



## Faith Integration Newsletter Introductory Article, Vol. 4 #1: *Tradition*

“Faith Integration is informed reflection on and discovery of Christian faith within the academic disciplines, professional programs, and lived practice, resulting in the articulation of Christian perspectives on truth and life in order to advance the work of God in the world.

—Newest Senate approved definition

### Faith Integration EER Questions Summary

What is the Impact of University Faith Integration Efforts on Faculty and Student Learning?

Specific Research Questions:

1. How effectively does Azusa Pacific University Faith Integration efforts equip faculty to integrate faith and learning into their faculty roles?
2. How effectively do faculty integrate faith and learning into their academic work?
3. How effectively do academic programs prepare students to integrate their faith into their academic learning?
4. How effectively do co-curricular programs equip students to integrate their faith into their daily living?

Faith Integration is an important part of APUs tradition. It is reflected in the scholarship of APUs academic community as can be seen from this Newsletter. Take for example the article by Dr. Marsha Fowler. It is offered as a sample of academic faith integration. Dr. Fowler illustrates how a key theme within Christian theology is tied to the history of nursing as a discipline and its modern practice. This important tradition is also reflected in the professional activities and lived practice of the APU community.

This God honoring tradition is equally reflected in APUs history. As Azusa College (formerly Pacific Bible College which started as a training school for Christian Workers) aspired to full accreditation in the 1950s, there was a real temptation to compromise its Faith Integration tradition. It had the option to minimize its tradition of robust commitment

to an education that is anchored in the Christian Faith so as to appear to the Western association of schools and Colleges (WASC) as a high ranking, intellectually sophisticated institution of higher learning. The lure was there to de-emphasize its spiritual leanings so as to describe itself as exactly the same as the other accredited institutions whose recognition it was indeed seeking. Through the energetic and committed leadership of Dr. Haggard, Azusa College (AC) demonstrated that it not only offered exactly what other colleges offered, but that it also offered something beyond what the other colleges had to offer, a “spiritual dynamic”. As Burtchaell correctly remarked “in 1964 Azusa College thus became the first Bible College to achieve regional accreditation without substantially changing its curriculum”<sup>1</sup>. The net effect of APU sticking to its Christian Faith Centered tradition then was that it became an inspiration to about three

hundred other Bible schools “tempted to jettison their Bible and Theology offerings and to compromise their spiritual ministry for secular recognition”.

Now 48 years later as APU goes through the WASC accreditation again, Faith Integration is one of the four themes for the WASC Reviews. As the various segments of the University work together in preparation for the next phase of the WASC visit, the Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) in a few months, we anticipate a repetition of the experience of demonstrating Effectiveness in Faith Integration. Enjoy this very rich Newsletter!

— Ben Nworie, Ph.D., M.Div., LPC Professor, Director, Office of Faith Integration, Center for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

<sup>1</sup>Burtchaell, James T. (1998). *The Dying of the Light*. Grand Rapids, MI. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, (758).

## A Really Good University

If so inclined, you can purchase a T-shirt or coffee mug emblazoned with the following sentiment: “Heard you got into that Christian college. Bummer.” Unfortunately, the notion that Christian higher education is a step down from what you get at “a really good university” is widespread. I think it’s time Christian universities stopped playing the “We’re just as good as . . .” game. First, it’s annoying. Second, it lacks awareness that what constitutes a good education is contested territory. Would we recognize good university-level education if we saw it?

Every form of education is faith-based, even in the most secular school. Educational structures, aims, and curricula are constructed on the assumption that certain things are real, true, good, and valuable, even

though these faith assumptions are almost never spelled out. In fact, the secular university has a huge faith integration problem. It attempts to serve so many gods that it has a difficult time stating its purpose with any coherence.

I firmly believe that Christian universities offer a bigger education than you can find anywhere else. If we see clearly, we recognize that every subject in our catalog touches some dimension of reality that God creates, gives purpose, and seeks to redeem. If we teach clearly and students hear clearly, truth does not simply inform, but transforms.

G. K. Chesterton says, “A small circle is quite as infinite as a large circle, but, though it is quite as infinite, it is not so large. In the same way the insane explanation is quite as complete as the sane one, but it is not so large. A bullet is quite as

round as the world, but it is not the world.” One could frame a coherent

philosophy of education that did not include God, but this education has the circumference of a bullet. A really big education at a really good university, if it wants to investigate all that really is, will need a bigger world. It requires a world where the God we know by faith permeates all we seek to know by rigorous study.

—Steve Wilkens, Ph.D., Faith Integration Fellow for Faculty Development



## Health-as-Shalom: Nursing, Christian Faith and Christian Scholarship

"The Lady with the Lamp" would have been justified had she used the lamp to knock some sense into the nurses. Cot after cot was occupied by wounded soldiers in that notorious war. The treatment of the soldiers was a scandal; Florence set about putting things right in the military hospitals and in the process became a heroine. Yet she was deeply troubled by the Christian nurses who neglected nursing duties in order to engage in aggressive evangelism. For them, nursing was nothing more than a means to the end of evangelism. Upon returning to London, Miss Nightingale began the founding school for modern nursing education. Though a deeply devout Anglican Christian, Nightingale determined that nursing education would be secular and never again used as an instrument for other purposes. Thus nursing education became secular and religion taboo. Yet, Christian faith has a great deal to offer nursing.

A brief example will suffice. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "... a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This is a utopian, individualized definition that remains disease

based and is inconsistent with a Christian understanding of "health." A fuller understanding of health, more consistent with a Christian vision of human life-in-community and human flourishing, can be found in the concept of *shalom*. Often poorly translated as *peace*, it has a far more capacious meaning. *Shalom*

"...is one of the most significant theological terms in Scripture, [having] a wide semantic range stressing various nuances of its basic meaning: totality or completeness. These meanings include fulfillment, completion, maturity, soundness, wholeness (both individual and communal), community, harmony, tranquility, security, well-being, welfare, friendship, agreement, success, prosperity." (Youngblood, 1986, p. 732)

Several features of *shalom* stand out as a corrective to the WHO and like definitions of *health*. *Shalom*, arising from a communal context, encompasses both the individual and the community. The individual cannot be healthy where the community is sick; the community cannot be healthy without concern for the health of the individual. Not only does this contextualize health better, it provides a warrant (curricular and for practice) to engage in

the amelioration of the social determinants of illness, chiefly poverty, and to work to overcome health disparities at every level of world health, articulating well with Christian concerns for social justice and global access to health care. This is a population-based approach that encompasses the individual, not an individual-based approach. In addition, *shalom*—as *totality* or *completeness*—allows for the realization of health even in one who is dying, providing space to address suffering *per se*. Moreover, while not founded on the absence of disease, it nonetheless encompasses the absence of disease. Coming to *health-as-shalom* can completely reorient nursing curricula, inform individual courses (e.g., chronic illness, gerontology, health disparities, death and dying, issues in nursing...), making a faith-based perspective intrinsic to an understanding of the discipline and its practice. This is but one small example; imagine what might happen if Christian scholarship were truly integrated with nursing.

—Marsha Fowler, Ph.D., M.Div., RN.,  
Senior Faith Integration Fellow

Adapted from: Fowler et al. *Religions, Religious Ethics, and Nursing*. 2011.

## Lent and Faith Integration

Lent (derived from Anglo-Saxon *Lencten*, meaning "spring,") is, for many Christians, a season of renewed dedication to God (40 days) and preparation for Easter. Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, falls this year on February 22, 2012—the day of the release of this Faith Integration Newsletter. What a coincidence! We will, in the future, explore the relationships between Lent and Faith Integration.

—Ben Nworie, Ph.D., Director Office of Faith Integration



## Upcoming Events

### The Sophia Forum—Eleanor Stump "The Integration of Faith and Learning"

Dr. Stump is the Robert M. Henle Professor of Philosophy at St. Louis University and a renowned philosopher of the Thomist tradition.

Thursday, February 24, 7:00 p.m, Munson Chapel (East Campus)

### Faith Integration Evaluation and CFEP Workshop

Thursday, March 1st, from 10:00-11:00a.m, Ronald Boardroom (East Campus)

OR Thursday, March 1st, from 2:00-3:00p.m, BAS Conference Room #616 (West Campus)

### Faith Integration Foundations Seminars

#### \* Session #5 "Faith-Learning Integration and the Application of Experience"

Wednesday, March 14th, from 2:30-3:30 p.m, Ronald Board Room (East Campus)

OR Thursday, March 15, from 11:30-12:30p.m, Duke 603 (West Campus)

\* Required for New Faculty / Open to All APU Faculty

To RSVP or for more information please contact: Connie Johnson, [conniejohnson@apu.edu](mailto:conniejohnson@apu.edu), (626) 387-5738