Faith Learning Integration can be found in all classrooms and across all disciplines at Liberty University. Below is a showcase of some successful examples of Faith Learning Integration.

Conflicts Between Science and the Bible
David Beck, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy

The key question for the university, from its medieval beginnings down to today has been how to coordinate science, understood as the analysis/synthesis of the data of our natural world by the use of our natural capacities of observation and reason, and Scripture, that is, God’s special revelation in the Bible. The standard answer of medieval Christian philosophy is epitomized in Thomas Aquinas and, I think, remains valid today.

He begins with a definition of science in its broadest sense: It is a specified set of data that is approached by a specified methodology. Next question: Is theology a science? Yes, he answers, it is the use of our critical methods that allow us to analyze (exegete) and synthesize (form biblical/theological statements and systems) the biblical data. These methods are really no different than those used by other scientists who deal with original documents, say Shakespeare scholars or Egyptologists for example.

Then what do we do when a proposition of theology is in conflict with a proposition of any other science. The answer is straightforward: You deal with it the same way you deal with conflict within or between sciences, including theology itself. That is, you just keep working at it till you see where exactly the conflict lies and find a way to resolve it. Sometimes that is easy and sometimes it takes centuries. Sometimes we have misinterpreted Scripture, sometimes the facts of science, sometimes both, and often there is a resolution that allows both our interpretations to be correct. Just look at the historical record.

Does inerrancy play a role? Of course God has the final word here. The problem is that inerrancy does not prevent us from misunderstanding, misinterpreting, and misapplying Scripture. Scripture is inerrant but our interpretations and theology not so much. The obvious evidence is that theologians so frequently disagree. So we need to proceed cautiously when these conflicts arise and patiently work on solutions, as we continue to give a reasoned defense of the truth of Scripture.
In the “Western” academic world, dominated by universities in Western Europe, North America, and Australia, among others, Naturalism is the dominant worldview perspective. There are all sorts of naturalists, but at the core, they generally hold that the natural, visible world is all there is. Although there are many nuanced versions, the scientific method remains the dominant means of learning about our world.

In order to relate better to these sorts of often-dominant intellectual sensibilities and still get across the Gospel message centering on the deity, death, and resurrection of Jesus, I developed what I term the “Minimal Facts Method.” It proposes using only data that exhibit two characteristics: 1) Each fact is well-established by multiple arguments from various angles, arrived at by accepted historical standards. 2) As a result, virtually all specialists who work in the relevant areas of research acknowledge and allow the truth of these facts, regardless of their religious belief or unbelief.

This “Minimal Facts Method” is an approach that is designed to establish common ground between believers and unbelievers. The goal is establishing an effective foundation to build towards a more crucial discussion with regard to the Gospel data. It does all this with a “lowest common denominator” type of approach, adding one brick (or fact) at a time, until the resulting wall takes shape. It has been received quite well even by specialists who do not share the underlying Christian beliefs.
One of the greatest challenges that teachers face in the classroom is the student who has special needs or challenging behaviors. If our Great Teacher was in a school today, you would probably find him surrounded by students with special needs (Psalms 72:12-13; Job 29:14-16; Luke 14:12-14). People with special needs are a representation of God’s ability to make great the least of these and that beauty is in all things wonderfully created for his purpose (Psalms 139:14; Romans 12:3, 6; Matthew 25:40 2 Corinthians 12:9).

It is often easier to grasp this great story of beauty and redemption in the disabilities and abilities that are seen and better understood. But one of the greatest challenges for a teacher lies in the unseen afflictions or the difficult student. Teachers often feel priority should be given to the 99 other students that are doing as they should. However, the Good Shepherd left the 99 sheep to save the one sheep (Luke 15:4; Matthew 18:12). As much as the difficult student can try and challenge our faith (James 1), our other students are watching how we demonstrate God’s grace and love. As demonstrated in the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, this difficult student may need the discipline of a loving father, but celebration and favor follow the son’s return. Teachers should – “warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone” (I Thessalonians. 5:14).
Sharing Faith with International Students

Bruce K. Bell, Ph.D., Associate Dean, College of General Studies

Teaching English grammar and composition to international students has its own unique challenges, but as a Christian professor charged with and privileged to share his faith with those students, I seek to reflect Christ’s love and grace in each class. That includes—but is not limited to—my dealings with the students in and outside the classroom. Can they see “Christ in me, the hope of glory”? Additionally, I introduce Scripture at the beginning of class before prayer. Those Scripture passages are chosen carefully for what they say about the nature of God, humankind, sin, and redemption, but they are also used to introduce the day’s lesson. For example, to introduce the lesson on pronouns I highlight subjective, objective, reflexive, and possessive pronouns, reading from Colossians 1:15-20, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

Similarly, when we discuss definition paragraphs, I take these international students to I Corinthians 13, Paul’s exquisite definition of love. While emphasizing that the Scriptures were not written just to teach grammar and composition, they can reinforce the subject for students new to this country and often new to the claims of Christianity.
Theodor Adorno famously declared that there could be no more poetry after the Holocaust, insisting that such a horrific subject could all too easily be sentimentalized or aestheticized and thus stripped of its power. In my ENGL 222 World Literature class, we attempt in fear and trembling to “describe the indescribable” by respectfully, yet realistically, approaching the subject of Holocaust-era literature.

One of the most important points I seek to communicate is the primacy of memory. God continually urges His people to call to mind His redemptive acts in history and to continue telling them to their children and grandchildren. To aid the memory, memorials constructed of standing stones were often erected to commemorate a great miracle done by God. Peter in the New Testament describes all believers in the same language—our lives are ‘standing stones’ in a sense, testifying to God’s great work in our lives (1 Peter 2:5).

But how do we go about confronting a period in history when to many people it seemed as if God was silent or inactive? All too often, those “standing stones” appear to only point to absurdity and man’s inhumanity to man. At this point, I solicit volunteers to read aloud testimonies of 12 survivors of the death camps in order to hear their dehumanizing experiences, but more importantly to capture in their voices the rich and priceless existence of individual lives that the Nazis would have been all too happy to erase. I conclude class by reminding students that as Christians, we imitate God through exercise of our memories since God tells us that He has engraved our names in His hands (Isaiah 49:16). I encourage students to do the same as the names of children killed during the Holocaust scroll silently on the screen, an experience that replicates the Children’s Memorial at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.
For the Christian scholar to impact their students, the academy, and the broader culture, they must first be shaped by their commitment to Christ. Scholastic rigor and a commitment to formative teaching should proceed from and be enhanced by Christian virtues. Often self-promotion, individualism, and selfish ambition are viewed as necessary virtues to rise in the ranks of scholarship. Instead, the Christian academic must die to these kinds of virtues and pick up their cross in integrating academic excellence with the “fruit of the Spirit”: love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. George Mardsen has reminded us that, “People are seldom convinced by arguments, although arguments can be important. Most often in academia people are convinced by a combination of intellect and character” (George Mardsen, The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship, p. 108).
Saint Peter’s instructions, though not specifically about academic engagement, offers guidance for us: “In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15). In all that we do, we are first to set our “hearts to honor Christ the Lord as holy.” While striving for excellence as we teach and research, we must flee the temptation to worship the approval of the broader academy. We can only have one Lord.

Peter also reminds us that our engagement with the world is to be done with “gentleness and respect.” This is the way of the cross. We are called to sacrifice our triumphalism—Christ has triumphed and one day every knee will bow, and on that day we will be vindicated—but that day has not arrived. And, we are not above our Master. The road to glory travels through Calvary—and it’s on Calvary, with bold humility, we must live as we engage with our students and the world as Christian academics.

Integration of Faith and Learning in Medicine

Kenneth Dormer, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Integrative Physiology and Pharmacology Department

Integration of faith and learning in medicine centers on: Judeo-Christian core values regarding life and death; what is the right thing to do when treating another person for their mental, physical or spiritual being and; the essential Biblical fact that mankind is created in the image of God, the *Imago Dei*. Whether teaching medical students or treating and educating patients or instructing graduate students experimenting on physiological mechanisms in the laboratory, such core values are sacrosanct. Learning about life and death, wellness and illness, for the student or for the patient, mankind created in the *Imago Dei* places both constraints and majesty in the conversations. Do we really believe that what we believe is really real?
Medical issues of abortion, physician-assisted suicide, patient co-responsibility for wellness, human trafficking, embryonic stem cell research for genetic therapy and right-to-die---duty-to-die ethical challenges all should be framed within the context of life’s divine origin.

A second tier of integration of faith with learning pertains to the handling of truth. There are truths in medicine, which when applied, lead to healing and wellness. There are mechanistic truths in the physiological laboratory that, when discovered, may be applied in the clinic. There are also Judeo-Christian ethical truths that when applied lead to wellness, personal peace, lasting relationships, better marriages and parenting. For the Christian in medicine or science, absolute truths exist that are immutable and timeless, and they are to be incorporated into the profession and teaching/learning environments. It is loving (to students and patients) to defend truth and confront lies (2 Corn. 10:5). Authentic love “rejoices with the truth” (1 Corn. 13:6).

Business and the Bible

David G. Duby, Ph.D., PMP, Chair, Associate Professor of Business

When a business concept is first introduced, we often note the research behind the concept and end up relating best practices for applying the concept. But some students inevitably wonder, “What does this really look like in a real-world organization?” Thus, in most business curricula, case studies are incorporated to help us connect theory to actual practice. Case studies present outstanding opportunities for students to see the practical application of the terms and concepts discussed in class. Case studies provide an excellent way to integrate biblical principles by allowing us to examine their “real world” applications via studies from scripture.

We know that the Bible is not a book of theoretical concepts. It is a vibrant account of real-world people, organizations, and events—or “cases”—that we can learn from. For example, studying Exodus 18 allows us to see the wise counsel of Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, as he discussed such important principles as leader burnout, delegation, and managerial integrity. In Genesis 33, we read a fascinating account of the risk management Jacob demonstrates when meeting his estranged brother Esau. And in Acts the interchange between Paul and Barnabas regarding John Mark gives us an animated example of conflict within a Christian organization and how the organizational mission is best carried out. These descriptive accounts in Scripture provide a rich context for seeing how both biblical principles and business concepts play out in the
“real world”—and this provides an excellent context for meaningful classroom discussion.

Corporate Formation

Melanie A. Hicks, D.B.A., Chair, Professor of Accounting, Director of Accreditation

Businesses have to choose the right method of corporate formation; whether that is a C Corporation, S Corporation, Partnership, LLC, or Sole Proprietorship. The way a business is formed will have a direct impact on an individual’s personal taxation. After discussing the various forms of businesses in ACCT 412 Taxation II: Corporate Formation, students are asked a variety of questions to determine if the students fully understand the individual ramifications for each form of business entity. We continue the discussion with the different rules and regulations and corresponding tax benefits and consequences.

There are several different biblical truths that come out of these chapters. One of these truths deals with the Parable of the Three Servants in Matthew 25:14-30. God commands us to invest what He gives us wisely. The formation of a corporation allows us to use the money and resources that God has blessed us with to further His kingdom. The proper formation legally minimizes the amount of taxes paid (i.e. still render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s, Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25) and provides the owners with the legal protection needed to further invest in His kingdom. By choosing the proper business entity, we allow our money to grow and invest much like the servant who was given the five talents and the two talents.
Integrating Biblical Concepts and Scientific Mechanisms

Gary D. Isaacs, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biology

Lectures, laboratory sessions, and office hours provide (a) openings to pray and thank God for the privilege of interacting with students; (b) opportunities to relate scripture to learning; (c) and chances to discuss the truth of the world around us. It is easy to see parallels between Biblical concepts and the scientific mechanisms of the natural world. Science is rich in opportunities for illustrations and integration. Science is grounded in facts and truth. Truth is important and steps must be taken to preserve it.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 describes the accuracy of the gospel message as it was passed down from person to person. When teaching genetics, this serves as an exceptional introduction to DNA replication during cell division which requires high fidelity processes to copy DNA in order to sustain the life of an organism. Certain enzymes are responsible for the copying process; others monitor the process to remove mistakes and promote the fidelity of the message. These molecules, like the body of Christ, all have important roles that when brought together for a unified purpose, promote life.

Other genetics topics (mutations, disease, pregnancy, old age) can be approached from a Biblical worldview, and Scriptural principles used as the template for classroom discussions. For example, one illustration can be made from genes. Although cells contain genes which promote life, a cell is only alive because it actively uses those genes, rather than just having the information stored inside. In similar fashion, James 1:22-25 calls Christians to be “doers” of the Word and not just “hearers”.
One of the most common disciplines referenced in the Bible is economics. The Word provides us guidance, caution, and relevance that allow us the opportunity to easily integrate and apply Biblical principles into economic lessons.

In Principles of Economics, each topic can be fully explained in economic sense from a Biblical worldview. When examining production, it is important for a producer to use resources efficiently to maximize the output and to minimize the cost. But it is equally important for them to use their resources wisely, meaning for good purposes. The Bible gives/shares a lesson about efficient production for unwise purposes in the parable about the folly of idolatry, “He cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it” (Isaiah 44:14-15).

In the parable the carpenter is wise in planning and replenishing natural resources. Because of his effort he was able to use the wood for fuel to provide much needed heat. He was efficient in using the same wood to prepare his meal. But, like many people, he then became unwise and fashioned a false idol. In today’s economy, too often, producers – although efficient – are unwise in using God-given resources to produce harmful products.
Determining Parentage

Rena M. Lindevaldsen, J.D., Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Professor of Law, Associate Director of Liberty Center for Law and Policy

When discussing parentage in LAW 601: Family Law, the issue of alternative family structures presents challenges. A common challenge occurs when two women or two men form a relationship and one of them has a biological child during the relationship. A custody battle ensues when the couple separates. In exploring this situation with students, we start with the questions of who is a parent and who makes that determination?

We first examine God’s design for marriage and family. In Genesis 2:24, the Bible states, “a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife...” Genesis 1:28 continues with God’s command to “Be fruitful...” We then discuss God’s view of same-sex relationships as sexual sin. The students realize that it was not God’s plan to deprive a child of a mother and father through same-sex households.

What is the state’s role in resolving custody in this situation? Students learn civil government is God’s servant to promote good and punish evil (Romans 13:1-4). Because God’s standards for family and parentage are clear, government should not advance a family paradigm contrary to scripture. What role should government play in determining parentage? Students learn the parent, not government, is responsible to God for training a child (Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-3). With the exception of abuse, the government lacks the authority to interfere with parenting decisions, including limiting visitation of a former same-sex partner.
Faith and Health: Inseparable

Beverly Mahoney, Ph.D., Associate Dean, School of Health Sciences

Health Promotion is a broad-spectrum profession, with its ultimate goal for health education specialists to provide their students or clients with the knowledge, skills, and supports needed to make informed decisions about their healthy lifestyles. Core courses therefore range from basic human anatomy & physiology through theories of behavior change, program planning & evaluation, and a wide array of health related topics. God created an orderly universe, with systems inside of systems (Genesis 1); everything designed by Him to glorify Him. Human health is much broader than physical health, comprising spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, financial, and other dimensions. Faith encourages healthy behavior, reduces stress, improves emotional health, improves life satisfaction, and provides space for the miraculous (Moll).

In class, we develop community early on, and use the platform of small group work & in class activities to explore how students can integrate their daily professional responsibilities with scripture and the Gospel message. Three brief examples of such integration are:

1. activities surrounding Genesis 1, and the complexity of the macro universe through, human anatomy & physiology, to sub-atomic systems;
2. using delegation (Exodus 18:13-27) and/or Jesus’ assurance (John 14:27) to manage stress; and
3. following Moses’ example for needs and capacity assessments (Numbers 13).

As students learn to recognize the synthesis of health and the Christian worldview it becomes their focus to serve as Jesus directed us, and to assist those in need, whether that is in a professional or personal environment. Prior to graduation they assimilate what they are learning and journal weekly about how they have been able to incorporate their Christian worldview into their internship activities.
Prayer in the Pre-Flight Checklist

James Mashburn, Professor of Aeronautics

Aviation instruction has a unique advantage over traditional classroom instructing in that there is a lot of one-on-one time with instructor and student. Our goal is to utilize this time to not only teach our students the technical skills they need to excel in the cockpit, but also to mentor them for success as a believer in Christ. A few years ago, we published an Aviation Devotional that has now become a part of our training curriculum. It encourages our pilots to integrate their faith with real life situations. We also have a very active mentoring program led by advanced students for lower classmen.

Almost everything a pilot does is part of a checklist. From preflight to landing, our students learn to do it properly and precisely by following a checklist. Part of our Pre-start checklist is prayer. Every single classroom lesson, simulator lesson and flight begins with prayer. Over the years we have actually cancelled or delayed flights because of serious prayer needs that arose during the pre-flight prayer.

Once our students are ready to earn their pilot certificates, they are sent to a FAA representative for testing, and they always include prayer in their checklist usage. We teach our pilots that they are not only being observed for their flying skills but also in their walk with Christ. Some of the examiners are not professing believers, but we have had a tremendous amount of feedback on the student’s positive attitude and Christian walk.
Acting Uncut: Abroad

Chris Nelson, M.F.A., Assistant Professor of Theatre Arts, Summer Arts Coordinator

"I want you to learn stories, not as an exercise in fiction, but in order to walk in mercy. Stories will help you find your way." J.R.R. Tolkien.

Within the Theatre Department we strive to refine our students’ performance and production skills, keeping in mind that the stories they create and re-create have great potential to influence others. This semester I took a team of students to Kitale, Kenya to minister to young people as part of our Acting Uncut: Abroad program. The project brought to life Mark 15:16, “And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation’.”

In preparation, Barry Gawinski, who teaches our Drama in the Church class, teamed to provide his students with an opportunity to utilize assignments as way to enhance storytelling. Students were asked to create stories that would effectively grab the attention of young people, present the work of Christ with clarity, and demonstrate effective performance and production technique. The class was provided with a basic overview of the potential audience: young, street children in the heart of Kitale. Then, two teams within the class went to work preparing wordless dramas, using scripture as their foundation. Students grappled with making theatrical choices that would not only work within the confines of international travel, but also with an audience with a different cultural background. The wonderful part was the end result: students created stories to be used outside the walls of the university for the sole purpose of active, theatrical ministry.
A Biblical Basis for the Study of Literature

Karen Swallow Prior, Ph.D., Professor of English

Literature is worthy of study in its own right. But for the Christian student, the study of literature has even greater significance. Scripture provides a strong foundation for both studying and delighting in literature. Below are just a few of the principles I share with my students when I teach literature classes.

Literature is an art that uses language as its medium. Language is a gift of God (not an accident of evolution). Therefore, to study and enjoy language arts is to appreciate God’s good gift. Furthermore, God created the world through language: he spoke it into existence. He called us to imitate that act of creation in the first work he assigned man: naming the animals. Using language to name things is an act of creativity and power that must be stewarded responsibly. The study of language arts helps us to witness and practice this important act of stewardship.

Reading literary works in light of scripture also helps us to fulfill the command of 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22: “Test all things; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” Literature embodies ideas, characters, and worldviews which provide excellent “tests” from which we can learn indirectly. Biblical figures such as Daniel and Paul set an example for this in demonstrating mastery of literary knowledge which they put to the Lord’s service.

Christians are uniquely a people of the Word. The care and study of words ultimately cultivates in us a love and faithfulness to the Word.
Chemistry highlights how God’s unique, incredible design can be found in every aspect of matter. This design underlines the truth that everything has a purpose. The complexities and intricate details surrounding God’s work prove that He is the Creator. His character can be shown in exhibiting order, beauty, and purpose - contrary to the statements of secular science.

In discussing liquids, the properties of waters fit within the design of life. Using Thermodynamics, one is able to note the problem of entropy and age of the universe. In Biochemistry, the building blocks of proteins (all left-handed amino acids) substantiate that life was purposely designed, not left to chance. Unseen details inside of atoms deliver no less wonder and evidence of God’s intervention: positive protons stay together in the nucleus, while negative electrons remain moving in the space beyond the nucleus. The elaborate system of forces and principles inside a single atom demonstrate that laws of physics at the atomic scale (quantum phenomena) have particular nuances. “By Him all things consist.” (Col 1:17).

Every area of matter, every chemical and physical process, exhibits these details. Beauty, design, and order are evident. Unspectacular metals, at the macroscopic level, are found to be ordered crystals of various sorts at the microscopic level. The crystalline property permits the addition of other materials to make the properties we desire. In God’s brilliant design, He even allowed for us to “take dominion” of the earth with the existence of discoverable principles. Chemistry highlights His majestic design.
Incorporation Faith - A Wholistic Approach

Barbara Sherman, Associate Professor of Education, Director of Individualized Programs of Study

Students enrolled in the Individualized Programs of Study (IPS) program are required to synthesize their area's of study through their Christian worldview. As director for the IPS program, it is important that I assimilate faith integration into my life, worldview and teaching techniques. Students in any faith-based institution watch for truth’s reflection, not only in the classroom, but also as it is “fleshed out” in my life as an instructor. The entire atmosphere of my classroom is one in which the students understand that their professor has a divine calling upon her life to reach into their lives and to share knowledge of the subject matter in a professional manner while, simultaneously, reaching into their hearts with a sincere and earnest desire to make them enlarged, faithful children of God—children who grow in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” because they see it lived out in the role models before them in the classroom. As a teacher, I help create within students a deep, abiding yearning to live godly lives that evidence care for work, care for others, and devotion to their faith.

This can only be because I have (1) been saved by the grace and mercy of Christ, (2) drunk deeply at the well of devotion to his fellows, and (3) determined to daily walk in the Way. “But if we keep living in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another …”(I John 1:7). As Dr. Falwell was our model for doing that, I scoured his speeches for particularly moving excerpts for my CLST 301 Advanced Reading/Vocabulary students to review and consider. For example, “God never called anyone to be a quitter. The word 'retreat' should not be in the Christian's vocabulary. The only way is upward and onward for the Lord.” Spiritual mindset and lifestyle are what students assess as real and truthful. Professors who “walk the walk” are the ones to whom students turn for the reality of faith integration.
Integration of Faith and Learning within Relationships

Elizabeth Sites, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology

Much research has focused on the best ways to integrate faith and learning. The curriculum must reflect Biblical worldview. In addition, many researchers found that integration is “caught [more than] taught” (Sorenson, 1994, p. 342). Students are more impacted by the people with whom they share a relationship. “Integration is as much about a who as a what: affectively engaged relationships seemed to shape how students learn integration, with current mentoring relationships” (Sorenson, Derflinger, Bufford, & McMinn, 2004, p. 356).

To encourage integration, even in large classes, I strive to get to know the students as people: their names, where they are from, their major… I try to arrive at least 15 minutes before class and stay after class so I can interact with the students, checking on their prayer requests and their lives. We begin class each day building connections with the Lord through the Bible and sharing prayer requests. I pray for and with my students as they need it, in class, in the hall, in my office and through emails. I encourage the students to connect with each other through group work, problem solving and critical thinking, even in the large classes. My husband and I invite the classes to our home once a semester, for a big pot of something and lots of fellowship. We try to attend their events outside of class, basketball, theater, music. Building relationships with students is as integral to integration as sound curriculum.
In philosophy of education, we implement critical thinking by evaluating theoretical assumptions through a biblical lens. For instance, various learning theories assume that the nature of the learner is basically good (Rousseau and Dewey), sinful (Aquinas and Calvin), or neutral (Locke and Skinner). These assumptions hold clear implications for instructional practice. In light of Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:23, and Romans 7:23, students typically conclude that a biblical perspective assumes that the nature of the learner is basically sinful. When we do the following activity, however, they also consider the instructional implications of considering that their students are created in God’s image.

Francis Schaeffer provided a grid to evaluate worldviews. We apply his following questions to several theories: (a) What does the theory claim is right with the world? (b) What does the theory claim is wrong with the world? (c) What does the theory propose be done to correct the wrongs of the world? When students apply these questions to diverse theories, they begin to understand the distinctive differences—especially when they apply the three questions to a biblical worldview that would answer the questions with (a) all people are made in God’s image, (b) all are sinful as a result of the fall, and (c) Christ’s redemption is needed to restore humanity. After applying this grid, future teachers begin to see the importance of considering, first of all, that their students are made in God’s image and can therefore reason and create. A perspective of the nature of the learner is skewed if it focuses solely on sinfulness, neglecting that learners are made in God’s image.
As we prepare future teachers, we encourage both those in public and those in Christian schools to instill critical thinking skills so their students are prepared to compare and evaluate all worldviews.
Knowing Your Audience

Tess Stockslager, Assistant Professor, Director of the Center for Writing and Languages
In both the Center for Writing and Languages and many of the writing courses offered here at Liberty, we place quite a bit of emphasis on the genres of writing. Not only is academic writing just one correct way to write among many, but there are also many ways to do academic writing—a research paper, a lab report, a discussion board, a conference presentation. Each genre has its own conventions, and each is appropriate to a particular context and audience. Trying to apply the conventions of one genre in the wrong context—for example, following the rules of the literary analysis genre while writing a legal brief—can lead to confusion for both writer and audience.

As Christians charged with communicating a message, we need to remember a similar principle. The gospel is a constant, unchanging message that can take on an infinite variety of forms. As is the case when choosing a genre of academic writing, knowing one’s audience is crucial when communicating the gospel. It’s even more crucial, actually, because although there may be some general principles for sharing the gospel with a particular demographic, such as children, God speaks, and uses us to speak, in a unique way to each person.

Speaking God’s words to real, non-abstract people takes emotional intelligence. It takes empathy. It takes the ability to analyze a situation and choose the right course of action. As it turns out, it takes a lot of the same qualities that make a good writer.

Faith Integration In Spanish

David Towles, Ph.D., Director of Liberty Spanish Institute, Professor of Spanish

During the early days of the university, Dr. Falwell used to talk often about our “action-oriented curriculum.” Spanish classes provide an excellent opportunity to demonstrate this kind of action orientation.

- Grammar features a purpose that stretches beyond that of learning a skill and getting good grades to the essential outcome of communicating God’s word and love through Spanish (Psalms 19:14).
- Culture highlights the distress of a deprived Latin American people in need of Christ (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
• Literature seeks to measure the futility of seeking fulfillment according to a worldly rubric that falls far short of God’s standards (2 Peter 3:16).

One of my favorite activities features prayer partnerships that I form with individual students (James 5:16). All it entails is a sharing of prayer requests, praying for each other separately, and then meeting briefly before or after classes to share updates. What results is a beautiful array of spiritual relationships without the complexities that can arise from frequent office visits.

In following the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), this action-oriented curriculum seems to appear most fully in Guatemala, where students spend two months each summer participating in intensive language instruction and equally intensive efforts toward sharing the Gospel in Spanish. Typically these labors result in eternal outcomes as, each summer, dozens of destitute Guatemalans accept Christ as their Savior.

**Engineering Equation for the Christian Life**

**John L. Vadnal, Ph.D, Professor of Engineering and Computational Sciences**

In ENGI 220 Engineering Economy, I give the students an assignment to explore Biblical references to financial resources, contrast these with how society portrays money, and discuss how Biblical and societal influences affect the financial decisions in their life. In ENGR 110 Introduction to Engineering and Problem Solving, the students review selected sections of the National Society of Professional Engineers Code of Ethics and develop plausible scriptural references that could be used as a basis for the ethical statements. The students also develop a biblically-based position paper dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. In ENGR 131 Calculus for Engineers, I show the students that a Christian’s life can be summarized in a simple, standard calculus equation (which can be found on the inside cover of many calculus textbooks):

\[ \int du = u + C \] (note: it is always lower case \( u \) and upper case \( C \))

Here, \( u \) is the independent variable, \( C \) is the constant of integration, and the symbol \( \int \) represents the sum of the infinitesimal parts (\( du \)). We, as Christians, have lives filled with infinitesimal moments, and are independent variables with free will. The best way to live life is to join with the only constant in our life, Jesus Christ, and remember John
3:30, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” If Christ is increased in your life (upper case C = Christ) and you stay small (lower case u = you), you will live a sum of infinitesimal moments that will glorify the King of Kings.

Service Learning

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“Why serve?” is a question I ask students in GNED 102: Contemporary Issues II, when teaching the topic of community service. The idea of service is embedded in the scripture from Genesis to Revelation. The Genesis account gives Adam and Eve creation ordinances or rules to live by. One command is to care for His creation and each other. But Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. This rebellious act caused a shift in humanity’s thinking from taking care of creation and each another to a more self-centered focus. Service chases away selfishness and returns the focus to God’s original intent.

Service has a direct connection to the Christian faith. This metanarrative is God’s story embraced by and embodied in Jesus Christ. Jesus came to earth to set an example of a life lived for God and service was a fundamental part of His life. I challenge the students with Jesus’ motto, “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). As students think redemptively, their mindsets are motivated toward service. Through Jesus’ example, students recognize that serving is more than a graduation requirement, it is a lifestyle transformation. When students learn to be the salt, light (Matthew 5:13) and leaven (Matthew 13:33) they become a godly influence wherever God places them.