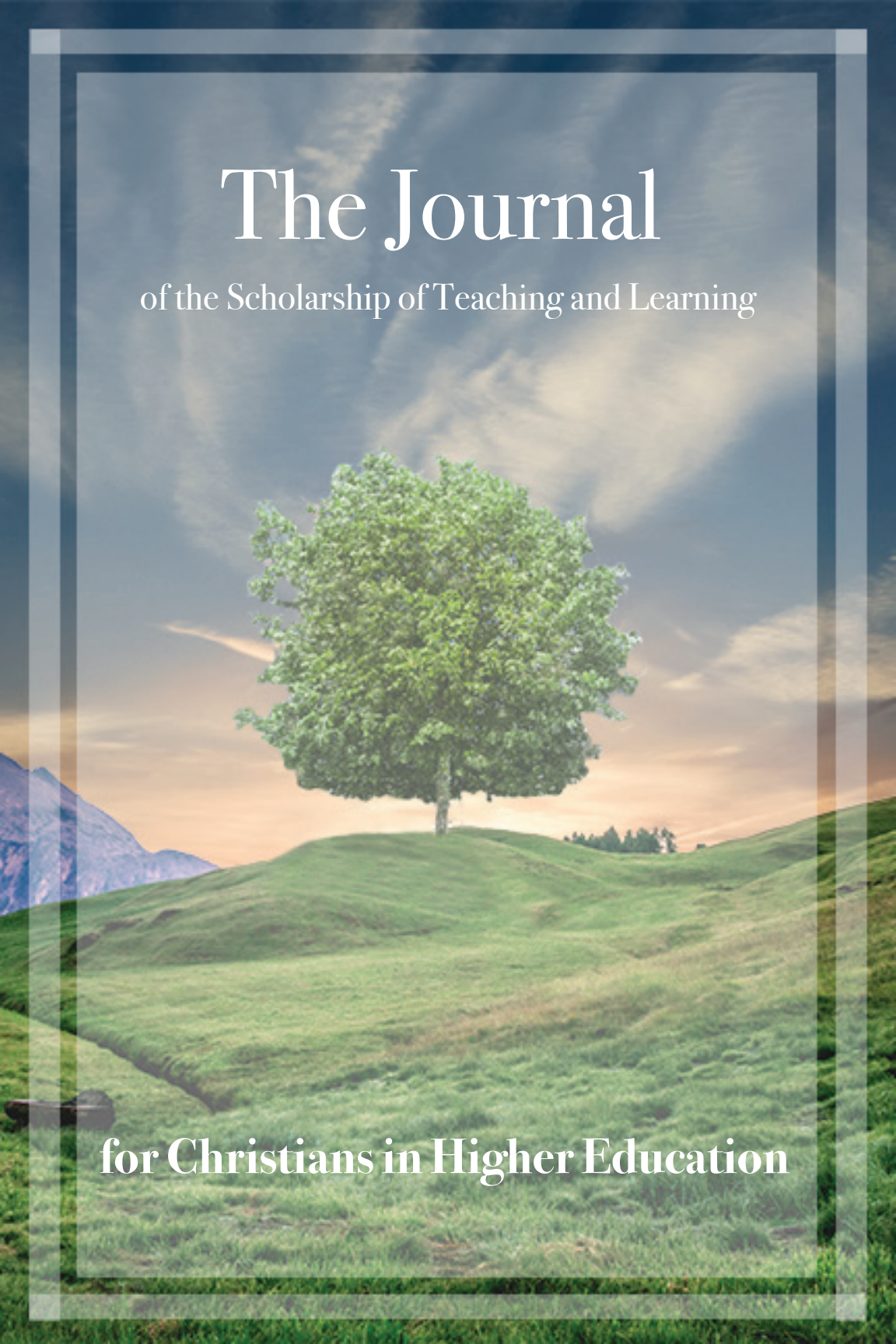
Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education

Manuscript 1102

Full Issue

The Journal

of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning



for Christians in Higher Education

The Journal

of the

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

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Volume 13 Number 1 2023

Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

for Christians in Higher Education

Volume 13 Number 1 2023

ISSN: 1559-8624

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Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education is published annually in June.

Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education is indexed through the Digital Commons (https://www.bepress.com/impact-analytics/). *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education* contents may be searched at http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/sotl_ched/ and through any web search engine.

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THE JOURNAL

of the

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education

Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education

The purpose of *The Journal* is to support and inspire Christian educators in higher education by providing an open forum for the exchange of scholarship related to teaching and learning, including discovery (research), integration (synthesis), application (practice), and teaching (instruction).

Find instructions for submitting articles and reviews for consideration at http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/sotl_ched/submissionsteps.html. Submissions are accepted via email with attachment(s) to SoTL_CHEd@oru.edu.

All correspondence (including submissions) is welcomed at SoTL_CHEd@oru.edu.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hayoung Lim

Students and professors tend to assume realities that are often unquestioned. Looking squarely at realities allows us to find patterns of discord surrounding us. Once we are facing the explicit reality of our world and ourselves, we will arrive at the point of chaos where we can't get out of it by our own knowledge and power. We will reach the moment when we finally lift our eyes to look for God. Have we already floundered in the chaos? We know where the answer is located, and we already know how to get there. The 2023 edition of the *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education* (a.k.a., *The Journal*) is focused on finding order in the midst of chaos. To find the order in our world, we should look into God's words as "meta narrative" for the frank description of our reality. We need to investigate the patterns of our sinful minds and actions in the Bible and then apply God's advice.

Dr. Andy Lang's editorial argues that Christian educational institutions should view AI as a powerful tool that can enhance and enrich the learning experience. The conclusion of this special editorial, "The Impact of AI on Christian Higher Educations: A Call to Lead," can guide us to find the divine order for Christian scholars and students to use artificial intelligence. The Q&A in this edition begins with the purpose of Dr. Feller's new book, *Puzzles, Parables, and Paradox: Understanding the Mysteries of God's Kingdom*: "… to help the reader in a more clear, concise, and compelling way see how the entire Bible fits together and to have that knowledge help with more effective Christian living."

An original article titled "Toward a Spirit-Empowered Framework for Encouraging Intellectual Conversions in Doctoral Students" by Daniel D. Isgrigg suggests a five-fold paradigm utilizing the spiritual transformation concepts of conversion, sanctification, empowerment, healing, and hope to correspond with intellectual conversion moments in the lives of students who are changed by their research. Another original article titled "Collegiate Music Technology: Converting a Music Production Curriculum to a Commercial Music Curriculum" written by two interactive music professors, Jeff McCoy and Christopher Brown, explores how to transform an existing music production into a commercial music degree considering the rapidly changing and fiercely demanding music industry. An article by Dr. Andy Lang and his colleagues reports on their work to compile 50 years of aerobics data from Oral Roberts University students. Once compiled, they analyzed the data and drew useful conclusions to help them revise the physical education curriculum that students will benefit from through the university's efforts to educate our future "Whole Leaders for the Whole World."

Amonda Matthewman-Isgrigg's book review on *The Flourishing Student* focuses on the mental and psychological well-being of Christian students in higher education. Sam Thorpe's review of the book *Learning to Be Learners: A Mathegenical Approach to Theological Education* by Les Ball points out that the current method of teaching theology is "a fragmented approach at best" and a newer approach to teaching can more effectively "promote the integration of ministry training and academic knowledge." Jared Johnston's book review of *Professors as Teachers* by Steven M. Cahn encourages professors to push themselves to be genuine educators in their fields to inspire and equip their students.

I trust the Christian professors and administrators who read this issue of *The Journal* will benefit from the articles, book reviews, and editorials contained in this edition.

Hayoung Lim
Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL

The Impact of AI on Christian Higher Education: A Call to Lead

Andrew S.I.D. Lang

This editorial argues that Christian educational institutions should view AI as a powerful tool that can enhance and enrich the learning experience. Instead of banning the use of AI in writing assignments, institutions should teach students how to use these tools effectively and ethically. This requires a new essential core literacy for both students and faculty: AI literacy—the ability to understand, evaluate, and effectively engage with AI technologies. Additionally, the editorial emphasizes the need for Christian institutions to take a leadership role in addressing ethical considerations related to the adoption of AI, by offering guidance on fundamental moral issues and prioritizing the education of their students on the ethical use of AI from a Christian worldview. Finally, the editorial calls for the creation of AI institutes, formation of ethical AI coalitions, and sharing data, research, and resources among institutions to ensure the development of unbiased and moral AI models in the future.

Part One: AI in the Classroom

Ars Est Celare Artem

The release of free and user-friendly artificial intelligence (AI) models capable of generating original content (generative AI) has given rise to concerns and fears regarding its potential impact on education. These fears have come to the forefront of public discourse with the recent public release of OpenAI's ChatGPT on November 30th, 2022 (OpenAI, 2022).

As with many new technologies, generative AI applications such as ChatGPT have prompted predictable hysteria. Some pessimists believe that these tools will bring about educational collapse (Weissman, 2023), massive job displacement (Mok & Zinkula, 2023), and public bewilderment and manipulation that will need governmental regulation (Grady, 2023). Some have even claimed that these models have achieved self-awareness and are sad about it (De Cosmo, 2022; D'Agostino, 2023; Roach, 2023).

While Christian educational institutions (who prioritize the formative development of students, encompassing spirit, mind, and body) will always have an important relevance for society (Brown, 2022; Paige, 2023), ChatGPT is causing disruption in education because many faculty members are concerned about students using AI to complete their writing assignments. This is because AI-generated text is novel and difficult to detect. One hard-headed response to this is to ban its use completely (Elsen-Rooney, 2023; Jimenez, 2023). Others have updated their integrity policies (Levin, 2023) or designed ways to make traditional assignments AI-proof (Klein, 2023)—good luck with that. But these responses are misguided.

Magistri et Discipuli

The era of relying solely on strong writing skills to produce high-quality writing has ended, and as a result, we must adapt our approach to education. It is time to shift our perspective from viewing AI as a threat to recognizing it as a powerful tool that can enhance and enrich the learning experience. Rather than prohibiting students from using AI writing tools, we should teach them how to use these tools effectively and efficiently. By embracing the potential of AI in education, we have the opportunity to equip our students with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfill their purpose in life. As Christian educators, this is a calling we must answer (Villasenor, 2023); however, it's not just about technical proficiency. It's equally important to equip students with an understanding of ethical considerations when using AI, such as avoiding bias and promoting responsible decision making. This will produce not only highly skilled professionals but also responsible leaders (Lang, 2023).

Thus, we need a new essential core literacy for both students and faculty: AI literacy—the ability to understand, evaluate, and effectively engage with AI technologies. By fostering AI literacy, we can help students develop the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate and analyze the information presented to them by AI tools while also recognizing any biases or limitations that may be inherent in the underlying algorithms (Mock, 2023). This will enable students to make informed decisions, challenge assumptions, and develop their own ideas, even in the face of new technologies that may seem more intelligent than they are.

Part Two: The Intelligent Campus

Ālea Iacta Est

The die has been cast and the impact that AI will have on higher education will be profound, revolutionizing operations at every level from the boardroom to the classroom. Quick pivoting and swift action are essential because things are moving quickly and falling behind could mean being left behind.

The integration of transformative AI-based tools in academic institutions can bring numerous and immediate benefits. Financial aid allocation can be optimized through AI to enhance retention rates while AI-powered algorithms can be utilized in marketing, recruitment campaigns, fundraising, and alumni engagement. Additionally, AI can be used to identify at-risk students and automatically alert faculty and advisors when a student is in danger of dropping out. These systems can be integrated with student health and wellness services to support those dealing with stress, anxiety, and other personal challenges. By implementing these measures, universities can establish intelligent campuses that thrive (Kravitz, 2023, 27:54).

However, to truly harness the potential of AI, universities must embrace its unprecedented capabilities that already far surpass those of human beings. Institutions must adopt a forward-thinking mindset that leverages AI's capabilities to not only enhance human abilities but also surpass them, rather than simply replacing them through automation (Brynjolfsson, 2022).

Non Ducor, Duco

Christian institutions have an opportunity to lead the way in addressing ethical considerations related to the adoption of AI. Christian thought leaders can play a crucial role in offering guidance on fundamental moral issues, including ethical principles that should be incorporated into AI systems (Brown, 2022; Paige, 2023). Christian institutions should create AI institutes, form ethical AI coalitions, and embrace this transformative technology by becoming leaders through sharing data, research, and resources with each other. Additionally, they should prioritize educating their students on the ethical use of AI from a Christian worldview and encourage graduates to work in the AI industry. This will help ensure the development of unbiased and moral AI models in the future.

Without assuming the mantle of leadership, there is a genuine danger that AI may become infused with the same critical-theory-based biases already prevalent in our society and entrenched in many secular institutions. President Biden recently signed an executive order that "directs agencies to ensure that their own use of artificial intelligence and automated systems also advances equity" (Hall, 2023). It would be tragic to witness AI—a technology with immense potential to change the world for the better—being sacrificed on the altar of ideology. In the worst-case scenario, AI could become a platform for anti-Christian philosophies, where certain Christian ideas are censored, and others are classified as thought crimes.

Thus, Christian institutions must develop a robust understanding of AI both in technical expertise and domain knowledge. This requires fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration across departments, particularly among faculty. A spirit of experimentation, learning, and collaboration is essential to developing and implementing new solutions and ideas. The future of Christian higher education depends on how institutions choose to approach the integration of AI, and the potential benefits are immense for those who lead the way.

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TOWARD A

Spirit-empowered Framework for Encouraging Intellectual Conversions in Doctoral Students

Daniel D. Isgrigg, Oral Roberts University

Key Words *intellectual conversion, five-fold gospel, Spirit-empowered movement, research, information literacy, graduate theological education*

Abstract

This article demonstrates how the five-fold gospel paradigm in Pentecostal theology can provide Spirit-empowered graduate theology students with a framework for understanding key growth moments (or intellectual conversions) in the transformational learning process that takes place in scholarly research. This five-fold paradigm utilizes the spiritual transformation concepts of conversion, sanctification, empowerment, healing, and hope correspond to intellectual conversion moments in the lives of students who are changed by their research. These five key moments can be seen as a transformational tool that allows students to be intellectually transformed by the research process.

Introduction

At Oral Roberts University (ORU), I serve as the faculty theological librarian who teaches the research methods classes for the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) programs. My primary role in these classes is to help the students develop a topic to research, do a thorough scholarly literature review

of the field, and to craft a research proposal that will guide them along their journey to the dissertation or research project. In this process, I am not only a librarian that assists in developing informational literacy skills for researching their topic, but I also mentor them in gaining the critical skills needed to form their expertise in the field.

All doctoral students embark on a journey of intellectual growth that advances their critical understanding of their field. To be successful, students must move beyond the basic proficiency of knowledge and writing that comes in bachelors and the mastery of a field in the master's degree, to entering into mature and advanced critical understandings of the scholarly conversations at the doctoral level. Doctoral students must not only expose themselves to a large body of literature in the field of their desired expertise, but they must also grow intellectually and take a more critical disposition to the knowledge they gain and the methodologies through with these ideas are explored.

Unfortunately, many students come into doctoral programs not having developed the critical faculties in research that would make them successful. Farooq & Maher (2021) note it's inaccurate to assume that graduate students have the skills in research they need when entering the program. The students I teach in research methods have a wide range of exposure and experience in research and information literacy due to the growing variety of formats in theological master's programs that exist in today's higher education market. Therefore, bibliographic assignments and literature reviews expose the students (some for the first time) to the scholarly conversations in the field of their study that begin the process of building their knowledge and expertise (Boote & Beile, 2005). As students walk through this process, there are many moments when students are confronted with concepts and theories in their field that challenge assumptions about their own knowledge and understanding of their area of research. It is here that the true beginning of learning on the doctoral level begins.

As a Spirit-empowered University, our constituency is largely part of the Pentecostal-Charismatic, or what we call the Spirit-empowered movement. Dayton (1987) establishes that the theological orientation that propels this movement is the five-fold theological emphasis of Jesus as savior, sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, healer. and coming king. This

five-fold or "full gospel" emphasis represents for Amos Yong (2014), "the constellation of early modern Pentecostal beliefs and practices" that together "set Pentecostalism apart as a distinct expression of Christian faith" (p. 15). These tenets are more than doctrines; they represent significant experiences of the Holy Spirit in the *ordo salutis* of a believer's faith journey. The familiarity of vernacular in the five-fold theological paradigm is an important tool I have used in guiding students through key movements in the research process. This five-fold paradigm provides students a Spirit-empowered framework for key growth moments (or intellectual conversions) in the transformational learning process that takes place in scholarly research.

Research and Intellectual Conflict

Education is a process of both intellectual and personal growth. The rigors of doctoral education should facilitate critical information literacy education that evaluates, assesses, and situates information within the scope of the field of study. Florence (2014) shows that critical thinking has long been one of the educational outcomes for theological education encouraged by American Theological Schools (ATS) accreditors. According to Phillips (2014), critical thinking involves developing the ability to comprehend and evaluate arguments, an openness to the new ideas of the argument, and willingness to be persuaded by an argument if sufficient evidence and data are provided. These critical judgements about information and ideas are critical to the process of shaping a learner's knowledge of their topic. But not all students are ready to do this sort of deeper level evaluation. Unfortunately, sometimes theological students perceive research as the process to find sources that reinforce a preconditioned attitude toward an idea, rather than challenge it.

Critical research challenges doctoral students to go deeper into the depth of understandings of scholarly conversation. At the same time, this process is re-shaping the researcher in their own self-understanding of the world and their own self. This process can be painful as deeply held assumptions are challenged. I have witnessed firsthand the crisis of wrestling with this internal conflict in my doctoral students. It is

this reality to which the concept of the five-fold gospel can assist by exploring how transformational research is much like the familiar Spirit-empowered crisis moments.

A Five-Fold Paradigm for Intellectual Conversions

In Bernard Lonergan's classic *Method in Theology*, he sets out a process by which theological research is conducted. In his dialectical method, Lonergan (2000) notes that all formulations of research encounter moments of conflict when the researcher encounters evidence, data, or ideas that challenge the researcher's assumptions. These crisis moments require personal intellectual growth to let go of the previously held assumptions or biases in order to honestly assess and assimilate this knowledge. The key factor that creates this conflict is the researcher's horizon, or hermeneutical starting point. Lonergan notes that a person's horizons consist of the limited field of vision that is bound by social location and epistemological assumptions of the world that are sociologically and psychologically inherited.

The problem is that often a student's horizons are unknown to them; they are assumed realities that are often unquestioned. Jack Mezirow (1991) breaks these assumptions into three areas: content knowledge based on perception, process knowledge based on how one comes to conclusions, and premise knowledge, the actual awareness of convictions for why one believes this way. There can be many areas where unchallenged assumptions come into play in the research process including their level of comprehension of topic, the nature of the problem or phenomenon that needs to be addressed, and the potential solutions. If any of these areas are built on incomplete understandings, the resulting arguments will be lacking in validity in the field and the thesis is in jeopardy.

When confronted with new or different perspectives, data, or ideas, the learner often experiences a "disorienting event" (Ranton, p. 48). At the point of this conflict, the researcher is confronted with what to do with this new information. Does one choose to assimilate this new information to change the horizon of her understanding? Or is the knowledge rejected because it does not conform to the current

horizon that is familiar and comfortable? Transformational learning takes place when the researcher is able to use the new paradigm to re-orient their perspectives towards new understandings about reality or concepts. This choice Lonergan calls an "intellectual conversion," which is the "radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceeding stubborn and misleading myths concerning reality, objectivity and human knowledge" (p. 238). Feischer (2006) points out that in Lonergan's cognitive process, these conversions can be both "evolutionary" or "revolutionary." If evolutionary, then ideas are shaped by new information. If revolutionary, however, this is often disorienting and causes a deep existential crisis. However, if the researcher is unable to part with previously held conceptions or flaws in their understanding, the research process is thwarted. When this happens, research devolves from critical investigation to a form of apologetics or polemics to re-enforce existing misinformation and biases. Worse, the researcher remains unchanged and untransformed in their understanding.

Yet, for doctoral students, no process is more important than these intellectual conversions as their understanding of their field of study must progress from sufficient knowledge in undergrad to mastery of knowledge in graduate school. At the doctoral level, the student is seeking to build expertise in a field, which requires a fundamental knowledge of the conversations in the field and the assumptions by which the field operates. Exposure to these conversations is the beginning. It is the intellectual conversion to a new paradigm that truly creates the scholar or expert and matures the understanding of the topic being researched. Feisher (2016) notes, "To educate religiously means creating educational climates that are loving and engaging, assisting others in their movements toward authenticity and self-transcendence" (p. 158).

It is this paradigm of intellectual conversions that this paper seeks to explore in the Spirit-empowered five-fold framework as key growth moments for doctoral students. Each of the five-fold gospel tenets of Spirit-empowered Christianity are more than just doctrines; they are the key conversion movements the believer must experience in the ordo salutis. How can the categories of Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer,

Spirit-baptizer, and Soon-coming King help Spirit-empowered doctoral students confront these critical conflicts? I suggest that these spiritual conversion moments in the life of a believer correspond to intellectual conversion moments in Spirit-empowered framework of research.

Intellectual Conversion

In the Pentecostal narrative, no doctrine is more important than salvation. Inherited from the evangelical tradition, salvation is a definite work of grace that transforms the believer from the old way of life to new life in Christ. This is a radical orientation of the self from old ideas, beliefs, and practices, to accepting new truths about God, about the self, and about the world. Conversion is a crisis in cognitive processes as much as it is spiritual or moral. Jesus calls the follower to trade love for self with love for God, including loving God "with all your mind" (Matt. 22:27, New International Version). The process of salvation begins with being confronted by the Holy Spirit that our former ways of thinking and doing are no longer acceptable. The Holy Spirit is our model of critical evaluation as the one who "convicts the world of guilt … and in regards to sin" (John 16:9-10, NIV). The first act of a believer is being confronted with new ideas that critically assess our assumptions about the world and about ourselves. Conversion forces us to embrace critical evaluation.

In the same way that spiritual conversion involves critical evaluation of the self, the researcher is also confronted with crisis moments when "truth" is presented and the researcher is asked to lay down previous assumptions about knowledge in order to align their understanding with the data. This process can be both exciting and painful for the student. It costs something to critically assess long-held assumptions about reality, many of which have been conditioned in spiritual frameworks. Yet, just as the Spirit opens people up to truth about themselves in spiritual conversion, so too the research process can illuminate new ideas and frameworks that deepen the student's understanding toward intellectual conversion moments. If the Spirit is indeed the Spirit of Truth that guides us into all truth, then research is a deeply spiritual quest for truth, wherever it may be found. Whether that is deeper critical study of the Word of God, or probing philosophical

questions about reality, or empirical research of phenomenology of faith, each of these acts of critical research provide deeper understanding into God's world and humanity's relationship to it.

Intellectual Sanctification

In the Spirit-empowered tradition, sanctification has a variety of meanings. Initially as an outgrowth of the Holiness movement, Pentecostalism held that both salvation and sanctification were "works of grace" that were brought by the Spirit. In the Holiness framework, sanctification was a work of the Spirit to cleanse the believer from the power of sin in order to equip the believer to live a life of holiness. This was most often an altar experience when Pentecostals had to "pray through" to victory as the Spirit did a cleansing work. While other streams of Pentecostalism eventually de-emphasized sanctification as crisis experience, they all maintained that walking in sanctification was essential. As Wolfgang Vondey (2017) describes, "The experience of sanctification therefore continues the Pentecostal emphasis on salvation as praxis and puts into contrast how Christian practices embrace both the believer's encounter with Christ in justification and the reception of the Holy Spirit in terms of sanctification" (p. 60). Sanctification, then, keeps the salvation experience alive through staying open to the Spirit's revealing of areas of distortion from the truth about ourselves and about God.

Similarly, research can be an intellectually sanctifying process. Our exposure to information and ideas not only informs our understanding of the subject of our research, but places the spotlight on ourselves as the researcher. This intersection of critical information assessment and critical self-assessment challenges the student to confront the unconscious biases and "unquestioned habits of the mind" that shape our understanding (Cranton, p. 22). Critical inquiry, much like conviction of the Spirit with sin, can expose those distorted perspectives, not to condemn us for them, but rather to help the researcher be aware of these distortions so that one can be more objective.

Therefore, like sanctification, critical reflection must be a continual work. It takes critical reflexivity to continually assess and address the

relationship between themselves as the researcher and the research they are conducting (Li Mao et al., 2016). As I say to my students, before we can exegete the passage, we must first exegete ourselves and our own motivations for engaging in this research. This attitude of critical reflexivity is an important disposition of openness that allows information to modify and shape us, taking the research process to a very personal level. This is why Li Mao et al. (2016) conclude, "The self or identity of the researcher is the core of the research journey and significantly impacts the ongoing research process, particularly the choice and development of methodology" (p. 5). What is changing in the transformational learning process, then, is the self-understanding, more than simply the knowledge of the topic (Cranton, 2016). Only then is the research process beneficial for the topic being studied.

Intellectual Empowerment

The most notable distinctive in the Spirit-empowered tradition is the emphasis on Spirit-baptism. The doctrine emerged from its Holiness roots in sanctification where the pneumatological emphasis of power and victory over sin was conflated with Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit and speaking in tongues. As early Pentecostals separated these two events, the emphasis on Spirit-baptism focused on the restoration of all the gifts of the Spirit, including speaking in tongues. The theme of empowerment was not only for witness, but demonstrated the believer's openness to God's power like in the days of the apostles. Spirit-baptism, then, is the believer allowing the Spirit to immerse fully into the dynamic, supernatural work of God. As Stronstad (1999) points out, the empowerment of the first century church as described in Acts empowered to the church in to be a "prophethood" of all believers. This meant that the most regular sign of the Spirit's empowerment was to prophetically speak God's revelatory truth into the world. The signature spiritual practice in this dimension is speaking in tongues. This phenomenon serves within the logic of Pentecostalism as both the sign of the Spirit's empowering presence, but also as the Spirit's enablement to pray God's intercessory prayers. Oral Roberts believed that one could pray in the Spirit, then interpret these words in the Spirit back to one's mind to gain understanding (Isgrigg, 2018).

How might this empowering, prophetic experience be translated to the research process? Research is a process of discovery. As a discipline, it functions in the realm of information science in which access to information and the discovery of that information is governed by information logic. Yet, sometimes the tools of research are not quite enough. Many times in the research process, the student reaches dead ends and points of frustration looking for the missing elements in understanding their topic or developing their thesis. I have been there many times where I have intuited that there is something out there hidden in the vast sea of resources, but I cannot seem to find it. In this intellectual crisis, I believe that the Spirit-empowered researcher has a resource at their disposal: the power of the Spirit. If all truth is a product of the mind of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit, then the student can draw from the resources of the Spirit. When writing my thesis, many times when I was stuck, I prayed in the Spirit and asked God for wisdom to break through writer's block. Other times when I was searching for the missing evidence or ideas, I asked the Spirit to lead me to the right resource.

These moments of serendipity are nothing new to the research process. Serendipity is the unexpected discovery of ideas or information that revolutionizes our understanding. The value of serendipity is being recognized by research in many different disciplines. Lori McCay-Peet and Elaine G. Toms (2018) note that there are several kinds of serendipity in research: the discovery of something unexpected unrelated to the topic researched, the discovery of a solution to an alternative problem than the one being researched, and the discovery of a solution not expected to the topic researched. Each of these are surprise moments where new ideas are formed from unexpected places. Information retrieval systems build in some levels of serendipity in order to help researchers see topics or ideas that may trigger or stimulate ideas not yet thought of. The idea here is that filter bubbles in commercialized algorithm-based search engines like Google are good at predicting what you want to see based on past searches, but are not built to expose you to ideas that lead to serendipitous discoveries (Kop, 2012). If search results are simply providing what you were looking for, you would never break the cycle of information filter bubbles. The

serendipity principle of information science allows for personalization to maximize effective search results, while at the same time allows serendipitous exposure to ideas that were not intentionally looked for (McCay-Peet & Toms, 2018).

What I am suggesting is that the Holy Spirit is a resource for serendipity to the researcher. As Poloma and Green (2012) point out, the whole history of the Pentecostal movement is animated by the serendipitous moments and experiences of the supernatural. As a movement, it prides itself on spontaneity and surprise as the Spirit invades spaces where people are not expecting it (Bialecki, 2017). Holy Spirit has access to the "deep things" of God and knows all of the information that the researcher needs to discover. Therefore, a dependence on the revelatory nature of the Spirit is essential to the research process—not the sort of subjective reliance upon direct divine knowledge in which one divines truth in terms of "God told me." Rather, the Holy Spirit gives divine direction in unearthing knowledge we didn't know existed. Serendipitous moments such as glancing at a book on the shelf, or stumbling upon a concept in an unexpected place, or getting a suggestion from a colleague could be divine revelation moments that equate to Spirit-baptized intellectual conversions. These revelations empower the student not only with the fresh and innovative perspectives, but also, as Cranton (2016) points out, the empowerment gained from research breakthroughs like this propel the student's confidence toward finding their own voice and original contributions to add to the conversation.

Intellectual Healing

The fourth concept in the five-fold gospel is perhaps the Spirit-empowered movement's most recognizable characteristic. Inherited from the mid-nineteenth century healing movement, healing was a characteristic in most evangelical revivalist movements. The recovery of the doctrine of healing was a trans-Atlantic phenomenon from healing rooms in Great Britain, to healing conferences in the U.S. Healing became an essential part of the Pentecostal ethos as most of the early Pentecostal meetings drew crowds on the promise the Jesus is the healer (Isgrigg, 2021b). So universal is this commitment that some scholars

suggest that healing—rather than speaking in tongues—has become the most recognized distinctive across all Spirit-filled communities throughout the two centuries (Dayton, 1987; Brown, 2011).

For the research process, I see healing as an incredibly important characteristic. The world is full of distortions of truth. Knowledge can be liberating for those who are allowed to flourish through education, but knowledge can also be used to oppress and control, causing trauma to vulnerable people often in marginalized or at-risk communities. Higher education is recognizing the impact that trauma has on graduate education (Stephens, 2020). Therefore, trauma-informed pedagogy is a growing necessity for educators in order to provide the type of environment that is conducive to transformational learning through safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. Two characteristics that are most important in the research process are choice and empowerment. The value of choice is important because control is a high source of trauma in which individuals lose their agency. For doctoral students, the freedom and agency of self-guided research allows for the direction of the research to be controlled by the student. Thus, they are free to choose what they investigate and guide the meaning-making process of those ideas.

In a traditional sense, many students recognize from a Christian worldview perspective that secularism and other ideas can distort truth from being fully apprehended in the academic pursuit. At the same time, just because someone comes to research from a "biblical" worldview does not mean that those biblical ideas are not distorted by all kinds of biases, myths, and uncritical assumptions. Even ardent students of the Bible are captive to cultural distortions of knowledge depending on the horizons of their perspectives.

A perfect example of this is the testimony of some minorities who go through the education process but never learn of their own perspectives are valuable (Ulmer, 2019). Many women in academia have discovered through their research that culturally shaped theological perspectives contributed to constraints upon their own views of themselves (Barr, 2021). Some discover through research that perspectives they had been told by their faith communities were not biblical and outside the realm of orthodoxy were not only affirmed in

scholarly research, but are also universally accepted outlooks on these issues. Many of these enculturated perspectives are traumatizing to the individual, though they do not recognize it. Baldwin (2018) describes sin related to trauma as the "abuse of relational power" and related to theological education that can shape one's ability to exercise theological autonomy. Many faith communities that use confessional theology regulate who has a say, who is empowered to do ministry, and what ideas and perspectives are authoritative and accepted in the community. Research can be a liberating work of the Spirit to expose people to ideas that give self-agency to the student. Shelly Rambo (2010) describes this process as the "middle work" (p. 116) of the Spirit where the Spirit is free to intersect trauma and release the understanding of God from the trauma of colonial, oppressive theological constructs so that the Spirit may give new life to words, ideas, and thoughts.

In these moments, research becomes a moment of intellectual healing that gets to the root of the distortion and brings clarity and grounding to their topic and knowledge. Baldwin (2017) describes the salvation of traumatic experiences this way:

> Salvation or healing … includes welcoming home parts of self and community who have been estranged and exiled, overcoming the internal tug-of-war as protective systems vie for control in how to negotiate the world. (Chapter 7)

Brown and Toumey (2017) point out that when someone has experienced trauma, using action-based activities to address that trauma can bring healing and new bursts of creativity. They point to actions, such as painting or drawing related to their trauma, can break through trauma to achieve healing. I would suggest that research does the same thing. Exposure to information allows researchers to expose places of intellectual bondage and begins healing when they are given permission to read outside normal boundaries of discussion.

Intellectual Hope

The fifth tenet in the five-fold gospel is that of the doctrine of the return of Christ, or "soon-coming king." Eschatology is at the heart of Pentecostal theology because the resurgence of the baptism in the

Spirit is seen as an "end time" restoration in God's eschatological plan (Isgrigg, 2019). The return of Christ is labeled by many Pentecostals as the rapture, but the most common name for the event was "The Blessed Hope" (Isgrigg, 2021). Pentecostals imagined the coming of Christ as a hopeful event in which resurrection will take place, justice will be done, and peace will come to the earth as Jesus sets up his kingdom. The expectation of Christ's coming is a work of the Spirit as the bride of Christ eagerly anticipates the coming of Christ very soon. Unfortunately, some have used Christ's coming as a tool to induce fear in people by warning that those who are not ready will be left behind in the tribulation. But the appeal to fear as a motivation for faith is the antithesis of hope. Instead, "Hope is an emotional response that can only be generated by the expectation of something good in the future" (Isgrigg, 2021a, p. 216). The future is good and should not be feared because Christ and his full revelation is the goal of the future.

This tension between fear and hope is also present in the research process. There are multiple reasons why research can be a fearful process. First, Sample (2020) notes the growing awareness of library anxiety in students, especially in non-traditional and international students. Students often fear asking for help due to the perception that there is something wrong with them if they do not know how to research. Furthermore, for some students, finding new information can also cause anxiety and can often result in "information selecting" behavior when the threat of information might come with discomfort or cognitive dissonance (Case, Andrews, Johnson, & Allard, 2005). Because information may bring this feeling of uncertainty, Case, Andrews, Johnson and Allard (2005) posits the Uncertainty Management Theory as a "sophisticated way explaining avoidance because it highlights how people sometimes deliberately increase uncertainty" (p. 355). The avoidance of new ideas leads to information-seeking behavior that offers the safety of reinforcing ideologies, rather than critically assessing them (Fleischer, 2016). This is confirmed by studies that show that people of strong religious faith are more inclined to engage in "selective exposure to attitude congruent information" rather than seek out the broader range of possibilities to critically assess (Cragun, 2020).

One thing that may encourage avoidance in theological research is the tensions associated with engaging in critical thinking about ideas that are deeply held as religious beliefs. The long-held conflict between fundamentalism and liberalism conditions many students to fear that certain ideas, methodologies, or hermeneutical frameworks are incongruous with traditional Christian teachings and should be feared. Particularly in the Pentecostal tradition, higher education has had an uneasy relationship with Pentecostal understandings of "faith fidelity" (Topf, 2021). Rather than seeing education and research as a path toward a greater understanding of truth, education is often seen as a process that leads one away from truth. While higher education is liberalizing by nature because it is designed to expose students to a wide range of disciplines and concepts, Broćić and Miles (2021) have disproven the claim that higher education erodes moral absolutes and show that education develops moral absolutes twice as often as religiosity alone, This means that education and research actually strengthen convictions by building openness to considering other people's perspectives, which fosters empathy and awareness of biases that animate moral conviction. Similarly, Fliesher (2006) found in studying graduate education that "sustained critical reflection deepened student's faith and spirituality, rather than weakened it" (p. 160). Nevertheless, these attitudes about higher education continue to exist. This means that Christian students are not only dealing with the normal cognitive and social barriers to learning but may also have an added level of fear that too much learning or exposure to ideas could be detrimental to their faith.

In addition, students from a Spirit-empowered tradition often come from independent charismatic backgrounds that are not situated into any confessional community. In these contexts, the arbitrators of knowledge and truth are often charismatic personalities who are seen as the primary authority to whom divine revelation is given. The veneration of ecclesial authority because of the attribution of charismatic leadership or signs and wonders ministry tends to engender a lack of critical analysis of ideas related to Scripture, God, and truth (Christerson & Flory, 2017). I have encountered students who dismiss reputable scholarly perspectives simply because a pastor or spiritual

authority has told them otherwise. Cacciatore et al. (2018) have documented that evangelical Christians are more trusting of religious authorities than academic or scientific authorities about information in general. They tend to trust people more than the evidence of the claim itself. In this context, authority of information is ultimately determined by who said it, rather than critical assessment of the validity, evidence, or grounding in research of that statement. These socially conditioned epistemological presuppositions are often hard to part with when confronted with scholarly, research-based data.

But just as one should not fear the full revelation of Christ at his second coming, there is no need for Spirit-empowered students to fear the revelation of knowledge and truth in academic research. Hope is an essential element of research and discovery. Hope involves anticipation of what could be out there to discover. It engenders in people an openness to the future. An openness to research and new ideas is an act of hope. As Kearney (1998) notes, theology itself is a work of the imagination. The world is far too complex and socially contextualized for any one person to ascertain the vast realm of factors that shape human reality. In effort to order our thoughts about the world, humans naturally fill in the blanks through the imagination to create a narrative about reality. This means that concepts of truth are ultimately shaped by "how we imagine the world before we ever think about it." (Smith, 2009, p. 66). Critically evaluating these imagined realities is essential to a student's self-understanding and growth. In this sense, our openness to ideas is not an afront to the truths of our faith; rather, they have the possibility of increasing our capacity to understand reality in ways not possible before. Just as openness is the key to breakthroughs in science and medical research, openness is key for students to allow student room to discover, evaluate, critique, and assimilate ideas from all corners of God's vast expanse of knowledge in order to bring new revelation to contemporary understandings of theological topics. As Yong (2009) notes, the pneumatological imagination presupposes that all knowledge of God begins with the Holy Spirit, who is "the divine mind that illuminates the rationality of the world to human minds" (p. 123). With the Spirit guiding us, why should we fear?

Conclusion

Theological research is not just a cognitive enterprise; it is in many ways an epistemological experience with the Spirit that shapes both knowledge and self-understanding. My task as an educator is to encourage students not only to prepare for these intellectual conversions but also to encourage them to seek them out as the goal of education. It would be tragic for a student to exit a doctoral program having gained little more than a better understanding of the things that student already knew. While this reinforcement may feel like a good outcome for students, it is far from transformative education. As Spirit-empowered educators, we must help students discover knowledge and truth with joy and hope is a much more consequential task. The work students do is far too important not to be transformed by the research process. For D.Min. students, their expertise in ministry can reshape how ministry praxis is carried out by implementing the best research at the ground level. This requires the researcher to use critical reflection, analysis, and inquiry that leads to concrete theories of human experience. In order to do this, one must complexify the situation that is being examined though interdisciplinary research. For Ph.D. students, critical reflection is essential to the creation of new knowledge in a field of expertise. Determining the gap in research requires reading widely, thinking creatively, and researching exhaustively to fully grasp the problems and the potential solutions. New theories must be imagined that take into account the voluminous research done by others, both in the specific field and across disciplines, in order to fully imagine what is possible.

This responsibility can be overwhelming to a new doctoral student. Therefore, I try to normalize for my students the perpetual feeling of "being in over your head" that comes with this process of intellectual growth. But the ability to communicate these necessary intellectual conversions in the vernacular of the Spirit-filled life can be another tool to inspire the student to embrace the transformation that will take place. In all of this, I see the Spirit at work, in the research and writing process as truth is revealed, the imagination is inspired, and knowledge is created for betterment of theological reflection.

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THEY SHALL RUN

and Not Be Weary, and They Shall Walk and Not Faint: 50 Years of the ORU Field Test

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Abstract

A history of the development and changes of ORU's field test over the last 50 years is presented followed by previously unpublished percentile values for N=14,076 recent pre-pandemic (2017–2019) field-test times for the distances for 1-mile, 1.5-mile, and 2-mile field tests for college students aged 18.9 years (N=2,198; 58.3% female), 19.1 years (N=1,574; 58.0% female), and 20.5 years (N=10,304;

57.3% female) respectively. The aim of this study is to establish an updated set of standard field test times that can serve as a valuable benchmark for assessing the cardio-vascular fitness levels of college students.

Introduction

Physical fitness has always been a central aspect of the educational philosophy at Oral Roberts University (ORU). Since its inception, ORU has upheld a holistic approach to education that emphasizes the development of not only the mind and spirit but also the body (Oral Roberts University, 1965). The university has a longstanding tradition of promoting a healthy and active lifestyle for its students, which is reflected in its required aerobics program (Oral Roberts University, 2015). In the early days of ORU, the Health Performance Laboratory coordinated the aerobics program, and all incoming students underwent a comprehensive physical fitness assessment, including blood tests, body composition analysis, treadmill tests, O2/CO2 analysis, and ECGs (Lockfield, 1983).

The purpose of this study is to collect field test times as a direct measure of cardio-vascular fitness and create a new set of standard field test times. The research question that this study seeks to answer is "What are the revised field test times for assessing cardiovascular fitness of college students in the United States that align with the current level of physical fitness of incoming students?"

History of the ORU Field Test

The Health, Leisure, and Sport Sciences Department (HLSS) at ORU has been tasked with promoting physical fitness among its students, and it continues to be a critical aspect of the university's curriculum. To this end, ORU has historically included a performance-based, cardio-respiratory assessment tool to measure the fitness level of its student body. The assessment tool originally adopted by the university was a timed distance run, known as a "field test," which was designed to promote the benefits of sustained exercise for the heart,

lungs, and circulatory system as defined by Kenneth Cooper's Aerobic Exercise model (Cooper, 1968; Cooper, 1969; Farrell, 2018). The field test was developed by ORU health and physical exercise faculty in the 1970s, based on results from an 11-year longitudinal study conducted by researchers from Harding College, Southern Methodist University, Kerr Foundation of Oklahoma City, and the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas, Texas (Brynteson, 1979; Cooper Center dedicated, 1974).

In the early days of ORU, the field test was mandatory for all full-time students and was a requirement for all freshman-level Health and Physical Exercise (HPE) classes. The field test consisted of a 1.5-mile run and was gradually increased to a 3-mile run for sophomore, junior, and senior level HPE classes. In the past, the field test was only offered as a running test, but over the years, alternative tests and standards, such as a 5-mile cycle and an 800-meter swim, have been developed to accommodate students who are unable to complete a running test. The current health fitness standards are in HPE syllabi, such as the one for Health Fitness II, available at https://syllabi.oru.edu/?id=38150. ORU athletic trainer and HLSS faculty member for over 40 years, Glenn Smith explains,

> Students would pick up their field test cards at what is now the Concession Desk by the front entrance to the Aerobics Center and drop them off there for tabulation at the end of the week. Back in those days the field test was 3 miles and the Tulsa police would block off 81st street from east of the City of Faith to beyond the not-yet-built Casino on Riverside Drive . . . . There would be at least 2,000 participants, and it was a great bonding time for all as students, faculty, and coaches would participate in a "fun run" that many would look forward to as they would consider it as part of their aerobic points requirement. (Smith, G.E., personal communication, March 9, 2022)

In the 1980s and 1990s, the level of fitness for incoming students at our institution declined, which matched the decline in fitness seen nationwide (National Center for Health Statistics, 2019), and an increasing number of students opted to complete their field test requirements by cycling. Adapting to this reality, ORU dropped its run requirement for its field test in 1997 and has since then allowed students to walk their field tests, which are assessed against ORU-developed walking standards (https://syllabi.oru.edu/?id=38150).

Additionally, students are no longer required to manually log aerobics points in a fitness journal as a part of their fitness program. All incoming students now have the option of tracking aerobics points and fitness through Fitbit wearable devices, and almost all students opt to do so. This innovation to ORU's aerobics program launched in the fall of 2015. The challenge for ORU's health instructors continues to be motivating a diverse and often reluctant student population to engage in physical fitness. A small percentage of the American population engages in exercise at least three times a week (Racette et al., 2005), and this lack of focus on fitness can result in resistance toward imposed exercise habits. To encourage a lifestyle of physical fitness, the HLSS Department at ORU decided to attach grade points to the field test results. The hope was that students would either be motivated by the national standards for cardio-respiratory fitness based on their field test finishing times or place more value on their fitness due to the implications on their final grade for each required semester activity course.

Currently, ORU students are awarded field test participation points for completing the field test, provided they engage in exercise as monitored by a Fitbit wearable fitness tracking device. If students lack motivation for regular aerobic exercise, they can decide to complete the field test to at least earn the participation points. This may be the reason why students choose to walk the field test and/or have very poor results. Observations within activity classes have shown that many students, especially after their freshman year, elect to complete a walking field test, perceiving it as easier or less taxing. The study findings indicate that many male students who choose to walk do so simply for the participation points and are often not aerobically conditioned

(and appear to not have prepared for the distance of our field test). Conversely, often female students express that they are motivated to achieve a higher grade and have prepared to power-walk the field test to the best of their ability. This focus on attaining a higher grade for the course may be the causal factor for females outperforming their male classmates on the walking field test.

Current State of the ORU Field Test

The most recent changes to ORU's field test requirements were made in 2015-2016 and coincided with the introduction of ORU's current university success course: GEN 150 Introduction to Whole Person Education. Currently, the freshman requirements include a 1-mile first semester field test, a 1.5-mile field test for the second semester, and a 2-mile field test for subsequent semesters. Students are now also encouraged to take 10,000 steps per day, with steps and heart rate data recorded automatically by Fitbits (Broaddus et al., 2021).

Although we have modified the length and format of the field test over the years, the criteria by which students are evaluated has remained unchanged. The existing field test times used for measuring cardiovascular fitness at ORU are outdated and in need of revision because they are based on outdated fitness standards from the 1960s and 1970s (Cooper, 1968; Cooper, 1969; Brynteson, 1979), so the purpose of this study is to collect field test times as a direct measure of cardio-vascular fitness and create a new set of standard field test times. The research question that this study seeks to answer is "What are the revised field test times for assessing cardio-vascular fitness of college students in the United States that align with the current level of physical fitness of incoming students?"

Methods

Each semester, HPE instructors administer a field test in their activity classes. The students can choose to walk or run the field test, and the HPE instructors monitor the field tests for accuracy and validity. After each student completes the field test, their time

is compared to the field test standard times used at ORU, which are based on research from the 1960s and 1970s (Brynteson, 1979; Cooper Center dedicated, 1974); the students earn points that correlate with their times (https://syllabi.oru.edu/?id=38150). In the spring semester of 2016, instructors started recording these field-test times electronically instead of using the traditional paper notecards.

The historical dataset consists of 14,076 field test times recorded from spring 2016 through the fall 2019, inclusive. We decided to not include the data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic (spring 2020 through spring 2022) as the implementation of the field test was modified during that time period to allow for virtual/hybrid learning and is therefore different in nature and ultimately less reliable. The initial dataset was pulled from ORU's institutional repository by a member of ORU's institutional research team and de-identified, as per our IRB requirement (IRB# F-14), before being given to our research team for analysis.

The initial dataset had N=15,901 field test times. A small population of students, for various reasons, cycled (N=16) or swam (N=129) instead of walking or running. These data were removed. We also removed data for students with ages under 17 years or greater than 25 years (N=850), leaving a dataset of N=14,906 students. We then removed any self-reported and all varsity sports values to leave a dataset consisting only of non-athlete students with instructor-monitored field test times. The final dataset consists of N=14,076 field test times, which are available as Open Data via figshare (Lang et al., 2022).

Results

The new set of field test times, which fulfills the purpose of this study, are presented below in tabular form. These results were derived from 14,076 field test results from spring 2016 through fall 2019. The average age for students with 1-mile, 1.5-mile, and 2-mile field test times was 18.9 years (N=2,198; 58.3% female), 19.1 years (N=1,574; 58.0% female), and 20.5 years (N=10,304; 57.3% female) respectively. Means and standard deviations (SD) for field test times by distance grouped by sex and walk/run mode are presented in Table 1.

	Male		Female	
Distance	**Walk**	**Run**	**Walk**	**Run**
1-mile	14:32 (2:30)	7:51 (1:54)	14:37 (2:15)	10:16 (2:15)
1.5-mile	19:56 (2:43)	11:26 (2:14)	21:10 (2:21)	13:42 (2:26)
2-mile	25:06 (3:18)	15:16 (2:40)	26:42 (3:18)	17:51 (2:48)

Table 1. *Mean (SD) field test times (minutes:seconds) grouped by distance, sex, and walk/run mode, spring 2016—fall 2019 inclusive*

Walk/Run Choice

Out of 14,076 students, 53% of the field tests were taken by students who opted to run. This is mainly skewed towards the 2-mile distance, where 73% of the data came from. The number of students who chose to run decreased from 79% (1-mile) in first semester to 66% (1.5-mile) in second semester, and 46% (2-mile) in later semesters. Males were more likely to run than females for all distances, with 85%, 83%, and 64% of male students choosing to run for 1-mile, 1.5-mile, and 2-mile distances respectively, compared to 75%, 53%, and 33% for females. Figure 1 shows a visual representation of the walk/run statistics.

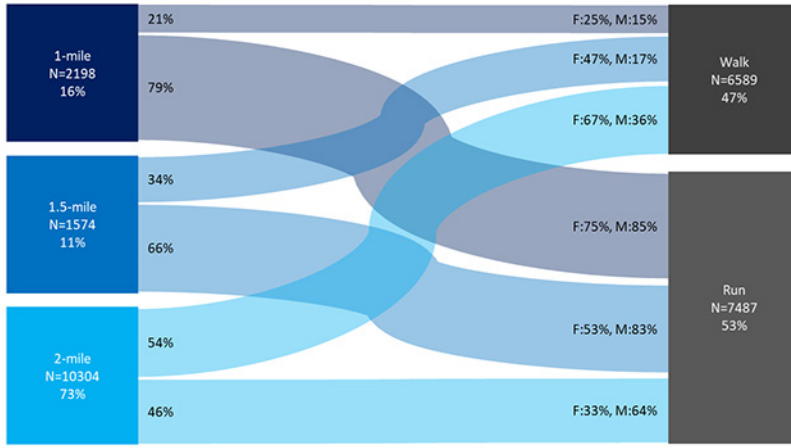

Figure 1. *Field test walk/run mode choice by distance and sex, spring 2016–fall 2019 inclusive*

Percentile Ranks

Field test times for ORU students are reported as minutes and seconds for each decile, plus the 95th and 99th percentiles for 1-mile, 1.5-mile, and 2-mile field tests are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4 respectively.

	Male		Female	
Percentile	**Walk**	**Run**	**Walk**	**Run**
99th	8:20	5:23	9:33	6:25
95th	10:23	5:44	11:02	7:13
90th	11:44	5:59	11:57	7:33
80th	12:37	6:21	12:41	8:18
70th	13:10	6:43	13:12	8:49
60th	13:43	7:03	14:09	9:20
50th	14:34	7:23	14:42	9:59
40th	15:00	7:47	15:20	10:34
30th	15:35	8:18	15:55	11:14
20th	16:40	9:01	16:38	12:01
10th	17:40	10:18	17:25	13:25

Table 2. *Percentile values for 1-mile field test times (minutes:seconds) by distance, sex, and walk/run mode, spring 2016–fall 2019 inclusive*

	Male		Female	
Percentile	**Walk**	**Run**	**Walk**	**Run**
99th	14:06	8:26	15:03	9:41
95th	15:56	8:58	17:50	10:26
90th	16:45	9:18	18:34	11:03
80th	17:42	9:43	19:15	11:42
70th	18:16	10:03	19:59	12:10
60th	19:13	10:26	20:27	12:49
50th	19:37	10:51	21:10	13:24
40th	20:10	11:28	21:37	13:57

	Male		Female	
Percentile	**Walk**	**Run**	**Walk**	**Run**
30th	21:08	11:56	22:05	14:30
20th	21:45	12:45	15:27	22:45
10th	23:19	14:11	24:16	16:53

Table 3. *Percentile values for 1.5-mile field test times (minutes:seconds) by distance, sex, and walk/run mode, spring 2016–fall 2019 inclusive*

	Male		Female	
Percentile	**Walk**	**Run**	**Walk**	**Run**
99th	16:44	9:48	18:04	11:50
95th	20:32	11:54	22:13	13:59
90th	21:42	12:39	23:23	15:01
80th	22:44	13:17	24:23	15:51
70th	23:25	13:49	25:08	16:26
60th	24:01	14:20	25:44	16:57
50th	24:42	14:48	26:19	17:27
40th	25:28	15:20	27:05	18:02
30th	26:27	16:02	27:51	18:48
20th	27:26	17:00	28:53	19:46
10th	29:17	18:40	30:41	21:15

Table 4. *Percentile values for 2-mile field test times (minutes:seconds) by distance, sex, and walk/run mode, spring 2016–fall 2019 inclusive*

Discussion

At Oral Roberts University, students in required Health and Physical Education (HPE) courses earn points based on their completion of field tests. These points are assigned based on their completion time compared to outdated standards that were established through research conducted in the 1960s and 1970s by Cooper and Brynteson. For instance, the sample in this study completed the 1.5-mile run in an average time of 11:26 for males and 13:42 for females, while the average times for males and females in 1979 were 10:01 and 11:13, respectively (unpublished results from an ongoing study at ORU).

The decline in the physical fitness of college students from the 1960s and 1970s to today can be attributed to a variety of factors. For example, there has been a rise in sedentary lifestyles due to the widespread use of technology. Additionally, schools have altered their physical education requirements, potentially reducing the amount of physical activity that students engage in. Furthermore, changes in society's diet, including the increased consumption of processed foods that are high in fat and sugar, may have contributed to lower fitness levels.

The purpose of this study was to collect contemporary data and create updated percentile rank tables for field test times. These tables can be used to revise the outdated standards used to assign points in HPE courses and provide up-to-date information for assessing the cardiovascular fitness of college students. These tables are unique to ORU; they were produced using the university's unique health and physical exercise requirements. They represent a novel contribution to the field, as there are currently no comparable tables available.

This study has also allowed us to quantify the number of students who choose to walk instead of run during the field test. We note that the walk option was not available to students in the early days of ORU. We hypothesize that contemporary students opt to walk because it is perceived as easier or less strenuous. Regardless, these findings have prompted ORU to reconsider the walk option and instead establish a walk/run protocol, where students who need to walk during the field test will be permitted to do so. Under this new system, students will be evaluated against a single standard, but with the additional requirement that their heart rate reach 140 beats per minute to encourage them to exert their best effort.

By adopting this new approach, ORU aims to improve the accuracy of its fitness assessments and encourage students to challenge themselves during the field test. Furthermore, by allowing students to walk when necessary, the university hopes to make the test more accessible to students who may not be able to run the full distance. Overall, this change represents a positive step toward promoting fitness and wellness among ORU students.

Conclusion

The results of this study represent a starting point for future research in this field and serve as a basis for the creation of new field test standards in ORU HPE courses that reflect the current state of physical fitness among college students in the United States.

Moving forward, ORU plans to utilize these percentile rank tables to revise its field test standards and better assess the cardio-vascular fitness of its students. By incorporating these new standards into HPE courses, ORU hopes to encourage students to prioritize their physical fitness and achieve a higher level of wellness. Furthermore, these new percentile rank data can contribute to the broader conversation around physical fitness and health in the United States and help inform policies and initiatives aimed at improving the general health of the population.

Overall, the implications of these findings are significant and suggest that there is much work to be done in this area. As such, future studies may focus on exploring the impact of various factors such as lifestyle choices, physical education requirements, and dietary habits on physical fitness, as well as identifying effective strategies for promoting healthy behaviors and improving overall wellness among college students. For example, one possible future study may involve utilizing these percentile scores to aid in detecting college students who may be prone to chronic diseases in their later years.

The ORU field test is an important part of ORU's history and an essential part of its future. As we continue as an institution to value whole person education—to educate students spirit, mind, and body—the field test, as an integral part of ORU's aerobics program, supports the development of an attitude of lifelong wellness.

Due to a society that is witnessing the effects of a lack of focus on healthy lifestyles along with the ever-increasing number of obese citizens with heart disease, cancers, Type 2 Diabetes, and other debilitating illness/disease (Sarma et al., 2021), it is vitally important that Oral Roberts University continues f*ighting the good fight* in its indefatigable efforts to educate our future *whole leaders for the whole world*.

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IN DEFENSE

OF MOVING FROM A MUSIC PRODUCTION CURRICULUM TO A COMMERICAL MUSIC CURRICULUM

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Key Words *commercial music curriculum, music production curriculum, music technology degree plan, music industry degree plan, entrepreneurship in commercial music practices curriculum, music technology curriculum, music distribution using social media, commercial music production, entrepreneurship in commercial music, live sound, audio recording, music industry practices, musical artistry skills*

Abstract

The music industry has significantly evolved in recent years, largely due to the growth of newer forms of technology, such as distribution platforms and music production tools. With technological changes, academic institutions must understand the need to alter their curricula to better prepare students for the growing field of commercial music. Traditional music education programs emphasized classical music, music theory, and instrumental and vocal skills; however, students wanting to enter the world of commercial music need a broader range of knowledge, including business, marketing, copyright law, self-publishing, and music licensing as well as skills in operating various kinds of hardware and software.

A commercial music degree can help students achieve their career goals by addressing new opportunities and challenges and building a curriculum that can adapt to the changing music industry. Understanding differences between music production and commercial music curricula is a key to developing strategies for exploring how to transform an existing music production into a commercial music degree.

Introduction

Various technological, economic, and cultural factors have shaped the history of music production education (Dorfman, 2022). The music industry has undergone significant changes in recent years, mainly driven by the rise of digital distribution platforms and the democratization of music production tools (Herstand, 2023). As a result, many academic institutions are reevaluating their music production curricula to better prepare students for the modern commercial music landscape (Klein & Lewandowski-Cox, 2019). This article explores the process of updating an existing music technology curriculum to a commercial music curriculum and offer insights, practical strategies, and recommendations for educators looking to make this transition successful.

The music industry constantly evolves, and the strategies and recommendations may need to be updated quickly (Mugisha, 2019). Conducting ongoing evaluations and adaptations to keep up with the latest trends and technologies is essential. Since the study of music technologies is broad, this study focuses on curriculum design, teaching methods, and student outcomes.

A Brief History of Modern Music Technology

Music production programs have been integral to higher education for several decades. Numerous institutions offer courses and degree programs to teach students the technical skills and creative processes of producing music (Renzoni & Boyce, 2022). In the early days of music production education, the focus was primarily on teaching students how to record and mix music using analog equipment, such as tape machines, mixing consoles, and outboard gear (Burgess, 2014). As digital technology revolutionized the music industry in the 1990s

and 2000s, music production programs began incorporating digital audio workstations (DAWs) and other software-based tools into their curricula (Dorfman, 2022).

However, the rise of digital distribution platforms and the development of music production tools have transformed the music industry in ways that many educators and institutions were unprepared for (Ruthmann & Mantie, 2017). As music production software became more affordable and accessible, the barriers to entry for aspiring musicians and producers were significantly lowered, leading to a flood of new talent and competition in the industry (Dorfman, 2022; Urkevich, 2019). At the same time, the decline of physical media and the rise of streaming services have drastically altered how music is distributed and monetized, presenting new challenges and opportunities for music professionals (Camlin & Lisboa, 2021; Sundet & Colbjørnsen, 2021).

In response to these changes, many academic institutions have recognized the need to adapt their curricula to better prepare students for the modern commercial music landscape. This has led to commercial music programs, which aim to provide students with a broader range of skills and knowledge related to the industry's business side, such as music marketing, copyright law, and music licensing (Klein & Lewandowski-Cox, 2019). In addition to traditional music production courses, commercial music programs may include entrepreneurship courses, music industry history and trends, and artist management.

The development of commercial music programs has also coincided with the rise of new technologies and platforms, such as streaming services and social media, which have further transformed the music industry and created new opportunities and challenges for aspiring musicians and music professionals (Klein & Lewandowski-Cox, 2019). The ability to self-publish music on platforms such as SoundCloud and YouTube has enabled independent artists to reach a wider audience than ever before but also presents challenges in monetization and copyright infringement. Similarly, the rise of social media has created new avenues for music promotion and fan engagement but also raises questions about privacy and data ownership (Cannon & Thomas, 2021).

The Shift Away from Traditional Music Education to Commercial Music

In recent years, colleges have shifted from the traditional emphasis on classical music toward commercial music. One reason for this shift is the changing demands of the music industry, which is increasingly focused on popular music genres such as rock, pop, and hip-hop (Holt, 2019). As a result, music schools and universities have begun to offer programs and courses that focus on the skills and techniques needed to succeed in the commercial music industry (Angel-Alvarado, 2020; Wang, 2021).

Another factor driving this shift is music students' changing tastes (Modeme, 2022). Many young musicians today are more interested in learning how to play and create popular music than in mastering the technical skills required for classical performance. This has increased demand for commercial music education programs that offer instruction in songwriting, music production, and music business (Angel-Alvarado, 2020; Wang, 2021).

The rise of technology has also played a role in the shift toward commercial music education (Dorfman, 2022; Haines & Matthews, 2021). The widespread availability of digital audio workstations, home recording equipment, and online distribution platforms has made it easier than ever for aspiring musicians to create and promote their own music. As a result, music schools and universities have had to adapt their curricula to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate this changing landscape (Angel-Alvarado, 2020; Wang, 2021).

Despite the shift toward commercial music education, classical music remains integral to many collegiate music education programs (Kladder, 2022). It provides a foundation in music theory, history, and technique that is valuable for any musician, regardless of genre (Stillie & Moir, 2021). However, the increased focus on commercial music reflects the changing nature of the music industry and the evolving interests of music students (Angel-Alvarado, 2020; Wang, 2021).

How Music Production and Commercial Music Differ

Music production and commercial music are related but contain distinct concepts and knowledge. Music production refers to the process of creating and recording music, which can include a range of different styles and genres. Music production programs involve various technical and creative skills, including recording and mixing audio, editing and arranging music, and mastering tracks for distribution (Burgess, 2014).

On the other hand, commercial music refers specifically to music created to generate revenue through sales or licensing deals. Commercial music can be produced using the same techniques and skills as music production. Still, it is often designed to appeal to a broad audience and generate significant sales and streaming revenue (Bell, 2020).

While commercial music is often associated with major record labels and mainstream genres like pop, rock, and hip-hop, independent artists can also create and market successful commercial music (Kladder, 2022). The rise of digital distribution platforms and social media has made it easier for independent artists to reach a global audience and generate revenue through their music (Jones, 2021).

Music production is a broader concept encompassing all aspects of creating and recording music (Hepworth-Sawyer & Golding, 2011; Swindali, 2022). In contrast, commercial music specifically refers to music designed to generate revenue through sales or licensing. However, it is essential to note that many music production projects, even those not necessarily designed to be commercial hits, can still be commercially successful through alternative means such as sync licensing, placements in film and television, and live performances.

Comparing Music Technology Curricula to Commercial Music Curricula

Switching from a music production degree program to a commercial music program can benefit students and institutions. Commercial music programs provide students with a well-rounded skill set, a deeper understanding of the music industry, and opportunities for real-world experience and collaboration (McCandless & McIntyre,

2018) because the curriculum often requires students to develop skills needed for popular music styles and coursework that delves into the music business.

Colleges that train future music professionals must stay updated with the latest trends and practices to prepare students for success (Renzoni & Boyce, 2022). If the industry emphasizes commercial music and revenue generation, it may make sense for a college to adjust its curriculum accordingly.

Commercial music programs are often perceived as more relevant to the modern music industry (Holt, 2019). In recent years, the music industry has shifted with streaming, social media, and the Music Modernization Act, which "updates the copyright law to make statutory licensing more fair for creators and more efficient for digital music providers" (U.S. Copyright Office, 2021). The demand for commercial music has increased, while the demand for traditional music production has decreased. Traditional music does not teach modern musical styles and is less centered on business than commercial music is (Bell, 2020). The music industry has shifted from one that was controlled by a few large labels to one in which the independent producer has the opportunity to create music, develop fans, and collect royalties.

This shift increases the need for the artist desiring to become a producer/artist proficient in skills beyond mixing and mastering music. By focusing on commercial music, students can gain a deeper understanding of the industry and its current needs, which can help them better prepare for a music career where knowledge of production, popular musical styles, the business of music, and artists management is needed.

While music production programs focus on technical skills such as audio engineering, mixing, and mastering, commercial music programs cover songwriting, music theory, and composition (Hepworth-Sawyer & Golding, 2011). Commercial music often includes instruction in non-traditional music styles such as rock, pop, blues, country, and R&B. This instruction allows students to develop a well-rounded skill set that can be applied to various areas of the music industry (Kladder, 2022). Commercial music programs employ a more interdisciplinary approach such as performance, production, business, and marketing.

They are also encouraged to collaborate and work with other students from different backgrounds (Haines & Matthews, 2021). This can help students develop a deeper appreciation for the creative process and provide opportunities for networking and building relationships with other industry professionals.

Commercial music programs offer greater real-world experience and hands-on learning opportunities. Students can work on commercial projects, intern at music companies, and participate in music industry events and conferences. This can provide valuable experience and help students build a portfolio of work that can be used to launch their careers in the industry (Kladder, 2022).

Real-world experience includes such things as mixing and mastering, where the recording is prepared for streaming, terrestrial radio play, and even vinyl and CD production. Students can also learn the role of producing songs and album projects as well as learn studio musicians skills by collaborating with other students on commercial music projects. These skills are acquired over time, and learning them in a university setting could give students a head start before they move to places such as Nashville, Los Angeles, or New York. Coursework focusing on live sound could prepare the student to do live audio work, a skill that is in demand by churches, live musical acts, corporations, or even touring with a major audio company. Through courses focusing on the music industry, students can also learn about the music business, especially the licensing and streaming royalties.

Transitions in Traditional Music Programs

Band and choir have been major extra-curricular activities for United States school programs since the 1920s (Martin, 1999). During this time, marching bands and wind ensembles were popular forms of entertainment, along with vocal, dance, and show-biz groups (Camus, 1980), and band directors often worked with various organizations and groups, including circuses, church groups, and opera houses. Colleges and universities did not have developmental music programs to educate aspiring band directors, and public secondary schools initially hired directors with little formal music education. In response to this need,

universities developed formal music education programs to teach university students the best practices for becoming secondary school band directors (Martin, 1999).

Early twentieth century technological advancements such as automobiles and road improvements helped musicians travel to find work and collaborate to promote themselves in the music industry (Cornelius, 2004), and the invention of the phonograph helped many Americans to play and record music (Brady, 1999). Music recording was more accessible to the public and became one of the most popular forms of entertainment, so for the first time, people could discover new music and listen to their favorite pieces of music repeatedly while sharing the experience with their friends and family (Martin, 1999).

Prior to the 1980s, public schools had a limited selection of electives (Kinney, 2019), and after the 1980s, participation rates for school band programs began to decline. Students were becoming disinterested in extra-curricular activities, and band was a time-consuming and complex extra-curricular activity at the school (Aróstegui, 2016). Band programs needed to be promoted in order to interest more students, so band directors recruited students by demonstrating musical instruments and holding meetings to discuss the attraction and fun music and band activities could provide. Band directors even planned exciting trips to attract new and beginning band students.

As the economy declined and layoffs caused families greater economic hardships, students found the need to find a job rather than participate in extra-curricular activities like marching band. With State legislatures requiring more graduation requirements and schools offering more elective choices, music programs needed to be more prominent to raise the number of students in these programs. Potential collegiate music students began taking a more pragmatic approach to the arts, looking to other majors to embark on a career (Hansen, 1988).

Technology can also be seen as a factor in band attrition (Justus, 2002). Due to the increasing popularity of television, students have other forms of entertainment. Programs such as MTV impacted young people to emulate certain behaviors and appearances to blend in with newer trends in music and in society in general (Greeson & Williams,

1986). Due to the emergence of new social trends, the popularity of bands decreased and was viewed negatively by some parts of society. These matters continue to be present, with social media and other platforms becoming increasingly convenient. Many students join school band programs to interact socially but feel they can accomplish a similar result through social media outlets with less effort (Dagaz, 2010).

Main Outcomes to Focus on for a Commercial Music Program

By using a reverse design approach to designing a collegiate-level music curriculum in commercial music, looking at industry standards and best practices in the music industry can be a valuable resource in constructing program outcomes. Studies show that professionals in commercial music have multiple skills to be successful and can make a livable income. The three main facets needed are (1) music production skills, (2) proficient musicianship, and (3) the knowledge and workings of the music industry business.

Music Production Skills in a Commercial Music Program

Music production is a catch-all that includes digital audio, studio recording, live sound, live production, and even stage lighting (Burgess, 2014; Gibson, 2020; Swindali, 2022). The goal is to start the candidates as freshmen in basic music coursework. These courses, such as music theory, keyboard, musicianship, and ensembles, have been the core of most collegiate programs for many decades. Towards the second semester of the sophomore year students progress in courses that focus on music production, performance, and the business side of commercial music. Accordingly, a producer who is well versed in music theory, instrumental and vocal musicianship, as well as keyboard skills will be able to produce music live and recorded with a degree of artistry and precision that may be lacking in someone who learned these skills through trial and error (Clauhs et al., 2019; Huber & Runstein, 2018).

The goal of a commercial production program is to compress the time the student would need to be ready to enter the commercial music marketplace into the last six or seven semesters before graduation

(Kladder, 2022). This would be accomplished by using a backward curriculum design. Curriculum designers would list as many skills as necessary for industry competency and embed them into the degree. Skills like mixing and mastering, industry practices, production management, and other necessary items would be woven into the coursework.

Musicianship and Musical Artistry Skills in a Commercial Music Program

The very nature of commercial music means the student would develop competencies in commercial music styles on a chosen primary instrument. Many musicians work in groups or ensembles, so they must have strong collaborative skills. This includes communicating effectively with other musicians, listening and responding to what they are playing, and working towards a shared musical vision.

In addition to musical groups, students will have private lessons in playing styles like rock, blues, jazz, country, and R&B. Applied lessons are standard within most music colleges. They are typically required for schools to be accredited. Typically music students take four to six semesters of private lessons and learn fundamentals and techniques during them.

For most musicians playing rock or pop, the learning process has been playing and copying. (Green, 2002) This approach differs from the traditional classical approach, where most musicians begin with foundational musical concepts- staff, notes, and rhythmic values- and move towards reading and performing written sheet music. With traditional musicians, the value is contained in the written score, but with commercial or popular musicians, it is improvisational skills and style.

The Importance of Understanding a Primary Instrument

One of the most fundamental aspects of musicianship is the ability to play an instrument at a high level. Students must develop their playing technique with one or two instruments. Technical proficiency is critical for musicians to express themselves creatively and better understand music theory and composing (Doğantan-Dack, 2016).

Learning an instrument can help music production students to develop their composition skills. They can experiment with different sounds, rhythms, and melodies to create new and unique music.

Another critical skill for commercial musicians is the ability to read and write music notation. Studies have shown that reading music helps prevent students from quitting organized musical ensembles and helps them profoundly understand music (Gudmundsdottir, 2010). Learning to read and write music notation allows students to communicate musical ideas accurately and precisely. They can identify the musical elements used in a piece, such as melody, harmony, rhythm, and form, and understand how they contribute to the overall musical effect. This allows them to communicate their ideas to other musicians and to understand the structure and context of the music they are playing.

By playing an instrument proficiently, a music producer or commercial music musician has a stronger connection to the music in the project they are involved with. By experiencing music through playing it, a musician learns about the elements of music and understands music theory practices. Through regular practice and performance, students can develop a more acute sense of hearing, which helps them better understand music and develop their unique artistic voice. This can lead to a deeper appreciation of different musical styles and a more nuanced understanding of musical composition and structure while collaborating with other musicians and industry professionals. Playing music in a band or ensemble setting teaches students how to communicate effectively, compromise, and work towards a common goal, which are essential skills in the music industry. Because of this, the musician can develop a deeper emotional connection to music and learns more about what makes aesthetically pleasing music (Creech & Hallam, 2011).

Methods of Playing Music in Ensembles

Commercial music styles are communicated in various ways. Reading chord charts is popular among many commercial musicians and is often the first method students will use to understand how to play and perform with other musicians. Another method is an improvisational style. This method gives the musician more freedom to perform, and they do not have to rely on reading anything.

Another popular method of notation where musicians communicate and play music is the Nashville Number System (NNS). This Arabic numeral-based system gives a number to each chord in the musical key of the piece. The Nashville Number System (NNS) is a system of musical notation used by many professional musicians, particularly in the country and gospel music genres. It is a shorthand method of writing down chord progressions using numbers instead of chord names, making it easier to communicate quickly and transpose music on the fly (De Clercq, 2019).

In the NNS, each chord is assigned a number based on its position within a key. The first note of the scale is assigned the number 1. The second note is assigned the number 2, and so on. For example, in the key of C major, the C chord would be represented by the number 1, the D chord by the number 2, and so on (De Clercq, 2019).

Music Industry Practice in a Commercial Music Program

Music industry practice encompasses all the methods and standards used in the music industry and constantly evolves to keep up with technological, social, and cultural changes (Katz, 2010; Schlesinger, 2022). Music industry practice refers to the conventions, customs, and methods used in the music industry (Radbill, 2017). These concepts are recording, live performance, music publishing, and music marketing and include the processes and standards related to recording, producing, promoting, distributing, and consuming music.

The production and recording of music is a fundamental aspect of music industry practice. However, the music industry has evolved from traditional analog recording and mixing methods to digital recording and production techniques that are now more common (Danilova & Krupa, 2021; McDonald, 2022; Owsinski, 2023; Wikström, 2020; Wixen & Petty, 2019). With the advent of digital distribution platforms, such as streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music, the way music is consumed and distributed has significantly changed (Cannon & Thomas, 2021; Prey et al., 2022; Richardson, 2014; Wlömert & Papies, 2016). In addition to physical media such as CDs

and vinyl records, digital distribution has become the primary method for disseminating music.

Intellectual property and copyright law are integral to music industry practice. Copyright law protects musical works from unauthorized use and ensures that music creators are compensated for their work (Woods, 2021). Along with the Music Modernization Act, royalties, performance fees, and other forms of compensation ensure artists receive fair compensation for their work. The debate on fair compensation models for artists continues to evolve for streaming mediums (Chalmers et al., 2021; Passman, 2019).

Music Distribution

The music industry has undergone a significant shift in recent years, with the decline of physical media such as CDs and the rise of digital streaming services. Various factors, including technological advances, changes in consumer behavior, and modifications in the broader cultural and economic landscape, have driven this shift (Herstand, 2023; Oswinski, 2020).

With the widespread adoption of high-speed internet and the proliferation of smartphones and other connected devices, it has become more accessible and convenient for people to access music online. The decline of physical media, such as CDs, has been a critical factor in the rise of streaming (Cannon & Thomas, 2021). As a result, many consumers have moved away from purchasing physical media and instead opted for digital streaming services.

Streaming services offer a range of benefits over traditional physical media, including convenience, accessibility, and affordability (Towse, 2020). A streaming service allows users to access millions of songs and albums from a single platform without purchasing individual CDs or downloads. This makes it easier for users to discover new music and explore a broader range of genres and artists (Barata & Coelho, 2021; Mugisha, 2019).

Another advantage of streaming services is that they offer a more equitable revenue distribution to artists. In the past, the music industry was dominated by major record labels, which had significant control over the distribution and sale of music. This often resulted in artists

receiving only a small percentage of the revenue generated by their music. With streaming services, artists have greater control over their music and can receive a more fair share of the revenue generated by their work (Lozic, 2020). While many music enthusiasts still value physical media, such as CDs and vinyl records, it is clear that digital streaming services are the future of the music industry (Daniel, 2019).

Social media has also played a significant role in the music industry, providing musicians with a powerful tool for promoting music and engaging with fans (Jones, 2021). Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow artists to connect with fans directly, share updates and behind-the-scenes content, and build a loyal following. Social media also allows musicians to gather feedback from fans, which can help them refine their music and marketing strategies (McDonald, 2022).

Music distribution and social media are both critical components of commercial music. Effective distribution strategies help musicians reach a wider audience and increase revenue. At the same time, social media provides a powerful tool for building a brand, engaging with fans, and launching new artists to success (Allen, 2022; Cannon & Thomas, 2021).

Commercial Music Curriculum

Current best practices in writing a commercial music curriculum include staying informed on industry trends and emerging technologies to provide students with the skills to adapt to changes (Holt, 2019; Hui-Min & Bin, 2019). The curriculum should incorporate practical, hands-on experiences such as songwriting, production, courses on digital marketing, music promotion, and social media management, and performance opportunities to develop students' skills and prepare them for real-world experiences (Dorfman, (2022). Providing students with industry networking and mentorship opportunities can help them gain valuable experience and connections in the field. The curriculum should also emphasize the importance of entrepreneurship and business skills to help students succeed in a highly competitive industry. Assessing the curriculum regularly to ensure it remains relevant and practical is crucial to maintaining its quality and usefulness for students

(O'Hara, 2021). Regular assessment helps ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to the needs of the industry and allows educators to identify areas where students may be struggling and adjust the curriculum accordingly to improve student learning outcomes.

Commercial music curriculum best practices include courses focusing on music theory, music history, sight-singing, piano, and digital technology (Snodgrass, 2020). These classes provide students with a strong foundation in music fundamentals, helping them better understand commercial music's context and structure. With good music fundamentals, students will understand music better to perform, write, and record music with more detail and artistry.

The curriculum should also take a global perspective, reflecting the music industry's diverse and constantly evolving nature (Baym et al., 2021). Including courses on world music, music business practices in different countries, and cross-cultural collaborations can provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the global music landscape (Modeme, 2022). Offering opportunities for extra-curricular activities such as music clubs, ensembles, and performances can help students develop practical skills and build their portfolios.

Developing a comprehensive commercial music curriculum requires careful consideration of industry trends, emerging technologies, practical experience, music theory, digital technology, global perspectives, soft skills, and extra-curricular opportunities. By incorporating these elements, educators can prepare students for successful careers in the music industry.

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Q&A:

A BOOK, THE BIBLE, AND GOD'S PLAN: AN INTERVIEW

Linda Gray, Oral Roberts University

Key Words *mystery, God's plan, God's purpose, God's process, parables, Christian living*

Introduction

The Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education (The Journal) seeks to support Christian educators by providing a forum for an exchange of research, educational resources, and ideas in order to encourage excellent teaching for the benefit of the students. *The Journal's* mission for Christian educators is—in part—the following statement:

> Called by God, Christian educators allow their faith to influence (either directly or indirectly) all that they do in and out of the classroom. They transform their students by inspiring love for God and others and by stimulating intellectual curiosity and creativity. The ability to teach is a gift from God, and those who are truly called to teach have a desire to see learning take place (https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/sotl_ched/aimsandscope.html).

One such teacher answered the call and dedicated himself to a career in educating students in behavioral studies, the Bible, and guiding them to live a mature Christian life. Much has changed in U.S. culture and education, requiring teachers to adjust their methods of reaching

students who are markedly diverse and less biblically knowledgeable than their parents' generation. But through the decades, Christian educators still strive to demonstrate God's love through caring, patience, knowledge, and commitment, and in a Christian institution, they also seek to bring a Christian worldview to their students.

The Interview

Dr. Randall Feller has taught psychology at Oral Roberts University since 1999 and served as chair of the Behavioral Sciences Department at Oral Roberts University for 17 years. Dr. Feller was awarded tenure in 2004 and holds the rank of senior professor. His dedication to teaching and to his students has been recognized through *Who's Who among American Teachers* for 2002-2006 as well as five outstanding faculty member awards, including the Harold and Edna Paul Award for Outstanding Faculty Member for the entire University in 2013-2014. He has served on and/or chaired numerous faculty committees, received three outstanding service awards, and is also a lifetime member of Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society. He earned a B.A. from Oral Roberts University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Counseling from Oklahoma State University.

Question: Dr. Feller, briefly give us an overview/summary of your new book *Puzzles, Parables, and Paradox: Understanding the Mysteries of God's Kingdom.*

Dr. Feller: The focus of this book is to understand God's plan, his purpose, and his process through the mysteries of God, which are now being revealed to the saints. It specifically focuses on the "Mystery of Godliness," the "Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven," and the "Mystery of Christ in You, the Hope of Glory." It is designed to help the reader in a more clear, concise, and compelling way see how the entire Bible fits together and to have that knowledge help with more effective Christian living.

Question: I understand that you had been teaching a while when you came to realize that you wanted to write this book. What prompted you to decide to write the book?

Dr. Feller: The desire to write this book stems from having students from 145 different nations and so many diverse Christian backgrounds (Pentecostal, Charismatic, Non-Denominational, Ecumenical, Catholic, etc.), all with varying degrees of Biblical literacy. In order to facilitate integration of their faith with their studied disciplines, students need to know about God's Word and what they believe as a result. This is because you cannot integrate what you do not know. In effect, the motivation for this book was to give students a more solid foundation in Biblical knowledge and understanding. In other words, can they see how the whole Bible fits together and what that means for their own Christian walk of faith?

Question: The table of contents indicates that the book is divided into three segments: puzzles, parables, and paradox. What is the focus or theme of each of these?

Dr. Feller: Section 1, Puzzles, is about the mystery of Godliness and how God the Father brings everything in heaven and on earth, from the beginning of time to the end of time, to conform to his PLAN of having it all point to redemption—the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and what that means for all mankind.

> *So what is this book all about? It is about a tremendously creative God disguising his plan for the ages in a mystery and then doing everything in his power to help you understand the mystery of his kingdom. It is about the God of clarity, speaking through puzzles, parables, and paradox. It's about an omnipotent God purposely hiding the secrets of the universe in plain sight. It is about a loving God going to incredible lengths to show you the obvious. It is about relationship, about trust, and about love. Most of all, it is*

about choice. It is about choosing to become actively involved and understand more of the mystery of his kingdom and what he wants for your life. (excerpt from section 1: Puzzles, God's Plans)

Section 2, Parables, is about the mystery of the kingdom of heaven. It shows how Jesus, the Son of God, always speaks through parables to focus on the PURPOSE for his Father's plan, which is to establish a living, unshakable kingdom—a kingdom where God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven, a kingdom that will never end and that is not far off but is immediately at hand.

God the Father's plan was to have everything in heaven and on earth point to the Messiah: the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. So, when Jesus finally arrived here on this small planet, he pointed everything to the kingdom of heaven. If you want to know the purpose of God's amazing plan for the ages, all you need to do is look at the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus boldly proclaimed that it is all about establishing a kingdom—a living, unshakable kingdom that will never end—a kingdom where God's will is done on earth just as it is in heaven. If you are able to hear this without stumbling over it, Jesus himself says, "Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me" (Matthew 11:6). (excerpt from section 2: Parables, God's Purpose)

Section 3, Paradoxes, is about the mystery of Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that enables you to live out kingdom paradoxes so that you might become the PROCESS by which the kingdom is established and so that you might become faithful stewards of the mysteries of God.

What is the key to everyday practical Christian living? Just like the early disciples did, we learn that we have become servants "by the commission God gave [us] to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them, God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious

riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:25-27). We do so through the power of the Holy Spirit with which we are supposed to live out the paradoxes as well. "Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, 'The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, "here it is" or "there it is" because the kingdom of God is within you' (Luke 17:20-21). These paradoxes are supposed to be firmly embedded within each of us such that they overwhelm our old nature and flow out into our everyday behavior. (excerpt from Section 3 Paradox, God's Process)

Question: Who is your intended audience, teachers or students?

Dr. Feller: The intended audience is for all Christians seeking a deeper relationship with God. Even so, it is particularly targeted for the next generation to show how the entire Bible fits together in order to empower them to live effective Christian lives.

Question: What is the purpose of your book and/or what would you like readers to take away from it?

Dr. Feller: Not only would I like them to understand the mysteries and see not only how all of God's Word is uniquely fitted together, but also (towards the later portion of the book) the focus is on a roadmap for Christian living and a developmental model for Christian maturity. This is so that we can build up mature Christians in the faith.

Question: You mentioned that you have two other books in the works. Can you give us a brief introduction to each of them?

Dr. Feller: In chapter 19 of this book, I lay out a development model for Christian maturity, which is introduced in the first chapter of second Peter. The next book I am working on is designed to focus more specifically on that model with how to implement those

qualities in one's personal life. The third book that I have in mind will show how this eight-step developmental model aligns with the primary psychological models of therapy that clinical research shows actually work.

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REVIEWS

Professors as Teachers. By Steven M. Cahn. Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2022. 90 pp. ISBN 13: 978-1-6667-4638-9 (HARDCOVER) $30

Steven M. Cahn's book *Professors as Educators* presents the case that professors should be more than just researchers. He maintains that professors should push themselves to be genuine educators in their fields in order to inspire and equip their students and outlines what he believes to be the necessary qualities a professor needs to have as an exceptional educator. Cahn contends that for higher education to shift to this paradigm, certain changes must be made within the university system. Cahn proposes five change strategies:

- adding practicums to those seeking faculty appointments
- changing the faculty appointment process
- changing the evaluations of teachers
- changing the nature of tenure
- changing the way administration views teaching.

Steven Cahn opens his book by addressing the stigma often associated with being a professor—teaching. He claims that, for the most part, professors do not wish to be educators but rather researchers. Professors often seek positions that emphasize research to the detriment of teaching, and for those professors already teaching, the author states that many would like a reduced teaching load to accommodate their desire for more research opportunities. Later in the chapter, the author claims that teaching is the real work of the professor, yet does not provide much evidence to support the claim. On the other hand, much evidence is given for the claim that professors prefer to be researchers.

In the following chapter, "How Teachers Succeed" (chapter 2), Cahn discusses the qualities needed for professors to be exceptional educators. He argues that professors are effective as educators when they can motivate their class, organize their material, and present the content with clarity. He states that to motivate a class, professors should employ humor, storytelling, rapid-fire questioning techniques, and elements of drama and should take time to plan and organize their material clearly and logically so students can follow. Finally, all material should be presented with clarity of thought and delivery. While this list of traits is an admirable start when discussing effective pedagogy, it is far too simplistic. Effective pedagogy requires many more components that simply are not discussed in this chapter.

Cahn also discusses the role of a teacher within the class and university. In "A Teacher's Role" (chapter 6), Cahn accurately describes the professor's role as being a guide and an authoritative figure in the classroom and that the professor should seek to teach all students in the classroom, not just the gifted and talented. Curiously, though, Cahn appears out of touch when discussing professors engaging in romantic relationships with students. While Cahn advises against these types of relationships from a moral perspective, which is admirable, he fails to do so from a legal perspective. Title IX is not mentioned within the text, which is surprising since Title IX regulations have made it clear that if professors engage in these types of relationships, they could lose their positions at their respective universities.

After spending some time delineating what qualities faculty need to have to be effective educators, Cahn presents multiple proposals to move the emphasis of higher education from research to education. In chapter 3, "Learning to Teach," Cahn offers his first proposal—to insert practicums within graduate work that would emphasize teaching a class. He does specify that the practicums would only be offered to students who are interested in a full-time faculty position in the future. In the practicum, the graduate students would get practice teaching their respective content to each other and then would present feedback to their colleagues. The received feedback would then help each graduate student to improve as an educator within the classroom. While this is a commendable idea, it may not be practical to implement across all

disciplines. Some colleges and departments within universities may not have the appropriate faculty on staff to develop graduate students to be competent instructors, lecturers, and future full-time faculty members. Pedagogy is both an art and a science and takes years of practice to master. With this in mind, a consideration could be made for graduate students who are interested in faculty work to partner with education departments, which would expose these graduate students to the true principles of pedagogy and allow them to see how these principles can be implemented in their disciplines.

In "Appointments" (chapter 7), Cahn proposes his second change proposal to help shift the paradigm from research to education—that higher education institutions should emphasize teaching and pedagogical skill over research and department interests during the hiring process. By emphasizing pedagogical skills, universities can acquire and develop talented educators within the field. As Cahn states, this is in direct contrast to how most universities choose to hire faculty. In many cases, universities either seek candidates who are renowned researchers in their field or choose faculty members who can help existing faculty further their own research. Ideally, universities should look for faculty members who will bring both pedagogical skills and talent, as well as a fresh perspective on research. While Cahn is correct in his approach, I am not sure his generalizations apply to most universities across the country. Due to program structures, accreditation bodies, and state agencies, universities must be mindful that applicants must meet certain criteria to teach specific content areas effectively.

Cahn presents his third change proposal in chapter 3, "Evaluating Teaching." In this chapter, the author rightly states that for too long, faculty evaluations have been conducted by students, and universities have placed far too great an emphasis on how the students evaluate their instructors. Cahn provides ample evidence as to why this should not be the case. He proposes instead that faculty should evaluate each other in a peer-reviewed system. While this is an excellent idea, it is not fully formed. We cannot know for sure if the faculty evaluations themselves are not without bias unless evaluation systems have been put in place. These evaluation systems need to demonstrate reliability and validity, which can be done through the development of university-wide rubrics.

Cahn's fourth proposal appears in chapter 9, "Tenure," in which Cahn discusses two sides to tenure and acknowledges that the issue is divisive: whether to keep tenure or not. However, his proposal, surprisingly, does not have anything to do with whether to keep or discard tenure. Cahn's proposal works under the assumption that universities will keep tenure, which is slightly out of touch with current university trends as more universities are discarding tenure and moving towards lengthy contracts for senior professors. While his assumption may be less accurate in the last several years, the proposal that he gives has merit. Cahn proposes that tenure be granted to those professors who show a balance between research and teaching. With the current trends, Cahn's argument could be applied to say that faculty promotion of any kind should be holistically based. To be promoted, professors need to demonstrate both scholarship and instructional effectiveness. This proposal would also stress the importance of teaching to seasoned faculty members. By changing the promotion process to include effective pedagogy, current university professors would be encouraged to further develop their pedagogical skills in the classroom.

The fifth and final proposal put forth by Cahn is that for the paradigm to shift from an emphasis on research to more emphasis on teaching, the values of the university administration must change (chapter 10, "Administration"). For universities seeking to change their culture from an institution solely focused on research to one that also values teaching, Cahn advocates emphasizing instructional effectiveness in the interview process when searching for and hiring new administrative officials. He believes that universities that value teaching alongside administration and research and include such criteria in the interview process will garner new administrative officials who can change the university culture. As universities hire more teaching-focused administrators, the university's culture will shift to one focused on instructional effectiveness.

Cahn's premise of professors as educators is promising. While some elements of his work need more research and evidence, the overall idea of his work is noteworthy. It should be examined by any university seeking to improve the student experience.

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The Flourishing Student: A Practical Guide to Promote Mental Fitness, Well-being and Resilience in Higher Education (2nd ed.). By Fabienne Vailes. Eugene, OR: Practical Inspiration Publishing, 2022. 258 pp. ISBN 13: 978-1-7886-0333-1 (PAPERBACK) $28

In her book, author Fabienne Vailes voices an observation echoed throughout the halls of every university: students today are not the same as in previous years. Why? Vailes answers by offering a list of reasons why today's students differ from those a decade ago. After returning from a ten-year break from academia, Vailes noted a great difference in the stress and anxiety of students, as well as their difficulty in managing the same workload accomplished by students a decade previously. Vailes helps her readers understand the changing landscape of today's students and offers practical steps to walk students through their difficulties and to help them flourish in the higher education environment.

The book is divided into thirds. The first part describes the contributors to students' stress and inability to manage their studies. Vailes focuses on the idea of well-being and factors that prevent students from attaining mental well-being. The second portion focuses on the implications for higher educational institutions, what that entails for faculty and staff, and how to understand and support students—thereby enabling the students to flourish. The book's last portion is dedicated to implementation, a call to change the way higher education institutions view the system to best create a flourishing environment for all stakeholders.

In the first section of the book, Vailes points out COVID-19 and the social isolation of the lockdown, anxiety about the future, financial worries, parental expectations, fear of failure, transitioning to independent living, social media, overparenting, and poor health habits are all stressors in college and university students' lives. According to Vailes, students are overwhelmed and are afraid to get help for their anxiety due to the negative connotation associated with mental health issues. As students are overwhelmed with the changes and expectations

in their lives, they respond to the stress with "fight, flight, or freeze" (p. 42). The majority of students withdraw from attending class or do not turn in assignments because they feel overwhelmed. Vailes introduces the idea of challenging students to reframe stress by using stress as a good motivator. Though frequently given a bad connotation, stress can be viewed as a means to change students' mindsets and work WITH the stress to achieve their goals. Neuroplasticity, the ability to reshape the mind, is a key element to changing the negative mindset and gaining a positive outlook in order to overcome the stress and anxiety students encounter.

The second portion of the book is dedicated to the idea that a new model—a whole-person model—is needed when addressing the students. The mind, body, and spiritual, emotional, and cognitive parts of a person need to be addressed as interactive components of a person, rather than compartmentalized areas. Vailes' "Flourishing Student Model" gives the readers a visual image of flowers transplanted into a new soil or ecosystem—the higher education institution. The "soil" is the higher educational institution's faculty and staff. Each faculty and staff member needs to be aware of student needs in order to provide enrichment, support for the students to thrive, and a physically, psychologically, and emotionally safe environment. However, Vailes does place responsibility upon the student to be aware of their needs and reach out to find elements needed for growth. Vailes continues her flower model to explain that the "roots" of the plant are the memories and past experiences of the students, which inform their reactions and choices in the new environment. The "stem" represents the student's mindset with the growth mindset being key to the student's ability to develop and learn. The "head of the flower" is composed of five health concepts—cognitive, emotional, physical, spiritual, and social—and five skills—flexibility, openness, curiosity, resilience, and language usage. Each plant is unique, as is each student, and each grows at different stages and has different requirements for growth.

The final third of the book is devoted to implementing the practices students need in order to flourish. The self-care of the faculty and staff is addressed first. If the faculty and staff are not healthy, they cannot care for the students without suffering themselves, and the author gives

insights on how to talk with and guide students in a positive manner. She then addresses how she would like higher educational institutions to adopt the Flourishing Student Model but do so by having each part of the institution adopt the practices and take ownership, rather than by a top-down model. Vailes encourages a growth mindset when adopting the model and keeps the idea of the school as an ecosystem. Creating a mechanized system is an easy solution, but the system approach—understanding that there is more than the surface issue—is the best way to serve the students. By looking at patterns and trends and identifying underlying assumptions and beliefs, faculty and staff can better understand their students and can best encourage them and communicate to them in a way that helps them grow and flourish.

The Flourishing Student is an excellent tool for those in higher education who seek to understand the students of today, learn how best to encourage them, and help them succeed in a university setting. Vailes mentions that the needs and characteristics of higher education students change every decade, and this book will help address the needs of the students today. If the growth mindset espoused in the book is embraced, the concepts models given in this book will enable the reader to adapt to the next decade of students as well. The book's final section does not give case studies of a higher education institution adopting the Flourishing Student Model, so without practical applications to view, it is rather difficult to envision this model being adopted by institutions. As it is, however, this model can help instructors and staff who desire to help and equip their students for a successful future.

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Learning to Be Learners: A Mathegenical Approach to Theological Education. By Les Ball. Sydney College of Divinity, 2022. 236 pp. ISBN 13: 978-1-9257-3031-9 (PAPERBACK) $45

Professor Les Ball's book titled *Learning to Be Learners* epitomizes his goal to make students become learners through his particular methodology, which he calls "mathegenical." He derives this nomenclature from *Koine* Greek terms *mathetes* (learner or disciple) and *ginomai* (to produce or generate) (p. 156). The process includes the idea that a "learner" is one who learns how to learn, a life-long learner. The focus of "mathegesis" must include concepts like motivation, facilitation, consolidation, and creation (p.157), highlighting "new and lasting ways of learning, which the learner will embrace as an 'independently motivated inquiry and production'" of learning (p. 157). Ball decries the more common and traditional educational methodology, primarily an effort to present foundational information, similar to reading a book in a lecture format, which is a fragmented approach at best. His goal is to identify the weaknesses of this traditional delivery of education and training—its lack of creativity and little use of modern methods—and to promote the integration of ministry training and academic knowledge, especially using the latest electronic means.

The initial portion of Ball's book involves a rather complete summary of the history of theological education beginning with the first colleges and schools worldwide. This history reveals the development of the basic dominant hermeneutical principles that became standard from the Middle Ages to modern times. However, Ball's critique of modern theological education lacks an appreciation of the philosophical methodology that has long been a standard approach for theological training. It must be included not only in the curriculum but also in the technique for developing a theology for use not only by learners but also by parishioners. Ball does not wish to eliminate all traditional subjects used in theological curriculum, but it should certainly not be the only content for ministerial training.

One feature of Ball's book that is extremely helpful to students and teachers is the "Critical Reflection," which appears near the end of each chapter. For example, in chapter seven, "Focus on Learning—A Mathegenical Approach," the Critical Reflection is "What mathegenical approaches do/could you employ in teaching your program?" (p. 157). Ball tries to match teaching "methods to stages and kinds of learning" (p. 208). His goal is to embrace "as many of the constructive components of various approaches as it can encompass . . . to produce a learner with a passion to learn, the skills to expand that learning, and the habits of learning as a productive ongoing way of life" (p. 209).

With our experience of instructional and educative creativity over 30 years of professional college-level teaching, we realize that multiple life and character factors bring a student to the point Ball seeks to develop. Motivation is likely the strongest factor in this individual pursuit, though Ball spends less time on this aspect of development. The educational technique certainly contributes a vital element, but the student's mental, personal, and strength of character are influenced in many ways. If the strongest blame for the lack of development of the student is the instructional technique, the teacher will always be at "fault" if the student does not become a lifelong learner.

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