



“Faith Integration is understood as theologically informed reflection on integrating faith within the academic disciplines, professional programs and lived practice in order to advance the understanding of Christian higher education and to develop moral leaders who will impact the world.”

—APU Definition of Faith Integration for WASC Accreditation

“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

## APU’s Faith Integration Tradition

Since its inception in March 1900, APU has always made faith integration (FI), practiced in the form of God-honoring learning and living, part of its institutional tradition. A good tradition such as this, especially when it has such longevity, needs to be clearly communicated, and communally celebrated.

Clear Communication of the Tradition: Though Faith learning and Faith living have intersection points, they are also distinct. Faith integration, as faith learning, belongs to the academy, and is not Pietism, Bibliicism, Spiritual formation, Discipleship or Spiritual counsel. Faculty should, on the other hand,

be ready and equipped to assist students who, for example, indicate that they are struggling with their personal faith. Faculty should not, however, substitute such vital support to students with the rigorous academic enterprise of doing faith integration. The Faith Integration Fellows invite you to come on board as the university continues to be in a process of campus-wide exploration and communication of an understanding and model of FI that fits the unique characteristics and mission of APU.

Communal Celebration of the Tradition: As clear communication of APU’s tradition of FI increases, we should anticipate more buy-in into the practice of FI. We are al-

ready seeing some increases in FI scholarship production, increased aggregate IDEA scores and increases in proficiency in the faculty FI submissions for CFEP. How can the students be included in this community celebration? One way will be through faculty provision of meaningful faith integration activities, opportunities, resources, and tools for students. It has been very wisely and aptly said that if faculty do not engage in faith integration in their teaching there is no place else that students will receive it.

— Ben Nworie, Ph.D., MDiv, LPC  
*Faith Integration Coordinator*

## Faith Integration as Strategic Focus

Let’s be honest. We don’t always understand the difference between spiritual formation and faith integration. Perhaps our uncertainty about the boundaries is a good thing because, in the confusion, there is recognition that they overlap and that one cannot be properly understood apart from the other. Perhaps the idea of faith integration as a strategically aspect of spiritual formation is a helpful way of thinking of this relationship.

First, everything we do as Christ-followers should be understood as an aspect of spiritual formation. If Paul tells us that even our eating and drinking is a means of glorifying God, everything up and down the heart, soul, mind, and body spectrum of human activity should express our awareness that discipleship touches every facet of life.

One aspect of spiritual formation is drawing our mind, our cognitive and intellectual capacities, under Christ’s Lordship. This is where faith integration comes in. It seeks to draw together our

commitments as believers and our call to love God with our mind. We do this in a strategically focused manner within the university. It is focused because we, as multi-dimensional beings, recognize that we are more than brains with legs. However, it is strategic. We cannot be whole as Christians without an intentional and disciplined examination of how to worship God through our cognitive skills. That is the mission of the Christian university. Apart from this, it has no reason for existence.

We have our students for a few years at most, sometimes for only a few months. In this blessed time of strategic focus, will they come to view history within a resurrection context that reveals God’s hope for the world? Will students critically examine life-draining assumptions often embedded within the business-as-usual of their fields and grow toward views that recognize human beings as bearers of God’s image? Do your classes allow students to see the world as the product of God’s love and purpose instead of dead, unloved, and unlov-

ing matter? Have they learned that virtues such as humility and wonder do not just make them better scholars, but Christ-like persons? These and a host of other questions define our mission as Christian educators.

Christian educators have a wonderful vocation. Like all callings, it is partial and incomplete. We minister alongside those who also engage in strategically focused, but necessary, missions. However, there is an urgency in faith-learning integration. Apart from the Christian university, few venues exist in which the intellectual dimension of life can be extracted, challenged, and transformed according to God’s vision for his promised abundant salvation. Thus, as are all other believers, we are charged with the spiritual formation of students. As Christian scholars, we participate strategically and specifically in formative ministry by helping God-created minds glorify their Creator.

— Steve Wilkens, Ph.D., *F.I. Fellow*

## Appreciating Tradition: A Few Thoughts and Two Books—Reviewed by Paul Kaak Ph.D.

The mantra of academic scholarship is “the latest”. “Be sure,” we were told by our dissertation committees, “that you show knowledge of the most current research in your dissertation’s final draft and at your defense.”

That’s all well and good, as far as it goes. The problem is that it rarely goes far enough back. So-called “seminal works” get a nod, but in the knowledge economy of academics, that might be a work published just a few short years ago.

Christian academics – like all believers – need to be people of memory. The Old Testament’s repeated mantra is “remember” and Peter’s interest in giving reminders to the readers of his second letter illustrate the Bible’s appreciation for tradition. Paul says, “Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us...” (Romans 15:4).

Beyond the stories and ideas in the Bible itself, we can look back to numerous faith traditions that nuance our faith. These also teach us – both by what they emphasize and what they leave out. They give us material to grapple with and to test against both our reality and our academic content. They provoke us to new questions – not considered previously considered from lens of our own faith

tradition – that cause us to contemplate, question, and research ever deeper ways to understand the truth we seek as critics, scientists, historians, health care professionals, and educators.

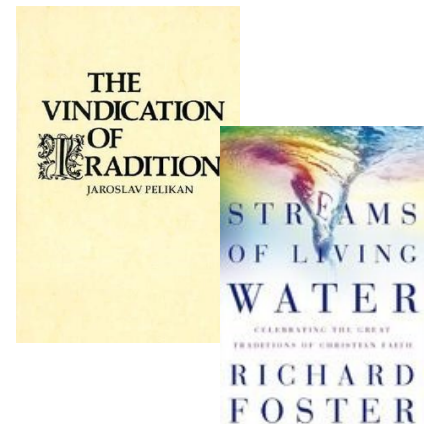
Today I’d like to recommend two books to you. The first is *The Vindication of Tradition: The 1983 Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities* (1986) by the late Yale historian Jaroslav Pelikan. Within can be found the pithy, yet profound quote that “Tradition is the living faith of the dead; Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.” (p. 65). If getting your mind around the necessity of traditional knowledge is what you need, you’ll find this 82-page book to be a thoughtful reflection from a respected scholar.

The other recommendation is Richard Foster’s *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith* (1998). Here Foster gives us a close to 400 readable pages unpacking key theological themes, historic highlights, and practical considerations from 6 Christian faith traditions. Not limited to denominational theology, this book applies good scholarship to take the reader into the heart of *imitatio Christi* as God’s people have sought to under-

stand and live it throughout history. Wesley’s Quadrilateral, APU’s “big tent”, and the multifarious movements of God call us to humbly appreciate the way God’s people have made sense of theology and its practice since the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Such study will deepen us as Christians committed to scholarship that is well-informed and mature.

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Pelikan, J. (1986). *The vindication of tradition: The 1983 Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities*. Yale University Press. ISBN: 0-300-03638-8

Foster, R. (1998). *Streams of living water: Celebrating the great traditions of Christian faith*. San Francisco: Harper-San Francisco. ISBN: 0-06-066743-5



## Upcoming Seminar

**SESSION #5 \*\*Faith Integration and the Application of Experience\*\***

Tuesday, March 22 @ 3:00 – 4:00 / LAPC (East Campus)

OR

Wednesday, March 23 @11:30 - 12:30 / LAPC (East Campus)

*\*This seminar is a requirement for new faculty and open to all faculty \**