

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

---

Manuscript 1119

---

## Integration of Faith and Learning in Online Programs: A Case Study of Online Curriculum at a Christian University

Van Hnuai Kim

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/sotl\\_ched](https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/sotl_ched)



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

---

# INTEGRATION OF

## FAITH AND LEARNING IN ONLINE PROGRAMS: A CASE STUDY OF ONLINE CURRICULUM AT A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Van Hnuai Kim, Oral Roberts University

**Key Words** *Faith-learning integration, biblical perspective, Christian worldview, Christian values, Christian ethics, online courses*

### **Abstract**

Faith-learning integration (FLI), an oft-stated goal of Christian higher education, is neither easy to define nor practice. Existing literature is not clear on how the fusion of faith and learning is taking place in the classroom, either in person or online. This study examines the two online programs of a Christian university in the Midwest of the United States. The purpose of the study is to describe some of the ways FLI is implemented in the two selected online programs, to gain a better understanding of FLI, and to suggest ways to implement FLI throughout the whole program effectively. The two online programs utilize discussion forums, assignments, weekly updates, online chapel, faith/life coaches, and online student portal to carry out FLI. Findings suggest that identifying elements of FLI and consistently integrating more elements of FLI into online course design will enhance FLI. Dialogue among program administrators, course writers, and faculty can make explicit the responsibilities of each and their assumptions regarding the implementation of FLI.

## Introduction

“**B**ringing the Christian faith to influence our learning is the most distinctive task of Christian thinking—always was, is now, always will be” (Dockery, 2012, p. 20). Faith-learning integration (FLI), which began as a movement against the secularization of American colleges, has become the primary goal (Esqueda, 2014; Sherr, Huff, & Curran, 2007) and the distinctive hallmark of Christian higher education (Dockery, 2008; Hasker, 1992; Holmes, 1987; Litfin, 2004; VanZanten, 2011). Although the comprehensive study of Joeckel and Chesnes (2012) found that member institutions of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) are succeeding in FLI, Weeks and Isaak (2012) point out the need for working on clear, uniform definitions of FLI in various disciplines as well as strategies for implementation. Schreiner (2014) similarly notes the unfinished task, stating, “Integration is often both challenging to define as well as to practice” (p. 89). After four decades of research and writing, it is still not completely clear how integration happens in the academy (Kaak, 2016). This study examines how FLI is carried out in one university’s online programs.

## Literature Review

### Background of FLI in Christian Higher Education

Although FLI has been emphasized since 1971 when the Christian College Consortium was consolidated (Glanzer, 2008), there is no consensus on its precise definition (Badley, 2009; Cosgrove, 2015; Glanzer, 2008; Moroney, 2014). Badley (2009) suggest that attempting to reach a consensus on the core definition of FLI could be futile, as the complexity and diversity of the FLI construct, the multiplicity of integrators, and the differences in worldview within Christianity make it almost impossible to reach that goal. Bailey (2012) also notes that the concept of FLI in the literature is not clear or well-defined. Glanzer (2008) proposes discarding the term FLI as it can lead to the perception that the Christian community only adds faith to the learning produced by the secular world. Instead, he proposes the use of “creation and

redemption of scholarship” (Glanzer, 2008, p.43) in place of FLI. Similarly, other scholars have created new terminologies in place of FLI: “integration of faith and professional practice” (Morton, 2004, p. 240); “faith-based learning” (Zylstra, 1997, p. 1); and “the creation and redemption of learners and learning” (Ream & Glanzer, 2013, p. 53). Others have asked for a more explicit and definite language of “integration of faith and academic discipline” (Cooper, 1999; Miller, 2006).

Despite the lack of agreement on its definition and models, FLI has become an educational mantra for faith-based, mission-driven institutions, including evangelical colleges. The mission statement of the CCCU (2016) addresses FLI: “To advance the cause of Christ-centered higher education and to help our institutions transform the lives of students by faithfully relating scholarship and service to biblical tradition” (para. 1). In its simplest form, FLI can be defined as “the relating of one’s biblical worldview to the learning that is taking place in the academic or cultural arenas” (Cosgrove, 2006, p. 54). Hasker (2011) defines FLI by emphasizing the integral connection between faith and learning: “Integratcion is concerned with the integral relationships between faith and knowledge, the relationships which inherently exist between the content of faith and the subject-matter of this or that discipline; such connections do not have to be invented or manufactured” (p. 109). FLI happens only “when an assumption or concern can be shown to be internally shared by both the Judeo-Christian vision and an academic discipline” (Heie & Wolfe, 1987, p. 5). According to Holmes (1987), “integration is concerned not so much with attack and defense as with positive contributions of human learning to an understanding of the faith and the development of a Christian worldview” (p. 46).

Cosgrove (2015) traces seven models of FLI in his study: (a) worldview approach, (b) compatibility approach, (c) modeling approach, (d) balancing assumptions approach, (e) ethical dialogue approach, (f) reconstructionist approach, and (g) no integration approach. The models or approaches adopted may differ in institutions based on the discipline of study and theological and philosophical commitments of institutions.

## Learning and Christian Faith

Learning and Christian faith have an integral relationship, and one cannot yield an optimal result without the other. Christ's Lordship and redemption provide the rationale for Christian higher education (Dockery, 2008; Esqueda, 2014; Plantinga, 2002); there can be no Christian university if the faith component is lacking (Plantinga, 2002). Failure to actively integrate faith into all learning will inevitably lead to "the weakening or the collapse of Christian vitality" (Esqueda, 2014, p. 98). Noll (2011) in his landmark book, *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*, asserts that Jesus Christ must be the center of the life of the mind and that evangelical Christians should be the leading influence in learning and academia. Gaebelein (1968) asserted that the integration of faith and learning should be founded on God and the pattern of his truth in all creation. Claerbaut (2004) calls this making God the "independent variable" in all learning (p. 98). It is the task of Christian educators to bring the Lordship of Jesus Christ into their disciplines by incorporating a biblical worldview into their disciplines. All disciplines are his, as all truth is God's truth (Esqueda, 2014). It is a continuous challenge for Christian educators to provide students with a sense of coherence in their studies (Plantinga, 2002) and the interconnectedness of biblical worldview with what they are learning in the academic or cultural arena (Cosgrove, 2006).

## The Need for Christ-centered Higher Education

Dockery (2012) contends that we need faithful, Christ-centered higher education more than ever before to prepare a generation of engaged students as a means for establishing the Christian presence in a post-Christian world. This Christ-centered education includes fostering a Christian worldview within the students toward their respective disciplines (Cosgrove, 2006; Ringenberg, 2006). It also entails training students to think with the mind of Christ, or to "think Christianly" (Dockery, 2012, p. 4) as they engage with the ideas of history and issues of our day (Dockery, 2012). This Christian thinking can transform the way one views all of life, including family, business, education, government, and society. Failing to do so can result in the next

generation of Christians who are underequipped for faithful thinking and service. It will take serious Christian thinking, what Dockery (2012) calls “tough-minded thinking,” (p. 4) to interpret and engage an ever-changing culture. The need for Christian higher education “to prepare a generation of Christians to think Christianly, to engage the academy and culture, to serve society, and to renew the connection with the Church and its mission” (Dockery, 2016, p. 116) has become more important than ever in the 21st century, where there is such an emphasis on diversity and plurality.

## **Spiritual Formation and Faith Development of College Students**

A mission-driven institution that maintains a holistic view of truth and personhood cannot ignore the spiritual development of its students (VanZanten, 2011). Fowler (1981) concluded that young adulthood is a critical time for faith development, which is often triggered by crises that challenge the young adult to examine his or her faith critically. The preliminary findings of Holcomb (2004), who based his study of faith development of college students on Fowler’s theory, agrees that crisis is a crucial driver for faith development. However, it does not invariably increase spiritual or psychological growth. The right amount of support and challenge is required for faith development (Holcomb, 2004). Holcomb and Nonneman (2004) recommend Christian universities create “environments that foster an appropriate mix of challenge balanced with communal support” (p. 102) as a way to provide circumstances “most conducive to developing a higher level of cognitive, social and spiritual functioning” (p. 102). Creating a greenhouse climate on campus can provide the balance of support and challenge needed (Holcomb, 2004). Moreover, students should be exposed to a diversity of culture, thought, theology, epistemology, and ideology as lack of diversity of thought, and open-ended exploration can stunt spiritual growth (Joeckel & Chenses, 2012).

## **Integration of Faith and Learning in the Online Environment**

According to the Babson Survey Research Group, the growth in online enrollment has superseded higher education enrollment in general (Allen, Seaman, Poulin, & Straut, 2016). The number of students taking some online courses in 2015 was 3.9%, up from 3.7% in 2014 (Allen et al., 2016) as online learning, in general, is experiencing its 13th consecutive year of growth. Sixty-three percent of chief academic leaders and 77.1% of institutions offering distance education indicate that online learning is vitally important to their long-term strategy (Allen et al., 2016). The rise in online enrollment and popularity of online programs call for Christian educators to carry out the faith-based mission of their institutions by providing spiritual development within the online environment, just as done in onsite classes (Castleman, 2013).

In online programs, well-designed courses that promote FLI are crucial as learners mainly interact with the course materials. It is the course design that establishes the themes for discussion, determines the epistemological framework to which students will be exposed, and shapes the overall learning experience (Quinn, Foote, & Williams, 2012). While some studies have been conducted on faculty perspectives of FLI and program level FLI (Miller, 2006; Morton, 2004; Sites, Garzon, Milacci, & Boothe, 2009), fewer studies have dealt with FLI in an online environment (Castleman, 2013; Norris, 2015; Quin et al., 2012; Sorberg, 2015).

### **Methods and Materials**

The purpose of this study was to examine how faith is integrated into the online programs of a Christian university in the Midwest. One research question guided the study: How is faith integrated with the curriculum in the online programs? This was a single case study (Creswell, 2013; Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012; Yin, 2003) that focuses on the course contents and everything that was included in the curriculum of the two programs under study.

All procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board. The Director of Online and Lifelong Learning Department granted access to the courses of both programs, and the course writers agreed to be interviewed.

## **Sampling and Participants**

When this study began, the university offered 15 online programs, more than could be examined for this study. Programs with obvious Christian content, such as church ministry and biblical literature, were excluded, along with programs with more affinity to the Christian faith, such as international business and ministry, caregiving, and counseling. Programs still in the process of being fully developed were not considered. In light of this, two programs were selected: business administration and psychology. Business administration is practice-oriented with potential for dialogue on ethical issues and underlying philosophical and faith assumptions. Psychology is theory-laden, with practical applications in counseling, social science, and education. Given their content and broad interest, I chose to review how Christian faith is intertwined with the concepts and theories of the business administration and psychology degree programs. The online program in business administration program includes 10 major courses and three cognates. The online psychology program includes seven major courses and two electives.

## **Procedures**

I was granted access to the faculty guides of the online psychology program and the master templates of the online business administration courses. The faculty guide is a Word document that contains all the information related to the course, including syllabus, calendar, course audit information, course copy, assessments, and other learning resources. After the course has been designed and approved, it is then built into a master template available in the learning management system. This template includes all the information that students see when they are enrolled in a class, including the syllabus, readings, assignments, discussion forums, and quizzes. Whenever a course needs



to go live, a copy of the master template is made and published for a student each semester. For both programs, I examined the above-mentioned resources.

Two course writers, one from each of the two programs, were interviewed. The course writers are subject matter experts who write online courses following the guidelines set up by the university's Online and Lifelong Learning Department. There are guidelines for a course writer on how to conduct a precourse quality assurance audit of the course, in cooperation with the instructional designer and chair, to ensure it meets credit hour requirements, student engagement needs, and interactivity standards. At the completion of course writing, the writer of the course conducts a course audit, which is verified by the instructional designer and finally approved by the dean. I interviewed two course writers using open-ended questions to understand their rationale for the course designs. The use of open-ended questions served to facilitate the process of corroboration (Creswell, 2013; Gay et al., 2012).

Based on a broad definition of FLI, the creation of a checklist is guided by a rubric for assessment of FLI by faculty (Halsmer, Roso, & Odom, 2016) and Moroney's (2014) categories of approaches to faith and learning: (a) FLI approaches, (b) Christian worldview approaches, and (c) practice and formation approaches. While the focus of the integrative approach relates the content of the Christian faith to the content of the discipline being studied, the focus of the worldview approach considers the subject matter from a Christian perspective (Moroney, 2014). The practice and formation approach emphasizes forming faithful disciples through particular classroom activities and assignments (Moroney, 2014). Although this study focuses primarily on FLI and Christian worldview approaches, it is inclusive of the third approach as well, by looking for ways in which the online programs foster the spiritual or faith development of the students so that Christian online education includes educating the head, heart, and hand (Moroney, 2014). A checklist made up of the following questions guided the course review part of the study:

1. Does the course discuss the relevancy of Christianity and the Bible to learning?

2. Does the course use biblical illustrations and examples?
3. Does the course compare and contrast academic issues from a biblical perspective?
4. Does the course present biblical truths both implicitly and explicitly?
5. Does the course use biblical principles to address current issues within an academic subject?
6. Does the course address the biblical morality or ethics in the related profession?
7. Does the course include practical application of Christian truth in related profession?
8. Does the course promote service to others through related profession?
9. Does the course have the instructor praying for students?
10. Does the course have the instructor sharing their personal testimony?
11. Does the instructor serve as a role model?
12. Does the course include the integrated reflection paper?
13. Does the course have an online devotional?
14. Does the course have a weekly update with encouragement from the instructor?
15. Does the course have anything related to the Christian faith?

## **Data Gathering and Analysis**

I carefully read through each component of every course of the two programs and the university's website, using the checklist to determine the presence of any of these elements of FLI. I recorded the presence of any FLI, along with the course component in which it appeared.

The course review was followed by the interviews. After an interview was scheduled, one course writer found it more convenient to respond to the interview questions by email. The interview with the second course writer was conducted via videoconference as the participant was in another country at the time of the interview. I asked about the approaches used in integrating faith with learning in their courses, the rationale for their courses, and how a Christian worldview affected their choice of reading requirements, assignments, and

online discussions. Other questions addressed how the course writers incorporated biblical values in their discipline, how they promoted biblical morality or ethics in dealing with current issues in their discipline, and any challenges in designing the course from a biblical perspective.

I analyzed both interviews using the data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2013). The email response served as the transcription of one interview, and I transcribed the recorded interview conducted by videoconference. I read through text data and wrote memos in order to understand the whole database (Creswell, 2013). The text was then divided into segments of information and labeled with codes. These codes were placed in categories that were clustered into themes. I conducted a member check by emailing the interview transcriptions and preliminary results of the data collection to the participants for review.

The analysis of FLI in the courses and the interviews with course writers provided two sources of data for triangulation (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2003). The results from curriculum review were combined with the themes from the interviews to obtain an understanding of how the university integrated faith with learning in these online programs.

## Results

The review included a total of nine major and elective courses in the psychology program and 13 major and cognate courses in the business administration program. Results from the psychology program's curriculum reviews are displayed in Table 1, and results from the business administration curriculum reviews are displayed in Table 2. Each element of the checklist is represented by an "X" in the table, the number of "X's" under a section indicating the frequency of the appearance of an element of FLI seen in that category. For example, three "X's" under a course discussion indicate three discussion forum questions with an element of FLI.

The appearance of elements of FLI in almost all statements of program outcomes or course goals reveal the university's emphasis on intentionally including the faith element into the course. One of the program outcomes of psychology is "Integrate Christian faith systems

with the values of psychology to enhance the individual’s ability to impact the general psychological knowledge base as well as the overall field of psychology.” “Identify appropriate business behaviors for Christian business practitioners” is a program outcome for business administration. One course writer explained that program outcomes, course goals, and course objectives provide the rationale for the course, some of which are in line with biblical or faith elements. Most courses have faith and spiritual development as one of their student learning outcomes.

Course	Program Outcomes	Course Goals	Student Learning Outcomes	Reading/ Learning Activities	Discussions	Projects
Principles of Psychology	X	X	XXXX		XX	
Physiological Psychology	X		XXX			XX
Psychology of Personality Development	X		XXX	XXXX	XX	XXXX
History & Systems of Psychology	X	X	XX		X	
Senior Paper	X		X			
Experimental Psychology Lecture & Lab	X		XX			
Senior Paper Foundation	X		X			
Research Design & Analysis	X		X			
Developmental Psychology		X	XXX		XX	

Table 1: *FLI Found in the Psychology and Business Administration Courses Online*

*Note.* Each “X” indicates the presence of an element of FLI.

In psychology, five out of nine courses have discussion forums and projects with Christian components. However, the other four courses

have no assignment, reading, or project related to the Christian faith—although FLI is stated in the program outcomes and student learning outcomes. In business administration, only seven out of thirteen courses have integrated FLI assignments. However, the personal financial planning course has as many as seven discussion forums devoted to discussing business principles and issues from a biblical perspective. Similarly, business seminar has five learning activities/readings and five forums addressing FLI.

Course	Program Outcomes	Course Goals	Student Learning Outcomes	Reading/ Learning Activities	Discussions
Principles of Financial Accounting	XX	X	X		
Principles of Financial/ Management Accounting II		XX	XX		
Qualitative Analysis		XX	X		
Business Law I	X	XXXXX	XXXX		
Business Law II	X	XXXXX	XXXX		
Business Seminar		XXXXX	XXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX
Principles of Marketing			XXX	XX	XX
Principles of Management		X	XXX		
Seminar & Senior Paper		XXX			
Principles of Economics I	X	X	XXXX		X
Principles of Economics II	X	X	XX		X
Financial Management	X	X	XXX		X
Personal Financial Planning	X	XXXXX	XXXX		XXXXXXX

Table 2: *FLI Found in the Business Administration Courses Online*  
*Note.* Each “X” indicates the presence of an element of FLI.

The issue of Christian worldview also appears in the reading requirements, forums and projects. One project in the history of psychology course is as follows:

Review what you have learned about psychology in this unit's readings. Additionally, read the material on a Christian worldview. Write an essay from a scientific standpoint that describes to what degree that psychobiology and facets of a Christian worldview compliment or contradict one another. As you write your paper, connect the individual's responses to the ideas and concepts outlined in your textbook.

The reading requirements in the psychology of personality development course also has references to Christian worldview, including readings such as "Toward a Biblical Christian View of Personality Development," "Biblical Worldview Truths," and "Reconceiving Personality Theory from a Catholic Christian Perspective."

Discussion forums in business administration courses aim at developing Christian ethics. Questions included the following:

1. In your opinion, what is the best way to deal with monopoly power problem?
2. Do you advocate antitrust law or regulations?
3. How might Christian ethics relate to finding solutions to these problems?
4. According to Keynes, can the private sector always remove the economy from a recessionary gap?
5. What would be the solution from a Christian perspective regarding people who cannot afford medical care? Explain your answer.

There are a total of 15 forums and projects (seven in business administration and eight in psychology) that integrate a biblical perspective into the discipline.

Psychology takes a holistic approach to FLI in the curriculum. One course writer said,

I use a holistic approach. In other words, the course content, delivery, peer interactions, and outcomes,

to name a few, should all align with the mission and vision of Christ as found in Scripture. For example, let's consider course content. Psychology is the study of thought and behavior. An integration of faith and learning first requires an understanding of what the Scripture states concerning thought and behavior. All other contributions are viewed in light of Scripture and should be allowed to dialogue with Scripture.

One course writer indicated that it was mandated by the online department to include the faith element in about 5% of the assignments of each course. However, some courses have more than 5% of faith element assignments, while others have no faith element at all. Much of the faith integration takes place in the discussion forum with open-ended questions that encourage more in-depth dialogue and reflection. One course writer commented that a good instructor could provide extra Christian worldview resources that are not included in the official curriculum.

But you have very good instructors because you have to understand that the faculty or the course writer is not always the one teaching the course. Yes, that happens a lot. So you have good instructors who get assigned to teach courses they didn't write. But they are really, really good at providing the extra resources, extra Christian worldview resources. So, it's really up to the instructor.

The interview responses revealed the focus on developing Christian values. One course writer reported promoting integrity, transparency, hard work, critical thinking, dialogue, listening to competing views and responding to them. Current issues are discussed in the forum: "... so finding those current issues and then allowing students to talk about them but from a biblical perspective. What does the Bible say about this specific issue? ... that's a great activity to prepare students for the work field."

However, there is also a need to have balance in FLI.

... we need to be able to balance between Christian worldview, ... but also not forgetting that they are in

the world, they are not of the world, but they are in the world and how do we make sure that they are well-equipped, to be competitive, and to be successful and impactful in their fields.

Weekly update emails from the instructor were useful in providing the teaching presence as well as encouragement and spiritual development as they include encouraging Bible verses (Babyak, 2015; Forrest & Lamport, 2013; Tweedell & Fleming, 2013). One course writer stated that the faculty is encouraged to pray for the students (Babyak, 2015; Forrest & Lamport, 2013; White, 2006). Each course begins with a forum for introducing oneself as a means to create an online community for providing the social presence and a sense of belonging (Babyak, 2015; Tweedell & Fleming, 2013). In the business administration program, one discussion forum was designated as “Spiritual Growth, Prayer, and Praise” where students could share their spiritual experiences, prayer request, and praise reports.

## Discussion

The university’s online programs use a variety of ways to foster the faith or spiritual development of the students. However, there are some courses with FLI stated in the program outcomes, course goals, and student learning outcomes, but nothing appears in the readings, forums, or assignments. The assumption seems to be that other required courses in the program and online resources provide a foundation in FLI and that students would make the connection between Christian faith and the knowledge of the discipline on their own. The general education portion of the online psychology program contains nine hours (out of 120 hours), which include Introduction to Whole Person Education, Spirit-Empowered Living I & II, and Biblical Engagement I & II. The business administration program requires 12 hours in general education out of 128 hours required in the degree: Whole Person Assessment, Biblical Literature 110, Biblical Literature 120, Spirit-Empowered Living, and Christian Worldview and Culture. This aligns with one of three criteria listed by Ream, Beaty, and Lyon (2004), which states that the core curriculum of a university must include religious courses that support its religious identity in order to be



considered intentionally religious. By providing biblical courses as part of the general education curriculum, this university assumes that online students are receiving sufficient grounding in the biblical perspective needed for integrating faith with the knowledge of their discipline.

Moreover, the university has developed a model of a “spiritual development pathway” that integrates faith and learning out of life contexts, personal framework, and academic disciplines. The instructors are encouraged to use it as the “intended curriculum,” in teaching the “official curriculum,” as seen in the learning management system. The instructors are also encouraged to engage students as faith/life coaches (Director of Online and Lifelong Learning, personal communication, May 21, 2018).

Online students have “success coaches” assigned to them to help them with non- curricular issues. The Online and Lifelong Learning Department has also created an online student portal with fitness and faith postings to care for students’ overall development as a whole person. This portal was extended to a mobile app in January of 2018 to increase accessibility (Director of Online and Lifelong Learning, personal communication, May 22, 2018). Video recordings of chapel services are also made available for all students.

## **Recommendations for Practice and Research**

Though FLI can be an elusive concept (Badley, 2009), Christian institutions of higher education can determine the extent to which FLI permeates their online programs by reviewing these programs using a predetermined list of FLI elements. Dialogue among program administrators, course writers, and faculty can make explicit the responsibilities of each and their assumptions regarding the implementation of FLI.

Recommendations for further research include expanding the review to a greater number of programs and to programs in other disciplines. A study that investigates the presence of specific types or elements of FLI in course components would yield a more detailed understanding of FLI implementation. An examination of online courses in progress or completed could provide insight into FLI initiated by an instructor who is not part of the course

structure. Likewise, an examination of responses to FLI assignments and discussions could provide insight to student engagement and understanding.

## Conclusion

True to the university's mission, the two online programs studied use the curriculum, online chapel, faith/life coaches, success coaches, and an online student portal to integrate faith and learning intentionally. Weekly updates and online threaded discussions are the primary means of providing spiritual nurturing and developing the Christian mind, which are the primary goals of Christian higher education. It is clear that the two online programs reviewed for this study implemented best practices of FLI and spiritual formation to some extent. However, students taking online courses should be given more opportunities to relate their knowledge of the Christian faith to their knowledge of the discipline. This can be done by consistently weaving in more elements of FLI into online course design. I hope that this study contributes to the existing FLI literature by its description of a Christian university's online programs' FLI implementation and by shedding light on the need for consistency in FLI efforts.

## REFERENCES

- Allen, I. E., Seaman, J., Poulin, R., & Straut, T. T. (2016). *Online report card: Tracking online education in the United States*: Babson Survey and Research Group and Quahog Research Group, LLC.
- Babiyak, A. T. (2015). A teaching strategy for a Christian virtual environment. *Journal of Research on Christian Education, 24*, 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2015.1008080>
- Badley, K. (2009). Clarifying “faith-learning integration”: Essentially contested concepts. *Journal of Education and Christian Belief, 13*(1), 7–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/205699710901300103>

- Bailey, K. G. D. (2012). Faith-learning integration, critical thinking skills, and student development in Christian education. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 21, 153–173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656219.2012.698831>
- Castleman, C. D. (2013). *Perceptions of faith integration online versus onsite in Christian higher education* (Publication No. 3557801) [Doctoral dissertation, Capella University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Claerbaut, D. (2004). *Faith and learning on the edge: A bold new look at religion in Christian higher education*. Zondervan.
- Cooper, M. V. (1999). Faculty perspectives on the integration of faith and academic discipline in southern Baptist higher education. *Religious Education*, 94(4), 380–395.
- Cosgrove, M. B. (2006). *Foundations of Christian thought: Faith, learning, and the Christian worldview*. Kregel Academic.
- Cosgrove, P. B. (2015). Variation on a theme: Convergent thinking and the integration of faith and learning. *Christian Higher Education*, 14(4), 229–243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2015.1049756>.
- Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (2016). *Our work and mission*. Retrieved from <https://www.cccu.org/about/#heading-our-work-and-mission-0>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among the five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Dockery, D. S. (2008). *Renewing minds: Serving church and society through Christian higher education* (Rev. ed.). B&H Academic.
- Dockery, D. S. (2012). Introduction-faith and learning: Foundational commitments. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Faith and learning: A handbook for Christian higher education*. B&H Publishing Group.
- Dockery, D. S. (2016). Toward a future for Christian higher education: Learning from the past, looking to the future. *Christian Higher Education*, 15(1-2), 115–119. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2016.1107349>
- Esqueda, O. J. (2014). Biblical worldview: The Christian higher education foundation for learning. *Christian Higher Education*, 13(2), 91–100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1536375.2014.872495>

- Forrest, B. K., & Lampont, M. K. (2013). Modeling spiritual formation from a distance: Paul's formation transactions with the Roman Christians. *Christian Education Journal*, 3(1), 110–124.
- Fowler, J. W. (1981). *Stages of faith: The psychology of human development and the quest for meaning*. Harper & Row.
- Gaebelein, F. E. (1968). *The pattern of God's truth: The integration of faith and learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. W. (2012). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application* (10th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Glanzer, P. L. (2008). Why we should discard the integration of faith and learning: Rearticulating the mission of the Christian scholar. *Journal of Education & Christian Belief*, 12(1), 41–51.
- Halsmer, D., Roso, C., & Odom, P. W. (2016). Relating Christian faith to physics for scientists and engineers. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for Christians in Higher Education*, 7(1), 25–37.
- Hasker, W. (1992). Faith-learning integration: An overview. *Christian Scholar's Review*, 21(3), 234–248.
- Hasker, W. (2011). Faith-learning integration: An overview. In D. King (Ed.), *Taking every thought captive: Forty years of the of the Christian Scholar's Review*. Abilene Christian University Press.
- Heie, H., & Wolfe, D. L. (Eds.). (1987). *The reality of Christian learning: Strategies for faith-discipline integration*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Holcomb, G. L. (2004). *Faithful change: Exploring the faith development of students who attend Christian liberal arts institutions* (Publication No. 3158250) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Holcomb, G. L., & Nonneman, A. J. (2004). Faithful change: Exploring and assessing faith development in Christian liberal arts undergraduates. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 122, 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.112>
- Holmes, A. F. (1987). *The idea of a Christian college* (Rev. ed.). Eerdmans.

- Joekel, S., & Chesnes, T. (2012). *The Christian college phenomenon: Inside America's fastest growing institutions of higher learning*. Abilene Christian University Press.
- Kaak, P. (2016). Academic faith integration: Introduction to a new section within Christian higher education. *Christian Higher Education, 15*(4), 189–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2016.1187988>
- Litfin, D. (2004). *Conceiving the Christian college*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Miller, D. J. (2006). *Keeping faith with the mission: A case study of faith and learning integration in graduate programs at George Fox University* (Publication No. 3215154 ) [Doctoral dissertation, George Fox University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Moroney, S. (2014). Where faith and learning intersect: Re-mapping the contemporary terrain. *Christian Scholar's Review, 43*(2), 139–155.
- Morton, C. H. (2004). *A description of deliberate attempts of the integration of faith and learning by faculty members at colleges affiliated with the southern Baptist denomination* (Publication No. 3157171) [Doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Noll, M. (2011). *Jesus Christ and the life of the mind*. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Norris, J. M. (2015). *A program for persistent integration of faith and learning in a Christian university online environment*. (Publication No. 3731753 ) [Doctoral dissertation, Liberty University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Plantinga, C. (2002). *Engaging God's world: A Christian vision of faith, learning, and living*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Quinn, M. E., Foote, L. S., & Williams, M. L. (2012). Integrating a biblical worldview and developing online courses for the adult learners. *Christian Scholar's Review, 41*(2), 163–173.
- Ream T., Beaty, M., & Lyon, L. (2004). Faith and learning: Toward a typology of faculty views at religious research universities. *Christian Higher Education, 3*, 349–372.
- Ream, T., & Glanzer, P. (2013). *The idea of a Christian college: A reexamination for today's university*. Cascade Books.

- Ringenberg, W. C. (2006). *The Christian college: A history of Protestant higher education in America*. Baker Academic.
- Schreiner, L. (2014). Editorial. *Christian Higher Education*, 13(2), 89–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2014.887920>.
- Sherr, M., Huff, G., & Curran, M. (2007). Student perceptions of salient indicators of integration of faith and learning (IFL): The Christian vocation model. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 16(1), 15–33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10656210>
- Sites, E. C., Garzon, F. L., Milacci, F. A., & Boothe, B. (2009). A phenomenology of the integration of faith and learning. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 37(1), 28–38.
- Sorberg, E. A. (2015). *Exploring selected online and face-to-face course inclusion of faith integration in a business administration program*. (Publication No. 3720320) [Doctoral dissertation, Walden University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- Tweedell, C. B., & Fleming, C. T. (Eds.). (2013). *Best practices in the integration of faith and learning for adult and online learners*. Sue Breeding.
- VanZanten, S. (2011). *Joining the mission: A guide for (mainly) new college faculty*. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Weeks, D. L., & Isaak, D. G. (2012). A coda on faith learning and scholarly rigor. In S. Joeckel, & T. Chesnes (Eds.), *The Christian college phenomenon: Inside America's fastest growing institutions of higher education*. ACU Press.
- White, R. (2006). Promoting spiritual formation in distance education. *Christian Education Journal*, 3(2), 303–315.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Zylstra, C. E. (1997). Faith-based learning: The conjunction in Christian scholarship. *Pro Rege*, 26(1), 1–5.

## Appendix A

### Analysis of Interview Data

Responses to Questions	Categories	Themes
The online department has guidelines and policies that will promote biblical values.	Program guidelines to foster FLI	FLI is an intentional component of creating online courses.
About 5% of assignments to include faith in each course		
Faith should permeate every discipline		
Program outcomes, course goals, and course objectives provide the rationale which is in line with biblical or faith element.		
A holistic approach is taken. God is concerned and involved in every domain of human existence.	Approach—holistic application of a Christian worldview approach.	Approach—holistic application of a Christian worldview approach.
The Christian worldview approach is typical—understand what Scripture says concerning thought and behavior. Contributions viewed in light of Scripture. Everything is coming from a Christian worldview.		
Promote excellence (in content, assignment, and online discussion).	Balance FLI with content mastery	FLI should be balanced
Balance Christian worldview with providing the best textbooks and readings in the field for the students to be well-equipped. Include current dialogue, trends, and significant contributions to field.		
Finding a balance between biblical perspective and relevance for our world today. Be sure students are competitive. Some course writers are really good at integrating the biblical perspective, but not so good as being relevant.		

Responses to Questions	Categories	Themes
Not to make it extremely specific in integrating faith because of different faith backgrounds and give students margins within which they can navigate. Christians may not express faith the same way. Students who are not Christian can get stuck in the faith component.	Balance specifics of FLI with broader perspectives.	
Allow students to talk about current issues from a biblical perspective.	Course components and instructional strategies	Variety of strategies for FLI
Promoting dialogue, critical thinking, integrity, hard work, transparency, listen and respond to competing worldview.		
Put faith component to weekly update.		
Posting a video that is encouraging.		
The instructor needs to set an example.	Instructor responsibility to model and be involved in students' lives.	Role of the instructor in FLI
The instructor needs to promote a faith environment, and encouraging environment.		
Faculty are encouraged to pray for students.		
A good instructor can provide extra Christian worldview resources.	Instructor responsibility to go beyond given course structure and content.	

---

**Van Hnuai Kim** is a Ph.D. scholar pursuing a Ph.D. in Contextual Theology at Oral Roberts University, researching Pentecostal ecclesiology and apostolic centers. She has been a professional educator teaching in Bible schools since 2000. Dr. Kim earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Oral Roberts University, her M.Div. from Myanmar Evangelical Graduate School of Theology, and her B.A. from Dagon University. She can be reached at [vkim@oru.edu](mailto:vkim@oru.edu).



