly the liberal arts experience . . . By taking general education courses in topics that I really would have never had an interest in . . . So knowing that our vocation is holistic has been liberating to me." Specific courses were mentioned by 24% of total participants, including a first-year orientation course and a specific senior capstone course within their major department. Participants described how these courses, as well as others not specifically mentioned, provided a guided space for them to reflect and learn more about their vocation.

Beyond the academic coursework, 16% of participants described how their interactions and relationships with university faculty members contributed to the understanding of their vocation. Conversations

with professors, specifically apart from the course curriculum, helped develop a sense of vocational understanding in some participants. While discussing his professors' influence on his vocation during an interview, one participant stated, "They've shaped my understanding of vocation in the sense that they've allowed me to explore who I am and they've challenged me to think differently on a lot of different topics."

Another participant echoed this idea, describing his interactions with two of his most influential professors:

It is very evident from speaking with them that their teaching here . . . is much more to them than a job that they punch in and out . . . They know that this is where God wants them, and that He has them here to benefit those around them.

University faculty and staff members informed their students' vocational development by advising, challenging, and inspiring them throughout their duration in college.

Like interactions with professors, one participant shared how her parents significantly and positively developed her vocation: "My parents often encourage and deepen my idea of what my vocation is. They desire for me to know God's will for my life, and will encourage me in finding that." Many other participants echoed this sentiment, with 21% of participants citing direct parental influence on their sense of calling. Alternatively, 12% of participants described how their parents had an indirect influence on their vocation. One participant explained, "Although I am unable to recall a time where [my parents] specifically talked about vocation, their approach to work and other responsibilities has had a strong influence on me."

#### Internal Influences

Internal influences were categorized as the components of vocational development that occur within the thought process of the participant. Three major themes for internal influences emerged: faith, observation of others, and personal reflection.

Different elements of Christian faith were mentioned as influences on vocational understanding for 19% of participants. The act of pursuing a deeper faith was noted as influencing one's vocation, as a participant wrote, "My personal relationship with God has heavily shaped my understanding of [my vocation] . . . As I understand more and more what is important to God, I gain a clearer understanding of what it

means to obey him and do the next thing I know.” When asked what the most significant influence on her vocation was, one participant stated, “My study of Scripture. Especially . . . in realizing how much that affects how I live each of my days.” These participants described how the internalization of faith inspired and led them to understand the world around them.

One participant noted that “it usually requires observance of other people’s lives to understand the concept of vocation.” This participant was not alone in her thinking—as observation of others as a tool for vocational discernment emerged as a major theme in the data, with 16% of participants mentioning it. As participants described their observation of their professors’ and parents’ vocation, participants also noted many other influential figures in their lives serving as models for vocational development. Friends, mentors, siblings, and pastors were all mentioned as observed individuals, and as one participant noted, the most significant influence of his vocational development is the “observation of adults who I trust and respect.”

The act of reflecting upon an experience to understand one’s vocation was mentioned by 15% of participants. Participants described general reflections they had on their lives and how those reflections related to their vocations. A participant explained, “I sometimes think about when I’m 85 and I’m looking back on my life, what do I want to say I accomplished . . . My corner of the world, I want it to change.” These personal reflections helped participants discern their current and future vocations.

#### Vocational Development Model for Introverts

In an interview, one participant detailed her vocational journey, combining different sources of influence in her description:

It’s really helpful to get that outside input and encouragement and support. And then later, taking it in and thinking about it, because I have a hard time processing stuff right as it happens. When I can step away for a day or two and come back to it and think about what we said, and then look at, like, more specifically how that applies to me and my understanding of the world that I might not have been able to articulate during our conversation, or things that have happened since our conversation, is really influential.

This process of pairing internal sources with external sources to understand their vocation matched seven of the nine interview participants' experiences. The Vocational Development Model for Introverts (see Figure 1) outlines this process of understanding a vocational call using four distinct phases.

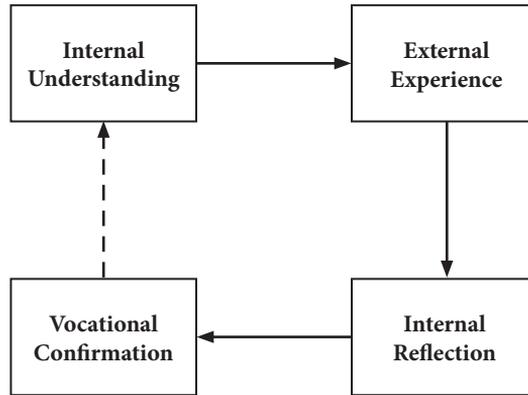


Figure 1. The Vocational Development Model for Introverts.

Phase 1: Internal understanding. To begin their vocational development, the participants described the internal assumptions and thoughts they had prior to their pursuits of understanding their vocations. These assumptions, as noted above, often included the observation of other adults in their vocations. The internal observation provided a framework for understanding what a vocation is, to find their own. Additional aspects of the participants' faiths and family upbringings contribute to this initial foundation of their vocational understanding.

Phase 2: External experience. As a participant noted, "I believe that one cannot know what vocation is until they experience it in some form," the seven interview participants described specific and unique events that led to their vocational understandings following their initial understandings. Most prevalent were the conversations and interactions with friends, family, and university faculty and staff members, as well as discoveries from participants' coursework. One participant described her senior capstone course as an experience that gave her the language to describe previous thoughts about her vocation: "The reason I think I liked them was because they agreed with what I was feeling and thinking already, but hadn't had the words to express or hadn't been affirmed by anything else." These external influences, as previously outlined, provided the participants with experiences to learn more about their

vocations from sources outside of themselves.

Phase 3: Internal reflection. Following the experience, the participants described the process of returning to their internal thought processes to reflect on the experience, making sense of how such thought processes relate to their initial understanding of their vocation. The participants mentioned how this additional reflection helped them better understand the experience. Participants described this internal reflection as the most important component of the process, leading to better discernments of their vocations.

Phase 4: Vocational Confirmation. After the internal-external-internal process, the participants described a sense of confirming or rejecting the newfound sense of vocation. This vocational confirmation combines the internal and external sources into a decision about how to move forward in pursuit of their vocations. One participant described the multiple-source understanding by concluding, “My understanding of vocation cannot be pointed back to a single incident or individual, but rather a combination of people, incidents and personal understanding.”

Participants described the vocational confirmation as the final stage—no participants discussed its implications. However, after an individual confirms or rejects his or her new sense of calling, he or she has a new understanding, which leads to new experiences and reflection. Therefore, the model depicts a dotted line between Vocational Confirmation and Internal Understanding, suggesting the circular nature of the process.

## Discussion

### Influences of Vocation Development

The interview participants described the benefits and challenges of the relationship between vocational development and their level of introversion. The most common difficulty, as described by participants, was the consequences of relying on self-reflection instead of seeking help from others. Palmer (2010) noted the importance of blending internal and external influences while discerning one’s vocation, with the individual and the individual’s community sharing a collaborative relationship. The internal processing and reflection are key components of an introvert’s vocational development, but they cannot be the sole stimuli. Palmer explained, “Doing inner work together is a vital counterpoint to doing it alone. Left to our own devices, we may delude ourselves in ways that others can help us correct” (p. 92). The process of vocational development needs to be an interwoven sequence of internal and external events, specifically for introverts whom may prefer to solely

embrace their inner world.

The online responses in the study described how the varying internal and external sources in respondents' lives influenced their vocational development. The time spent observing and reflecting created space for the participants to make meaning of the external influences in their lives. As Neafsey (2006) wrote, the combination of these internal and external sources creates an "authentic vocational discernment" (p. 1). By combining the two types of influences, introverted college students can authentically understand their callings in the world.

#### Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

As Ewen (1998) described, introverts tend to have a natural disposition for introspection, thinking carefully before making important decisions. While making the important decision about finding meaning and purpose in their lives, the participants' responses suggested the necessity of introspection and reflection. Another theory outlining the importance of reflection in student development is Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning. The results of the study resemble Kolb's (1984) Theory of Experiential Learning; however, the participants' described experiences did not adequately follow the process of Kolb's model. Therefore, the Vocational Development Model for Introverts was created to account for the participants' vocational discernment. Perhaps vocational development is a form of experiential learning, due to the shared process of these two concepts.

#### A New Model for Vocational Development

Literature on vocation widely discusses the integration of external and internal sources of influences. However, there is no model for vocational development that accounts for these varying and interwoven influences. The creation of the Vocational Development Model for Introverts established a model to explain the process of students understanding their vocations. The results from interview participants outlined the foundational process of their development, with seven participants describing a similar internal-external-internal pattern. The results from the online essays provided a fullness to the model, explaining the major themes of influence that interact with students' vocational development.

#### Implications

The Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE) consists of 220 member institutions, both religious and secular, who are

increasingly interested in the vocational development of their students. Professionals working directly with students in their vocational or career discernment could benefit from understanding how students' personalities influence their pursuit of purpose. Because reflecting after experiences was beneficial to introverts' vocational development, practitioners should offer students opportunities for guided reflection. For example, a career development office could provide a program in the fall semester for students who completed a summer internship experience, in which a professional staff member guides the group through reflective activities to make connections about the work experience and students' emerging sense of vocation.

Practitioners will need to promote these efforts and make them easily accessible, specifically for introverted students. Participants in the study noted that they waited until someone approached them before discussing their vocation, therefore, these efforts should be proactive. Academic educators can also incorporate literature on vocation into curriculum, creating a holistic university culture of support for students' pursuits of meaning and purpose.

#### Limitations

Both key terms in the study, vocation and introversion, are ambiguous in nature. While the current research operated under specific definitions of these two variables and made corrective actions to remove data with obvious misunderstandings, the participants may have answered the questions under varying assumptions. Additionally, without performing a comparative study between introverted and extraverted students, the results cannot appropriately be generalized to extraverted students. Finally, the methodology reflected a pseudo-grounded theory design, due to extraneous constraints on data collection.

#### Conclusion

As Buechner (1973) famously wrote, vocation is "the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (p. 95). The introverted college students taking part in the current study balanced their inner and outer worlds to discover their callings. While some influences on their vocation occurred within their own personal thoughts and reflections, participants also cited higher education professionals and parents as influencers of their vocational development. To better support introverted students in their pursuits of purpose, professionals

can use the Vocational Development Model for Introverts and continue to research the unique processes and needs of this population. Students, both introverted and extraverted, should graduate from college with a full understanding of their deepest gladness, the places in the world with the deepest hunger, and the intersection of the two.

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*"It feels a bit like imposter syndrome": Examining the issue of masculinity and depression in male college students*

Wildon Story, MA  
Belmont University

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Abstract

This research seeks to examine the intersectional relationship between depression and identity development of male students at a liberal arts institution. The present study focused on the statistics of male students attending the university counseling center alongside multiple conversations with three counselors who help depressed male students and two students whose personal accounts detailed the interaction between their depression and male gender identity. The findings suggest male students' depression may be rooted in the incongruence between students' self-perceived identity and the culturally-demanding narratives of male behaviors and thought patterns. Students detailed their experience navigating shame, loneliness, comparison, and their hesitancy to share struggles with depression to peers. Campus climate for the university provided inconclusive results, dictating historic rises and falls within the percentage of male students who experience depression or are likely to see a counselor. The impacts of depression and male identity development on male students' willingness to see a counselor were also examined.

## Introduction

Beginning at an early age, males are taught the importance of assimilating into socially-accepted characteristics of masculinity. As they grow older, pressure to fulfill masculine ideals increases (Edwards & Jones, 2009). These pressures stem from familial and peer interactions, as well as messages from various entertainment mediums men absorb everyday (Clarke, 2009; Hatoum & Belle, 2010). Considering these narratives, male students enter the collegiate environment with formulated masculine ideals which further manifest themselves on college campuses. Since the majority of college students reside within on-campus residence halls, considering how to counteract potentially toxic masculine stereotypes is imperative for colleges and universities.

Current research chronicles the experiences of both depressive male students and university counselors who assist collegiate men struggling with depression. Examining male students' experiences concerning what triggers their depression, their specific episodes, and how they cope with their illness in relation to developing identity were predominantly important. These particular topics were emphasized because the campus climate data depicted environments where more male students may be feeling severely depressed but are not intentionally seeking out professional counseling. Data revealed an increasing number of male students experiencing depression. The American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment II (ACHA-NCHA I) (2017) found 32.7% of collegiate males "felt so depressed it was difficult to function" and 8.8% of students "seriously considering suicide" (p. 14). Institutions of higher education must emphasize the importance of mental health in their students, especially since incoming male students live with potentially decades-old narratives about how men should act or think.

## Gender Identity Development

Gender Role Theory defines gender as "the cultural and historical ways in which biological sex differences are played out at the individual and social level" (Branney & White, 2008, p. 3; Connell, 1995). Creating a set of gender role expectations is harmful to individuals, especially those who feel disconnected from the set of gender ideals to which they must subscribe. Consequently, men may internalize their masculine gender roles and avoid certain actions counterintuitive to what they believe is expected of them.

Hegemonic masculinity is the social representation of gender and the totality of socially accepted forms of masculinity and the way it is expressed (Branney & White, 2008; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). If men pursue hegemony, they must disassociate themselves with feminine characteristics or actions others may perceive as gay (Connell, 1995). Since hegemonic masculinity is most consistently depicted, men create specific male identities in order to properly navigate social expectations. Edwards and Jones (2009) describe three phases of masculine identity development: First, a person creates a "mask" resulting from a desire to represent a masculine image and conceal qualities not affirmed by culture as masculine; second, a person uses this mask as a catalyst for behavior "to overcompensate and prove their manhood to others and to themselves" (p. 216) out of fear their natural characteristics do not fulfill society's description of normalized gender beliefs; finally, a person recognizes stereotypical masculine ideals that may not appeal to the entire identity and, therefore, avoid hypermasculine ideals.

### The Problem of Depression

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition* (2013) states depression is indicated when five or more symptoms occur over a two-week period: depressed mood most of the day, less interest in most activities, significant weight gain or loss, insomnia or hypersomnia, restlessness or slower body movement, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, inability to think or concentrate, and recurrent thoughts of death or suicide. Feelings of depression may occur because men feel they are unable to meet expectations of their prescribed gender roles. Incongruence with a prescribed gender role has the potential to negatively impact someone who ultimately feels unable to fulfill his role as a male (O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986). Good and Wood (1995) found men with depression live in tension: While gender role conflict causes depression because men feel incapable of reaching a social standard, they avoid counseling because help-seeking does not fit into the masculine role.

### Depression and Masculinity Interacting

Mens' gender role conflicts may negatively impact their desires to seek counseling services for depression. However, counseling provides unique and positive barriers between men and their depression. When counseling "normal[izes] depression as well as emphasiz[es] the generally favorable outcomes of depression treatment," it becomes particularly

helpful—especially for men—because it provides them an opportunity to discuss their emotions (Rochlen et al. 2009, p. 8). However, some men may create self-stigmas, defined as “internalization of negative views of society toward mental illness and seeking help,” about seeking assistance for illnesses such as depression (Vogel et al, 2011, p. 369; McCusker & Galupo, 2011). Tang, Oliffe, Galdas, Phinney, and Han’s (2014) study on college men found participants were eager to deny their weakness and limit the self-disclosure of their illness. Men explained how denying an illness was effectively denying weakness because of the thought that self-disclosing an illness would lead others to label them as inferior or weak in relation to other men. Participants actively limited their self-disclosure in the interest of saving face in front of their peers.

The current study sought to examine how depression and masculinity intersect at a campus-wide level, as well as how male students navigated their identity development with episodes of depression. The research was guided by the following questions:

1. How does depression impact masculine identity development?
2. Does an individual’s view of masculinity influence their willingness to seek professional help for depression?

## Method

The study balanced looking at quantitative data from the university’s CIRP Freshmen Survey and College Senior Survey (CSS) alongside qualitative data collected from multiple interviews with students and counselors. The CIRP Freshmen Survey detailed information about incoming first-year college students based on survey results and the CSS was created as a survey for graduating seniors (CIRP Freshmen Survey, 2017; College Senior Survey, 2017). Two student participants (Student Participant A, or SPA, and Student Participant B, or SPB) were males who sought personal counseling for periods of depression. These participants discussed their personal experiences with depression while studying at the university and represented men with depression. Additionally, three participants (Counselor 1, Counselor 2, and Counselor 3) were female counselors at the studied university with a history of treating depressed male students. They acted as professionals whose experiences were based on history or patterns they recognized in depressed male students.

Interviews with students focused on several ideas: the notions of masculine ideals they learned at home; how living in a residence hall on a college campus impacted those teachings; and how depressive episodes impacted how they felt about themselves, their relationship

with peers, and their willingness to seek counseling. Components of the interviews with university counselors included the most common themes they noticed with depressed male students in counseling, how they perceived the college environment affects depressed male students, and the potential impact higher education staff and faculty may have on depressed men.

## Results

### Campus climate

The researcher examined potential trends in male students who felt “frequently” depressed and who reported there was a “very good” chance of seeking counseling from university counselors. As seen in Table 1, the number of first-year students at the university who consistently feel depressed has decreased. Although CIRP data shows an overall decreasing trend in those who would strongly consider utilizing the counseling center between 2009 and 2011, there was a 6.6% increase from 2011 to 2014.

Table 1. CIRP Respondents Feeling “Frequently” Depressed

	Percentage Feeling “Frequently Depressed	Percentage Indicating a “Very Good Chance” of Visiting the University Counseling Center
2009	8%	11.3%
2011	7.4%	4.3%
2014	5.4%	10.9%

There is no consistent relationship between CSS respondents who indicated feeling “frequently” depressed and the number of those who visited the counseling center. In Table 2, the number of students with frequent depression increased for two years, followed by a decline. However, there are more students who feel depressed than those who frequently visit the counseling center.

While interview participants did provide a positive opinion regarding campus counseling, there seems to be a difference when communicating about specific issues like depression. Counselor 2 concurs, stating, “You know, the counseling center and what people will think of you—there’s not that much [sigma] here.” However, both student participants

commented on the difficulty between balancing a cultural acceptance of counseling and a campus climate that may not fully understand the issues men experience. Student Participant A (SPA) agreed, stating, “I think the hardest thing is not having the general student population really be aware what it’s like to be dealing with [mental illnesses].” Furthermore, SPB believes, “Letting someone into [your struggles] is—it’s being defeated in some ways. Like, I don’t know, like, once you give up doing it all on your own is defeating for a guy.”

Table 2. CSS Respondents Feeling “Frequently” Depressed

	Percentage Feeling “Frequently Depressed	Percentage Indicating a “Very Good Chance” of Visiting the University Counseling Center
2010	6.5%	7.4%
2012	8.3%	9.1%
2013	12.5%	6%
2015	9.2%	7.7%

Incongruent identity

While all participants discussed how depression affects masculinity in some capacity, they dissected various components of the issue. Two participants discussed issues with culture’s understanding of masculinity and three participants explained how depression impacts one’s emotions. The emotional imbalance participants described creates a difficult reality for male students navigating depression and gender roles. For example, Counselor 1 indicated, “[Depression] leads to, I think, a really difficult intersection between ‘how do I balance what culture has told me and what depression leads me to [believe],’ because they are so incongruent often that that feels difficult to navigate.”

Both Student Participant A and Student Participant B recounted the evolution of incongruent identity into prolonged feelings of shame. SPA stated, “I think so many people who struggle with depression try to hide it, because they feel . . . I know for me, it’s made me feel very, like, inferior, if that makes sense.” Additionally, SPB articulated how he has withdrawn from some relationships because they feel “unsafe” and how depression has caused him to change behavior around specific people.

### Negative self-esteem and comparison

When coding participant interviews, a theme regarding depression's effects on self-esteem and men's tendencies to compare themselves surfaced. Counselor 2 believes, "Comparison definitely happens. I think it's from 'why?' or 'I don't understand, because this person seems to have it all together, and [a depressed man] is doing good to get out of bed.'" SPA discussed self-hatred from depression:

Self-esteem especially is really attacked. So, yeah, that was really difficult. Self-esteem is one of the biggest. Just a lot of pain, I guess, can be turned inward during depression. So it was like, I hate myself, [and] I hate how I'm feeling, so I hate myself.

Counselor 1 explained residence halls can be tricky environments for depressed men because they can compare themselves with large numbers of peers. Living with peers is a common component of the college experience, but it may create more difficult layers for depressed men to navigate in avoiding comparing themselves to others. SPA described the difficulty of living in his residence hall where he constantly sees male peers who "look like they have it all together" and "in general being so much more, like, more of a man," which increases negative self-talk.

### The Importance of Disclosing to Others

Counselor 3 believes relationships outside of the counseling center are important for depressed men because male students typically attend counseling after someone they are close to recommends seeing a professional. After discussing an experience where he shared about depression with a peer, SPA stated, "I think a lot of people with depression, being able to share, um, what you're going through, um, with someone who truly cares about you is an absolute step to being able to overcome it." Additionally, Counselor 2 noted individuals, specifically those in mentoring roles such as coaches or teachers, have positive impacts on depressed male students because they are able to recognize issues and refer students to the university counseling center. Finally, SPA communicated how positive relationships in his life assisted his recovery:

Especially [in my hall], I had no energy to reach out; not many people reached back. A few did, and those few made that [positive] impact. Sometimes you need a reason to work yourself out of that depression, [because] it's so much work.

However, participants spoke of potential obstacles to disclosing depressive feelings to others. SPA said, “A lot of [fear of disclosing] has to do with what other people might think of you.” Similarly, SPB’s female peers have provided a safer space for disclosure because there is not a fear of them perpetuating masculine stereotypes like male peers might. SPB believes male peers may not acknowledge issues because “[they] don’t want to look like [they] care too much” for male friends. Although male students may observe problems with their depressed friends, participants have experienced a lack of response. According to SPA, some of his male friends ignored signs of depression. “As a result,” he said, “the support I needed from those friends wasn’t there, because they just didn’t really get it. It’s easier for them to pretend nothing is going on.”

#### Barriers to Attending Counseling

Male students expressed hesitancy to meet with a university counselor because it represented an inability to overcome an issue on one’s own. Counselor 1 stated, “To come [to the counseling center] means there is something on a totally different level, there is something going on that is not going in a way you think it should be or desire it to be.” SPB concurs, articulating, “I look at counseling more as a place for weakness and not having everything together and more on the brink of something bad happening.”

#### Discussion

The study findings can be understood when examining the overarching statistics surrounding depressed men on college campuses. While both students and counselors articulated the struggle of depression and the hesitancy to address it with peers and professional counseling, both sets of participants described their hope for raising conversation and creating dialogue about mental health on college campuses.

#### Incongruence Between Depression and Masculinity

Exploring the interaction between depression and masculine characteristics is integral in understanding the perceptions of depressed men. Gender Role Theory creates specific, cultural expectations of gender, and students carry these lessons on gender roles with them as they enter college environments (Branney & White, 2008; Harris, 2010).

Most of the participants described how family expectations and rules about gender and disclosure began at a young age. Additionally, they

said face-to-face interactions dictated their thoughts concerning gender. For example, SPA said, "In the small community I grew up in, um, there were a lot of gender roles: the guy was the provider, the emotional stability, and the leader of the household." Similarly, Counselor 1 believes our society creates gender roles that dictate how people should behave, explaining, "We get rewarded or punished based on those [norms] based on our experience." As participants noted, male students enter the college environment with preconceived gender norms, which the college environment may exacerbate.

Emslie et al. (2006) described how men isolated themselves based on their sense of masculinity. Through isolation, they were able to navigate depression without others knowing. Specific participants in the current study described their experiences with isolation on their campus. For example, SPA said depression impacted the lens through which he saw the world, and he described depression as "pure and total loneliness" because others cannot physically see depressed thoughts.

Research shows depressed individuals tend to overestimate others' abilities and underestimate themselves (Beck, 1967). A number of participants expressed that depressed students wondered why other students seem to be collected and healthy, while they struggled to go about their day. SPA believes during his depression "any sort of confidence in who I was [got] pretty much sucked away." No participants detailed an exact process of how male students stop comparing themselves to others. However, some noted university counseling center attempts to cultivate positive self-talk based on the idea that depression is an illness not an identity.

### Barriers When Seeking Help

The current study identified a theme of the importance of disclosing depressive feelings to others in order to ensure a higher chance of successfully overcoming periods of depression.

Overall, while participants were aware of the benefits of disclosing their struggles to someone else, they did articulate the hesitations men have when considering telling others about depression. All participants affirmed the literature's findings that a counseling center can become a positive environment for depressed men. They made a distinction between the stigma of the counseling center and the stigma of disclosing to others about their visits to the counseling center (Kitzrow, 2009; Rochlen, et al., 2009).

Although the current study's participants had positive experiences

disclosing to others and to the counseling center, there are many personal stigmas men may attach to help-seeking. Student participants in the current study discussed their hesitancy to disclose with peers based on fears of being perceived differently as a result of disclosure and experiences watching peers ignore signs of depression. Additionally, participants discussed how male peers are likely to notice troubling signs while avoiding inquiring about them out of fear of appearing too caring.

The literature shows males create stigmas of counseling based on gender roles and the dissonance between confessing an issue and appearing strong for others (McCusker & Galupo, 2011; Addis & Mihalik, 2003). Participants affirmed these findings, discussing the fear of appearing weak when entering into a counseling center. Counselor 1 explained attending a counseling center is a sign there are unforeseen issues individuals are not able to handle themselves, and it takes time for men to admit this. Because men are likely to deny their issues based on avoidance of weak characteristics, men often enter counseling centers in more severe states than their female peers.

#### Implications

The current study affirmed depression's impacts on male students' understandings of masculinity. These beliefs influence male students' desires to seek either peer or professional help for their mental illnesses. Although depression can become a serious issue for male students, they are less likely to disclose their struggles with others out of fear of changing perspectives or appearing weak. Student affairs professionals should be aware male culture prominently influences students. Therefore, beginning conversations in areas on campuses, such as male residence halls, may combat damaging notions of hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, it is integral to show positive male role models to students who can create conversations surrounding topics of masculinity.

The literature illustrates how depression can detrimentally impact a student's academic performance. Therefore, colleges and universities should intentionally inform professors of signs of depression. Signs of depression within the academic setting include failing grades, sudden changes in academic performance, or prolonged periods of missed classes. In order to better alert professors, institutions should create educational seminars about mental health. These types of seminars should be ongoing development sessions regarding how to identify students with depression, paths to make other university staff and faculty aware,

and how to assist depressed students in academic settings. Participants articulated how professors are oftentimes considered lynchpins on university campuses, especially by first-year students. Professors should insert a section about mental health into their syllabi and provide on and off-campus resources for students struggling throughout the semester.

Student affairs professionals should consider how programmatic efforts on campus have the ability to raise awareness for particular issues or begin conversations amongst the student body. However, a tricky component of depression is a lack of energy, which may influence depressed students' abilities to engage with programs. Therefore, universities should consider campus-wide programming that discusses mental health issues such as depression without singling out individuals. If student affairs professionals desire to create inclusive spaces for depressed students, they must promote educational opportunities that raise awareness about issues affecting large portions of the student body.

#### Limitations

One of the potential limitations for this study was the low number of personal interviews. Although the participants provided their beliefs concerning the current university and the issue of depression on campus, more participants would have provided a more robust understanding of depression in male college students. Specifically, interviewing more male participants in the future will provide a larger pool of experience for what depressed male students believe about their own masculinity and their other male peers. A final limitation was researcher bias. Although the current researcher believes a hermeneutical approach to this study was integral, bias must be accounted for when examining the results and discussion. The current researcher identifies as a male who has had experience with depression and help-seeking from a university counseling center.

#### Conclusion

Although research is limited, it continues to identify how depression and negative masculine stereotypes can hinder a male student's college experience. Although participants in the study communicated a healthy experience thus far with depression and the college experience, many male students may feel uncomfortable sharing their stories. Such discomfort only increases the importance of continual efforts to raise awareness for mental health on college campuses. The findings of this study should encourage student affairs professionals to continually seek

new information regarding depression and the male student population in order to tailor helpful strategies to specific institutions and student bodies.

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*The motivation of students of color for pursuing leadership positions at faith-based universities*

Grant Burns, MA  
Jenny Eley, MA  
David M. Johnstone, EdD  
George Fox University

Abstract

As faith-based universities increasingly diversify the culture of their student body, student leadership roles also diversify. While there is literature on barriers and challenges students of color experience in these roles, there is little to help understand their motivation in pursuing these roles. Using conversations, interviews, and surveys this research was conducted to start such a conversation. The researchers' goal was to go beyond conventional wisdom and begin gathering data reflecting the experiences of students of color on our campuses. While compensation is definitely a motivation, this research suggested there might be a variety of reasons to pursue these roles.

## Preamble

Recently, a prominent speaker affirmed until there is broad research done in all areas of diversity within Christian higher education, there will be challenges in establishing momentum for institutional commitments to culturally diversify Christian campuses. This was reminiscent of the challenge heard elsewhere for the need to record the stories of students of color in general (Bradley, 2015). Until there is data tied to experiences of students of color at faith-based institutions, diversity initiatives will gain limited traction—an admonition affirming this particular project.

## Goal

The researchers' goal was to go beyond assumptions and conventional wisdom to gain a more nuanced view of the motivation of students of color for pursuing leadership positions on their Christian campuses. Considering the many values articulated by evangelical schools, the researchers assumed students would not encounter hostility in pursuing these roles. However, statements of students were anecdotally concerning. They felt vulnerable in the scrutiny and risks of candidacy for pursuing these roles (Bleikamp et al., 2014). Even with peers noting these concerns, the authors still had students of color pursuing leadership positions, which begs the following questions, which serve as the basis of the current research:

- Why?
- What sparked their imagination?
- What motivated them?
- What kept them tenaciously pursuing these roles?

## Theoretical Lens

There is an abundance of material on leadership and college students; however, there is little material on the motivation of college students pursuing leadership roles. Much of the existing data is anecdotal or based on observations formed by professionals from personal experience. Students pursue leadership roles for a variety of reasons, leaving researchers to discern motivation by inferences and anecdotes in the literature base. While there is a growing body of literature on the student of color experience at university, research tends to focus on access, retention, and support.

The current study evaluates experiences of students of color within leadership paradigms. The researchers started with Greenleaf's servant

leadership model (1977). Though focused externally in terms of relationships and service to others, Greenleaf's model was still heavily individualistic. Greenleaf chose to look at models that had a broader relational element. At risk of being fragmented, the researchers borrowed elements of the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (Astin & Astin, 2006), and two particular elements of the Critical Race Theory (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). These elements, discussed below, allowed the researchers to place their data into perspective, draw conclusions, and discuss implications.

The Higher Education Research Institute began to develop the Social Change Model (SCM) in 1994 (Astin & Astin, 1996). Designed specifically with college students in mind, SCM states leadership involves "collaborative relationships that lead to collective action grounded in shared values of people who work together to effect positive change" (Astin & Astin, 1996, p. 16). SCM identified eight values and activities a leader pursues in order to effect change. While all had some relevance, three values stood out as fundamental to the current research.

The SCM asserts, "Leadership is a socially responsible, values-based, collaborative process that is inclusive and accessible to all people, and that community engagement is powerful pedagogy to learn leadership" (Astin & Astin, 1996, p. 23). Compared to leadership perspectives focusing on the individual, SCM provided a collaborative focus. The model suggests leadership is shaped by relationships, in contrast to leadership definitions leaning heavily on personal attributes (p. 23). The values most pertinent to the current research include: consciousness of self, understood as an awareness and development of one's talents, beliefs, and values; citizenship, recognition that all people involved in a given enterprise are interdependent and affected by one another's efforts; change, understood as the ability to transform the world for the benefit of all. While these values seem personal, SCM suggests they develop in individuals as those individuals relate to others. Using the three values as a paradigm through which to view the current study, the values emerged frequently in the data.

Including elements of Critical Race Theory (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015) adds to the theoretical values-based framework, particularly in discussing motivations of student leaders from minority communities. Critical Race Theory suggests that racism is embedded in American society (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015, p. 6-7). Such thinking assumes racism is often unrecognized, thus requiring movement beyond personal and

relational interactions in favor of challenging systems that intentionally or unintentionally promote racial biases.

Two aspects of the Critical Race Theory were important to include in the research. First, the idea of counter-narrative suggests students of color have a stories that stand out in contrast to the prevailing stories of majority students (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Often, students of color represent narratives different from that considered normative or typical within society or even a campus's culture. This theory also emphasizes the need for and power of experiential knowledge (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). When tied together, story and experience lead to a recognition of the power of experience and the personal nature of stories.

Initially, the researcher sought to understand whether the researcher's own systems had biases or racial barriers. However, as the research progressed and developed, the researchers decided to utilize a different approach. While maintaining an interest in and concern for barriers, the research aimed at understanding why students of color seek leadership positions and roles. Overall, the aim of the study was to gain such understanding in order to encourage peers and colleagues in how they might effectively recruit students of color into campus leadership positions.

## Methodology

The researchers built a simple survey and originally approached five private, faith-based institutions associated with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) located on the West Coast of the United States. While identifying as evangelical Christian institutions, four did not require students to sign a statement of faith. The researchers contacted 12 professional staff members at these institutions, explained the study's aims, and requested that the survey be forwarded on to current and past student leaders of color. The researchers asked staff member only to send the surveys to alumni from the previous three years. Three participating institutions helped generate 51 survey responses and reflections. Due to the survey being submitted in the busy first month of the academic year, many staff members were hesitant to participate at that time.

After several months of low responses, the researchers determined the sampling was too small. Therefore, snowball, or convenience sampling, was utilized to gather more participants. The study's rationale, goal, and request was placed on three networks—both professional and social—

asking peers to forward the survey to students meeting the criteria which generated another 65 responses from 12 additional CCCU-affiliated institutions across the United States. Responses from three other non-faith-based institutions were also included in the sampling. Because these respondents acknowledged their own personal faiths, the researchers included their responses. In total data was gathered from 116 survey responses.

The following spring, face-to-face focus groups were conducted with 12 current students of color to determine why they had or had not pursued leadership positions. The additional data generated not only affirmed survey findings, but also provided reflections that were more expansive.

We began coding the results in terms of themes, and disaggregated the data in terms of both gender and ethnicity. The disaggregation in terms of ethnicity became complex because students were provided with the option of listing multiple backgrounds. A large percentage (32.76%) of students responding (38) listed themselves as being multiracial.

## Results

The data did not provide clearly defined explanations to survey and interview questions. Student answers revealed many nuances and exceptions. However, the researchers noticed several trends.

In the initial scrutiny of the data, trends coinciding with SCM values, as discussed above, emerged. Considering “consciousness of self,” the first trend recognized the simple reality that many leadership roles provided some level of compensation. Compensation was significant for all students, particularly students with lower family incomes. The second trend, related to “citizenship,” was the desire, particularly for first generation students of color, to be models for their home communities (Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyam, 2012). Many respondents desired to benefit their families and communities and to provide more options for other members of their communities to also attend college. Often, these student leaders would see themselves as pioneers or trailblazers for their younger siblings or others in their community. The third trend was desiring to be agents of change. Many leadership roles include opportunities to participate in shaping and influencing campus cultures and values. Consequently, leadership roles foster in students of color increased confidence in their abilities to effect positive change in a campus community as a result of their unique voices and perspectives.

Of 116 respondents, 75 identified as women, 29 reported as men, and 12 chose not to report their gender. Additionally, 38 respondents identified themselves as being multiracial or having multiple ethnic backgrounds with 25 identifying as black or African-American, 30 as Pacific Islander or Asian, and 18 as Hispanic or Latino. Other backgrounds, including International, Native American, and Caucasian, were present among the respondents, but were counted among those who identified as multi-racial.

#### Consciousness of self

One element of the values SCM lists is what the authors call “consciousness of self” (Astin & Astin, 1993, p 23) and what practitioners describe as an awareness of one’s self. Consciousness of self involves a discernment of personal motivation, values, strengths, and needs and is discerned through observations from others and self. Sometimes such consciousness is fostered through the affirmation of others who observe leadership characteristics in students. At other times, self-perception and understanding is part of a more natural trajectory students move along in terms of their own growth, competency, and awareness of needs.

A fairly significant part of higher education involves encouraging students to increase their understandings of why they do things in certain ways, discern their needs, and understand how the world around them impacts them. At one level, consciousness of self involves identifying basic provisions such as financial needs, or complex needs such as understanding one’s own significance. In surveys and interviews, many students identified the utilitarian benefit of the compensation tied to formal leadership roles. While some thought compensation might bring status, others noted the altruistic possibilities of becoming an example and model for others. One African-American woman wrote, “I saw there was a missing element in leadership roles on campus that I possessed.” Many students saw value in developing their own leadership skills. Still others discerned the benefit of support provided by the relationships found in their leadership teams.

Many students were encouraged by parents, faculty, mentors, and peers to pursue different roles due to benefits to both those individual students as well as others and. One Latina student noted, “I had a great mentor . . . who encouraged me to take part in roles most students were intimidated by.” Multiple students explained how advisers and mentors observed traits and characteristics in students’ lives and anticipated the benefits of

a particular role for students' maturation and growth. Moreover, some students were able to identify the need for development of skills and challenges for themselves. One Pacific Islander student observed, "I don't want my collegiate experience to be one dimensional. I have the capacity to serve." Another student noted, "I wanted to get the most out of my college experience, find a place where I felt like I was part/belonged."

Interestingly, some students expressed feeling that their pursuits of different leadership roles were responses to God's direction. One student explained,

I became interested because I think God was pointing me in that direction. I actually wanted nothing to do with [that diversity program] because I have had negative experiences with some of its members in the past, so to lead it was not in my agenda. It was God's agenda, and I am so blessed to serve in this position.

This sense of divine direction was reported by numerous students. One student brought clarity to understanding this divine direction as he explained that students' desires seemed to stem from aspirations to participate in something much "bigger" than themselves.

### Citizenship

The altruistic element of leadership responsibility exists at all levels of formal leadership, particularly if a leadership position involves leading within a community. The surveyed students of color had a comprehensive understanding of their influence even before they entered these roles. They were often aware of the impact they could have, and did have, on their community at home and on campus. Commitment to this responsibility and a desire to serve often compelled them to pursue different leadership roles. The notion of community as a value was often observed as an important reason for pursuing leadership roles.

One Latina respondent noted she "wanted to be a voice for my student body to the administration." Another wrote, "I wanted an inclusive place where students of color and non-color could have community." An Asian student described the compelling nature of her responsibility: "When my friend who is Asian American decided not to apply because she did not fit the mold, I felt like it was my duty to apply because students need to have diverse leaders." One Latino student identified the impact his leadership role had on him personally: "After completing a very

challenging first semester and receiving support from my RD and RA; I felt encouraged to give back what had been given to me.” One African international student acknowledged the depth of personal responsibility that some students experience as a compulsion for pursuing leadership explaining, “I realized the importance of being a leader, which is to bring along someone [along] as far as you have come. I saw [leadership] as how Christ showed the way to the kingdom; it was an obligation for me to do that.”

### Change

Many students who responded to the survey had a clear understanding of what they wanted to achieve by their participation in student leadership. Some wanted to be change agents on their campuses while others desired to be voices for those in their communities who were unable to advocate for themselves. A Latina sophomore stated, “I believe this campus needs a leader to spread the word.” Their reflections illustrated a desire to influence their peers in positive ways. One biracial woman noted, “I experienced hardship my first couple of years as student of color. I wanted to bring change to the school to improve the experiences of other students.” Another Latina student observed, “I wanted to be a voice, change for those who feel they cannot speak up.” Still, another similarly noted, “I wanted to make sure that everyone felt heard. In addition, more than anything I want to ensure that people feel welcomed, loved, and encouraged throughout college.”

Students saw their impact as much broader than just meeting their own needs and interests. One student articulated, “I wanted to be part of something bigger than me while at college. Being in leadership has allowed me to be a part of a team, be challenged, and have a voice.” An Asian male observed, “I feel that I have been blessed with the opportunities to speak up and the ability to cause positive change within the institution of my university.” Meanwhile, students also noted their presence was significant for other students of color on their campus. One student expresses this in saying, “I applied to be an RA because I was told the university expected cookie cutters RAs (white, extraverted) and I did not fit the mold. I wanted to be a different face for students of color to be able to go to.” Some of students even discerned the value granted to their campus as a result of having culturally diverse personalities on student leadership teams.

### Counter-story/experiences

Students of color noted the reality of attending a predominantly white institution and the many associated complexities and challenges. They further noted how their experiences and heritages often formed stories different than those experienced by most of their peers and larger campus community. The common narrative among their peers was not reflective of their own experiences or the experiences of other students of color. One of the primary motivations for students of color in pursuing leadership roles was to represent and to be able to tell their unique stories and experiences. Students expressed desires to help “shift perspectives”, to “educate” peers, and to have an “impact” on campus. Participants wanted to help empower “others to be proud of who they are.” One Asian student realized she “didn’t fit the mold,” but “wanted to be a different face for students of color” to come to for assistance. Respondents intuitively longed to provide additional narratives on their campus.

### Discussion

Some of these trends are not particularly surprising for practitioners. Many of these reflections reinforced anecdotal experiences and observations many practitioners have been privileged to share with students. Students of color are very conscious of the importance of their role in making it easier for those coming after them, sensing their own pioneering role for classmates, future students, or family members and home community. Moreover, participants tended to demonstrate gratitude for those of the same cultural heritage having gone before them in pioneering roles. Respondents frequently cited a sense of being lead by God seemingly congruent with their own senses of significance and their community’s values.

While students often acknowledged compensation as part of an initial interest in pursuing their roles, their perceptions changed as they realized the significance and impact of their positions on themselves and on the lives of others. They began to note the “change agent” role they played on their campuses. While students were often able to identify individuals who noted something in their character or challenged them to consider taking a leadership role, participants occasionally were prompted to consider leadership roles by advertisements, marketing, or information meetings. However, most students reported that they were encouraged to consider these roles by a peer, faculty, family member, or

other person in their life. Respondents noted these men and women had taken time to observe aspects of their lives and stories that would benefit others. These observers also noted the benefits of leadership challenges and experiences for the student.

#### Implications

Inherently, practitioners—and many others—value having diverse student leadership teams for many reasons. One of the most significant reasons is the benefit of diversity of thought, background, and experience in tackling problems or concerns that arise on a campus. Having diverse perspectives allow for more creative and robust responses that may not be considered with a homogenous team.

In terms of recruiting students of color, the reality of the felt needs of compensation needs to be validated by recruiters. However, the motivation of the respondents were more complex and varied. In understanding the motivation of students in pursuing leadership roles, recruiters will be benefitted by inquiring deeply about motivations and hopes. Neglecting to ask further questions related to motivation risks limiting the student candidate and potentially diminishing the depth provided by a diverse team.

#### Further Research

Recruitment is the first step in a student's formal leadership journey. It is helpful to know both the motivations as well as barriers to these roles. Research on student leaders of color at CCCU schools who encounter systemic and personal barriers was minimal, though Young (2015) does address general barriers and experiences.

Anecdotal reflections abound and much conventional wisdom holds that research tied to specific aspects of the experiences of students of color—gender, geography, specific ethnicity—would prove valuable for practitioners. However, research on student leadership has mostly centered on leadership roles within athletics and fraternities (Cuyjet, 2006; Sutton & Terrell, 1997). Because populations of students of color on campuses are not homogeneous samplings, deeper and more specific studies would be welcome. Assessing the specific demographics of gender, faith, geography, and economics would provide more nuanced understandings concerning student motivations.

Beyond demographic and logistical practices, understanding how others influence imagination and inspire students to consider leadership

roles would be extremely valuable. Understanding such influence may be related to the notion of “counter-story.” More data concerning the importance of understanding a student’s personal story, particularly when that story is different from the perceived common majority-culture narrative, might benefit educators.

#### Conclusion

Returning to the initial reflection about the need for recording the multiple experiences of students of color, the hope is that this article might serve as a primer for continued development of a neglected part of the field. Practice needs a foundation upon which to act, a foundation the current study is helping to build with the hope of encouraging further reflection and conversation on how best to support and inspire all students. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

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*The Slow Professor:  
Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*

Maggie Berg, Barbara K. Seeber; Hager  
Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press

Reviewed by Kirsten D. Riedel and Joshua P. Riedel

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Maggie Berg and Barbara K. Seeber's *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy* examines the corporatization of the modern university and the corresponding demands for productivity at a frantic pace. Berg and Seeber's work provides a cultural analysis that is both timely and relevant for professionals across the landscape of higher education. Their narrative acknowledges the challenges many readers face while navigating an increasingly "defensive culture of guilt and overwork" (p. 2). *The Slow Professor* serves as a groundbreaking application of Carlo Petrini's Slow Food movement to the world of academia by offering compelling and practical strategies for faculty implementation of slow principles. However, as Berg and Seeber present a thoughtful account of the culture of speed in the academy as well as specific strategies to adopt slow principles, they simultaneously leave readers questioning whether—and likely presuming that—the presented vision of *The Slow Professor* is overly idealistic.

Founded upon their own experience, the purpose inspiring Berg and Seeber's book is "to foster greater openness about the ways in which the corporate university affects our professional

practice and well-being” (p. ix). They further describe their vision of “Slow Professors acting purposefully, cultivating emotional and intellectual resilience. By taking the time for reflection and dialogue, the Slow Professor takes back the intellectual life of the university” (p. x). Through the following narrative, Berg and Seeber highlight pertinent research and utilize personal stories to provide a convincing case for the need for slow principles in academia, while also implicitly demonstrating that their vision for embodied Slow Professors is a lofty one.

In order to outline the detrimental effects of speed in the academy and to offer a counter-narrative through their vision of Slow Professors, Berg and Seeber utilize four chapters, which address distinct aspects of life and work in academia. Throughout these chapters, Berg and Seeber often “adopt the tone of a manifesto” (p. ix), critiquing significant literature and sharing personal experiences to directly make a case for slow in the corporate university. More specifically, the authors examine pervasive pressures associated with time management as well as within the academic realms of pedagogy, research, and collegiality. Following these analyses, they present corresponding and relevant strategies for adopting timelessness, optimizing pleasure, pursuing understanding, and engaging in community. To conclude, Berg and Seeber share their reflections on embodying and practicing many slow principles while writing the book together. By intentionally restricting the book to just 90 pages, they make *The Slow Professor* an attainable read for their colleagues who are most busy and, consequently, most desperately need this renewed sense of identity.

From the beginning, Berg and Seeber also strive to offer a book “unique in its blending of philosophical, political, and pragmatic concerns” (p. vii). *The Slow Professor* successfully addresses each of these three realms, providing an optimistic philosophical framework, an insightful political critique, and pertinent pragmatic solutions. However, Berg and Seeber fail to connect these three realms in a way that fully acknowledges the complex nature of the contemporary university.

Their astute political analysis highlights pervasive systemic issues, but they offer practical solutions only on an individual level, which would require faculty to virtually disregard such issues. Berg and Seeber, themselves, embody a defensive response to these pressures through their excessive political analysis, demonstrating a presumed need to justify their vision for *The Slow Professor*—a defense mechanism that a truly innovative and grounded Slow Professor would not find necessary

to employ. The implications are neutral at best: Readers find the authors implicitly communicating that their intention of blending philosophical, political, and pragmatic concerns—and consequently, their hope for readers becoming Slow Professors—is unrealistic. The disconnects between the substance of their political critique and both their defensive presentation as well as their inadequate solutions, therefore undermines their ultimate vision of *The Slow Professor*.

The aforementioned and inherent disconnects are pervasive throughout all four chapters. For example, Berg and Seeber write in the first chapter, “The problems of time stress will not be solved with better work habits . . . Time management does not take into full account the changes to the university system: rather, it focuses on the individual” (p. 25). This analysis of time management is deeply perceptive, acknowledging the conversation sustains innate flaws which perpetuate the frantic pace of our culture, and consequently, of our institutions. However, in response to this criticism, they offer four strategies, the second of which is, “We need to do less” (p. 29). While this suggestion is timely and relevant for individual faculty, it does not provide a solution to the primary, systemic issue. Berg and Seeber confess the shift toward doing less will prompt criticism from colleagues, but they do not acknowledge the full implications of that shift. Such a shift requires having to do less within the corporate university, which conversely demands more. In presenting this solution, therefore, the authors themselves make the same mistakes they previously criticized. Readers are left disheartened, realizing Berg and Seeber’s implied response to a systemic issue is at best just an overly idealistic practice for individual implementation.

Throughout the book, Berg and Seeber offer an extensive review and critique of the systemic problems symptomatic of the corporatization of the academy. To be fair, they choose to intentionally focus on the individual, having changed the title from *The Slow Campus* to *The Slow Professor* “to highlight individual agency within the institutional context” (p. 4). This pursuit is itself a noble endeavor, one worthy of widespread recognition. Perhaps, however, their thorough, acute political critique of the contemporary university necessitates a more comprehensive vision of the slow campus—where institutional issues are addressed through institutional strategies and solutions. Without such a comprehensive vision, how sustainable is their vision of *The Slow Professor*?

With mindfulness of *The Slow Professor*’s strengths and shortcomings, faculty members as well as professionals in diverse roles across university

campuses will discover the book to have widespread benefit. For student development professionals, Berg and Seeber offer applicable principles, which can easily be extended to the unique work of educating students outside the classroom. Furthermore, as the field of student development is becoming increasingly professionalized, there exists a felt and growing pressure to speed up in order to justify our distinct value to the institution and our place in the broader landscape of higher education. Berg and Seeber can appropriately challenge student development professionals to resist this temptation for speed and to adopt slow principles instead. These same principles are also relevant to the Christian narrative, capturing the idea of slowing down in order to create space for contemplation—the place in which we are reminded of our true identities and find freedom to faithfully live out our vocations.

Berg and Seeber, therefore, offer a critique of the culture of speed in the academy that is appropriate and applicable throughout the field of higher education. While their presentation of this culture and their proposed slow strategies reflect an overly idealistic vision of the Slow Professor, reading this book alongside colleagues with whom we can discuss the particularities of our institutional contexts will allow their vision to more realistically inform our work. As we intentionally adopt a lens that recognizes both the strength of their cultural critique as well as the overly idealistic nature of their vision, Berg and Seeber's *The Slow Professor* can become a deep breath of fresh air—providing enlightening new perspectives as well as a compelling call to adopt a more peaceful disposition toward our life and work.

***Kirsten D. Riedel is a Residence Director at Belmont University, and Joshua P. Riedel is the Assistant Director of Spiritual Formation at Belmont University.***



*Diversity matters: Race, ethnicity,  
& the future of Christian higher education*

K.A. Longman; Abilene, TX  
Abilene Christian University Press

Reviewed by Cassie Isaacson

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In a global moment when division and fear abound, we need like-minded colleagues and leaders to help us prioritize our pursuits, pushing diversity and other crucial issues to the forefront. *Diversity Matters* is a collaborative work written by twenty-five higher education professionals who represent different positions at CCCU institutions all across the country, including Rebecca Hernandez (George Fox University), David Turk (Nyack College), Kimberly Battle-Walters Denu (Azusa Pacific University), and Allison N. Ash (Wheaton College). Each contributor explores a different aspect of faith-based higher education such as describing how a particular campus approaches diversity and inclusion, sharing the challenges of being a person of color employed by a CCCU school, or unpacking the role of white allies striving to support diversity efforts. An explicitly Christian text, this work identifies the need for a theological framework under which to function in order for Christian institutions to educate students with the kingdom of God in mind. The insights found in *Diversity Matters* fill a noticeable void in Christian higher education via poignant stories, practical strategies, and hope-inducing vision.

It is worth taking a moment to discuss two unifying, faith-based themes before highlighting the key points of *Diversity Matters*. The first theme is the Christian value of peace. This type of peace is not simply the absence of discord but rather the richness that a community can embody when everyone seeks the mutual service and sacrifice that Jesus emulated throughout his life. Kinoshita shares, “Shalom gave depth and meaning to my work in higher education, as I would frame the overarching vision and goals back to the concepts of thriving and wholeness for the people of God” (p. 107). The other Christian value evident in the text is a hope of something greater than what currently exists, and the unmistakable charge for Christ-followers to participate in the continual process of bringing God’s kingdom to earth. The current state of diversity in Christian higher education is not what it needs to be, but there is hope in little steps of progress and in people who have committed their lives to bringing God’s kingdom to earth in tangible ways. Jeanette L. Hsieh of Trinity International University writes, “It was important for me to see real progress, no matter how small or slow, and it was in that progress that I found meaning in my work” (p. 121).

Although there are numerous noteworthy ideas in this book, three key mandates from the authors are diligence, curiosity, and collaboration. First, many of the writers discuss the importance of being diligent and committed to the development of diversity in higher education. Setbacks come with the territory of diversity work because there are decades of oppression and inequality to overcome (p. 126). Nevertheless, Christians in higher education are called to bring dignity to every student, and a deep conviction of this call can be the difference between simply trying to make a difference and actually effecting change (p. 266). When diversity champions are met with opposition, and where institutional patterns of racism and privilege are deeply ingrained, positive efforts may not produce visible results for many years (p. 272). This kind of slow work is exhausting (p. 272). Rodney Sisco, a seasoned administrator at Wheaton College states, “Just as listening to a complex composition requires focus and diligence, so too does the conversation of diversity. Longevity in Christian higher education for me has been to find that balance of consistency and artistry akin to finding the groove of a song” (p. 147). These authors make it clear that shortcuts do not exist. Entering the realm of diversity and inclusion demands a commitment to march into the mess and to stay there, regardless of how many times the same age-old challenges arise.

The second mandate found throughout the text is curiosity. A curious approach to diversity work requires asking questions like “How does my experience shape the way I see others? What might I be missing that others are seeing?” (Visser, p. 213). These questions and others allow higher education professionals to see more than what one experience can provide and to understand which action steps are needed. When members of the white majority step into the diversity conversation, they will encounter the frustrating—yet decidedly true—narrative of privilege. Humble curiosity also helps to break down the “us versus them” mentality that is toxic and counterproductive when hearing the experiences of colleagues or students that differ from one’s own (p. 326). Simply being curious can turn a defensive skeptic into an enlightened advocate (p. 259) who will be equipped to create positive change.

Third, the authors convey the importance of working together. The text’s contributors hold job titles that identify them as champions of either diversity, multicultural awareness, or racial reconciliation on campus, but almost all of them emphasize that they could not do this work alone. One avenue for partnership is collaborating with a variety of offices or departments with the intention of achieving widespread ownership of diversity initiatives, programs, and events (p. 250). Yvonne RB-Banks, among others in the book, discusses the importance of finding a mentor or sponsor. This is particularly key for professionals of color, who will likely encounter barriers that are much easier to face with the support of someone who understands (p. 262). Another aspect of working together is the role of white allies. As those who are historically—and currently—underrepresented and unheard in the world of higher education, people of color need to be at the forefront of the diversity conversation. However, white professionals are crucial to this work as well and should empathetically seek out the most sensitive, strategic use of their privilege (p. 276). Educators who desire to engage in this work need to be proactive about forming a diverse network of staff and faculty who are committed to diligence, curiosity, and forward movement.

*Diversity Matters* is an invaluable resource for professionals in Christian higher education. Those who would like to be more informed about the state of diversity in Christian higher education will find this resource a helpful tool in understanding the current climate in the field. It provides facts, first-hand accounts, and academic accounts of the challenges and roadblocks preventing progress in the area of interracial competency.

This work serves as a handbook of advice and encouragement for Christian educators. Rich testimonies of professionals of color and their white allies who have navigated their way through decades of diversity work in higher education are interwoven with some of the lessons they have learned along the way. This text delivers an unmistakable admonition to care deeply about diversity and inclusion, regardless of one's role on campus. Christian higher education has a huge platform in this "kairos moment," as Pete C. Menjares puts it, to shape the lives of an increasingly heterogeneous population (p. 13). A recognition that diversity matters, and an understanding of why it matters, is the first step towards providing an excellent, holistic, transformative education for every single student.

*Cassie Isaacson will complete her Master of Arts in Higher Education from John Brown University in May 2018*



*The Undergraduate Experience:  
Focusing Institutions On What Matters Most*

P. Felten, J. Gardner,  
C. Schroeder, L. Lambert, and B. Barefoot;  
San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2016

Reviewed by David M. Johnstone

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In a culture that frequently voices skepticism about the value and viability of higher education, the authors of the “The Undergraduate Experience” seek to provide an alternate voice. Using current models, the authors reflect on the commitments common to universities that are effectively educating their students. In describing their intent, the foreword states, “For leaders who find themselves discouraged because of external constituents and forces, the authors argue that the focus must be on controlling the things we have power to control” (p. viii). The well-written volume exclusively focuses on the undergraduate experience, providing models of current programs for the reader to consider.

The foreword notes, “One size fits all strategies for learning seldom work,” (p. ix) yet there are common “principles of learning” (p. ix) that help “meet the needs of all students” (p. ix). Further, “One essential characteristic of a healthy institution is the extent to which the climate encourages transparency and honest dialogue” (p. x). This is the desire of the authors for the book—that it be a primer for discussion about an institution’s priorities. The authors identify that “in many places higher education is

flourishing” (p. 1). In their studies, conversations, and assessments, they observe trends and commitments present within flourishing programs and institutions. The authors believe they have identified a “common set of commitments to what matters most in the undergraduate experience” (p. 5).

The authors comment: “We are emphasizing possibilities not because we are wearing rose-colored glasses, but rather because we have seen countless examples across the country of institutional and programmatic excellence” (p. 13). They note effective programs shared similar commitments. These schools, in their own way, believed that “the preeminent purpose of undergraduate education is student learning” (p. 5). While one would assume this commitment is self-evident, flourishing institutions clearly articulate learning as a value and priority. While a university’s “curriculum clearly is essential to the undergraduate experience . . . too often colleges are reluctant to recognize and validate the important learning that takes place beyond the classroom” (p. 26). The authors recognize that learning takes place in a variety of ways, in multiple locations, and with diverse individuals. Students need to be able to interact “with faculty and peers about substantive matters” (p. 23). Out of classroom experiences need to have the possibility of becoming significant and challenging by promoting “experience with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar” (p. 23). These occasions need to provide spaces for “structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning” (p. 23). All of this aids students in integrating learning into their lives.

Dovetailing with emphases on learning is the recognition of relationships on students’ educations. While classroom content is important, relational connections solidify learning and broaden students’ experiences.

Institutions that are effective in delivering a robust education have leadership with “high expectations,” which are central to the university (p. 6). The authors observed, “Expectations are based on purpose, values, and personal beliefs at both the individual and institutional levels” (p. 72). Along with this clarity of expectations, effective universities have a commitment to “align their resources, policies, and practices with their educational purposes and student characteristics” (p. 6). However, they do not solely rely on aligning their resources with their mission. These institutions continuously examine whether or not they are accomplishing their intent and how to keep improving: “Excellent institutions critically

assess student progress and their own effectiveness” (p. 7). Further, effective universities have leaders who “share a sense of vision and purpose” (p. 7). This involves leadership throughout an institution, where each area “bears responsibility for the culture of leadership in an institution” (p. 149). Everyone helps shape the culture of the university.

While the book is wide-ranging and provides numerous models and principles, for the purposes of this review, I want to focus on institutional commitments to relationships. The authors note, “Student-faculty, student-staff, and student-student relationships are essential to the undergraduate experience” (p. 5). For educators and practitioners committed to student life, this assertion is a truism. While there are some studies that demonstrate the connection of relationships to academic success or grades, research more often demonstrates that relationships affect a student’s resilience, endurance, tenacity, and curiosity. Most institutions of higher education provide solid content, but the successful graduate also learns the soft skills needed for success.

The authors assert that institutions need to discern how to “make relationships central to learning” (p. 47). They observe,

If students had a professor who (a) cared about them as individuals, (b) made them excited about learning, and (c) encouraged them to pursue their dreams, then – years later – their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of reporting higher overall well-being. (p. 52)

Because “belonging is vital to student learning and success,” the impact of relationships cannot be understated (p. 56). Further, “what we do know is that relationships matter in part because they help students to learn and to feel that they belong in college” (p. 58). Strategically, the authors’ desire to encourage institutions to recognize that “every person on a college campus has the potential to be a teacher and mentor” (p. 59). In challenging institutional expectations, they comment: “At many colleges and universities, faculty efforts toward relationship building do not fit neatly into one of the traditional categories of teaching, scholarship, and service” (p. 61). They suggest, “Higher education could indeed be substantially improved if we paid more attention to the importance and quality of mentoring and relationships in undergraduate education” (p. 64). The authors ask the question, “How does your institution create structures, environments, and programs to encourage meaningful relationships?” (p. 65). Acknowledging the impact of relationships on

a student's educational success has implications for the systems and structures of universities.

At the beginning of the volume, the authors state their intent: "This book aims to help you articulate and enact a concrete, aspirational vision for undergraduate education that will have a positive impact on your students, your institution, and our world" (p. 14). The volume does not presume to be a roadmap or a strategy for success. Rather, the authors challenge the reader to go beyond the standard rubrics for success. Many colleges and universities use admission, retention, and graduation rates as their standard metrics. The authors observe, "Focusing on retention as a primary metric is an insufficient aspiration. Retention can be more accurately viewed as a by-product of what matters much more – student learning and success" (p. 171).

They suggest the undergraduate experience is another route to assess and focus resources and attention. The authors assert, "The greatest influences on students during their undergraduate years are other students. We must pay greater attention to how we can effectively encourage and structure the kinds of student interaction that will enhance learning" (p. 173). That academics and high-level university administrators wrote this comment caught me off guard—the academic world does not tend to recognize the role of relationships. The intent of this volume is to be a catalyst for conversation in academic and university worlds. In a national environment of skepticism and cynicism over the value of higher education, this volume may be a significant primer for critical conversations at many institutions. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

*David M. Johnstone is the Associate Dean of Students at George Fox University.*



*Safe spaces, brave spaces:  
Diversity and free expression in education*

J. Palfrey;  
Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press

Reviewed by Eli Casteel

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John Palfrey's *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces* is a helpful read in our current environment, providing a reasonable and brief survey of the present landscape of diversity and free expression in the academy. The book at its best clearly marries the two ideas of diversity and free expression and, at its less optimal moments, provides helpful background information. Palfrey's writing style makes the book enjoyable to read as he weaves in his knowledge of the law to succinctly make his point. *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces* will trigger many ideas, provide helpful frameworks, and generate ample conversation starters for most student affairs educators and professionals.

The driving thesis throughout the book *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces* is diversity and free expression ought to exist together (Palfrey, 2017). In addition to the normative coupling of free expression and diversity, the book explores the limits of tolerance within the framework of both private and public university settings and within a democratic society. As a legal scholar, Palfrey, examines legal cases and applies them to the topics of diversity, free expression, hate speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly, and concludes by examining the

importance of these democratic principles. During his examination of these democratic principles, Palfrey consistently ties in higher education and the function of a democratic society. Palfrey starts the book off by charitably analyzing five flashpoints on college campuses: safe spaces, trigger warnings, microaggressions, speakers, and the renaming of buildings.

Palfrey is fair in his brief overview of student activism in higher education. He places each of the five flashpoints within the context of learning, which seems apt considering the controversies take place on college campuses. First, Palfrey removes the dichotomy of a safe space and a brave space and instead articulates a spectrum with safe spaces on one end and brave spaces on the other. The purpose of the continuum is twofold: It illustrates, first, how speech becomes less protected as it moves toward brave spaces, and second, how students need varying levels of safe and brave spaces in order to engage in meaningful learning. Next, he suggests that professors who use trigger warnings are not being overly sensitive, but are instead being polite. Third, Palfrey acknowledges microaggressions and how they are compounded by multiple identities of difference or the intersectionality of identities, like being both black and a woman. However, he—very importantly—goes on to resituate the conversation of microaggressions within the context of implicit bias. Palfrey then quickly touches on the flashpoint of disinviting speakers, essentially stating disinviting speakers is counter to both free expression and diversity. Finally, he moves onto the topic of renaming buildings, which he sees as an opportunity to raise the level of conversation on campuses.

The next two chapters wrestle with the case for diversity and free expression. Logically, he starts with the case for diversity because without diversity there would be no need for freedom of expression. Palfrey lays out a series of different arguments for diversity often using the Supreme Court as a testifying witness for the case of diversity. Additionally, he argues that the current climate and trends within the United States signals an ever more pressing need for diversity within the academy. According to Palfrey, free expression is an important concept in the development of autonomy as well as a vibrant and healthy pluralistic democracy, which needs an environment where ideas can be challenged, exchanged, and transformed. Throughout his chapter on free expression, he references the first amendment and how it was a necessary right for a variety of social justices activists like abolitionists, women's suffragists, and civil

rights leaders. The goal of these examples is to highlight the thesis of free expression and diversity coexisting and working together.

The rest of the book examines the limits of the first amendment by looking at hate speech, the freedom of the press, and the freedom of assembly. Palfrey makes two helpful arguments in the hate speech chapter. First he uses his legal expertise to reveal the difference in standards concerning the first amendment between public and private institutions. Second, he shows there is a limit to the first amendment, which he suggests is a combination of time, place, and context coupled with “fighting words” before discussing the critical role the free press plays in informing and garnering trust within the public. The book concludes with an argument in support of why free expression and diversity matter: They inform our conceptions of tolerance, which is needed for a pluralistic democracy to flourish.

For Christians, and specifically for those of us working in Christian higher education, the book prompts two questions: How do Christians fit within a pluralistic democracy, and theologically what are the implications of tolerance? The essence of the first question explores the need for diversity. Specifically, how does the Christian narrative fit within the diverse tapestry of a pluralistic society, and how are we preparing students for such contexts? The second question deals with how we ought to engage or express ourselves. *Safe Spaces Brave Spaces* does a good job of starting the conversation, and the text provides some helpful background information about how the legal system has supported diversity and free expression and their necessity in promoting a democratic society. However, the book does little in guiding or even suggesting how to go about teaching or living out these principles.

The discussion of tolerance seems to fall short of how most Christians would articulate their obligation within a pluralistic democracy. The tolerance articulated by Palfrey seems to be a classical rendition of the silver rule: Do not do unto others as you would not want done to you. This perspective of tolerance is one of creating space between individual actors. This usage of the silver rule operates within an assumed individualistic viewpoint, which is found throughout *Safe Spaces Brave Spaces*.

Palfrey directly supports the development of autonomy in his chapter on free expression. It is unclear how his formulation of an argument for free expression within the framework of tolerance would capture a collectivist worldview. The book seems to consistently exist in the

tension of espousing pluralism, but as a means for autonomy, which is not a universally held conception of the good life. What happens when a person's idea of the good life is that everyone ought to live a life congruent with his or her tribe, community, or faith tradition? Christianity, specifically, would still probably support the idea that it has a convicted sense of how humans should collectively act to flourish. From a Christian perspective, tolerance then seems like a low bar for society to live by. Perhaps for Christians, remaining in fellowship takes priority over tolerance.

In the conclusion, *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces* does not return to its original conception of brave spaces and safe spaces. This lack of looping back to the beginning of the book is unfortunate because the two spaces, brave and safe, capture much of the pluralistic democratic values put forth by Palfrey. Safe spaces represent the individual's subjective pursuit of truth and brave spaces are the public squares where the universal truths can be discussed, shared, and tested. Both the safe and the brave spaces assist in developing diversity and autonomy. Overall, for higher education professionals working at any institution, the book is a sensible read, touching on many of today's issues. *Safe Spaces, Brave Spaces* is an exploration of how a democratic or academic community balances the pursuit of truth, while valuing both the individual and collective experiences through the joint understanding of free expression and diversity as interlocutors in the discourse of truth.

***Eli Casteel will complete his Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Development from Taylor University in May 2018.***

# Write for Growth

**Growth** is published during the spring each year and solicits manuscripts and or book reviews that fall within content areas that relate to purposes of the journal. Those content areas include Foundations, Leadership and Professional Development, Student Culture, Student Learning and Assessment, Spiritual Formation, Diversity and Global Engagement, and Book Reviews.

All articles should be consistent with the Doctrinal Statement, Article III of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association for Christians in Student Development. Material in the following categories will be considered for publication:

- Research articles that have relevance to the field of Christian Student Development.
- Theoretical or applied articles that have relevance to the field of Christian Student Development.
- Research, theoretical or applied articles dealing with the integration of faith and learning within the field of Christian Student Development or within the broader field of Christian Higher Education as a whole.
- Reviews of articles in other journals relevant to Christian Student Development.
- Reviews of books relevant to Christian Student Development practice.
- Reactions to current or past journal articles.

## Submission Guidelines

Authors submitting a manuscript should:

1. Follow the guidelines on format, style, and submission procedure provided in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.).
2. Adhere to the following length parameters:
  - a. 10-15 pages for original research articles
  - b. 7-10 pages for applied research articles
  - c. 3-4 pages for book and article reviews
3. Avoid submitting manuscripts which have been previously published or that are being considered for publication in other journals. If an article has been rejected by another journal it may then be submitted to Growth.
4. Submit completed manuscripts to [ACSD-growth-submissions@taylor.edu](mailto:ACSD-growth-submissions@taylor.edu), as follows:
  - a. Send two digital copies in Word format (one with author identification and one without identification for review purposes)
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All submitted manuscripts will be promptly acknowledged and processed in a timely fashion. The review process generally requires a minimum of three months, after which authors will be informed of the status of their submissions. Please note submissions may be rejected for failing to adhere to the guidelines above, or authors may be asked to revise and resubmit articles.

Article submissions will be accepted until December 1 for the spring issue.

Contact the Growth co-editors with any questions about the review process:

- Tim Herrmann, Taylor University, [tmherrmann@taylor.edu](mailto:tmherrmann@taylor.edu)
- Skip Trudeau, Taylor University, [sktrudeau@taylor.edu](mailto:sktrudeau@taylor.edu)

ACCSD Journal  
C/O Skip Trudeau  
Taylor University  
236 West Reade Avenue  
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