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Fleming & Tweedell's "Best Practices in the Integration of Faith and Learning for Adult and Online Learners" - Book Review

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church in general and the Christian university specifically ought to be presenting a unified front as we face the specter of a society that no longer sees the value of objective truth, especially biblical truth.

Engaging the Culture, Changing the World was written by Eaton to show that something has to drastically change in higher education to uphold all that is true and good and beautiful. At times, Eaton does this masterfully. His heart for the mission and ministry of Christian higher education is evident. His theology is strong, but one can get lost in his attempt to justify a need for change through his philosophical arguments. I would recommend this text for those who are members of Christian universities. It is good to be reminded why Christian institutions have a unique and valuable place in society. Eaton does this well. Eaton (p. 191) notes that we, as Christians in academia, have the opportunity for “life together in genuine, grace-filled community.” He does well to show that Christian higher education is the place where a community as God has intended can best be propagated. I could see this text being a challenge to fully comprehend for individuals who are not a part of a Christian community. Eaton uses some insider language that could cause confusion when his intention is to simply articulate that we have a particular “something more” to offer. Nevertheless, I enjoyed reading this book as Eaton took me for a metaphorical walk through the halls of the Christian university.

Adam Paape

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Cheryl Torok Fleming and Cynthia Benn Tweedell (eds.)

***Best Practices in the Integration of Faith and Learning
for Adult and Online Learners***

CCCU Center for Research in Adult Learning, 2010 pb 141pp

The population of adult learners in higher education is continually on the rise, with many adult learners choosing to attend Christian institutions for their academic experiences. To adapt to the learning needs of these adult learners, the majority of whom are working professionals, many higher education institutions have changed and modified the delivery method of courses to include courses taught entirely online, or

via a hybrid model, which is a combination of face-to-face and online components.

In May 2009 the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) developed the Center for Research in Adult Learning to engage in research and provide support to its member institutions in addressing the needs of the adult learners and the changing academic landscape toward more online learning opportunities. As Christian institutions have opened their institutions to adult learners, including those from a variety of faith backgrounds, these same institutions are also seeking ways to continue their spiritual mission and focus and incorporate effective strategies to include the integration of faith and learning.

This book, edited by Cheryl Torok Fleming and Cynthia Bean Tweedell, was the result of a research study supported by the CCCC and in partnership with Indiana Wesleyan University. The purpose of the book is to “uncover practical models of faith based teaching” (p. 7) from Christian institutions, already known to be leaders in teaching adult learners within online and hybrid teaching environments. The editors further underscore the importance of the mission of faith integration by stating:

In this environment of integrating faith into the learning experience, the world view and mind set of students can be altered. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the wonderful potential exists for the heart and behavior of the learner to be changed as well. This describes the primary focus of Christian higher education—the commitment to developing students in character, scholarship, and leadership. More than gaining information or expertise, Christian higher education seeks to set students on the right course both spiritually and professionally. (p. 10)

To assist the reader’s understanding of the conceptual framework for the integration of faith and learning, the introductory section provides a description of three models the editors believe to be the most commonly used within Christian higher education institutions. The first model is described as the *integration of Scripture and knowledge*. This model “emphasizes the development of explicit connections between the biblical text and the various academic disciplines” (p. 9). The second model is referred to as the *integration of faith and learning tool*. While not as specific as the first model, this one “maintains that all knowledge can be encompassed within larger theological categories, such as creation, general

revelation, the image of God in humans, and the unity of objective truth” (p. 9). According to the editors, this is the most widely used of the models within traditional undergraduate colleges and universities. Finally, the third model, *integration of faith, learning, and life*, is described as seeking “to honor God by bringing the Christian faith to bear on every aspect of life” (p. 10).

The main content of the book is divided into three sections: techniques for on-site courses, techniques for online courses, and techniques for hybrid courses. The eighteen chapters (six per section) were written by selected authors from the CCCU institutions involved in this original research project. A variety of subject areas and specific faith integration strategies are represented, reflecting the various interpretations and uses of these concepts. The content of each chapter is designed with the overall objective to provide an example of a specific course or faith integration strategy, complete with examples of their use. Additionally, most chapters make intentional connections to leading adult learning theory concepts and practices.

This first edition was a starting point for the CCCU institutions to engage in conversations and research pertaining to faith integration strategies for online and hybrid courses specifically targeted for the adult learners. Although the first edition of this book was printed with limited quantities and is currently out of print, the editors anticipate an updated version will be available in 2012.

Eloise Hockett

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Marsha Fowler and Maria A Pacino (eds.)
Faith Integration and Schools of Education
Indianapolis, IN: Precedent Press 2012 pb 181pp
ISBN: 0-9817097-2-9

There is a strangeness to this book that should not escape our attention. We are Christian educators, deeply invested both in our faith and in our academic vocation. The vast majority of us believe that no inherent contradiction exists between the mission to educate and our call to be Christian. . . . Despite this, the plethora of books about faith-learning integration (including

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