Fall 1999

Koinonia

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Recommended Citation
Lastoria, Michael; Campbell, Denise; Guthrie, David; Coffey, Ron L.; and Row, Michael W., "Koinonia" (1999). Koinonia. 23.
https://pillars.taylor.edu/acsd_koinonia/23

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Student Leaders Evaluate Their College Experience

Are You In Over Your Head? Advising vs. Counseling

Money Week

Redemptive Criminology

Annual Conference Highlights

Leaders Who Make A Difference

Placement Service 2000
September 8, 1999 — This is Orientation Week at Spring Arbor. The last few days have been hectic. Housing complaints, leadership training and staff retreats, parent’s concerns, last minute maintenance requests, parking assignments, and the rush to complete new buildings. Social life planning, student appeals, group initiatives, meetings, more meetings, more student appeals, more housing complaints, more parent’s concerns… Pretty much standard fare for this time of year — for me — for my family — for my staff…

But today I watched someone die.

Today I sat in the hospital and watched my mother end a long battle with cancer.

Now as I rush home to dedicate the early morning hours to the writing of my first column as President of ACSD (nearly two weeks late in making my first deadline!) I have to admit I am perhaps a little off focus — But am I?

Right now I am focused on what my mom knew and valued and what she held dear; what was most important to her. You see, my mom never graduated from high school. She didn’t know anything about human development theory. She didn’t know anything about Chickering’s Seven Vectors, Kohlberg’s Moral Reasoning, or Perry’s Continuum of Dualism, Multiplicity and Commitment. She didn’t know anything about the Balance of Challenge and Support, the Interactionist Paradigm, or the Plus-One Concept. Mom didn’t even know anything about parking policies or housing assignments or appeal procedures. My mother didn’t know anything about these things. They were not important to her. But one thing was important — Jesus.

Now you may think that my focus is off and clouded with emotion, etc., but humor me …

Today I saw someone die who was confident, comfortable, and committed. She was not arrogantly dualistic, selfish in her multiplicity or confused in her relativism. She knew who she was, what she valued and why. Her focus was Jesus. Jesus made the difference in her life — not policies, programs or theories — just Jesus.

Honest, humble belief in Jesus changes people — people like my mom who know nothing of all our theories, people like our students who may not be all that different from my mom, even people like me and you.

So, as I sit at my lap-top, trying to think of some impressive commentary on our profession and the year ahead, I have decided not to revisit some of the tired discussion of how to apply theory, implement programs and revise policies. Instead I have decided to share my mom’s focus, which at present is also mine (and I pray it stays that way). Jesus is the reason we do what we do. He is our way, our truth and our light. He is our ultimate focus. Honest, humble belief in Jesus changes people — people like my mom who know nothing of all our theories, people like our students who may not be all that different from my mom, even people like me and you.

If my focus has been distracted from the “priorities” of Orientation Week at Spring Arbor College I think I am ok with that — for now.

“Take your stand on the power of your God and see how quickly all difficulties will vanish before a steadfast determination to believe. Trust in the dark, trust in the light, trust at night and trust in the morning, and you will find that the faith which may begin by mighty effort, will end sooner or later by becoming the easy and natural habit of the soul.” —Hannah Whitall Smith

—Everett Piper
"The Association for Christians in Student Development is comprised of professionals who seek to bring their commitment to Jesus Christ together with their work in college student development. Through the exchange of ideas, encouragement of networking, regional and national conferences, and the application of scriptural principles to developmental theory, the Association seeks to enable its members to be more effective in ministering to students." — ACSD web page

ACSD MISSION

• To promote professional growth and provide opportunity for Christian fellowship and exchange of ideas.

• To integrate the use of scripture and the Christian faith in the student development profession.

• To provide various services for membership.

The Koinonia is one service provided to the ACSD membership for idea exchange. In our publication there is opportunity to share with and respond to colleagues regarding our understanding of how Scripture and Christian faith might be integrated with our profession.

In this issue, several of your colleagues have prepared well-written and informative articles that I trust will encourage you, provide you with new ideas and ways of thinking, and inform you of research and resources that may be helpful in your work with students and in your professional growth.

God bless you throughout this year!

—Sharon Givler, Editor
A few weeks ago at the Houghton College fall faculty retreat, Laurie Schreiner, a psychologist from Eastern College presented some findings from the recent CCCU Student Satisfaction Inventory research. Aggregate data was presented representing general CCCU student profiles and opinions and, in certain instances, specific data was given for Houghton College students. During the dialogue, the familiar “crucial first six weeks” data was presented. This was a helpful reminder to me. The data suggests that the first six weeks on campus are the most important and critical in determining student persistence because:

- 50% of students who are going to drop out that term will do so in the first six weeks
- 50% of students who have not had significant contact with a faculty or staff member in the first three weeks will drop out

As the dialogue continued the focus shifted to the crucial role academic advising plays in facilitating the establishment of these early meaningful connections for students. Furthermore, and surprising to some, were the expectations that CCCU students had of their advisors. Fourteen were listed but, when boiled down, the following four could sum them up:

- Accessibility/Approachability
- Specific and Accurate Information
- Advice and Counsel
- Personal Caring and Relationship

I decided to press forward in the dialogue at that point by saying, “These sound fine, and many of our group can accomplish all four, but what about the individuals who find themselves uncomfortable with the latter two...counsel and a personal caring relationship.” Laurie responded by saying that students would settle for the first two. When I asked the colleague next to me if advising was a task enjoyed and that included all four expectations, the response was “No, I don’t feel comfortable.”

I sensed then that some of my colleagues might welcome some assistance with managing the latter two areas of their expected role as advisors. Specifically, help with understanding the differences between advising and counseling, knowing when to draw the line, and how to refer students to other appropriate support services (specifically counseling services). I had recently completed writing a faculty/staff guide to counseling services at Houghton College and included a section on the above issues. The following is an adaptation of that material and is presented to you as a resource.

Are You in Over Your Head? Advising vs. Counseling

Most CCCU campuses are relatively small and allow for the opportunity to have close relationships with our students. As a result, the line between traditional academic advising or mentoring and counseling is often blurred. Advisors frequently find themselves talking with students about personal issues as well as academic concerns. The following represents some thoughts about when it might be helpful to consult with a counselor about a situation involving unclear boundaries between you and a student.

In other words, you’re probably in over your head if:

- The situation is life threatening. If you have any concern, however slight, that the student is a threat to himself or herself or others, you need to consult with the Counseling Center. There may be legal liability involved.
- Your “rescue fantasies” are getting the better of you. It is natural to hope that your relationship with a troubled student will make a difference, and that you can “turn a troubled student around.” This is especially true if the relationship you have with the student is a good one. Yet, it may be important to ask yourself if your need to be liked, or your attraction to the student, is overly motivating your rescue effort? Also, sometimes a student’s psychological issues are just too complex to be able to benefit from your relationship. This may result in frustration and discouragement for both you and the student.
- Things in your personal life are getting triggered. Advising can become a close relationship where the advisee talks about personal struggles that may resemble one of your own unresolved conflicts. If this happens you may experience surprising emotions. One of the challenges of advising is to recognize your own personal issues and to keep them from interfering with the advisee relationship.
- You experience strong emotions towards your advisee. If strong emotions are being evoked in your advisee relationship (either positive or negative) and
they do not diminish, it is usually advisable to discuss these with a trusted colleague or counseling center staff. This is especially the case if you intend to continue advising the student. Remember that it isn’t uncommon to experience attraction to a student. It is inappropriate, however, to allow those feelings to become an integral part of your relationship to the student.

• You find yourself caught up in keeping secrets that make you uncomfortable. If a student shares something and swears you to secrecy, you are probably also being sworn, unaware, into a secret relationship. You may be legally required to report the information you have. If this is the case, it is best to consult with a counselor (names withheld) to help you clarify the situation.

• The advising relationship is demanding too much of your time and energy. If you are feeling resentful about the amount of time spent with an advisee, you probably cannot be very helpful to that person. In addition, be especially mindful if your family or close friends believe that your relationship with a student is being nurtured at the expense of other important relationships in your life. They are usually, though not always, right.

• You feel like you’re in over your head. Trust your own judgment. If you feel uncomfortable, chances are you could use some assistance.

Counseling Center staff members are available to consult with you regarding any concerns you have about an advisee or your relationship with an advisee. It is possible to talk about most situations without breaching a confidence.

What About a Referral?
You may not necessarily “be in over your head,” but you may sense the need for a counseling referral. You’ve noticed a change in a student’s sleeping or eating patterns. Energy patterns are different (up or down), class attendance is down, general appearance is “off.” The student may be distracted, experience crying spells or anger outbursts. Physical shakiness may occur or a student experiences an inability to concentrate or focus.

Above all, avoid arguing a point with the student or the use of judgmental statements that are of secondary concern.

Withdrawal is often a warning sign and is usually first observed by close friends or residence life staff. If you notice a student with several of the above characteristics it is best to mention what you have observed or what you have heard them say. For example: “I noticed that you’ve missed several classes and when you’re here you just don’t seem to be yourself. Is something on your mind or did something happen?” or, “You’ve missed work a few times this week and the quality of your work isn’t as good as it usually is. Is something on your mind?” Or the case may be that you do not notice many of the above symptoms, but a student has confided in you regarding a situation that is causing distress. You may periodically follow-up on your initial conversation. For example: “Last week you mentioned that things in your family were really stressing you out. How are things now...any better? About the same? Or worse?” “Is it OK for me to ask about this stuff?” The last question is important, since it is likely that a student will be grateful that you’ve taken an interest, but it is always best to check to be sure that you are not crossing a boundary. This type of query could make a student quite uncomfortable if they are not prepared to disclose more to you. It would be similar to the student asking you if things are going better with your husband, wife, or suitemate!

Next, observe how the student responds to your initiative. Does he or she seem willing to discuss more, or is this just not the right time? If you perceive the latter, it is best to mention your concern and willingness to talk in the future if the student would like. Don’t consider this a “failure.” Many times a student just isn’t ready to talk, yet may return to speak with you several days or weeks later. In this case, showing your concern initially made enough of an impression upon the student that you are sought out later for support. If the student is willing to talk, simply listen to his or her story. Ask questions for clarification and be sensitive to concerns that underlie what you are hearing (issues that are unstated, brushed aside, or intimated).

As always, make an effort to communicate that you understand the student’s feelings about the story they are telling you. For example: “That must have made you very angry,” or, “Sounds like you were completely blown away by the whole mess.” This is usually not a time to offer advice or your own personal point-of-view. Above all, avoid arguing a point with the student or the use of judgmental statements that are of secondary concern. For example, it’s probably best not to say: “I can see you were upset, but you can’t just drink this problem away,” or, “Do you really think yelling at your parents was the proper thing to do?” or, “I just don’t see it that way at all.”

It is also helpful to explore any previous attempts at problem resolution. What things were tried? How did they work or not work? Can the student think of any time when they had a similar problem? If so, how did they solve it that time? Encourage the student during this time, if you can do so sincerely. For example: “I am surprised (or impressed) that you’ve been able to do as well as you have considering the circumstances. How do you manage?”

After listening carefully it is helpful to summarize for the student what you’ve heard. This is important since it is a great encouragement for a student to be understood and, if you’ve misinterpreted any detail or nuance, the student can correct you at that time. For example: “Let me see if I’ve got the story right here. You tried to talk to...” or “Let me give this back to you to make sure I’ve understood correctly, and you need to feel free to edit anything I’ve misunderstood or left out, OK?”

At this point in the conversation, you will probably need to make an initial assessment of the situation. If you choose to continue your discussions with the student ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you and the student believe the discussions are helpful? (Remission of symptoms)
2. Do you believe the problems mentioned are not beyond your ability or experience?

3. Are you and the student both comfortable dealing with the content of the problem (i.e. sexual issues, bizarre behavior, or content to which you find yourself responding in an overly emotional manner)

4. Are you able to commit to the student in this way? (Time, emotional investment, boundary issues)

If you answer no to any of the above, a referral may be in order. To begin a referral process it is important that you familiarize yourself with the services, procedures, and personnel of your counseling center (CC). It's helpful to have a CC representative address your group at some point to go over this material. It will also offer you the opportunity to get to know these people. A good referral is a transfer of trust; it is difficult to refer to an unknown resource.

Once you have the information you need then first introduce the idea of a referral in a straightforward manner. For example: "After getting the big picture of what's going on for you, I want to be able to support you as you work through this mess. At the same time, I don't think I'm in the best position to give you all the assistance that you might need. I am familiar with the folks over at the Counseling Center and think they might be of help to you. What do you think about that idea?" If the student is favorable to the idea, suggest that the student make the call right then. You might even make the call for the student. For example: "I could call the Center now about an appointment, if that's OK with you," or "If it's OK, we can walk over to the Counseling Center now and see about getting an appointment." It is also permissible in most counseling centers for the student to be accompanied by you to the first, or even second, appointment if requested. CC staff are usually able to make the student feel comfortable enough to "fly solo" in a very short period of time.

If the student is reluctant to act on this immediately don't be overly concerned. Simply ask when he or she plans on doing so, and ask if it is OK for you to follow-up later to see if the student actually made an appointment. If the student does not wish to be referred and you are nevertheless concerned about the seriousness or urgency of the problem, please call your CC for consultation. You need not disclose the student's identity to obtain this consultation.

Also, in some way let the student know that acting on a referral doesn't mean that you plan on having no further contact with him or her. You will continue to be concerned and caring in a way that is appropriate for you. This is important as no one particularly appreciates being "dumped," especially if they perceive you are "washing your hands of the matter." At this point, it is probably best to give students a clear statement about what you can and cannot do for them.

Conversely, a student who has followed up with counseling may not wish to discuss with you many details of this work. If you sense this is the case, you can limit your queries to an occasional, "How are things going with the counseling?" The student may say, "fine" and then you can say, "good" and that's that. If the student maintains contact with you after the referral, continue to be supportive and maintain confidentiality. Again, it is usually advisable to stay within your realm of responsibility (e.g., financial problems, health concerns, academic needs, job responsibilities) after a referral is made, even if the student appears to be willing to have you as a second counselor.

Should you wonder about the advisability of a referral you can always discuss this with a counselor. Again, it is suggested that when doing so you not disclose the identity of the student. It is unnecessary to the discussion and allows the privacy of the student to be maintained. This is also the case if the student accepts the idea of a referral. It is important that you not discuss with a counselor any details of the student's story until you have the permission of the student. While confidentiality laws do not bind you, this is simply respectful and prudent.

Referral Failure

On occasion, despite good intentions and an accurate knowledge of resources, a referral is not successful. Before judging yourself, the student, or your CC too harshly, consider the following possibilities:

1. The student was not ready for the counseling process, or there was a significant "gap" in the student's expectations of counseling and the actual nature of the help given. If the former is the case, accept the student's lack of readiness as a very normal occurrence. If the latter is true, you can define more clearly the student's needs and what the CC can offer. If appropriate, try again.

2. The CC may have been an inappropriate referral for the help needed, or the counselor may have misunderstood the student's actual needs. Perhaps there was a misunderstanding or miscommunication about the actual nature of the problem. If the former is the case, your CC staff can usually make efforts to access an appropriate resource. If the latter happens, and you become aware of this, you might consider asking the student's permission to contact the counselor with information helpful to correct the misunderstanding. You may also encourage the student to contact the counselor directly to clarify the miscommunication.

3. The student may not have been able to form a working relationship with the counselor. The "chemistry" may not be right or the student believes the counselor cannot help. In this case, encourage the student to try another counselor, rather than give up. Explain to the student that counselors understand the chemistry issue and do not "take it
personally." Check with your own CC about the policy regarding changing counselors. The policy of Houghton’s CC is that the student communicates this concern to the counselor before we reassign him or her to another counselor. It is our experience that in over half of these conversations, the student and counselor clear up a perceived chemistry problem and resume working together.

Responding to Students in Crisis Situations

Concern of Suicide

Generally, suicidal potential is divided into three categories, increasing in their order of severity. Suicidal ideation is the first and refers to having thoughts about suicide or, rather than thoughts about wanting to die, thoughts about just not wanting to live with the pain one is experiencing. The second category is suicidal gesture and refers to acting out a suicidal wish, but not in a lethal manner. For example, a student who takes 10 Tylenol tablets most likely does not intend to die, nevertheless, the gesture is a cry for help. The final, and most serious category, is the suicide attempt. This refers to actions that, left unchecked, may actually end a student’s life.

The best approach in dealing with your concern about suicide is to ask the student directly. For example: "I’m concerned about your safety. Will you be OK after you leave this office, or is there a chance that you might harm yourself? Is suicide a possibility?" and it might help to add, "Please be honest because I need to trust your response." If the student assures you of his or her safety, ask them what they would do if they felt unsafe later that evening. At this point attempt to put a plan in place that the student will commit to following, should it be needed. The plan may include calling a hotline, calling the CC’s emergency phone number, or calling a friend. The actual details of the plan are not as important as receiving the student’s promise to do these things before they harm themselves. Obviously, there is no complete guarantee of safety, but this is really the most that can be done by any person, and it is the preferred protocol of professionals short of a “safety watch” or hospital admittance.

Even if the student has assured you of their temporary safety, it will be important to follow the referral procedures above. For example: “I’m going to take your word that you’ll be OK tonight according to our plan, but I still am concerned about you and would like you to make an appointment to see a counselor as soon as possible. In fact, I would like to call for an appointment now, if that’s OK with you.” If this conversation is after working hours, your CC will have an emergency number to call to contact a counselor. In general, the potential of suicide increases with several factors:

1. Is there a family history or has the student had previous attempts?
2. How detailed is any plan of suicide (specific method, place, time)?
3. Does the student frequently abuse alcohol or other drugs (lessens impulse control)?

Do not be timid about asking any of these questions when talking with a student. If you are uncomfortable talking to a student about these things, call your CC for a consult, or request that a counselor come over to talk with the student. In addition, if you believe someone to be so severely depressed or actively suicidal that you would feel uncomfortable if they simply left your office, call your CC or other emergency resource immediately.

Bizarre Behavior

Should you encounter a student whose thinking is very unclear, or a student who is experiencing delusions or hallucinations, your role is that of keeping the student with you or tracking the student’s movement, and calling your CC for assistance. You may wish to attempt some form of dialogue to calm the student down or to clear their thinking. However, if the student is experiencing a psychotic episode, or the manic phase of a bipolar illness, talking is like spitting in the wind. Please call for assistance (for yourself) and help for the student. You may want to consider calling your campus security office if you believe the student is also potentially aggressive or violent.

Potentially Violent or Dangerous Students

The following may manifest potentially violent or dangerous behavior:

1. Physically violent behavior (physically fighting or destroying property in anger)
2. Verbally threatening or overly aggressive behavior
3. Threatening emails or letters
4. Threatening or violent material on academic papers or exams
5. Consistent physical, verbal, or sexual harassment including stalking
6. Possession of a firearm or other weapon

Sometimes these behaviors are the result of or are exacerbated by mental illness. You need to take appropriate action to protect both the potential victim and the potentially dangerous student. If the danger appears imminent it is best to call your campus security immediately for assistance. If you are uncertain about the course of action to take (and you have some time to think about it) you may wish to talk to your chief student affairs officer or the director of counseling services for consultation. In any case, it is recommended that you not handle this situation yourself.

Note: The information in this article was adapted from the Houghton College Faculty/Staff Guide to Counseling Services. Please check with your own counseling center personnel for more specific advice.

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Do you mind if I just take a minute to praise God for being here? You see, some years ago I attended my first ACSD Conference. My experiences there reshaped my prayer life, confirmed my professional calling, and validated the value of my Christian upbringing as I reflected back on the numerous occasions when God has whispered in my ear. For the last seven years, between budget constraints and calendar conflicts, and a new supervisor, who believed there was a conflict between church and state, Satan has been trying to keep me from being with you. Truthfully, I’ve been heart-broken; but I prayerfully submitted to the authority under which I had been placed. And every year I’ve said, “Lord, I’m ready to go. I can take vacation time and pay for it myself, or I can raise the money, or I can get a sponsor. You tell me how, Lord, and I’ll get it done.” Yet every year God’s answer was always the same; “In My time and in My way.”

Now we all know that patience is a virtue, right? Well, I’m here today to praise God for His grace and mercy despite my impatience, because I must confess, I did not feel particularly patient while I waited on God’s timing and God’s way. As a matter of fact, I felt pretty pouty about the way God was handling this situation. So I confessed my poutiness and said, “Lord I believe, help my unbelief; I believe You are able to take care of this; I believe You are able to make a way out of no way. So help me to trust in You and not my own devises.” I said, “Lord, You know my every need, and You know I need to be with Your children at this conference because fellowship with them revitalizes me and

renews my strength; so whenever you’re ready, Lord, I’m waiting!”

In January of 1998 I didn’t receive permission to attend the conference; instead I received an invitation to speak at the 1999 national ACSD Conference. You see, God will exceed our expectations every time if we get our behinds out of His way.

Do you see what God will do when you listen to His whisper? Do you see what God will do in spite of us? That’s grace and mercy! Amen? You see, in my impatience, I almost missed the miracle. I almost missed the opportunity to share this testimony with you and no one of us would have been blessed in quite the same way, would we? Oh, but isn’t God good? For His mercy and His grace endure forever! He will fill your cup so full you can’t even move it! You’ll have to sip from the rim without moving the cup it will be so full! I’m sipping from the rim this morning, ya’ll!

Make no mistake. God has you in this place, with these people, struggling with whatever issues you’re struggling with, for such a time as this.

So, Father, I just thank You and praise You for each and every individual You saw fit to include in this conference. Let them be touched with a double portion of Your wisdom and discernment; let them be restored, refreshed and revitalized; that they might serve You and Your people in precisely the manner in which You have ordained. I pray for Your choicest blessings for each and every one, Lord; that the fruit of their labor would be the ripest, juiciest, most delicious fruit in Your kingdom; so that by their example, others would be drawn unto You, Father. Amen.

So, what about the signs of the times, what about the cultural influences that are shaping the students of the new millennium? What about reading the writing on the wall; or reading the writing on the WEB, as it were? You know it is truly a wake up call to realize that if you were to hold your arms out as such that anyone who can walk underneath your arm pits probably knows more about technology than you do! I mean how would you feel when an eight year old stands behind you at your computer station and confidently proclaims, “You know, Mrs. Campbell you wouldn’t have trouble accessing that document if you copy it to file as html text instead of using your word processing program. Are you going to be much longer? I need to access a new search engine on the Internet to find my friend’s web page on secret codes for the new Star Wars Episode I game.”

“Access what?” Am I the only one in here who feels completely incapable of keeping up with how quickly our young people are not only learning to use technology, but coming to depend on it?

How are we to know what kinds of students will enter our institutions in the new millennium? Perhaps it is helpful to frame the sources of information to answer this question into two fundamental categories. From the secular lens we look to the voices of scholars, researchers and historians. From the Christian lens we look to the voices of divinely inspired words from God, the Bible, words from our preachers, and words from our prophets. In the early Old Testament prophets were called seers; that is to say, people who could see things that others could not.
Now let’s see what God says in Deuteronomy 18:21-22—You may say to yourselves, “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?” If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or become true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

Let me “race walk” you through some interesting information I acquired recently while attending a secular conference workshop where “innovative methods” for understanding the millennial generation were discussed. Perhaps you are familiar with the William Strauss and Neil Howe’s generational works, Generations: The History of America’s Future, 13th Gen: Abort, Ignore, Retreat, Fail? and The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy. In brief, these historians describe a four phase generational cycle that lends itself to four generational types. They like the number four, God likes the number three; but never mind that for now.

According to Strauss and Howe the four generational types, namely “Civics”, “Adaptives”, “Idealists”, and “Reactive”, progress cyclically through the Crisis Era, the Outer-Driven Era, the Awakening Era, and the Inner Driven Era. They go on to describe these generations as follows:

- **A dominant, outer-fixated Civic Generation** grows up as increasingly protected youths after a spiritual awakening; comes of age overcoming secular crisis; unites into a heroic and achieving cadre of rising adults; sustains that image while building institutions as powerful midlifeers; and emerges as busy elders attacked by the spiritual awakening. Born 1901-1924; 74-97 years of age; G.I. Generation.

- Next, “a recessive Adaptive Generation” grows up as over protected and suffocated youths during a secular crisis; matures into risk-averse, conformist raising adults; produces indecisive midlife arbitrator-leaders during a spiritual awakening; and maintains influence (but less respect) as sensitive elders.” Born 1925-1942; 56-73 years of age; Silent Generation.

- Following, “a dominant, inner fixated Idealist Generation” grows up as increasingly indulged youths after a secular crisis; comes of age inspiring a spiritual awakening; matures into narcisistic rising adults; cultivates principle as moralistic miidlifeers; and emerges as visionary elders guiding the next secular crisis.” Born 1943-1960; 38-55 years of age; Baby Boomers.

- Finally, “a recessive Reactive Generation” grows up as under protected and criticized youths during a spiritual awakening; matures into risk-taking, alienated rising adults; mellow into pragmatic midlife leaders during a secular crisis; and maintains respect (but not influence) as recessive elders.” Born 1961-1981; 17-37; Generation X.

In their latest book, The Fourth Turning, Strauss and Howe go on to apply this generational theory to the cycles of history. That is to say they hypothesize that about every two decades or so society enters a new era or “turning.” The First Turning is a High, an upbeat era of strengthening institutions and weakening individualism. The Second Turning is an Awakening, a compassionate era of spiritual upheaval. The Third Turning is an Unraveling, a downcast era of strengthening individualism and weakening institutions; and the Fourth Turning is a Crisis, a decisive era of upheaval that propels the replacement of the old civic order.

These historians predict that we are destined to begin the next Fourth Turning (Crisis) shortly after the start of the new millennium, around 2005. They predict that sometime before 2025, America will pass through a great gate in history, commensurate with the Revolution, the Civil War, and the twin emergencies of the Great Depression and World War II. They suggest that this period will also bring a unique opportunity to achieve a new greatness as a people. And as such, we should prepare.

- Clean up the culture. When events force a decadent society to mobilize, the result can be fascism.

- Simplify. Shrink government now to make room for growth during a Crisis, when America will need public authority again.

- Team up. Stress duties over rights. Use technology to bring people together.

- Prepare youth. Teach civic habits and group skills.

- Prepare your family. Kinship will be the ultimate safety net for your health and old age because government will have other priorities.

- Diversify your assets. Be prepared for a great devaluation.

- Safeguard your reputation. Neighbors and public officials will newly prize classic virtues of loyalty, integrity, and civic honor.

More specific to the student population, with which we are most interested, other researchers offer themes around which one can hypothesize and prepare. Astin’s work with freshmen surveys; Levine and Cureton’s When Hope and Fear Collide: A Portrait of Today’s College Student; Snyder and Shaffer’s Youth Indicators: Trends in the Well-being of American Youth all reflect interesting themes for the characterization of new millennium students. There are five themes:

- Technology is a way of life

- Concern for self “AND” others

- Key relationships are changing, e.g. adult children returning home

- Finding ways to be safe and seeking well-being

- Want to do well and do good

So where does God fit into all this theorizing and philosophizing, you may ask yourself. Good question, self! Well let me progress into the spiritual realm of my culture and see if I can “spoil it to ya.”

Now I don’t know about God’s favorite way to impart knowledge in your life. In my life, He likes to kick things up a notch. You see what the “Essence of Emerle” (the food channel celebrity) is to the gourmet pallet, the anointing of the Holy Spirit is to the discerning

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Christian. Coming from the African-American Creole culture of New Orleans, I grew up on gumbo, hot sauce and spicy food. I also grew up learning as much about cooking as I did about conjuring, voodoo and false prophecy.

The thing I love about Emerle is that as much as I’ve learned over the years about Cajun and Creole cooking, he keeps on revealing new cooking secrets; he keeps on kicking it up a notch...BAM! Well, the same is true of my walk with Christ. Just when I think I’ve got a handle on what’s going on in the world, in my life and how I should respond to it, along comes a prophetic word from the Holy Spirit, and BAM! God has just kicked it up a notch. And as you might surmise, from a cultural, culinary and spiritual perspective, my life is never boring and always spicy!

You see, in my cultural experience, getting a prophetic word is as common as a pot of red beans and rice. I come from a peculiar culture; it is indeed a dichotomous mix of passion for food, fun, family, friendship and Christ on the one hand and a Sodom-and-Gomorrah-like reality of lustful cravings, licentiousness, conjuring and voodoo on the other hand. So as a child, when I read in Deuteronomy 26:18, Titus 2:14, and I Peter 2:9 that God called us to be a peculiar people, I figured He must have been talking about me and my people! New Orleans Mardi Gras is a premier example of what I’m talking about: a celebration of Christ on the one hand and an all out public drunken orgy on the other. And then there is my father’s great-uncle. Uncle Sam, was a conjure man and an apprentice of Marie LaVoux, the infamous voodoo queen of New Orleans. From the time I was a young child, it made perfect sense to me that God speaks in the still small voice as we read in I Kings 19:12. So I never questioned the notion of listening to whispers, following the instructions and speaking out about it as directed. After all, that was how Uncle Sam made his living for Marie LaVoux, so why shouldn’t I do the same thing for God?

So as a very precocious two-year-old I was constantly hanging around adults. My parents would host these very wonderful-ly festive gumbo and crawfish parties and I was always underfoot. I would get stepped on and bumped and sandwiched between jovially distracted grownups that repeatedly said, “Oh baby I’m sorry. I didn’t see you. Oh darlin’ I’m so sorry. I didn’t mean to step on you.” Well here comes that little whisper; and inevitably I responded to it by proclaiming to all those adults, “You not sorry. If you were really sorry, you’d stop steppin’ on me!”

Well, needless to say, I’ve been getting in trouble for telling the truth ever since; and today may likely be no exception. You see I suspect that when it comes to addressing the needs of our diverse student populations, there is little difference between us as Christian brethren.

God whispers the same message to all of us, although not necessarily in the same way. The difference is some of us choose to listen and others of us don’t.

Now I have four wild and crazy sisters. Some years ago one of them gave me this little card which describes the meaning of my name. It reads “Denise a Wise Discerner.” Since that time my sisters and other family members will call me up to be funny and say, “Oh sister-seer, give me some 411. I know you got some information. I’m just callin’ to get my prophetic word for today.” So one day I finally said, “Well you know, God has really laid on my heart, I Samuel 3:4-9 and I Kings 19:11-12. You remember the parts when Samuel hears God’s whisper and finally answers, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening” and when the Lord passed by Elijah and the word says... but the Lord was not in the wind or the earthquake or the fire, but in a gentle whisper.” I told my sister, “I believe we are really to listen for the whisper. If we don’t listen to the whisper, God is going to start yelling. Then He’s going to start thumpin’ heads; then He’s going to get a spoon,” (Scripture says spare the rod and spoil the child, but in my house it’s spare the spoon and raise a buffoon! And you don’t want to know how many wooden spoons have mysteriously disappeared from my house). I said, “Then He’s going to knock some folks to their knees; and some folks He’s just going to flat out lay out. So take heed, sister dear, and listen to the whisper.”

Some days later she called me hysterical and I couldn’t tell if she was laughing or crying. Finally she said, “Denise, God is too funny to me. Ever since you told me to listen for the whisper, you would not believe how God has been speaking to me in all sorts of strange ways. But these last two episodes were it.” She told me the other day her daughter had been up all night working on a school project, had skipped dinner, didn’t have time to eat or make her lunch the next morning and asked my sister if she could drop her lunch by the high school right at 12:35. My sister agreed even though a little voice told her, “Not 12:35, 11:55.” But all morning she kept ignoring this little voice that said, “Take the lunch now, take the lunch now.” She even went so far as to debate with the little voice, “No, it doesn’t make sense to take the lunch now when it will be more convenient to drop it by on my way to the post office. No, the school is closer to my husband’s office, I can pick him up lunch and that certainly makes more sense.” So she and my brother-in-law pull up to my niece’s school, right on schedule; she jumps out of the car, sees her daughter across the school yard; and as she makes her way toward her, the back-to-class bell rings, ending the lunch period. My niece looks at my sister like a starvation victim and her sister melts into a puddle of tears. She feebly returns to the car, hoping for a measure of consolation from her husband and he looks at her like, “what...what’s with this little voice thing!”

Well no sooner does she recover from this episode then she finds herself on one of those all time hectic days that she knows she’s got to have everything coordinated like precision clock work. Pick up her daughter for dance, get her son to basketball practice. Leave the tapes at church for women’s fellowship. Pack a workout bag so she and her husband can go workout after bible study and meet the family back at home with a chicken
When we're asking what in the world is wrong and as they single one was burnt to a crisp. Her family are all voice thing is just getting ridiculous. God would not be telling me to do something so silly when we've been getting the best fresh tortillas in the county from this restaurant for years.” So she doesn’t check the tortillas. She races home just in time to fix their plates, feeling oh so relieved that she was able to pull the day off without a hitch. She lays out the meal, opens the container of savory warm tortillas that melt in your mouth. And as her family enters the house they hear the wails and sobs of a woman in mourning, “Oh, I didn’t check the tortillas; God told me to check the tortillas but I would listen; oh, I’m so sorry; I ruined the dinner because I wouldn’t listen to the whisper; I wouldn’t check the tortillas.”

Now her family is still trying to figure out what in the world is wrong and as they examine the container of tortillas, my sister ekes out between sobs, “The tortillas are all burned.” And sure enough every single one was burnt to a crisp. Her family didn’t know whether to laugh at her or cry with her.

So what I am suggesting is this. As we are listening to the whisper of prophetic words, be they secular or Christian, we best check the tortillas. When it comes to reading the writing on the wall in order to determine what kind of student we will see on our campuses in the new millennium, some people don’t even see the wall, because the truth is the wall is a rainbow of diversity. Others ignore the wall; then some don’t see the writing. Others see the writing but can’t read it; some read the writing but don’t understand it. Others understand it and consciously choose not to take heed. Check the tortillas.

When we witness the unbridled tongues of the coming generation. When we witness the use of violence as the preferred methodology for conflict resolution. When we witness the resurgence of hate groups and hate crime uprising. When we consider the patterns and cycles of historical injustice repeating over and over again, listen closely to the still small voice and probe deeper. Check the tortillas. Look closer and more carefully with a discerning heart to understand how God would have us respond. God always preserves a remnant. Find the remnant and check the tortillas!

Do not be confused by the apparent bifurcation of student concerns and student needs. After all, Satan’s sorry and pitiful tactic has always and forever will be the same; divide and conquer based on a lie. When we look around this room and our campus communities, knowing that God created His children as a beautiful rainbow, but we don’t see that rainbow represented in these communities, we need to genuinely ask ourselves why. And then we must really do something about it!

What can we do to more effectively challenge and support the intellectual, moral, emotional, and spiritual growth of new millennium students? As a nation and as believers in the great commission of Christ, let’s stop being greedy and self-serving. Let’s stop functioning out of fear. Let’s start meeting our students where they are instead of where we are. Let’s start being servant leaders because we understand the needs of those we serve, not because it seems like the noble thing to do at the time. Satan has used a whole lot of missionaries to destroy a whole lot of people’s faith in God because the missionaries didn’t understand the needs of the culture.

What about a following a Solomon-like theory of wisdom acquisition as a first line response to meeting the needs of new millennium students? I happen to believe David Guthrie, Kate Harrington and company are on to something with their emphasis on wisdom-focused student learning as discussed in their recent book, Student Affairs Reconsidered: A Christian View of the Profession and Its Contexts. I believe this for one simple reason. As a fundamental response to the needs of new millennium students, it is scriptural; seeking first the wisdom of Solomon. Too many of us are like fish out of water when it comes to understanding new millennium generations. I know I certainly feel like one of those fish. And we need a fresh anointing of God’s wisdom to meet their needs.

As we face the Goliath-proportion challenges of the next century we need to make sure all that we do passes the “five smooth stone” test. As David prepared to face Goliath, he made sure he was ready with five smooth stones, even though he only needed one to slay his enemy. I believe God is fixing to kick it up a notch. And our power to defeat the enemy in secular institutions is the same power needed in Christian institutions. Our most powerful weapons are found in the five smooth stones. So what are the five smooth stones for the new millennium?

- Power in the word of God... Bam!
- Power in the name of Jesus... Bam!
- Power in prayer... Bam!
- Power in praise and worship... Bam!
- Power in Christian fellowship... Bam!

So the next time you begin to question prophetic writings on the wall or on the web about the new millennium generation of students, remember it doesn’t really matter if the challenges before you look like Canaanites, Amorites, mosquitos bites or fools. The weapons of the Holy Spirit are still the same. Simply remember to listen for God’s whisper and then check the tortillas. More than likely, God is fixing to kick it up a notch in YOUR life; and you want to be ready with your five smooth stones. BAM! Jesus is in the house; go ahead and praise Him!

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- To promote professional growth and provide opportunity for Christian fellowship and exchange of ideas.
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In The Field

At Home At School: CCCU Student Leaders Evaluate Their College Experience

By Donald D. Opitz and David Guthrie

Good news! Student leaders at CCCU schools don’t just like their colleges, they LOVE them! We’ve tried to capture their appreciation in this article. We also take a look at their concerns, and at a few of the issues on which these student leaders were conspicuously silent. Before we jump into the good news, we want to orient you to the who, what, when, where, how, and why of our research.

Conferences. One institution with the support of three organizations worked together to put on two conferences at two different locations in January 1999. Geneva College’s Master’s Program in Higher Education worked with the Coalition for Christian Outreach (a regional campus ministry organization) to put together a one-day conference that we called The Call. Conference costs were covered by a generous grant from the Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation, and the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) supported the research initiative. Conference sites were chosen central to a cluster of CCCU schools to ease travel for student groups. Southern Wesleyan University in South Carolina and Anderson University in Indiana provided ideal facilities for the gatherings. Almost 200 students from eighteen campuses attended The Call.

Key administrators (the president, the dean of students, and the chaplain) from all of the CCCU schools in the region of each conference were asked to nominate student delegates to send to the conference. These students were then contacted by their own institution and from our office with particulars about the program. Of the 188 students in attendance who participated in the study, one third were men and two thirds women, 95% were white, and the class standing averaged right at Junior (with only a couple of first year students and a recent grad in attendance). While these students demographically “represent” the student population on campus, they all were selected student leaders and we expected their responses to be positive.

Research Method. The research component was designed to record students input about their own college experiences. Our plan was to use this qualitative data to give depth to some of the quantitative data being collected through the CCCU’s FIPSE project. We also hoped that providing student leaders with a means of shaping institutional response might encourage their ongoing commitment to Christian higher education.

A written survey was administered shortly after the students arrived. This tool enabled us to gather basic demographic and satisfaction data, and we thought it might get students thinking about the nature of their college experiences. Later in the day, roundtable discussion groups of 10-13 students were convened. Several open-ended questions were used to solicit student responses. Students were given another opportunity to express their views about their Christian college experiences in written outline or essay form. For the essay, students were asked to respond to one of the following:

- parents asking what their college-searching child could expect from attending a Christian college, or
- the president of the CCCU seeking advice on how to improve Christian higher education.

Praise Abounding. We had no idea how satisfied students were with their college experiences. We asked students how they felt about their college experience thus far: 80% love it, 18% like it, 2% were neutral, and none hated it! We asked if they would return to the same school if they had it to do over: 70% said “Oh yes!” and another 28% said “Probably yes.”

We also tried to get to the key sources of students’ satisfaction. We gave the students the opportunity to choose two responses in a series of items. Figure 1 is a summary of their responses.

Strong Christian perspective (102) and Made good friends (76) were at the top of the list. Middle of the list: High quality of education (46), My gifts were being used (37), and Relationships with faculty, staff and administration (35). Not far behind was Leadership opportunities (32), [but remember these were campus leaders]. At the bottom of the list was Career preparation (21). Given how we asked this question (i.e., select only two responses), the two items that received the most votes from students are not surprising. What is more curious, however, is the relative relationship among items. For example, why did twice as many students choose “made good friends” compared to “my gifts were being developed”; or, why did three times as many students
select “high quality of education” compared to “career preparation.”

The general enthusiasm and the key positive experiences were confirmed over and over again in the roundtable discussions and in the essay responses. One student was particularly enthusiastic: “I believe that the Christian college is perhaps one of the greatest assets and resources for the entire world body... The Christian college actualizes young people into becoming Christian thinkers, feelers, lovers, artists and disciples...We need Christians who will be able to live as Christians everywhere, not just in church.” Another student was equally passionate about the mission of these institutions: “The world as a whole is in desperate need of such people and nobody in the USA is as well equipped as the CCCU schools to upbring (sic) such leaders/stewards. They should “train” them in such a way that they can go out of the Christian realm and permeate and impact strongly the secular world.”

Students spoke again and again about “a Christian perspective” and “Christian worldview” and the “integration of faith and learning.” One student saw Christian integration in this way: “At a Christian college the focus is on developing the mental, spiritual, social and physical areas. We seek to integrate all of these ... and avoid the temptation to compartmentalize the many faces of life.” Another student felt equipped for her calling: “My experiences at a Christian college have strongly equipped me with the tools I need to go out and truly make a difference for Christ in my field.”

**College Impact.** Students scored their responses to 16 statements about key learnings during college (4=plenty, 3=some, 2=little, 1=none). A mean and standard deviation for each statement are given in Figure 2. The statements are listed from what students were most confident that they had learned from college on the top, to what they were least confident that they had learned on the bottom. There is no statistically significant difference for those items appearing in the three sections of the chart, but there are interesting gaps between each section that divide the chart into three levels of perceived attainment.

We gave students the opportunity to state whether college had any negative impact: 94% said no and 6% said yes. We expected students to be much more aware of the limitations of their own schooling. (Our expectations, we gather, were the fruit of spending more time reading the higher ed experts than hanging out talking to college students.) From our conversations, we saw that they really had spent little time trying to imagine what was missing, or how the process and expectations of their collegiate experience were limited and had limited their development.

**Missing Pieces.** During the roundtable discussions we were able to get student leaders to discuss a few of the missing ingredients in their educational pies. We also think there are a few other ingredients missing which these students didn’t mention. But first, their own concerns.

Many students wanted to burst the bubble: “The bubble is a protective environment where influences from the outside world are largely kept out and the flock inside relates to itself without venturing too far outside its “safe” boundaries.” The same student recommended that his school pursue continual outreach to local and global communities. The students were very aware that their safe environment was also a sterile environment, and they realized that they needed to be made ready for a bigger, badder world.
Some of the students we talked to found it difficult to be a Christian in a faith-saturated context. For many, the experience had been good for them, but they knew other students who found it hard to see college as an opportunity to grow in faith. Apathy in regard to faith is certainly one of the dangers of living in an environment that has been described as “the womb” and “the bubble.” Sometimes it’s almost harder to have a good faith life at a Christian College, because you are surrounded with so much religion, or faith-centered things (classes, bible studies, chapels, or just being around so many Christians), that you sometimes lose sight of your Christian walk. Other students in the group were quick to add that “you get what you give.” They weren’t comfortable with too much blame being laid at the doors of the institution. We hoped that these students would see the importance of taking responsibility for the nurture of their own faith, and they were interested in talking about what they could and should be doing to get the most out of their experience.

Many student leaders knew that they should be experiencing diversity in all kinds of ways. They knew that their multicultural experiences and awareness were sorely limited, and not only was this not good for them, it was not a good testimony about the reconciling nature of the gospel. “I see a need for a greater emphasis on diversity and expanding multicultural awareness on campus. We should be leaders in providing an atmosphere where people of all races, cultures, and backgrounds can come together and learn from one another while getting a solid education.”

Those of us who work at Christian colleges are used to (and perhaps support) a somewhat paternalistic posture when it comes to matters of faith. After all, we have traditions to uphold. Sometimes the provident caregiver role stretches even wider, however, and these students recognized this as a problem. One student suggested that CCCU institutions work harder “to allow student involvement in planning programs to suit their needs and to better equip them after school.” They want to be treated as adults who have something to say and something to offer.

A few of these leaders were concerned about the academic reputation of their institutions, and they were willing to work harder for a better education. “The bar for academic excellence has fallen, and it needs to be raised... Students are not challenged academically enough... they dread classes and don’t seek to challenge themselves.” The academic standards of our schools “should be comparable to or even exceed the degree of excellence of secular universities.” This assessment may not be shared by many of their peers, but several students from different colleges stated this opinion forcefully.

These student leaders felt like they were being taught foundational Christian doctrine and worldview that integrated and gave direction to their lives. While the rhetoric was there, and a few students were quite articulate about what this meant, many of the students seemed unsure about the meaning of these terms. We think it is likely that the rhetoric of “worldview” (and “the integration of faith and learning” and “servant leadership”) has swept over our campuses, but that students (and perhaps some faculty) are unable to articulate a life-directing biblical vision. We concur with the student who said that we need a “stronger grounding and expressing of Christian worldview. Worldview should not just be something that is taught to freshmen, but brought up as more than just a sidenote in every aspect of college.”

Another student expressed a need for a mentor to help integrate her Christian perspective and new learnings into a plan for professional development. “One of the most important yet elusive skills is the ability to integrate successfully our faith into our professional life in such a way that they are both intertwined so tightly that they’re inseparable. So, as we grow professionally, it only makes sense that we should be challenged to grow personally and apply new knowledge and skills as we learn.” This gets close to our central concern to see Christian higher education reshaped by a commitment to the notion of calling as central to the work of the academy and all of the advising and coaching roles performed in that context.

The research team was concerned about a couple of other things that the students did not mention. So we asked, “Have any of you been involved in research with the faculty at your institution?” This seemed like a strange question to most of the students, possibly because they were not familiar with faculty who are active in research and writing. While student rapport with faculty appears to be extremely good, almost no involvement in faculty research was reported. The stories of student satisfaction with faculty were almost entirely related to the warmth, accessibility, and concern of faculty. The fact that CCCU students lag behind their peers at other institutions in expressing their confidence for providing leadership in their academic fields may be due to the fact that they are missing certain kinds of mentoring which might increase their confidence and prepare them as leaders in this way.

One topic that we could not generate much discussion about was gender. We knew that these students would be conservative, but we still thought they would raise some concerns about gender. While we could get the women to state their desire to have female role models, we needed to suggest this as a concern before it was expressed. It is possible that these students were not ready to talk freely about this issue because it is not an issue that is discussed much on campus. Even if a great deal of progress on multicultural issues has not been achieved by many CCCU institutions, at least the concerns are discussed and debated on campus. We wonder if that is the case regarding gender issues. As evidenced earlier in Figure 2, student leaders rated “an increased awareness and sensitivity toward gender issues” lowest on their list of college learnings.

While several students mentioned the importance of the whole person, none of them connected that issue to the mission...
or role of Student Affairs. We anticipated that they would say how important their RD (or RA) was to them, but we only heard two stories about how residence life staff had coached or tutored or advised them in life-shaping ways. This is not to say that it did not happen much more often. But in discussions about what important things happened to them in college, these stewards of communal life (i.e., student affairs folks) did not register as significant contributors. This may mean that Student Affairs needs to be more clearly connected to the central purposes of these institutions, or simply that these professionals will need to continue to serve faithfully knowing that recognition may not be their reward. If Student Affairs wants to build bridges with Academic Affairs, professional roles and activities may need to be redefined.

**Institutional Improvement.** On the satisfaction survey we gave the students an opportunity to prioritize improvements for their institution. Each student could choose two priorities. The costs, we assured them, would be covered by some rich benefactor. Figure 3 displays students’ primary concerns for improvement.

Students who gave advice to the president of the CCCU in their essay had a few other suggestions related to institutional improvement. The most common recommendation was that faculty provide even more attention to Christianity in the classroom. These student leaders were especially concerned that faculty help them make clearer links to life application and service.

**Observations.** Based on the information that we gathered from this subset of CCCU students, we have a few observations. These will serve as our concluding recommendations.

1. We need to commit ourselves to addressing our cultural isolation. Most of the CCCU campuses we’ve visited have some kind of diversity plan, and plenty of workshops and conversations about multiculturalism, reconciliation, and changing demographics. And yet very little visible change has occurred. This issue is going to require passionate leadership, total institutional commitment, and the allocation of considerable resources. Good intentions haven’t gotten us very far.

2. We cannot remain silent about gender issues. Due to the conservative orientation of many of our students, faculty and other constituencies, these important issues which are at the center of our culture wars have not been adequately discussed and analyzed from a Christian perspective on many of our campuses.

3. We need to work hard to acknowledge and celebrate our successes. Hopefully this data and the FIPSE findings indicate that we are doing some things very well. We need to encourage those who contribute to our excellence, and keep building on our strengths. The high quality of faculty-student interaction appears to be extremely important to student satisfaction, and these students expect to hear their Christian faculty address various disciplines and issues from a Christian perspective.

4. In addition to enjoying and celebrating these good days of institutional growth and student satisfaction, we also need to take advantage of these blessings and work hard to assess and improve. Just because students are satisfied does not mean that student outcomes are being achieved or institutional missions advanced. We need to continue to clarify a faithful vision for improvement, and we need to press on to ensure that students aren’t just learning the rhetoric of the Christian faith. What kinds of college experiences and learnings lead students toward lives of lasting conviction and service?

5. We need to address calling right at the core of the curriculum. We need to help students discover purpose, to help them envision their own future of service, and we need to help them identify and develop the gifts and skills and wisdom that will enable them to provide such leadership. These were the central themes of The Call conferences, and students seized the opportunity to talk about them. Perhaps we ought to make plans to keep such conversations alive.

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I was trapped, like a deer in headlights, with nowhere to turn. I had been asked by the student government executive council to conduct a series of group activities for their retreat, which would assist this group of leaders in understanding teamwork, leadership, and group communication. Oh, and by the way, could you lead us in exercises that grow more progressive in the challenge and learning the group experiences?

What was I to do? As a Dean of Students, I was famished for more student contact, and this was an incredible opportunity that I could not pass up. However, I had not spent every year of my college summers at a camp, I did not have a master’s degree in experiential education, and had only been on a ropes course a few times. This dilemma was admirably resolved by Kaagan’s Leadership Games, a very practical guide to facilitating group exercises designed for leadership development.

As one would guess from the title, Kaagan applies an experiential learning approach to leadership development. The book is organized into eight sections, with the heart of the book focusing on what Kaagan describes as four of the toughest challenges for leaders and those work with them: risk taking, fostering collaboration, managing conflict, and using diversity. An entire section full of exercises is committed to each of these leadership challenges. Within each topical section, Kaagan invokes the learning cycle of interaction, reflection, demonstration, and application to assist the participants in gaining maximum learning about these leadership challenges.

Kaagan sets up this valuable resource by building a case for using an experiential approach to leadership development, followed by a brief review of the current literature on leadership development. This is followed by a discussion regarding the issues surrounding preparation for the exercises, setting up the exercise with participants, do’s and don’ts of facilitating an exercise, and conducting a thorough debrief of the exercise. Thus, one need not be a grizzled facilitation veteran in order to conduct these exercises. This is really a complete, start-to-finish guide which will enable you to work with a variety of groups on your campus in developing leadership.

One aspect of this resource which sets it apart from other books of this nature is the author’s effort to describe in detail the purpose of each exercise, as well as detailed instructions specific to the preparation for, facilitation of, and debrief of that specific exercise. He provides advice on how the facilitator can “stay out of the way” of group process in order to provide a richer experience for the participants. In addition, Kaagan places each exercise, within its own leadership challenge category (e.g., risk taking, innovation), in a progression from introductory to more advanced. This enables the facilitator to target exercises not only to a specific area of leadership challenge, but also to the specific needs of a particularly high- or low-functioning group, or a group which has just begun to work together vs. a group with great familiarity of one another.

One of my personal favorite exercises is the “Innovation Maze”, an exercise about leadership, followership, and innovation. It is easy to set up, gets the group moving and physically involved in solving a problem, and is extremely rich in producing excellent issues for discussion. I have used this exercise many times with a diversity of groups, and have never seen a group fail to vigorously engage the exercise and its implications. Also included is the Collaborative Leadership Qualities Inventory, a brief leadership traits assessment based on the Kouzes & Posner (1991) personal best leadership practices research. This is extremely helpful in creating a positive discussion about what each person brings to the group, as well as potential “gaps” in leadership traits of which the group might need to be aware. It is quickly administered and scored, thus leaving maximum time for discussion of the results.

Kaagan is highly qualified to write on the subject of the use of experiential education in leadership development. In addition to formal graduate preparation at Harvard University, he has served as the President of the Hurricane Island Outward Bound pro-

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Leadership Games: Experiential Learning for Organizational Development
By Stephen S. Kaagan

Money Week 99

By Ron L. Coffey

A CNN Impact report aired in May 1997 noted that many students are adversely affecting their financial future by amassing huge credit card debt. For many students who are attempting to understand how to manage the expectations of their latest syllabus, the topic of personal finance can be quite overwhelming and quite unexciting. Combine this indifference with a credit card industry whose marketing strategies towards college students have been described as “ruthless.”

Spawned in part by these concerns, and juxtaposed by credit card company interest (no pun intended) in being perceived as a resource for helping students to manage their funds and their credit cards wisely, the Money Week 99 program was conceived.

A similar concern that colleges, both secular and Christian, have raised is what if any responsibility does higher education have to train students regarding such issues. More and more there is agreement that there is some shared responsibility between the student and the university. In a recent edition of the Chronicle of Higher Education, a brief article about this issue reported that many institutions have ignored the problem and in some cases even profited from allowing vendors to solicit applications from students. The article further stated that colleges provide programming on issues such as sexually transmitted diseases yet provide no emphasis on financial management.

A primary mode of solicitation used by credit card companies is to obtain student phone numbers. Another method is to utilize the lure of a free t-shirt for filling out an application. At Huntington College, two representatives set up a copier in the dining commons to copy student ID cards as part of the application process and began handing out t-shirts for anyone who applied for a card.

When confronted, the representative claimed to have permission from the Dean of Students whose name, of course, they did not know. This was not the case and in their haste to leave, forgot their small Xerox copier. For many students this seemed like a harmless activity. Once they had more time to reflect, however, many students who applied in exchange for the free tee shirt, wished they hadn’t and asked the Student Development Office what they could do.

The credit card industry understands the impulsive nature of consumers and sees a rich market in traditional age college students. It is clear that credit card companies do not make their money from individuals paying their balance off on a monthly basis. It is difficult to think of life without a credit card in our current culture, and most would agree that the responsible use of such instruments can help build a solid credit rating, while providing traveling protection and general convenience. Clearly, without a context for the impact of inflated interest rates over time and a lack of self-discipline in personal spending, credit cards can and have caused great hardships. A few years ago, Oprah Winfrey interviewed several students on her talk show regarding the issue of credit card debt. All of the students entered into this type of spending without considering the ramifications of their choices. One student summed up the malaise she was in by calling credit cards “the college trap.”

Credit cards can be quite problematic for today’s student but certainly there are many other financial challenges that face students. Do I need insurance when I graduate? If so, how much? Do I lease a car or purchase? What about investments? Should I start now or later? What are my options? All of these questions, along with the credit card issues, made us think about what we could do in the

Continued on page 20
informal classroom to address these topics. A still small voice frequently reminded the planning team during brainstorming that these are not exciting topics. Students might not be drawn to seminars during their discretionary time on the basis of these topics alone. After much consideration, however, the Money Week 99 program was developed.

**Purpose:** To creatively provide programming and a Biblical perspective related to sound financial strategies. As a result of participation in this program, students will gain an understanding of the financial context of the present generation and be better prepared to confront economic realities.

Money Week 99 was designed as a progression of events that would eventually lead to a culmination experience — a combination of three game shows rolled into one. Students needed to participate in the Money Week seminars to gain information used in the culmination experience. Eight topics were selected by the student steering committee to be addressed during the seminars: 1) checking, 2) stewardship, 3) student loans, 4) house or apartment — housing after college, 5) car loans and insurance, 6) credit cards, 7) investments, and 8) health and life insurance.

With the assistance of the Advancement Office, the planning team compiled an extensive list of community resource persons possessing expertise to lead the seminars. Calls were made and in a short time we had professionals to lead the seminars. The recruitment of the experts was a pleasurable task. Most seemed eager to share their experience and information despite our caveat of no solicitation.

More than half of our full-time student body participated in Money Week 99 and the response was positive. “Vital” and “extremely useful” were the comments frequently found on the brief survey instrument that was distributed following the culmination experience. Many students suggested seminar times be extended in order to allow more time for discussion and questions.

Significant incentives, such as airfare as a main prize for the game show, got the attention of students and helped encourage attendance. And we couldn’t have pulled Money Week 99 off without the consulting assistance of our Executive-in-residence, an investment manager with Fidelity for a number of years, and a great student steering committee. Money Week is a program that students now recognize as a significant resource that should help us to market the event in the future.

Ron L. Coffey is the Associate Dean of Students at Huntington College and serves as secretary of ACSD.

**References:**

The Campus Safety program at Taylor University is, like every other facet of the institution, striving to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing society. Although the rapid transformations of our culture sometimes has a dizzying effect on us, those who are called to serve the Lord at Campus Safety remain prayerfully focused on our university’s goal: “Educating men and women for lifelong learning and for ministering the redemptive love of Jesus Christ to a world in need.”

A major challenge for our department has been developing and implementing approaches to law enforcement that are applicable to a Christian institution of higher education. Some would say that Christianity and policing are incompatible, but we have found that nothing could be further from the truth.

Campus Safety at Taylor University is first and foremost a group of believers who possess a firm understanding of human depravity and the fact that salvation can only be obtained through the blood of Jesus Christ. Viewing crime and indiscretion as a spiritual matter allows our personnel to avoid the pitfall of the “Us versus Them” mentality during the commission of their duties. Instead of viewing a person who has committed an impropriety as the source of evil, we approach each situation as a spiritual battle against powers and principalities that have been allowed to influence the individual’s decision making process. We feel that Scripture guides us to examine crime and inappropriate behavior as matters of the heart that must be dealt with prior to the issuance of sanctions.

Our Campus Safety officers understand that overlooking the spiritual aspect of a person for the sake of expeditious punishment leaves the job only half done. Our staff has taken the popular concept of community policing a step or two further in an effort to meet not only the material needs of our citizenry, but the spiritual needs as well.

Campus Safety personnel have derived great value from participating in the lives of Taylor students. Not content with merely performing security tasks, our officers revel with students as they investigate the Holy Scriptures and great literary works for the answers to the grand questions of life.

Instead of viewing a person who has committed an impropriety as the source of evil, we approach each situation as a spiritual battle against powers and principalities that have been allowed to influence the individual’s decision making process.

Intramural participation is a long-standing tradition among our officers. It is not unusual to find members of our staff romping with students on a rain soaked flag football field, skimming their knees as they dive for a wayward volleyball, or playing a highly competitive game of midnight basketball.

We glean professional benefit from letting students see us in a more personal light, but the relationships that emerge from such activities go much deeper than merely obtaining information about someone’s stolen bicycle. These are eternal alliances cemented by hours of enjoyable and sometimes tearful interaction that lends flavor to the special nature of the Taylor community.

Our officers know that our success as an agency depends upon the trust and cooperation of our community, but as former students call us with news about their upcoming weddings, the birth of their children, or new mission assignments, a stirring of the heart occurs that is like no other.

Although many experts consider our strategy criminological heresy, it is hard to argue with its effectiveness. While other universities live in a perpetual state of fear of violent eruptions, Taylor has had only one burglary during a three year span. We offer numerous programs designed to prevent crime but, in the final analysis, this blessing is clearly the work of the Sovereign.

Our Campus Safety officers recognize this and take a prayerful approach to preventing crime on campus. We have not been infallible in this pursuit, but as violent crime remains on an upswing in our country and two-thirds of Americans say they don’t trust their neighbors, it is evident that there is something different about our community.

As Christians serving in the field of campus safety, we feel that this difference is the result of directing those who are charged with misconduct toward salvation through Jesus Christ. Experience has taught us that a relationship with the only Authority who can truly change behavior pays dividends, not just in terms of communal order, but from an eternal standpoint as well.

Michael E. Row is the Director of Campus Safety at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, where he is a member of the faculty. Mr. Row is also a freelance writer who has taught courses in government, history and economics. He is a doctoral student at Regent University.
Leaders Who Make A Difference

Thomas D. Morgan, Ph.D.

Lee Tillman, motivational speaker from Southwest Airlines, began his presentation to a group of hospital executives and board members by circulating through the audience enthusiastically yelling, "Nuts and mints for everyone." His words were accented by tossing nuts and mints to every person in attendance. Needless to say, this novel introduction captured our attention. He proceeded to tell the story of how Southwest Airlines came into being.

The airline’s mission includes offering the "highest quality service to customers, and a stable work environment with equal opportunity for learning and personal growth" for employees. Tillman’s topic was "Developing Leaders Who Make A Difference." As it turned out, the nuts and mints glibly tossed to the audience at the outset of his presentation served as the basis for his talk. The "nuts" illustrated the unconventional, non-conforming “kill bureaucracy, learn to act crazy” philosophy, which Herb Kelleher, CEO, was willing to employ in order to get Southwest Airlines "off the ground." The "mints" represented their philosophy of how to treat employees. Four "mints" were mentioned and expanded upon: Environment, Encouragement, Enjoyment, and Acknowledgement. A central theme was emphasized throughout the entire evening: "It's all about people." 1

Two weeks later a proposal landed on my desk that also captured my attention. The theme of the paper focused upon leadership development of college students. The information suggested that millennials or mosaics, those born between 1984 and 2001, possess characteristics that resist the idea of leadership. Other characteristics of millennials are: relationships matter most, being loved is a high priority, individualism is valued, commitment is taboo, truth is relative, and pursuit of a leadership position is not "in." 2

A third source of information came from the report, “FIPSE through the Eyes of Student Affairs of CCCU Institutions.” The purpose of the report was to provide student development professionals with a snapshot of our efforts to date. The question that triggered the study was “What impact does a Christian College education have on our students?” Data were gathered on leadership development, student learning, service learning, vocational preparation, multicultural awareness, Christian worldview, and dominant pedagogy. A rather disturbing finding is that motivation for leadership among Christian College students is somewhat lower than among their counterparts on secular campuses.

What does this have to do with us? Most of our colleges advertise that we are in the business of producing leaders who can make a difference in the world for Christ. Does it bother you that Southwest Airlines, a secular business, seems to be doing a better job of "developing leaders who make a difference" than we in Christ-centered colleges? If pressed to do so, we can conjure up several reasons as to why we are not producing more leaders. Some frequently used excuses include not having enough resources, non-supportive faculty, lack of sufficient staff, and unresponsive students.

In my opinion, these are hollow excuses used to justify our lethargy. To gain the respect of our faculty colleagues, we must first change our image as being fetchers of the chalk, disciplinarians, and those in charge of fun and games to Student Development professionals interested in developing integrative learning, living, faith-oriented communities. Higher education is rapidly moving toward collaborative learning. If the Christian College is to develop a comprehensive approach to educating the whole person, then efforts to combine curricular and co-curricular offerings must be given high priority on our Student Development agendas.

It seems to me that Christian colleges should have more motivation to move toward educating leaders who possess character and are oriented toward Christian service than secular institutions. We in Student Development cannot afford to keep doing what has worked in the past — that is, just run a program. It is going to take real creativity and uniting of efforts to change the paradigm to meet the needs of the millennial generation. If our dream of collaborative learning is to become reality, we Student Development Professionals will have to initiate the change.

Can we do it?

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Article Sources:

One Heart, One Voice

ACSD June 5-8, 2000 ~ Taylor University, Upland, Indiana
KOINONIA is the official publication of ACSD (Association for Christians in Student Development). The purpose of the publication is to provide interchange, discussion, and communication among Christian professionals in the field of Student Development. It is published three times per year, in early fall, winter, and spring. Both solicited and unsolicited manuscripts and letters may be submitted to the editor for possible publication.

The KOINONIA is mailed to all members of the Association. Annual ACSD membership dues are $25.00 per year. Information on membership may be obtained by contacting Mark Troyer, ACSD Membership Chairperson, Asbury College, Wilmore, KY 40390-1198, (606) 859-3511. Address changes may also be sent to Membership Chairperson.

The ideas and opinions published in the KOINONIA are not necessarily the views of the executive officers, or the organization of ACSD, and are solely those of the individual authors or book reviewers.

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