

ADVENTIST EDUCATION



TEACHING PHILOSOPHY in ADVENTIST SCHOOLS



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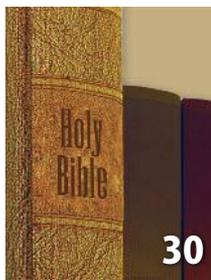
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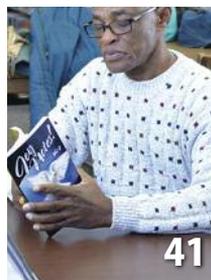
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Zane Yi

THINKERS OR REFLECTORS?

Young Adult Retention, Philosophy, and Adventist Education

Researchers from the Barna Group recently shared some disturbing results with Seventh-day Adventist leaders in the North American Division, based on a survey of Adventist young adults (18-29) regarding their perceptions of Christianity.¹ A surprising number of them, in some cases double the percentage of young adults from other denominations, held negative views about their own faith: Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed thought Christians were “doubtless”; 47 percent perceived Christianity as being “anti-science”; and 36 percent described the church as “overprotective.” Other words the young people used to refer to Christianity were “shallow” and “repressive.”²

These numbers were both illuminating and alarming for the leaders in attendance because they provided insight into the problem of young adult retention. Given the responses, what should the church do? The presenter made three general suggestions along practical lines. Churches need to foster intergenerational relationships, provide opportunities and platforms for young adults to share their stories, and practice forgiveness and acceptance.

These suggestions are doubtlessly an important part of the solution, but they do not address the substantial intellectual issues underlying these negative views shared by young adults. For example, the view that Christianity is “doubtless” or “anti-scientific” remains a problem even if young adults experience warm, nurturing relationships with others in a local congregation. Young adults must learn how to handle doubt and think about science in relationship to their faith. In other words, they must learn to be “thinkers, not mere reflectors” of others’ thoughts.³

But how does one teach someone to think? Learning *how* to think, rather than just *what* to think, requires practice. This is where educators play such a crucial role. Critical thinking is a skill that moves beyond memorization and regurgitation. In order to gain competency, students must be exposed to the world of ideas and taught to critically engage them. They need to be encouraged to respectfully express agreement and disagreement with others, and to graciously articulate their own views. The academic discipline that focuses on doing this, however, has traditionally been absent in Adventist education. Phi-

losophy is misunderstood and underappreciated, and courses in it are offered inconsistently.

This is partially due to a legitimate fear. We want to protect our students from ideas that might be harmful to their developing faith.⁴ But this also leaves them unprepared to deal with the real world when they move beyond the perceived safety of the classroom. Another reason for our underappreciation of philosophy is the advice we have received from Mrs. White, who emphasized exposing students to the Bible and nature and was critical of education focused solely on an exposure to human ideas.⁵ But could it be that these are not mutually exclusive?

In November 2011, an international group of Adventist educators, pastors, and scholars gathered in San Francisco, California, to consider the teaching of philosophy in a Christian, and more specifically, Adventist educational context. In this issue of *THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION*, we are sharing three papers originally presented at the conference. Richard Rice directly addresses some of the common objections to studying philosophy, arguing that such study harmonizes with a holistic vision of Adventist education. He describes ways that the study of philosophy has helped (rather than hindered) him to achieve a better understanding of the Bible. Shawna Vyhmeister shares a model she has developed to help students understand and navigate the relationship between the principles of Scripture, Adventism, and philosophical ideas. Students must learn to see the similarities and differences between the truths found in these different sources and engage in the hard work of synthesizing and integrating these truths. Lastly, Jim Londis proposes a template for teaching an introductory philosophy course to college students. In doing so, he provides a succinct summary of some of the major issues and ideas explored by leading figures of Western philosophy.

Some teachers with limited exposure to philosophy may feel unqualified to teach philosophy or think it should be relegated to postsecondary education. However, critical thinking is a skill that should be acquired much earlier than in college (much like reading and math) and can be learned when modeled by teachers who have dared to go beyond reflecting to thinking carefully and deeply about the issues broached in philosophy.

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PERIL AND PROMISE

Teaching Philosophy in an Adventist Context

“Remember, if you’re not thinking, you’re not living.” With these words I ended each session of the “Intro to Philosophy” class I taught for many years to undergraduates on the La Sierra University campus in Riverside, California. It was my version of Socrates’ famous dictum, “The unexamined life is not worth living”¹ which, in turn, was his gloss on “Know thyself,” the inscription on the walls of Apollo’s shrine at Delphi.

If the fundamental purpose of philosophy is to cultivate “the life of the mind,” to invoke an expression I often heard at the University of Chicago, there is a good deal in the Seventh-day Adventist mentality that potentially supports an interest in philosophy. There is also a good deal in the Ad-

ventist mentality that will arouse suspicions about philosophy, or at least raise serious questions. Let’s deal with the negatives first.

Why Do Adventists Have Reservations About Philosophy?

One reservation about philosophy arises from a strong belief in our community that education should have a practical pay-off. As a familiar saying puts it, “Philosophy bakes no bread.” Another aspect of the Seventh-day Adventist outlook that makes us suspicious of philosophy is our robust doctrine of sin. We believe that the Fall affects the whole person—mind as well as body—and we thus cannot trust our intellects to lead us to truth. The epistemic effects of sin cloud our thinking and leave us susceptible to error and deception. Human reason is unreliable.

As the Bible says, “There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12, NRSV).² From this vantage point, philosophy strikes many as the vain imaginings of fallen human beings, with predictably unfruitful and potentially dangerous, even disastrous, consequences.

Given their visceral suspicion of human “speculation,” Adventists believe that only divine revelation provides reliable knowledge, especially when it comes to matters of ultimate significance. And so we look to religion, rather than to philosophy, for answers to life’s major questions. In recent years, this has taken the form of insisting that we must derive our presuppositions directly from the Bible,

BY RICHARD RICE

not from other sources, and particularly not from philosophy.³ By extension, this means that the essential fault of rejected positions is their reliance on unbiblical presuppositions—in particular, their reliance on philosophy. So, it is not surprising that Adventist colleges and universities have few faculty members with academic training in philosophy, and few who teach the subject.

With all this in mind, we have to wonder if philosophy has a place at the Seventh-day Adventist table, and if so, just what its role might be. However, if the fundamental purpose of philosophy is to cultivate the life of the mind, to encourage careful and critical thought, then there are also elements in the Seventh-day Adventist spirit that provide a strong mandate for philosophy in the curriculum of an Adventist college or university.

For one thing, Seventh-day Adventists have always been concerned with keeping God's commandments, and the "greatest and first commandment," as Jesus formulated it, is to love God "with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37, NRSV). So, the mind's love for God is just as important as every other form our devotion takes. The very meaning of the word *philosophy*, "love of wisdom," suggests that it has an integral role to play in the mind's love for God.

Another feature of the Seventh-day Adventist spirit that arguably supports the value of philosophy is our vision of the "whole person." Adventists maintain that human existence comprises physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual dimensions—all inseparably connected and intimately intertwined. This conviction lies behind the Adventist "health message," as well as our commitment to education. We believe that all the powers of the soul—mental as well as physical—should be cultivated to the highest degree.

A third element in the Seventh-day

Adventist spirit that supports an interest in philosophy is our dedication to mission. The world encompassed in the gospel commission—"all the world"—is not only the physical world, but also the cultural and intellectual world. A mission that is truly global will seek ways to communicate with privileged as well as underprivileged people, with those who have cultural and educational advantages, as well as those who lack them.

We need philosophy in order to communicate the gospel in ways that will engage thinking people. We need to appreciate the distinctive challenges to faith that are influencing people's attitudes today. And we need philosophy to understand the long history of reflection on the Christian faith. In centuries past, great minds pursued philosophy and theology as collaborative disciplines. Philosophy was often described as "the handmaid of theology."⁴ To understand the forms in which Christianity has come to us, we need to understand the philosophical concepts at work in its various historical expressions.

When I was in graduate school years ago, people asked me questions now and then about the wisdom of my decision to study at "an outside institution." I sometimes replied by quoting the following statement of Ellen G. White: "We would that there were strong young men, rooted and grounded in the faith, who had such a living connection with God that they could, if so counseled by our leading brethren, enter the higher colleges in our land, where they would have a wider field for study and observation. Association with different classes of minds, an acquaintance with the workings and results of popular methods of education, and a knowledge of theology as taught in the leading institutions of learning would be of great value to such workers, preparing them to labor

for the educated classes and to meet the prevailing errors of our time."⁵ I think the same holds for philosophy. A knowledge of how educated people think, of what they are thinking about, and of what's being taught in the world's most influential institutions, is indispensable if we hope to present the gospel in a way that will address their interests and concerns.

If the study of philosophy can help to fulfill the potential of the "whole person," cultivate the life of the mind, encourage careful and critical thought, enlarge our circle of conversation, indeed, even enhance the effectiveness of our Christian witness, then there appears to be a strong mandate for philosophy in the curriculum of a Seventh-day Adventist college or university. Here are some of the things that philosophy can do.

Cultivating the Art of Critical Reflection

First of all, philosophy cultivates the art of critical reflection—traditionally, the heart of the philosophical enterprise. Young people need philosophy in order to grasp and appreciate the various currents that flow through the thinking of people in the world today. We are painfully reminded on a regular basis of the clash of cultures, ideologies, and mindsets that affect the lives of millions around the world. Philosophy can help us discern and analyze the divergent ways that people view the world in which they live. Carefully reflecting on the fundamental convictions that underlie the way people live—the "basic beliefs" that form the framework or foundation of all thought and experience—can help us appreciate the divergent perspectives of those around us.

Philosophy as an Aid in Problem Solving

Second, if indeed philosophy creates problems—and this is often the case,

admittedly—we need philosophy to help us solve these problems. The solution to bad philosophy is not *no* philosophy, it's *better* philosophy. To cite my own area of interest once again, the traditional Christian view of God as immobile, immutable (and ultimately insensitive) is arguably due to the unfortunate dependence of Christian thinkers on the static ontology of Greek philosophy. The best way to counter this is not to reject philosophy *ueberhaupt*, but to show that a dynamic ontology such as that of process thought has metaphysical advantages over the classical view and provides a more promising way to portray the dynamic God of biblical revelation.

Reason's Contributions to Faith

Third, while I have always embraced the priority of faith over reason, I have found that reason can make important contributions to faith. In fact, it was my desire to explore more fully the contours of faith, to shine a rational light on Christian faith, and to place my long-held beliefs under the light of careful scrutiny that led me to a deeper appreciation of philosophy.

Several experiences in my childhood had a lasting effect on my religious outlook. A long series of family problems made me sensitive to life's larger issues at an early age. And the solace my religious beliefs provided along with the reassurance I drew from my religious community confirmed the value of my convictions on a deeply personal level. At the same time, the difficulties we faced left me unconvinced by facile assurances about "God's protecting care" and "God's perfect plan." So, I felt God's presence in my life, but the feeling did not provide easy answers to some important questions.

On the whole, graduate school turned out to be a faith-confirming experience. I discovered that the central claims of Christianity could stand up

The most striking challenge to Christianity, and religion generally, in the late 1960s came from philosophy, indeed from a particular branch of philosophy. A growing number of people were asking serious questions about the meaning, or lack of meaning, of religious language.

to searching, rational scrutiny. I also found both that philosophy presents Christianity with some of the most formidable challenges it has to face, and that philosophy also provides Christian faith some of the most important resources available. When it comes to theology, therefore, philosophy is both inescapable and indispensable.

This could not have been more clear than during the years just before I started my studies. The most striking challenge to Christianity, and religion generally, in the late 1960s came from philosophy, indeed from a particular branch of philosophy. A growing number of people were asking serious questions about the meaning, or lack of meaning, of religious language. During the 20th century, logical positivism had worked its way through science to religion. And a number of thinkers, Alfred J. Ayer, Antony Flew, and others,⁶ argued forcefully for the view that religious language in general, and the locution *God* in particular, had no cognitive significance. Whatever emotive purpose it may serve, they insisted, it communicates nothing about the way things are. It is literally non-informative. In time, a number of (so-called) theologians capitulated to this critique, and the "death of God" movement emerged to widespread public attention, as evidenced by the most famous cover in the history of

Time magazine—the Easter issue of 1966. The question "Is God Dead?" appeared in bold red letters against a black background.⁷

The theologians where I studied confronted this challenge head-on, addressing it in both philosophical and theological dimensions. They wrote and lectured on the value of religious language, drawing on various philosophical resources: analytical, phenomenological, and metaphysical. To paraphrase one of their more memorable statements, however absurd the idea of God may seem to some, nothing could be more absurd than the idea of Christian faith without God. The arguments they offered to counter this fundamental challenge to faith were impressive, and their confidence in addressing the challenge was contagious.

True, the configuration of Christianity they embraced was different from what I was used to, but the most important thing they provided their students was the assurance that faith could stand up to the most formidable challenges that secular thought could mount. They imparted the abiding conviction that Christian faith has nothing to fear from engagement with the modern mind. Belief in God is not

merely a viable option, one among several possibilities. When carefully articulated, it provides by far the most adequate, and intellectually defensible, interpretation of human existence, superior to all alternatives. Furthermore, as their work demonstrated, philosophy makes an important contribution to theology. In fact, in certain situations the resources that philosophy provides are indispensable.

A Better Understanding of God

Let me be even more specific. My philosophical reflections led me to a better understanding of the Bible. Captivated by Greek philosophy, traditional Christian thought presents us with a timeless God who is utterly self-sufficient and completely unaffected by anything that happens in the creaturely world. Such a picture obviously conflicts with the biblical portrait of a God who cares intensely for His earthly children and even notes when a sparrow falls. The history of Christian thought is filled with attempts to pull these two together (a timeless God and a temporal world), none of them very convincing. If we shift our philosophical focus in ways that allow for us to think of ultimate reality as both changing and unchanging, both temporal and eternal, however, we can honor the desire to elevate God beyond all creaturely limits and yet affirm God's intimate relation to us. And my study of philosophy provided a way to do this.

Limitations of Philosophy

At the same time, I realized that every philosophical position has its limitations. The God of Christian faith is larger than any philosophical program or position. Consequently, when it comes to philosophy and its potential uses, we would do well to remember Paul's injunction to the Thessalonians: "Test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21, 22).

There may be liabilities or risks in

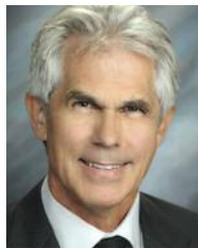
allowing philosophy within the Seventh-day Adventist school. But the dangers of excluding it are even greater. Limited perspectives, a false sense of security, intellectual defensiveness—philosophy can be an antidote to these very real threats. Acquainting our students with various philosophical positions, helping them to do their own thinking, showing them that careful reflection can go hand in hand with religious devotion, demonstrating that truth can be fair and has nothing to fear from close investigation⁸—all these are facets of the task that Adventist philosophy teachers face.

Rewards of Philosophy

But all this misses one of the most important purposes of philosophy. Whatever its many uses, any good philosophy professor would tell us, philosophy is its own reward. Like the play of a child, it may have no goal but itself, but that can be quite enough.

A mind at work is a beautiful thing to see. It is even more beautiful to experience. Like music, the flow of ideas, carefully and thoughtfully arranged, can be a source of pleasure and of joy. After all, if we're not thinking, we're not living. 🍀

This article is slightly adapted, with permission from the author, from a presentation at the Second Annual Symposium of the Society of Adventist Philosophers titled "Teaching Philosophy: Promise or Peril?" which was held on November 17 and 18, 2011, in San Francisco, California.



Richard Rice, Ph.D., joined the faculty of Loma Linda University Riverside in 1974 and has taught a number of classes in philosophy over the

years at both Loma Linda and La Sierra universities. His latest book, *Suffering and the Search for Meaning*, will be published by InterVarsity Press in July 2014.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Plato, "Apology," *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, translated by Harold North Fowler; Introduction by W. R. M. Lamb (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd., 1966), vol. 1, Section 38a.

2. Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible texts in this article are quoted from the NRSV. Bible texts credited to NRSV are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright ©1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

3. Kwabena Donkor concludes an article in a newsletter from the Biblical Research Institute several years ago with this pronouncement: "So where should Adventists stand? . . . [W]e should stand on the biblical foundation without any philosophical footings" ("Open Theism: A Review of the Issues," in *BRI Newsletter* 16 [October 2006], p. 6). Compare this statement from the article on God by Fernando L. Canale in *The Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, which refers to the "Adventist emphasis on Scripture as the sole source of data for executing theology": "Systematically distrustful and critical of traditional theological positions," it states, "Adventists were determined to build doctrines on the basis of Scripture alone" (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 2000], p. 148).

4. The origin of this expression is the *Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150 to ca. 215).

5. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, pp. 583, 584.

6. For example, see Alfred J. Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic*, first published in 1936 (Courier Corporation, Dover Edition, 2012), a classic in the field of analytic philosophy. Antony Flew's famous essay, "Theology and Falsification," which appeared in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre, eds. (Norwich, U.K.: SCM Press, 1955, 2012), contains this assertion.

7. *Time*, April 8, 1966. A follow-up cover of sorts came three and one-half years later. It read, "Is God Coming Back to Life?" (December 26, 1969).

8. Cf. Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publ. Assn., 1946), p. 35.



ELECTICIS

Peril or Promise in Adventist Philosophy Classes?

Over the years, eclecticism has been both hero and villain. A simple definition will provide some clue as to why this is so. One online dictionary defines *eclecticism* as “selecting or employing individual elements from a variety of sources, systems, or styles.”¹ Depending on how the idea is interpreted, the concept of eclecticism can be seen as everything from a pragmatic, common-sense approach that includes seeing the good in every situation and combining good ideas from various locations, to an ill-thought-out collection of concepts without a defining purpose.² This negative view of eclecticism depicts it as the product of a lack of philosophical rigor, and that if one tackled his or her investigation in a more academic manner, the conclusion would be more uni-

formly systematic, rather than drawn from multiple sources, making eclecticism unnecessary.

During my own doctoral program, I struggled with these concerns,³ which I labeled “ambiguity,” but I eventually realized that clearer language and better thinking would not solve this dilemma: Each theory I studied presented some things that were good, as well as some things that were undesirable. Becoming more comfortable with this ambiguity, I began to see it “as a sort of primordial soup out of which can spring rich new thinking and deeper understanding both of myself and of the world I live in.”⁴ This sort of constant seeking for the good and the useful in every theory and trying to find ways to combine these ideas into larger theories is more satisfying than sim-

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ply following someone else's path without understanding why or automatically accepting as a package things that might not need to be lumped together. There are those, however, who feel that Christianity should provide a complete philosophical package in which everything fits together and merges into a unified plan to which everyone ought to subscribe.⁵

Eclecticism and Adventism

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was founded in the modern era, with very modernist doctrines. For Adventists, truth is frequently spelled with a capital T, revelation is an acceptable form of authority, and most morality is not relative. Ellen White, as God's messenger, helped develop biblically sound doctrinal and philosophical foundations for the Adventist Church that make a good deal of logical sense. These beliefs are so sound, in fact, that Adventist philosophy teaching has frequently been reduced to the simple reproduction of already accepted and digested truths, rather than searching for truth and wrestling with contradictory ideas.

The more the world embraces the mixing of Eastern and Western philosophy, combining pagan and Christian ideas, the more some individuals retreat into the "safe" territory of received truth that allows for no adaptation, growth, or creativity. But truth that does not continue to grow and adapt may find itself irrelevant to a new generation of thinkers. Truth is not a cut flower that is handed down from parents to children, or teachers to students, but rather a seed that must be planted, watered, and tended so that it will grow in the hearts of the next generation and bear fruit. And as that seed grows, it may look different from the parents from which it sprang. We cannot expect it to be otherwise. This is not a case of diluting the truth, and certainly not of revising views about revealed Truth, but merely the natural adaptation of a living thing as God's Spirit interacts with different kinds of believers over time.

Many Adventists, however, take the idea of the unity and immutability of *Adventist philosophy* very seriously. They believe it is a body of knowledge that is learned and handed down to our children verbatim. They regard it as complete in itself, without need of either being mixed with other forms of philosophy or even being compared to them.

I meet doctoral students in every class I teach who feel that the Adventist philosophy is so complete and all-encompassing that they should not risk studying any other sort of information about philosophy, lest their thinking be contaminated.

They thus limit their reading to only Adventist authors, and consider Ellen White's educational philosophy as the end of any discussion. They reason that there should be nothing to talk about anyway, since Adventists all share the same philosophical base.

But when asked whether all Adventists must be idealists or pragmatists, modernists or reconstructionists, or even if they themselves subscribe to a single philosophical perspective, most of my students will hesitantly admit that there are differences among church members, but this still seems dangerous or wrong to them. And for some, to label these differences as eclecticism is anathema. So the differences are usually either denied, covered up, or downplayed in an effort to make the body of Christ uniform in every way possible.⁶

The Need to Learn to Filter

Christian schools agree on and share a set of philosophical beliefs in a way that secular institutions do not.⁷ As two Christian educators have put it, "Within the context of Christian schools, the moral differences and attitudes among the staff are less blurred and more universal."⁸ Of course, given their shared biblical foundation, this is not surprising. And whatever is built on this foundation must be tested using the Bible as a filter, and keeping only the parts that apply. George Knight explains the process in this way: "for the Christian, the Bible is the foremost source of knowledge and the most essential epistemological authority. All other sources of knowledge must be tested and verified in the light of Scripture."⁹

Unfortunately, perhaps because of this tendency toward shared beliefs, Christian schools are not always adept at teaching their students how to deal with contradictory ideas. Nor do they necessarily develop a process for using the Bible as an instrument for testing new concepts. Indeed, the Bible itself teaches us that Christians do not have a monopoly on God's truth, and that we need to learn to filter things. God told Ezekiel: "teach my people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 44:23, NIV).¹⁰

In her article "The Bible and Psychology,"¹¹ which discussed the preparation of Christian psychologists, Donna Habenicht provided some advice that parallels the concerns I have raised here about the field of philosophy. Habenicht used a model developed by Jones and Butman in 1991 to illustrate the basic concepts such a model would contain. This may be part of the

answer to questions about teaching philosophy in an Adventist context. We need to provide students with opportunities to build their own models and evaluate and integrate secular ideas, while always “basing their work on the Biblical model.”¹²

The Interplay Between a Biblical Worldview, Adventist Philosophy, and Traditional Philosophies: A Proposed Model

A list of shared beliefs and values is a good starting point for helping students build their own understandings, which will help them filter new information. Rather than listing the specific elements required in a Christian worldview,¹³ however, this article focuses on presenting and discussing a model that I have developed in my philosophy classes. This model attempts to bridge the gap between secular and Christian philosophy by showing the relationships between a biblical worldview, Adventist philosophy, and traditional philosophies as typically presented in secular settings. An approximation of this relationship is shown in Figure 1 (note that the drawing cannot be completely accurate because of several complexities, which are not possible to show in a two-dimensional drawing).

This model is proposed as a basis from which students can develop their own dynamic filter system, which will be much more useful than a static list. The major features on which this understanding is based are as follows:

1. As Christians, the biblical foundation is the primary basis for our philosophy, no matter what biases we hold.

2. There are elements within Adventist philosophy, such as the Adventist health message, that logically extend the biblical perspective.¹⁴ These extensions must be based in biblical truth and in harmony with scriptural principles.

3. Traditional philosophies should be seen as “ideal types, rather than mutually exclusive belief systems.”¹⁵ People use these traditional philosophies more as primary colors from which to paint their personal perspective, rather than as separate categories from which to choose a single viewpoint. The “Traditional Philosophies” section of Figure 1, therefore, is not neatly divided into four categories (or whatever number you prefer), but rather, these lines are blurred, as each individual may subscribe to a mixture of perspectives.

4. For a Christian, these traditional philosophies (even in the case where an individual subscribes to only one) are not entirely pure. An Adventist might have Idealist leanings, for example, but only as far as those tendencies fit within his or her

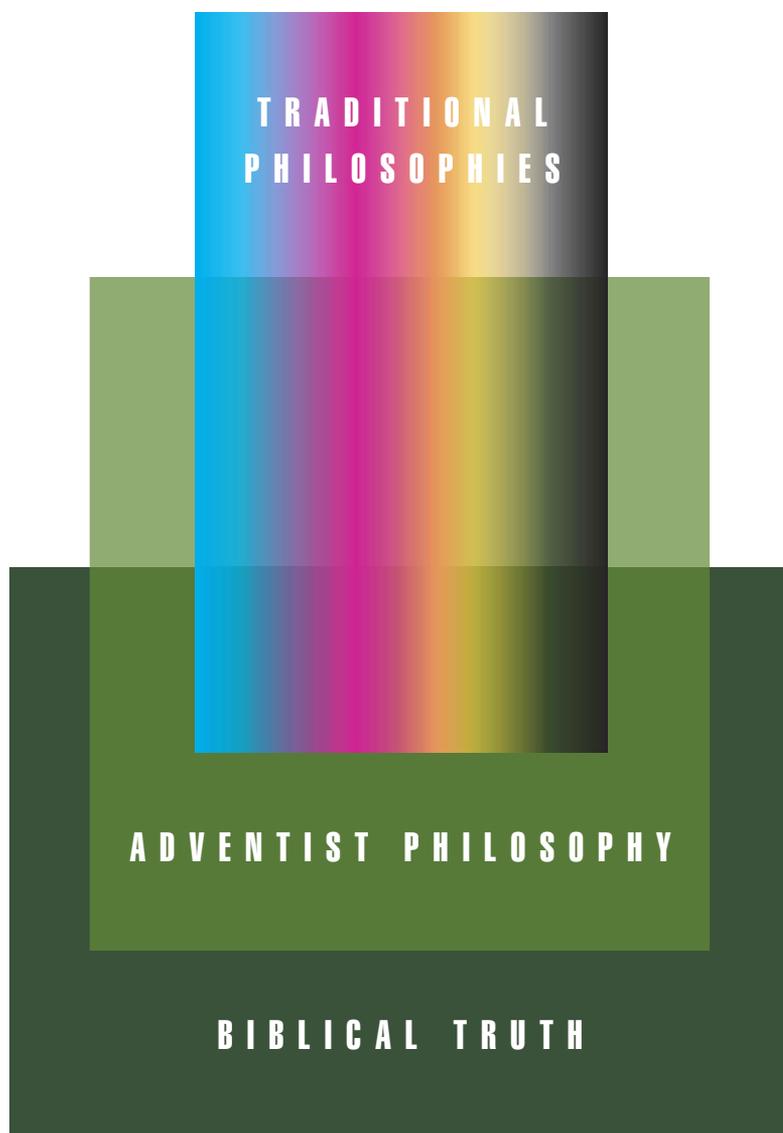


Figure 1. Philosophical Relationships

biblical worldview and understanding of Adventist philosophy. For that reason, Figure 1 shows each of the traditional philosophies as being rooted in the biblical worldview and Adventist philosophy, which, by definition, may disallow some of the potential perspectives of a particular philosophy.

5. One’s philosophical bias, I propose, also affects his or her understanding of both biblical truth and Adventist philosophy. That is, Adventists with reconstructionist leanings, for example, will emphasize biblical truths that fit with their perspective, which will also color their understanding and applications of Adventist philosophy. While the essence of Adventist philosophy and biblical truth will remain the same, the way it is expressed will be unique. In sum, while much of Figure 1 de-

scribes ideas that come from the bottom and filter upward to one's personal preferences, this also works from the top down, where people's personal philosophies affect their interpretation and application of philosophy and biblical principles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, eclecticism can be good or bad, depending heavily on how it is defined and used. Truth can come from many places. "Christ was the originator of all the ancient gems of truth. Through the work of the enemy these truths had been displaced. They had been disconnected from their true position and placed in the framework of error."¹⁶ There is nothing wrong with using this truth, even from non-Christian sources, to build up the kingdom of God. This is not to suggest that very young or immature students should be challenged to seek truth in unlikely places. But mature Christians, especially at the graduate level, need to understand how to select "from the writings of others . . . the gems of truth from the rubbish of error."¹⁷ Skill in doing this is not acquired without practice—or without much prayer.

After graduation, however, Adventist students will face the secular world, so they need to know how to separate truth from error. If we merely teach them a *product*, and fail to teach them a *process* for arriving at truth, we are doing them a disservice because we are not really preparing them to face the world as thinking Christians. At some level, students need to know how Adventist beliefs are similar to those of the world's thinkers, and how they are different. They need to know what they can safely adapt for their purposes, and why. They need to see the dangers of secularism and postmodernism, but they also need to know how they can harness the good ideas of the world and use them to advance the cause of God. Is it possible to address these issues without undermining their faith in God and in Adventist principles?

There is a fine line between the need to protect students from secular ideas, and the parallel need to encourage them to use and adapt secular ideas for sacred purposes. One of the ways we can help students understand these concerns is to share a model like the one presented in this article, which will help them understand how their Christian values must undergird, support, and influence any other philosophical choices they make throughout their lives. If students can clearly see how biblical truth interacts with other truths, and where eclecticism can be acceptable (as well as where it would not be appropriate), this may help them understand their own worldview better, and give them the tools to explain it more coherently to both Christians and non-Christians alike. ✍

This article is slightly adapted, with permission from the author, from a presentation at the Second Annual Symposium of the Society of Adventist Philosophers titled "Teaching Philosophy: Promise or Peril?" which was held on November 17 and 18, 2011, in San Francisco, California.



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A PROPOSAL

Teaching Philosophy to Seventh-day Adventist Students

In the mid-1960s, I was asked to teach an Introduction to Philosophy course at a Seventh-day Adventist college. After the first exam, a number of students let me know they were struggling; a few even dropped the class within a few weeks. Even some theology majors were disenchanted and, in two cases, openly hostile. Unlike my near-ecstasy studying philosophy in college, they saw it as pointless. It surprised me that future pastors could not see the relevance of this discipline to their futures. Deeply committed to Adventism, they wanted

(admirably in a way) to get out of school and help “finish the work.” Philosophy, they believed, was not going to help them preach or evangelize any better. Climbing that intellectual mountain would not strengthen them; it was a waste of time.

A Proposed Solution

Looking back, I wish I had adopted a template for the course; or perhaps a filter, through which all the material might be organized in more familiar terms. I would likely employ John E. Smith’s insightful observation: There are only two basic starting points in philosophical reflection: the self and

the world.¹ Whichever starting point you select, you must account for the one you did not select, but that initial choice often shapes everything that follows. Self/World (like subject/object, the one and many, change and permanence, appearance and reality) is one of those useful polarities that helps clarify otherwise opaque material.

I would begin with what philosophers usually mean when they say the “self” or the “world.” My first encounter with that distinction came in a college English class when we were

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There are only two basic starting points in philosophical reflection: the self and the world.

assigned B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two*,² which argued that when we introspect or observe ourselves feeling and thinking, we are not observing anything more than our own bodies. Our genetic and environmental histories produce our behaviors and moral awareness. Thus, there really can be no self-determining activity or freedom of choice. (To be fair, one of Skinner's contributions was his insistence that more than our mental states affect our behavior, that the environment is a major causal agent in what we do.) But Skinner went further, asserting that our actions are not the result of our being autonomous agents.

Writer and critic Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Measure of Man*³ was also assigned as a counterpoint. Krutch (1893-1970), a humanist and man of letters, was not about to allow Skinner to vaporize the uniqueness of human agency and self-consciousness. Skinner wanted, I would suggest to students, to understand the self only through the world or natural processes and not give it the uniqueness it seems to require based on introspection. Clearly, the "mind" and our sense of agency cannot function without the brain, but will understanding all the physical/chemical factors that affect human behavior adequately account for the activities of the mind and the decisions made by what we call the will? If one begins by denying the uniqueness and importance of the self in philosophical reflection, he or she cannot possibly

allow space for anything but cause-and-effect events. This leaves little room for morality, human freedom, or the experience of God.

Examples for Using the Template: The Pre-Socratics

Instead of summarizing schools of thought and the major thinkers within them, I would impose the Self/World Template (SWT) on both. I would have students read primary and (accessible) secondary sources while coaching them in applying the SWT. Starting with the pre-Socratics, I would ask them to decide whether early Greek reflection began with the interiority of the self or the self's experience of the world. They ought to see quickly that Thales argued that everything arises from water; hence, the world is his point of departure. In their own ways, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus (seventh to sixth century B.C.E.) also started with the world.

In contrast, by insisting that being was indivisible and unchanging, Parmenides and Zeno (fifth century B.C.E.) chose not to start with the world but with the self's analysis of the conceptual problem. If "Being" is by definition "eternal," sensory phenomena cannot reveal it. The ultimately "real" cannot be reduced to "appearances." Thinking about the nature of

Being itself, one understands that it cannot be ensconced in material reality.

Plato and Aristotle

In the Dialogues, Socrates and Plato (fifth to fourth century B.C.E.) cemented the importance of the self in philosophy.⁴ Could the dictum "know thyself" be any clearer? Using logical analysis, they claimed that one must begin (if not conclude) reflection about ethical truth and metaphysics with the self as a moral and thinking agent. Conversation and rigorous thought (not sense perception) uncover the elements of the nature of the good and of justice. "Ideas" or "forms" (known only to the mind) are the ultimate reality. One is not learning either ethics or metaphysics from the world, but "remembering" essential truths that are already stored in the mind or self. Physical objects are instantiations of the forms, copies of the "real." Students should come to realize at the same time that the Dialogues are models of deductive argument.

While impressed by Plato's passion for ethics and rationality, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.)⁵ saw essences in "particulars," not universals. He defined matter as the principle of individuation, not merely a copy of something more ultimate. He began his reflections with the world and the logic of *induction*, and produced remarkable science for his era. From these two philosophers have come rivers of thought that

still nurture our intellectual efforts.

I say again: To start with the self means that our experience of our own consciousness and feelings is given at least equal weight in our efforts to understand the nature of reality. Our sense perceptions are not ignored, but they cannot become so powerful that self-consciousness is treated as no more than a collection of physical effects completely subject to natural law.

More Recent Philosophical Examples

Next, I might touch on early church history which, in its efforts to blend Hebrew and Greek thought, tended to follow Plato in the writings of Plotinus, Augustine, and Anselm (third, fourth, and 11th to 12th centuries A.D.).⁶ I would contrast Anselm's ontological argument approach (faith seeking understanding through deduction) to the Hebrew approach, which assumed God's reality and saw God's activity everywhere in the world (through both induction and deduction). Later, we would revisit Aristotle through the Arab revival of his thought, which resulted in the magisterial contributions of Thomas Aquinas (13th century A.D.),⁷ whose arguments for God clearly reflected his interest in using—as did Aristotle—the world as a starting point. By now, I would hope, Adventist students would see clearly how philosophical work impacts theological development. No one can understand how theology unfolded, I would emphasize, if he or she does not understand how philosophy shaped it.

Rationalism

Skipping over figures like Erasmus, Bacon, and the like, I might go directly to the so-called Age of Reason, which is often thought to begin with Descartes.⁷ During this period (16th to 17th centuries A.D.), a new sensibility arose in which assuming certain truths by faith and attempting to demonstrate them

Another aspect of “self” was invoked to replace reason as the primary source of understanding. This “romantic” turn became pietism in religion, and the dance between the two poles of self and the world continued in a new form, persisting to the present day.

with powerful logic began to give way to a rational, skeptical, logical, and axiomatic philosophy. I would want students to understand that Descartes' method of doubting⁸ all that could be doubted in order to find a new, certain foundation for knowledge resulted in some very significant philosophical shifts. Descartes made sharp distinctions between mind and body, reason and revelation, philosophy and theology, and settled on mathematics as the “ideal” knowledge because it is strictly a human creation that is logical to its core. In his *Cogito*, he began with the thinking self and found in it the starting point for knowing everything else, even the reality of the world. His leap into rationality fomented a revolution in which the “reasonable” in observations of nature, politics, and religion became the quest for other philosophers of his era like Pascal and Hobbes. His dualism spawned its own reaction in George Berkeley and Benedict Spinoza (17th and 18th centuries),⁹ which could also be briefly explored; again, using the same template.

Empiricism

In reaction to rationalism, David Hume (1711-1776) and other empiricists like John Locke (1632-1704) insisted that knowledge must be founded on sense perception. They were among the strongest Enlightenment critics of a rationalistic religion. Hume's radical empiricism challenged even the basis for the cause-and-effect understanding of physical events because there are no sense impressions of such connections.¹⁰ So, here is an example of starting philosophical reflection with the world and not the self in a fairly radical manner. As a result, so-called “natural religion” suffered a devastating blow (17th and 18th centuries).

Kant

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) reacted to David Hume's radical empiricism with his famous comment: “David Hume has awakened me from my dogmatic slumbers.”¹¹ So, Kant set out to create in his terms a “Copernican Revolution in philosophy” by locating essential elements of our sense impressions in the self, creating the unheard of *synthetic a priori*, experiences which are *necessary* even while sensory.¹² I would probably take a class period or two to unpack this phrase for students, for it represents the most

ambitious effort to date in philosophy to integrate the self and the world in epistemology.

Following Kant, the reaction against empiricism continued not with a focus on reason, but with an emphasis on “personal experience” or the “heart.” Another aspect of “self” was invoked to replace reason as the primary source of understanding. This “romantic” turn became pietism in religion, and the dance between the two poles of self and the world continued in a new form, persisting to the present day.

The Modern Period

If the teacher looks at subsequent philosophers through this Self/World Template, I believe students should better grasp the philosophers’ concerns.

Finally, if time permitted, I would review the existentialist revolt against the dominance of scientific thought in the early to middle part of the 20th century.

Process Philosophy

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947),¹³ who was influenced greatly by the developments in physics and possessed a deep affection for the arts, developed a model for reality that turned out to be perhaps the most creative metaphysical synthesis of the self and the world ever devised. To theorize that every “drop” of experience (or actual occasion) we have is suffused with creative potential and newness, that each moment (and each decision we make) closes off some possibilities and opens new ones, that not only the self but nature, too, dwells in this reality, was an intellectual breakthrough of monumental proportions. It suggested, perhaps for the first time, that given quantum mechanics and other insights, human beings might be able to situate randomness and chance

in nature itself, in the brain and physical body, so that it is not only selves who possess room for freedom and morality, but God as well, the Creator of this highly regulated universe we experience.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I might have them review the writings of Marilynne Robinson (1943-), whose *The Death of Adam*¹⁴ and *Absence of Mind: The Dispelling of Inwardness From the Modern Myth of the Self*¹⁵ are among the most impressively written books affirming the importance of the self in understanding. She argues that many modern thinkers mistakenly insist that the answers to our deepest questions *must* start and end with science or what I have called the “world.”

It is my hope that this approach (just one of many possibilities, of course) could be fruitful in introducing Adventist students to philosophy and inspiring an appropriate fascination with the importance of rigorous, truly critical thinking that, while independent of faith, is inescapably related to it. ☞

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S P I R I T U A L

M E N T A L

P H Y S I C A L



Ellen White

and the Harmonious Development Concept

Importance of a Harmonious Development

Ellen White placed significant value on the concept of harmonious development, both within education and in life.

True education, she proposed, should result in well-balanced minds⁴ and harmonious

characters,⁵ evidenced in a clear, strong intellect and in sound judgment.⁶ Experiencing harmonious development, students would be enabled to study effectively⁷ in order to prepare themselves more fully for usefulness in this world and to acquire moral fitness for eternal life.⁸ Her rationale: An individual cannot achieve his or her highest potential in any single dimension unless all faculties undergo development.⁹ Further, she affirmed that only an educational process that incorporates a harmonious development of the whole person can yield eternal results.¹⁰

Ellen White provided some illustrative cases. She noted, for example, that at creation, all of Adam's faculties were well-balanced¹¹ and maintained that the primary aim of education is to restore humanity to this original state.¹² She observed that individuals of influence, such as Moses and Daniel, were those who developed harmoniously,¹³ and presented Jesus as the prime example of a "perfectly harmonious" life.¹⁴ Furthermore, she stated that those who are saved will have de-

In her influential work *Education*, Ellen G. White (1827-1915) began by defining authentic education as "the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers."¹ This concept of harmonious, whole-person development has become a key element of Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy,² appearing quite frequently in the official statements of mission, core values, and/or philosophy of Adventist schools, colleges, and universities worldwide.

What did Ellen White have in mind when she wrote about *harmonious development*? Did she focus exclusively on the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions, or did she extend the concept to include other elements? Perhaps more significantly, did she provide an indication of the process that educators might follow to achieve this goal?

In an endeavor to answer these questions, approximately 50 distinct passages were identified in the works of Ellen White in which the concept of harmonious development is discussed,³ including conceptually related terms, such as *balanced* and *symmetrical* education. Analyzing these passages, a number of conceptual clusters began to emerge, which were grouped under the themes of *significance*, *areas of development*, and *enabling practices*.

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veloped harmonious characters.¹⁵

In the life experience, White proposed that a harmonious development results in happiness¹⁶ and in the blessing of God,¹⁷ while its absence will produce deficiencies.¹⁸ She maintained that a well-developed Christian life is “harmonious in all its parts”¹⁹ and that such a life will be a light in the world,²⁰ a powerful witness that will save others from ruin.²¹

Areas Included in a Harmonious Development

What dimensions should receive harmonious development? Ellen White proposed quite a variety of factors that should develop in a balanced way. In a number of passages, for example, she presented a pairing of elements. One of the most common dyads is that of mind and body,²² alternatively described as brain and muscles²³ or as the mental and physical faculties.²⁴ Another frequent linking was the harmonious development of the mental and moral powers,²⁵ identified at times as a balance of knowledge and character²⁶ or of literary and spiritual training.²⁷

Ellen White then combined these dimensions in her frequently cited triad of physical, mental, and moral development,²⁸ also described as the harmony of body, mind, and heart.²⁹ It might be noted, however, that even in the classic “harmonious development” reference cited earlier, a fourth factor emerges. After noting that true education harmoniously develops the physical, mental, and spiritual powers, she observed that such training “prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.”³⁰ The incorporation of the social dimension is further borne out in Ellen White’s assertions that mind, soul, and body are to be used for uplifting fellow human beings³¹; that body, mind, and soul are to be trained for divine service³²; and that the physical, mental, and moral faculties are to be developed for the performance of every duty.³³

A number of statements, however, take a somewhat different approach. These alternate groupings include the harmony of the emotions, words, and actions³⁴; of nerve, muscle, and will³⁵; and of brain, bone, and muscle³⁶—all of which are to be employed in active service.³⁷ In a final grouping, Ellen White stated that harmonious development includes temperance, kindness, and godliness,³⁸ or stated in another way, a duty to ourselves, to our fellow human beings, and to God. Taken together, the underlying concept seems to be that there must be a balanced, symmetrical, whole-person development that encompasses all aspects of life.³⁹

Enabling Practices Toward a Harmonious Development

How is this “harmonious development” to be achieved? How can we translate this ideal into educational practice? These are perhaps the central questions for Adventist schools. While Ellen White did not lay out, in precise terms, a recipe of the process to be followed, she did describe two fundamental approaches.

The first approach incorporates in the educational experience certain curricular components that complement the cognitive element. These ingredients focus primarily on psychomotor, social, affective, and spiritual dimensions, which may be prone to neglect in educational systems that primarily emphasize intellectual

development. The second approach is more didactic, and points toward instructional techniques that seek to develop a personal yet balanced profile of traits and abilities. (Figure 1 on page 18 provides a summary of these approaches.)

First, a look at the complementary dimensions of development:

Coupled with cognitive learning, the importance of *physical development* is a common theme in Ellen White’s writings on education. She advocated, for example, that students should combine “mind and body exercise,”⁴⁰ rather than dedicate their entire school time to sedentary learning. In order to attain this balance, schools should establish a system that includes physical culture⁴¹ and practical, work-oriented physical training.⁴² This concept of manual labor as education and as a key curricular dimension was developed quite extensively throughout Ellen White’s writings, starting with one of her earliest essays, entitled “Proper Education.”⁴³

Social skills and activities constitute a second curricular component of harmonious development. Ellen White advocated that students engage in cooperative learning approaches, avoiding rivalry and intense competition.⁴⁴ She advocated that students should also participate in community-oriented service activities as an integral part of the learning experience.⁴⁵ Finally, the social dimension should include elements of witness, in which learners share their understanding of and experience with God.⁴⁶

Affective elements, including values and attitudes, constitute a third curricular component. A key theme is the commitment to excellence. In order to develop harmoniously, Ellen White maintained, students must resolve to do their best in each learning activity,⁴⁷ aiming to reach the highest degree of excellence in order to uplift their fellow human beings and glorify God.⁴⁸ Students were to also develop self-reliance⁴⁹ and cultivate habits of order and self-discipline.⁵⁰ In this endeavor, resolute effort would be required by the learner, and teachers must avoid unhealthful permissiveness or indulgent flattery.⁵¹ Over time, students should progressively develop a virtuous character and a stable, coherent personality.⁵²

As a religious educator, Ellen White placed considerable emphasis on the *spiritual life*, which she held as integral to whole-person development. She maintained, for example, that students need both academic and spiritual formations,⁵³ and that a harmonious development is incompatible with moral depravity.⁵⁴

Although spiritual growth comes about through divine agencies,⁵⁵ she believed that human beings must still actively cooperate with God.⁵⁶ This occurs when the learner correctly understands God’s will,⁵⁷ seeks to be guided by the Holy Spirit,⁵⁸ and commits to serving God in every aspect of life.⁵⁹ This is accomplished through Bible study⁶⁰ and embracing the principles of God’s Word as a guide for all aspects of life.⁶¹ In essence, faith in God must be reflected in all of the attitudes, priorities, and activities of life.

In addition to the curricular components, Ellen White also proposed a number of *instructional interventions* to achieve harmonious development.

A key strategy, she believed, was for teachers and the learners themselves not to concentrate only on those areas for which they have a natural inclination, but to also cultivate those areas

where deficiencies exist.⁶² Teachers and students, for example, should avoid over-emphasizing a favorite topic or branch of study, to the neglect of other vital areas.⁶³ Although affirming students should cultivate their gifts and talents, which can indicate the direction for their lives,⁶⁴ Ellen White cautioned that attention must concurrently be given to a development of weaker traits and abilities, which, if neglected, could ultimately compromise lifelong success.⁶⁵ This, she advised, can be accomplished by taking particular care to strengthen these underdeveloped facets through intentional nurture.⁶⁶

In guiding student development, teachers should also institute an effective course of discipline, avoiding the extremes of overbearing harshness and permissive indulgence.⁶⁷ Such redemptive discipline should not focus on punishment, but rather on developing a personal understanding of each person's own character traits and inclinations, and consistently making every effort to "bend them toward the right."⁶⁸

In sum, each dimension of the individual is to be challenged and symmetrically cultivated.⁶⁹ Such harmonious development is the result of continual dependence on divine grace, a personal commitment to balanced development, the faithful improvement of opportunities, and earnest effort invested to accomplish this goal.⁷⁰

Conclusion

Based on a review of her writings, it appears that Ellen White emphasized the significance of the harmonious development concept and also identified a variety of areas to be included in this development. To assist educators in accomplishing this goal, she described in general terms, both curricular approaches and instructional strategies.

As Adventist educators, however, we still have important work to do. It may be that Seventh-day Adventist education has at times embraced the motto of "harmonious development" without fully understanding its scope and without devoting sufficient attention to its implementation. We may have, in effect, adopted a "high-sounding hope"⁷¹ that finds but sporadic tangible expression in our daily work.

Perhaps as educators, we should more closely examine Ellen White's proposed principles and processes for achieving a harmonious development, creatively explore how these might be implemented within our particular contexts, and then intentionally develop enabling learning experiences that transform our philosophy into educational practice. ✍



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This article has been peer reviewed.

CURRICULAR COMPONENTS

Physical development

- Regular exercise
- Work-education program
- Healthy lifestyle and physical fitness

Social development

- Cooperative learning
- Community-oriented service
- Witness training and experience

Affective development

- Commitment to excellence
- Self-reliance and self-discipline
- Character and personality formation

Spiritual development

- Bible study to identify life principles
- Personal relationship with God
- Nurture of a faith commitment

INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS

Addressing strengths and weaknesses

- Cultivating gifts and talents
- Remediating deficiencies
- Diversifying into undeveloped areas

Redemptive discipline

- Avoiding permissive indulgence
- Seeking to develop a personal understanding of behavior

Personal commitment

- Priority and personal effort for harmonious development
- Optimizing growth opportunities
- Dependence on divine power

Figure 1. Approaches to Operationalizing the "Harmonious Development" Concept in a Cognitively Dominant Educational Program

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**TORNADO!
LIGHTNING!
FIRE!**

When the Alarm Goes Off, *What Happens at Your School?*

It's often in the news: pictures of horrific destruction due to fire and natural disasters, stories of heroic teachers, scenes of heart-wrenching personal loss. While some may have experienced such challenges firsthand, most of us only see these disasters on TV, hoping that it doesn't happen at our school. As school administrators, faculty, and staff, we are tasked with the responsibility of providing the safest environment possible for the precious gifts entrusted to us—our students, as well as for everyone else on our campuses. It would be a violation of that trust not to do all we can to actively prepare for the risks our schools face.

Recent site surveys and inspections of our schools by Adventist Risk Management reveal that while many of them have outstanding prevention and loss-control programs, others are deficient, particularly when the administrators are new or inexperienced. Thus,

it is well to revisit some of these important precautions on a regular basis. While schools face more than their share of potential emergencies, this article will focus on the most common concerns, *weather-related risks* and *fire risks*.

Regardless of how many types of disaster potential a school may face, each risk needs specific, careful planning and prevention. To ensure prudent management of such risk, questions that must drive the planning include the following:

- Will evacuation be required? What is the safest path for each student group at any given time in the school day? What are the potential dangers that will shape decisions about whether evacuation is necessary?
- Is it feasible to use the school building(s) for shelter in place? Which types of emergencies will require shelter in place, and where are the most effective locations?
- Will there be enough advanced warning to close schools and send chil-

dren home? How effective is our system for communicating with parents/guardians and students? Has a common, off-campus site been determined for safe rejoining of parents with students?

- What steps do we need to take to ensure effective and prompt action in case of an emergency?

To assist schools with answering these and other crucial questions and in developing an effective emergency plan, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), working closely with the U.S. Department of Education and other key agencies, released the *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans*¹ in 2013. Each school is urged to download this comprehensive resource and follow its steps in establishing a campus emergency plan. This guide covers, in detail, *Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery*. Of particular im-

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portance are the *Planning Principles* that help create the necessary philosophical foundation for complete buy-in and cooperation from all school, church, and conference entities. This guide was prepared for United States public schools, but the principles are easily adaptable to all Seventh-day Adventist schools, both in the U.S. and internationally.

Our discussion in this article will not attempt to summarize or duplicate all of the information in the above *Guide*; instead, we will focus on areas of neglect and poor management that have been observed by ARM staff during on-site inspections.

hensive, addressing all potential risks. Developing an emergency action plan always requires a team effort—a team with diverse experience and skills, including school administration, teachers, maintenance staff, food-service personnel and other staff members, including those who deal with transportation and medical needs. It is wise to include parents and older students in developing the plan. Interaction with local emergency responders, such as police, Emergency Medical Technicians, and fire departments, is also necessary. If your school is small and has minimal staff, you will need to seek more assistance from parents and local emergency providers. While public

everyone's responsibilities. Drills regarding intruders and shooters should be handled very carefully so as not to traumatize younger students.

Tornadoes and fires, on the other hand, will require drills that involve teachers, staff, and students. Tornado drills are required by some states, although the number of drills varies. Fire drills are required by all states, and some require tornado and other weather-related drills. Follow local requirements for drill frequency.

Emergency Supplies

All emergency plans need to include designated areas where supplies are maintained for the school personnel and students. Many schools purchase or rent large metal overseas shipping containers that they position outdoors in a secure area as an emergency bunker. Your local fire department or the Red Cross can help you determine what type of supplies should be maintained and the appropriate quantity, based on the size of the school. Typical emergency supplies include the following: long-life emergency food and water, first-aid supplies, safety clothing and equipment, portable lighting with a supply of fresh batteries, and thermo blankets and/or rain gear. These supplies should be restocked after each emergency and updated at the start of each school year.

Preventive Maintenance

In emergency planning, a frequently overlooked area is preventative maintenance. In a storm-related emergency, staff and student safety will depend upon the integrity of the classrooms, the tornado shelter, or other school buildings. A properly designed and well-maintained facility will fare much better in a storm, particularly where strong winds and heavy rains are prevalent. ARM inspections have revealed that the items listed below are commonly overlooked:

- Poorly maintained gutters that become damaged or filled with leaves. These allow water to overflow or back

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PLANNING FOR WEATHER EMERGENCIES BEFORE THE STORM

The Plan

Written action plans for all potential school emergencies will become the blueprint for action before, during, and after an event. The *Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans*, noted above, outlines specific steps for establishing an effective plan. In order to create a workable plan, careful thought and attention are critical. The plan need not be complex, but it must be effective and compre-

emergency response personnel will generally only offer advice, the in-house team should be assigned specific responsibilities based on their areas of expertise. The written plan is the cornerstone of an effective safety program and is required by most state and federal regulations. It should be reviewed and updated yearly, and be made available to all employees.

Drills

For many emergencies, drills are a critical component of an effective safety plan. Some emergencies listed in the plan will not require a whole-school drill, but can be satisfied with tabletop drills and discussions that identify



up, causing damage to roofs, walls, and even building interiors. Failure in this regard is frequently evident during risk-control surveys and is sometimes so severe that vegetation is actually growing in gutters.

- Damaged or loose roofing materials and siding are vulnerable to further damage and even total loss when battered by powerful winds. This may produce emergency conditions and require evacuations that might not have been necessary if the buildings had been properly maintained.

- Although a powerful storm can knock down healthy trees, there is higher risk of injuries or property damage from falling unhealthy trees and dead limbs. Arborists or tree surgeons can identify potential problem trees and dangerous limbs that should be removed.

- Lightning arrestors should be in place and working properly.

Geographic location is obviously a major factor when preparing for weather-related risks. Such disasters can include tornadoes, high winds, hurricanes, freezing rain with subsequent ice build-up, lightning storms, blizzards, floods, extreme cold or heat, and more. The extent of damage on an institution from weather-related emergencies will depend primarily on the factors listed below.

Hazard Identification

Accurate identification of potential hazards will include a survey of the history of weather-related incidents in your geographical area. A great resource for understanding weather patterns, which will also provide general weather information for both staff and students is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).² This interactive site is a comprehensive resource for all weather-related information, including storm tracking, forecasting, severe events, local information, and much more. Designated school staff and administration should monitor this site, not only for the protection of the school, but also as a resource for student projects.

It is important for administrators and staff to understand the potential



weather hazards that might affect the school. Each type of storm has particular elements of concern. Some weather situations allow for ample decision-making time, others provide little if any warning.

On each campus, select staff to be trained in weather basics. Even a superficial understanding of storm prediction can ensure better warning time for approaching storms. A weather radio should be monitored as well as local TV, radio, and weather-related Websites. While weather prediction is not an exact science, it is always better to be prepared. Identifying the potential for weather-related emergencies is a vital

element in the prevention and limitation of storm-related losses.

WEATHER RISKS

Tornadoes

According to the NOAA,³ a “tornado watch” may go into effect with adequate lead time for safety precautions to be taken for students, even as a storm approaches. But the typical “tornado warning” provides only 13 minutes to take action. Tornado watches and warnings should never be ignored. For schools in areas prone to tornadoes, plans need to include identification of safe zones. In addition, planning should address:

- Student/parent/guardian notification procedures;
- Communication methods in the event of power outages (air horns, megaphones, etc.);
- First-aid supplies;
- Methods for transporting of students and/or staff with disabilities;
- Provisions for holding children after hours, as they generally will be safer in buildings than on roadways in vehicles;
- Readily accessible documentation regarding the authorized release of children to parents or guardians;
- The holding of drills based on the school’s safety plan;

- Written documentation of the locations of shut-off valves and switches for gas, electrical and water supplies, and staff assigned to take responsibility for them;

- School vehicles' gas tanks always kept at least half full, as gasoline stations may be out of service for some time if there is an electrical outage or flooding; and

- Appropriately stored fuel for generators, etc.

Storm Shelter Areas

Designated locations within the school need to be identified as storm shelter areas. Typically, these include basement areas, interior hallways, and restrooms on the lowest floor level without or away from windows. Administrators should work closely with local emergency responders, building contractors, or a licensed structural engineer to identify the safest shelter areas on campus and to determine the number of persons who can be sheltered in each area. Signage should then be installed directing people to these areas within the various buildings.

Hurricanes

Because hurricanes are tracked for days, there will usually be adequate warning of their severity, time of arrival, and areas at risk. This will make it possible to proactively prepare for these storms. Both Web resources mentioned above address issues relating to hurricane preparedness. Remember that consistent monitoring of weather reports on TV and Websites is necessary to ensure adequate preparedness.

Winter Storms

Like hurricanes, winter storms usually can be predicted far enough in advance to allow adequate time for implementation of safety plans. Preparation should include the following:

- Plans for a modified class schedule, late starts, or cancellation of classes. Modification of class schedules will only be as effective as the communication process with students and parents/guardians.

- Thermostats may need to be reset to higher temperatures in buildings,

particularly at night, to prevent pipes from freezing. (Frozen pipes and the resulting damages are one of the largest claims received by Adventist Risk Management.)

- Provision for removal of snow and ice, including clearing of roofs where heavy snowpack can cause collapse. Schools can contract for these types of services.

- Emergency lighting, generators, and other sources of power in the event of an ice storm, which can cause power outages, sometimes for a week or more.

- Plans and procedures for preventing slips and falls, such as warning signs for wet floors and non-slip rugs for entranceways, along with quick

look threatening. Establish appropriate protocols and signals to immediately call everyone indoors. Also, ensure that important electronic devices are connected to surge-protection devices or unplugged because electrical surges can destroy both hardware and data.

Flooding

Major storms (e.g., severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes and/or typhoons, tsunamis, and sudden winter snow or ice melt) all can create large amounts of rainfall, storm surges, or sudden flash flooding. Identify the potential flooding hazard for your location. Remember, flooding can occur days after the storm has ended as the

Designated locations within the school need to be identified as storm shelter areas. Typically, these include basement areas, interior hallways, and restrooms on the lowest floor level without or away from windows.

cleanup of wet, slippery areas where rain and snow are tracked into buildings.

- Accessible battery-operated walkie-talkies, fresh batteries, solar chargers for cell phones (recently much less expensive) and, of course, emergency provisions—blankets, food, and first-aid supplies.

Thunderstorms and Lightning

Whenever thunderstorms and lightning approach, halt all outdoor activities and move everyone indoors. Lightning can strike randomly, so precautions should be taken when skies

runoff water breaches the banks of creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, dams, levees, and ocean/sea coastlines.

Preparation should include:

- Identification of the potential flooding hazard for your location. Schools in coastal areas need to determine the potential damage that could be caused by a storm surge. This information can be found on flood maps and flood plain charts, which are readily available from the library, weather service office, or FEMA. Schools located in the United States can determine their flood risk potential by using this online tool: https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/flooding_flood_risks/defining_flood_risks.jsp.

- Careful monitoring of NOAA weather radio or TV stations for potential flood alerts or flash flood warnings;
- An evacuation plan that can be immediately implemented if flooding is occurring in your area, which should include the location of safe zones on higher ground;
- Common-sense measures to ensure the safety of students and staff;
- Avoid all contact with flood water, as it may be contaminated with sewage.
- Do not allow students or adults to walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Remember, just six inches of fast-flowing water can knock a person down, and two feet of water can float a vehicle.

FIRE

Emergency planning for storms and fire emergencies are similar, but there are some major differences. Storms fit into the category of “natural disasters” for which weather is the cause. Forest fires and lightning are also a part of this category because the greatest cause of forest fires is lightning. While forest fires sometimes threaten homes and schools, most structure fires are caused by non-natural forces. They are not limited by location, occur more frequently, and are in many cases preventable. The FEMA table below lists some fire statistics for just one year, 2012.

We will focus here on non-residen-

Electrically Caused Fire Hazards

The largest cause of fires in non-residential buildings is electrical. This includes:

- The improper use of extension cords. Multi-head extension cords should never be plugged into a power strip or other multi-head extension cord. Most household extension cords can handle only light electrical loads.
- Old and inadequate wiring. As wiring ages, oxidation can occur, along with the loosening of electrical connections. In some areas, copper wiring was replaced with aluminum wiring, which is more prone to oxidation and resulting fires. All aluminum wiring should be replaced with copper.⁵
- Space heaters that don’t turn off automatically when tipped over. (New models are equipped with switches that turn off the heater if it tips over.) However, a heater can easily be set too close to a flammable surface or tip without the shut-off switch tripping, causing a fire. Allow for a three-foot clearance around all portable heaters, and do not use them when flammable liquids or fumes are present.
- Electrical cords that are routed under rugs, carpets, or desk chair floor mats. Their insulation can become worn, creating the potential for short circuits and fire.
- Multiport electric plug adaptors. These should be replaced with power strips containing a built-in breaker.
- Overloaded electrical cords. Do not plug a power strip into another power strip or extension cord. Too many devices plugged into extension cords or power strips can cause a circuit to overload when the wires overheat. Over time, this will break down the wire’s insulation and start a fire.
- Excessive power drain on outlets. If the breakers on power strips trip repeatedly, the power usage is too great, and fewer devices should be plugged into them. High-voltage devices such as heaters, large lighting fixtures, and blow driers, etc. can quickly overtax a power strip.

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U.S. Fire Loss by Property Use (2012)⁴

Property Use	Fires	Deaths	Injuries	Direct Dollar Loss In Millions
All Structures	480,500	2,470	14,700	\$9,776
Residential Structures	381,000	2,405	13,175	\$7,199
Non-residential Structures	99,500	65	1,525	\$2,577
Vehicles	202,500	325	975	\$1,838
Outdoor and Other Fires	692,000	60	825	\$813

- After flooding occurs, do not use gas or electric appliances until they have been checked for safety.
- Turn off the power and water main valve if instructed to do so by the local authorities.
- Stay out of any flooded buildings until they have been declared safe for re-entry by the local authorities.
- During clean-up, always wear protective clothing and safety gear—e.g., gloves, eye protection, and masks and/or respirators. A best practice is to use a licensed professional restoration contractor for this type of work.

tial structure fire safety in the United States, where nearly a hundred thousand non-residential fires occur annually. Fires can happen anywhere, anytime, and generally without warning. Most structure fires are restricted to one building. Of note is the number of deaths in residential fires versus non-residential fires. This is due in most part to the extra warning in non-residential buildings from fire alarms as well as the use of sprinkler systems. Worldwide, few homes have fire sprinkler systems, and while some homes today have a fire/smoke alarm installed, many do not operate properly, generally because of failure to check the battery, which is often dead or missing.



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Other Hazards

Other practices that should be avoided: the improper storage of flammable liquids, use of mechanical rooms as storage closets, and displays of holiday decorations and student projects that are not fire rated or treated with a fire retardant. We have seen many schools and churches cover entire walls with flammable paper. These walls are simply torches ready to ignite. Always use fire-rated paper, and observe local codes regarding the percentage of wall space that can be covered with any paper (usually 20 percent). Ensure also that upholstered furniture and drapes are treated with fire retardant. (This does not purport to be a comprehensive list of hazards, but does include some of the most common problems that we have seen during ARM school inspections.)

Fire Emergency Planning

There are three main activities in the planning process for fire emergencies:

1. The writing and annual review of the *fire emergency* section of your school's Emergency Action Plan. As in the weather-related section of the Emergency Action Plan, this should list emergency procedures related to fire prevention and safety. Details specific to each building should be listed on the building's emergency evacuation diagram.

2. Annual building inspections, with particular attention given to potential fire hazards. Building inspections may not sound like planning, but they represent a vital part of the process. Identifying and eliminating hazards is critically important. Included in the inspection is ensuring that all fire and smoke detectors and other alarm systems are in working order. The appropriate type of fire extinguishers must be mounted properly and serviced annually. Special attention should be given to lighted exit signage, emergency lighting, and evacuation route maps. Problems identified during the inspection should be corrected as quickly as possible. Annual building inspections are essential in identifying unique building features that require special attention during a fire, and are a neces-

sary part of creating an effective plan. Specific self-inspection forms are available on the Adventist Risk Management Website⁶ for churches, schools, and camps. The forms also deal with various safety issues in addition to fire.

3. Practice your plan to make sure that it works. Important components of a successful drill are as follows:

- a. *Frequency.* How often drills are conducted is usually regulated by the local jurisdiction. In Florida, for instance, the requirement for K-12 schools is 10 drills per year, with two during the first two weeks of school. At the higher education level, only one drill per academic term is required.⁷

- b. *Alarm system.* Not all alarms sound alike, and when activated, may

not be recognized by someone who has not rehearsed the drill. Verify that the alarms can be heard everywhere in the building, including remote storage areas and bathrooms. Antiquated systems will need to be updated. (Many older alarms are "local only," meaning that they do not alert the fire department or someone in another building or off site who is responsible to call the fire department. Also, newer fire alarms include a flashing light that alerts the hearing impaired of the fire alarm or other danger.) Make sure all fire *alarm systems* automatically notify the fire department. We often hear people say that "our policy is to call the fire department after we have determined that it is not a drill or false alarm." But when the building is



empty at night, the alarm may not be heard for some time.

c. *Drills* should be performed as though there is a real fire. All emergency exits should be used. Every occupant, including students, teachers, staff, guests, and administrators, should leave the building and meet at the designated assembly area. The point of a fire drill is to get everyone out safely and quickly. Teachers should check to be sure that each student (as well as classroom aides and visitors) has arrived at the assembly area. This will enable the person in charge to give an accurate report to firefighters. During an actual fire, if someone is unaccounted for, it is the job of the firefighters to search for missing persons.

d. The *designated assembly area* should be at least 200 feet from the building being evacuated to give the fire department sufficient room to operate safely. Do not block streets or roads that are necessary for fire department access. Remember, when selecting an assembly area, that in the case of a real fire you and your students could be there for an extended period of time. It could be raining and/or very cold or hot, so plan for shelter if needed.

e. *After the drill*, solicit feedback. Find out what worked smoothly and what didn't. Revise your plan as needed. Be sure to review how long it took for everyone to evacuate. If there is a concern that everyone did not evacuate the building, the structure can be searched, but only after the drill has been officially concluded.

f. You should also make sure that all *fire alarm systems* functioned properly and notified the fire department.

Conclusion

An important part of our work as administrators, teachers, and staff is to reduce the potential for losses of life, property, and resources. Taking appropriate preventative measures is not an option, it is a requirement. Averting a disaster is the goal. But even if a major disaster occurs after the best prepara-

tion, there is some consolation in knowing that we did our very best. We are called to be faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us, especially the lives of God's precious children—our students and staff. ✍



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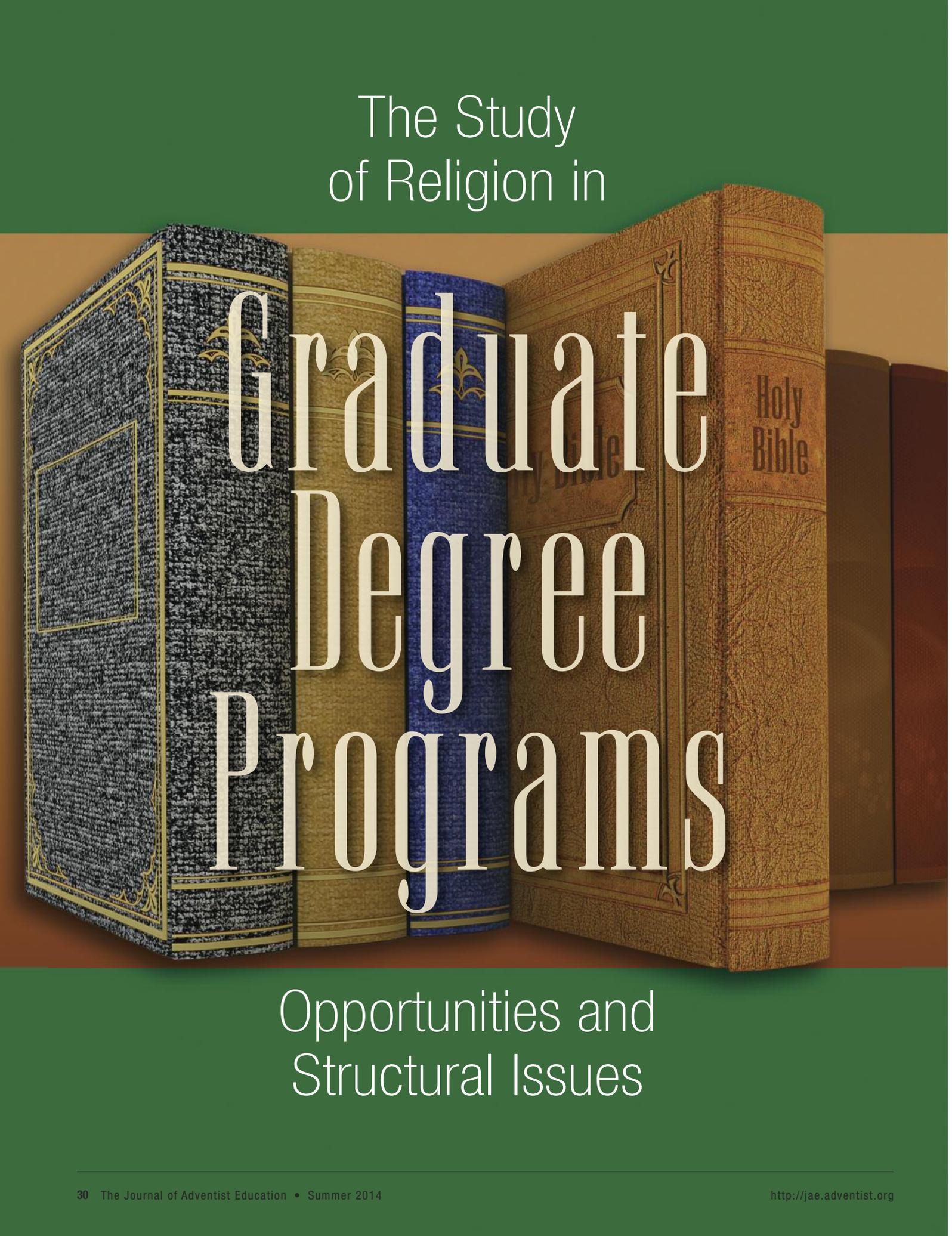
Additional Resources

- At Adventist Risk Management, Inc., "Our ministry is to protect your ministry." Extensive risk control resources are available on our Website to help with all aspects of risk management. They are free and can be accessed at <http://www.adventistrisk.org>.
- **Prevention Web**, Serving the information needs of the disaster reduction community: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=185>
- **National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) "Weather Safety"**: <http://www.weather.gov/safety>
- **American Red Cross, "Plan and Prepare"**: <http://www.redcross.org/prepare>
- **Ready.gov, "Thunderstorms and Lightning"**: <http://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning>

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The Study
of Religion in



Graduate Degree Programs

Opportunities and
Structural Issues

In this article, I will discuss several questions that get at the heart of the distinctive purpose of Seventh-day Adventist graduate education: How should we integrate faith and learning in these programs? Should we require the study of religion in all graduate-degree programs? If so, should this always take the form of a required religion course taught by a religion professor? What other options might be available to ensure that Adventist graduate education achieves both its academic and spiritual goals?

Comparatively little has been written on how to structure integration of faith and learning in Adventist graduate education.¹ This article explores the challenges and provides a framework for exploring the advantages and shortcomings of various approaches.

The Opportunity

The need to integrate biblical faith into Seventh-day Adventist graduate education has never been greater. Every school term represents an opportunity either gained or lost to connect learning and faith. The more we can ensure that faith informs and interacts with the academic disciplines, the more likely that students will think biblically and live morally when they leave our institutions. Interweaving Scripture with academic curricula in natural ways will improve both academic learning and our students' faith. Scripture can be useful when addressing "big questions" and assumptions in a variety of disciplines. Biblical principles can be compared with various schools of thought. Scriptural narratives and biographies provide opportunities to explore ethical values and aesthetics as they interact with academic learning. The deeper we dig in order to connect the grand themes of the Bible to academic content as well as our shared experiences with students throughout the total learning environment, the stronger becomes the anchor of faith. Incorporating matters of faith into our teaching can also help expand students' critical thinking skills.

As a faith-based community, we embrace the need to establish and nurture faith-based graduate degree programs. What are we doing to ensure that biblical principles are integrated into the various disciplines in our curricula?

Adventist graduate education desperately needs learning resources supportive of faith and learning integration at both the Master's and doctoral levels. Unless godly scholars in various disciplines produce educational materials that address issues of faith and learning, our faculty will continue to function without adequate resources to use in this area. I would encourage our administrators to explore a variety of ways to sponsor and produce such resources in multiple languages for use worldwide.

Through its educational institutions, particularly at the graduate level, the church plays a definitive role in preparing professionals who are willing and able to take their faith into the larger arena of leadership in the public square. If Christians are to live integrated lives after graduation, their faith commitment and learning quest must inform and challenge each other while they are in school. This will help to ensure that after graduation, faith integration continues to occur not only in the areas of church life and personal devotions, but also in the crucible of the graduate's vocation. We also must constantly seek to nurture and prepare the next generation of scholars to serve as faculty in our schools and faith. The many issues² raised by the various academic disciplines are so vital and urgent that we must address them through the lens of faith.

Implementation

How can biblical faith be incorporated into the graduate curriculum? Should we require every graduate student in every discipline to complete a general religion course?³ Is this the best way to ensure that integration of faith and learning occurs in graduate studies? Who should teach such a class—a religion professor? A subject-area specialist? Will such a class adequately address the issues of faith that the student will encounter in his or her vocation? Or should subject-area professors receive training so that they can integrate faith and promote spiritual growth in their courses? Perhaps both approaches should be implemented?

Consider the issues raised by these questions as well as the structural challenges of the various approaches. Many religion professors do not have graduate degrees in disciplines other

BY MICHAEL E. CAFFERY

than theology or religious studies. Can we reasonably expect them to find effective ways to integrate faith and learning in the graduate-level study of other disciplines? The reverse also may be true. Subject-area professors who have little formal training in religion will doubtless feel uncomfortable being required to teach a graduate course in religion. They would need sponsorship and release time to take these additional courses that would qualify them for this task. Exacerbating the problem is employment of non-Adventist adjunct professors who have little knowledge of the church's doctrines or exposure to strategies for integrating faith and learning. Thus, it is likely that a significant number of subject-area professors will face serious challenges if asked to address issues of faith in the graduate courses they teach.

Add to this the pressure to provide students with academic training to master an ever-expanding body of knowledge. If a religion course is required, either the degree program must be

must make to foster integration.⁵

Differentiation and integration are inherently inverse operations. Embedded in one is the potential for undoing the other unless both are appropriately managed. Although they are natural polar opposites, they are inseparable, which means that the tension ultimately cannot be completely resolved one way or another once and for all. It can only be managed, with attention given to both specialization and integration. To attempt to resolve the tension is to damage one or both sides of the polarity. Furthermore, this paradox exists in dynamic tension. Some people like to think of paradox management as a balancing act where we give a little to one side and a little to the other side. But the balancing metaphor does not adequately describe how to manage a tension that is not static, where there are inevitable tradeoffs regardless of the choices that are made.

Keeping in mind the challenge that managing this tension poses to the task of integration, are there any structural options that will help administrators who are defining the content of a graduate-level religion course? How can we get the benefit of subject area specialization and at the same time be successful at integration? I suggest five possible options. (See page 33.) These can be considered in terms of the degree of involvement by a professor, as shown in the following matrix. As used here, "High Involvement" is when the professor has the dominant influence in planning course content, writing the course syllabus, and managing the teaching-learning experiences. "Low Involvement" is when he or she has little direct influence in course content planning, developing course requirements and managing the teaching-learning experiences. Listed at the bottom of the matrix are examples of goals that the options are designed to achieve. (Some goals inevitably will compete with one another.⁶)

Option 1: Offer a course in religion taught by a religion professor. The course is tailored to address the issues of other subject areas. This option might be chosen when faculty in the university's graduate-level courses are not qualified to discuss religion topics relevant to their discipline or have no interest in developing a discipline-specific religion course. Option 1 also assumes that either (a) religion faculty can become qualified to deal with the issues of other disciplines at the graduate level or (b) it is unnecessary for religion faculty to become so qualified. Examples of this approach can be seen in the history at Loma Linda University that Gerald Winslow referred to in his 2006 article "Why the Study of Religion Belongs in Adventist Graduate Programs."⁷

As with the other options considered here, there are tradeoffs when choosing this course of action. The upside of this option is that a scholar who specializes in religion teaches the course.⁸ Religion scholars will bring a depth of understanding of religion but not necessarily the expertise needed to guide student inquiry in other disciplines.⁹ This option may deter scholars in other disciplines from integrating faith into their own curricula areas. Some professors may conclude that only

Differentiation and integration are inherently inverse operations. Embedded in one is the potential for undoing the other unless both are appropriately managed.

lengthened to accommodate it or an existing course dropped to make room for the new one. This will result in a difficult trade-off.

Finally, consider the structural constraints imposed by external accrediting bodies and the perceptions of administrators and faculty members regarding what is required for a credible graduate program. These and other questions should be discussed in the context of the fundamental structural tensions experienced in the quest to integrate faith and learning at the graduate level.

The Structural Perspective and Tradeoffs

Adventist higher education must exist concurrently in two worlds: the community of learning and the community of faith.⁴ The resulting tension highlights two fundamental concerns in defining structural options for faith and learning integration: How much influence should each of these communities exert in the teaching-learning process? What is the appropriate level of involvement for scholars from each of these communities in the teaching of religion in graduate school? The core issues are the degree of *differentiation* (specialization) we wish to create in the curriculum and the commitments we

		Degree of Involvement on Faith Issues by Religion Scholar	
		Low	High
Degree of Involvement in Faith Issues by Scholar From Other Disciplines	High	Option 2	Option 3
	Low	Option 5	Options 1 and 4

The following represent possible competing goals to manage when a structural option is chosen:

- Maintaining a limit on the total length of the curriculum
- Adequately covering the topics in the academic discipline
- Improving biblical literacy among graduate students
- Addressing issues raised by academic disciplines when seen through the lens of faith
- Maintaining a pool of qualified faculty members who align with institutional mission
- Furthering the individual scholarship interests of faculty and students
- Fostering faculty development: interdisciplinary study vs. deeper study of one discipline
- Encouraging students to consider the claims of faith in their lives
- Integrating faith and learning throughout the entire curriculum
- Maintaining the appropriate rigor needed for graduate education
- Fostering role models of faith integration among faculty and students
- Achieving economic efficiency
- Offering training that prepares graduate students to pass licensing exams or to be successful in other types of career gateway experiences
- Keeping a limit on the amount of information addressed in any one course

scholars with terminal degrees in religion are qualified to engage graduate students in substantive discussions regarding issues of faith.

From a structural point of view, extensive specialization requires a corresponding commitment to integration and to collaboration between religion and the other disciplines. To ensure that this occurs, religion scholars will need to devote time to fairly intensive study of the disciplines taught at the institution. The religion teachers should become familiar with the stream of Christian scholarly research and dialogue already present in the other disciplines so they are aware of the issues and problems that other Christians have raised.

Option 2: Offer a course in religion tailored to the issues of the various academic disciplines, and taught by one or more professors in each discipline, rather than a religion scholar.¹⁰ This option may be seen as a logical extension of ideas on faith integration put forward by several authors.¹¹ This perspective appears to be derived from the assumption that all truth is God’s truth,

and that Christian scholars in all disciplines can learn to incorporate ethical and moral topics relevant to their area of specialization into their classes.¹² This option may be implied in Richard Rice’s review of the options when he says that Adventist professors “will teach as representatives of a religious community, not merely as historians, literary scholars, sociologists, anthropologists, or philosophers.”¹³ Implementation of this option makes a statement that the university refuses to compartmentalize religion.¹⁴

An example of this option is the course BUAD 562 Integrating Faith & Business required of all M.B.A. students at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. In this course, some perspectives traditional to the field of religion are employed such as biblical studies, Christian ethics, world religions, missiology, and biblical theology as lenses through which to think about issues in business theory and practice. Another example is EDCI 512 Faith and Learning, offered by the La Sierra University School of Education in Riverside, California.

This course examines such topics as worldview, spirituality, and epistemology as they relate to Christian and public education.

Option 2 assumes that students and professors alike are interested in exploring issues of faith in the context of their field of inquiry. It also assumes that faith integration is not a one-way street in which biblical knowledge, theological reflection, and personal religious experience have little valid connection with academic disciplines. Further, it concludes that faculty in disciplines other than religion are qualified, or can become qualified, to deal with issues of faith in their own area of study. In Gaebelein's view, there is an assumption that the "experienced teacher who can control and interest a class in science can, out of prayerful and faithful study, interest a class in the Word of God."¹⁵ But conversely, Option 2 also suggests that religion faculty may not be qualified or may lack interest or time to become qualified to deal with the issues of theory and practice addressed by other disciplines.

While it is true that ethics is important for all graduate students preparing for service, this approach [Option 3] limits the range of biblical material that might be relevant to a particular discipline.

The upside of Option 2 is that scholars who are deeply acquainted with the big questions, the core ideas, theories, and assumptions in the discipline are the ones who engage students in matters of faith. Those closest to the intellectual issues of the discipline are those who, employing a biblical worldview, evaluate with students the big questions inherent to the discipline.¹⁶ The downside is that the people teaching these classes may not have graduate-level training in religion, thereby increasing the risk that they will make errors when addressing key issues of religion or overlook areas that ought to be explored.

If this option is chosen, teachers will need to devote time to studying the biblical and theological foundations that inform their discipline. Some may need to use a sabbatical to develop such a course. In many cases, it will be helpful to invite a theologian or biblical scholar to participate as a guest lecturer.

Option 3: Offer a religion course tailored to the issues of a specific academic discipline, which is team-taught by two (or more) professors, one from religion and one from the other academic discipline. This collaborative approach assumes that faculty from both religion and the other discipline will have a desire and willingness to collaborate. As in the other options, it also assumes that both students and professors are interested in ex-

ploring issues of faith in the context of their chosen academic field. An example of this approach is seen in SOWK 508 Social Work, Religion, and Spirituality, a course required of students enrolled in the School of Social Work at Walla Walla University in College Place, Washington. This course is team taught by a faculty member from the School of Social Work and a professor from the School of Theology. Another approach would be to offer a course in Christian ethics, with a portion of the course allocated to a particular discipline. While it is true that ethics is important for all graduate students preparing for service, this approach limits the range of biblical material that might be relevant to a particular discipline.

The upside of this option is that professors from religion and the other subject area have high involvement in the course. The depth of scholarship may be enhanced by their collaborative effort. The downside is that, compared with the first two options, such an approach will be more expensive and difficult to schedule.

If this option is chosen, among other things, faculty members need to be selected, at least in part, based on their willingness to collaborate. In addition, administrative support and budgetary adjustments may be needed to deal with the additional costs.

Option 4: Offer a general religion course taught by a religion professor. This option assumes that faith integration will occur for students and faculty even if the big issues, assumptions, and questions of their discipline are not specifically addressed. Those advocating this option argue that a general religion course will provide a deeper understanding of the Bible and enhance the student's overall spiritual experience. This option may be chosen because of the belief that there is an insufficient

number of teachers who can appropriately integrate faith and learning in the various disciplines.

This option also may be more efficient since students from a variety of disciplines can be enrolled in one course. The downside: It may implicitly foster a compartmentalized view of religion in terms of the curriculum in other disciplines. Students will not be directly challenged to think about the issues, questions, and assumptions of their discipline through the lens of Scripture. Furthermore, requiring a single graduate-level religion course will make it impossible to cover the vast amount of biblical material that might be addressed during graduate study.

If this option is chosen, professors in the various disciplines will need to find other opportunities to engage students in the issues of faith as they relate to the discipline. But, if religion professors are perceived as taking care of the faith and learning curriculum problem, it will be more difficult to convince professors in other disciplines to pursue such engagement.

Option 5: Both the community of faith and the community of scholarship have little or no involvement in the design and delivery of a religion course. This approach appears to be inconsistent with the mission of Adventist universities. Accordingly,

it probably should be rejected.

With the exception of Option 5, each option described here allows for every professor to integrate faith and learning in any particular course, class period, or assignment. Furthermore, the personal impact of the life of each instructor is an important factor in the integration of faith and learning in every discipline that cannot be forgotten when considering only the structural dimension.

Other Structural Contingencies

In addition to the options available in resolving the fundamental tensions between differentiation and integration, it is necessary to consider other structural contingencies. For example, graduate study is distinguished from undergraduate study in terms of the degree of emphasis or the degree of complexity a number of factors, including theory, research, schools of thought (perspectives), assumptions, threshold concepts (core ideas), values in practice, and pedagogy. Each plays a role in teaching and learning. Graduate studies tend to emphasize theory and research to a greater degree than classwork at the undergraduate level. These and other factors can be seen as planks in the bridge between other disciplines and religion, as shown in the illustration below.

Each teacher, whether trained in religion or another academic discipline, will have personal preferences for how to cross this bridge with students. They must be allowed the academic freedom to pursue matters of faith in a way that constitutes the best fit for their own talents, knowledge, and skills, as

well as the needs of their students. Some teachers may make connections to biblical faith by emphasizing theory and religious experience. Others may approach the faith integration process by emphasizing how values can best be put into practice, or stressing the grand biblical themes that guide practice. The potential pathways across the bridge are many. Individual preferences and course- or discipline-specific elements will influence the choices made. However, every choice comes with one or more tradeoffs, since there is insufficient time in a single course to explore every possible part of the bridge that might have the potential for linking faith and student experience.

Every teacher, however, can integrate faith and learning in caring interactions with students by sharing his or her spiritual journey. Scheduling worships at the beginning of each class period and expressing a genuine interest in each student's spiritual and emotional welfare and growth will also help to ensure that our programs are holistic and produce graduates who have grappled with the moral issues relating to their discipline.

University administrators must provide support and training to assist teachers in making these connections between their disciplines and biblical principles. Teachers can search out materials on the Internet and/or attend seminars to help them identify effective strategies to use in order to integrate faith and learning in their classes.

Conclusion

The fundamental structural tension between differentiation and integration cannot be completely resolved. It can only be

FAITH INTEGRATION BRIDGE



managed. We may think we have resolved the tension by making a particular choice among the options; however, no single choice is likely to bring permanent resolution.

Which option is best? The answer will emerge at each university and in every program through dialogue that considers the contingencies and how best to manage (minimize) the downside tradeoffs of each option. An assessment of the background and needs of a particular group of students may suggest the need to adapt an approach that worked well in another environment.

Hybrid approaches might seem to be the optimal solution, but they still present some challenges, since they are unlikely to permanently resolve the fundamental structural tension described in this article. Furthermore, hybrid approaches will bring their own set of tradeoffs to consider. Each teacher and the administrators of each institution will need to carefully and prayerfully study the options in order to decide which approach will work best in each situation. ✍



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1. See for example, Arthur F. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), p. 7. This present article assumes that there are differences between graduate and undergraduate education regarding the optimal ways of integration of faith and learning, and will address only the graduate level.

2. The term *issues* as used here refers to the cluster of questions, dilemmas, assumptions, and problems emerging from an area of study, which relate to or impact the core of a person's faith, and influence the formation of his or her worldview. Accordingly, issues are not necessarily points of fact, but refer to assumptions, theories, interpretation of facts, methods, and vocational behaviors that affect a person in a social setting.

3. See Gerald R. Winslow, "Why the Study of Religion Belongs in Adventist Graduate Programs," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 48:3 (February/March 2006), pp. 27-32: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200668032706.pdf>.

4. Fritz Guy, "Can Education Be Both 'Higher' and 'Adventist'?" *ibid.* 64:4 (April/May 2002), pp. 4-8: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200264040405.pdf>.

5. These two opposite functions have been recognized in various fields including mathematics, biology, education, psychology, philosophy, and art. Traditionally, higher education has been on a long-term trajectory of increasing specialization of the academic disciplines. This has created greater challenges in how to integrate learning across the disciplines. I am arguing here that the same fundamental tension exists when considering issues of faith and learning. In the field of organization theory, much has been written on this fundamental tension experienced by every organization in every sector of society including religious nonprofit organizations. See Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch, *Organization and*

Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1967); Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978); Richard H. Hall and Pamela S. Tolbert, *Organizations: Structures, Processes, and Outcomes*, 9th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005); Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

6. Competing goals are not unusual in complex organizations and especially in nonprofit organizations. Indeed, the goals of differentiation are, to a degree, in competition with the goals of integration.

7. Winslow, "Why the Study of Religion Belongs in Adventist Graduate Programs," *op. cit.*

8. This review of positive and negative effects of the various options is not intended to be comprehensive. The validity and relevance of some of the points raised here will vary, depending on the contingencies of particular situations.

9. Some have cautioned against taking too heavy-handed an approach when teaching religion, suggesting that mere indoctrination can actually be counter-productive to the goals of Christian education, since professors hope that students desire to be critical thinkers rather than mere reflectors of the thoughts of others. See Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, *op. cit.*, p. 68; R. T. Hughes, *The Vocation of the Christian Scholar: How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), p. 70; Richard Rice, "How Religious Should We Be? And How Should We Be Religious?" *The Journal of Adventist Education* 70:4 (April/May 2008), pp. 4-9: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200870040406.pdf>; Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), p. 17.

10. See C. Garland Dulan, "Curriculum and Faith in Tension: Educational Models and Principles That May Ease Tension and Promote Understanding," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 71:4 (April/May 2009), pp. 4-9: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200971040406.pdf>; Chris Blake, "Encouraging Students to Ask Questions About Their Faith," *ibid.* 49:1 (October/November 1986), pp. 14-15, 30: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200971040406.pdf>. Integration of faith and learning in specific disciplines has been addressed by: John Wesley Taylor V, "A Christian Focus for the Arts," *ibid.* 71:1 (October/November 2008), pp. 5-11: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200871010507.pdf>; Frank E. Gaebelein, *The Pattern of God's Truth: Problems of Integration in Christian Education* (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1968); John Wesley Taylor V, "Instructional Strategies for Integrating Faith and Learning," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 63:5 (Summer 2001), pp. 5-14; George H. Akers and Robert D. Moon, "Integrating Learning, Faith, and Practice in Christian Education (Part II)," *ibid.* 43:2 (Summer 1980), pp. 17-31: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae198042051715.pdf>.

11. For examples, see: John Wesley Taylor V, "Instructional Strategies for Integrating Faith and Learning," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 42:5 (Summer, 2001), pp. 5-14: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200163050507.pdf>; George H. Akers and Robert D. Moon, "Integrating Learning, Faith, and Practice in Christian Education (Part I)," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 42:4 (April/May 1980), pp. 17-32: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae198042041716.pdf>; Hudson Kibuuka, "Mission and Identity of Seventh-day Adventist Schools," *ibid.* 64:2 (December 2001/January 2002), p. 7: <http://circle.adventist.org/files/jae/en/jae200164020405.pdf>; Gaebelein, *The Pattern of God's Truth*, *op. cit.*, p. 18. Some may argue that if faith integration were extended throughout the graduate degree curriculum, there would be no need for a course in religion. Others will maintain that a specialized course in religion is needed if for no other reason than that it will be practically impossible to extend faith integration throughout the curriculum of each degree program, given the current personnel resources available.

12. James Wilhoit, *Christian Education and the Search for Meaning*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1991), pp. 127, 128; James S. Sire, *Discipleship of the Mind* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books, 1990), pp. 93, 142; Gaebelein, *The Pattern of God's Truth*, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 7, 17.

13. Rice, "How Religious Should We Be? And How Should We Be Religious?" *op. cit.*, p. 8.

14. Holmes, *The Idea of a Christian College*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

15. Gaebelein, *The Pattern of God's Truth*, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

16. Sire, *Discipleship of the Mind*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

GOVERNING BOARD AUTONOMY, INDEPENDENCE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES—GUIDELINES¹

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Seventh-day Adventist institutions of higher education fulfill several varied purposes. They perform a public service by providing quality education. They participate in the mission of the church by framing education within a biblical worldview and the defining values of the Adventist Church. They function as distinct legal entities yet are accountable to multiple agencies including their denominational constituency, students, accrediting agencies, and governments.

Membership on a board of trustees/board of governors can be a daunting challenge. The board, entrusted with the governance of the institution, must act in ways that both fulfill the mission of the institution and satisfy the expectations of numerous stakeholders. How does the board govern in such a complex environment?

The document “Governing Board Autonomy, Independence and Accountability in Colleges and Universities” was designed to assist trustees and governors in understanding how the board functions and demonstrates accountability to all concerned parties. The document is intended to provide guidelines for the education and orientation of board members. It recognizes that while denominational colleges and universities function in widely differing political, cultural, and regulatory environments, governance principles can be preserved even while governance patterns may vary.

The document has been developed over several months and reflects contributions from college and university administrators, board chairs, and church leaders. At its meeting in October 2013, the General Conference Executive Committee approved this statement and recommended its use in the training and orientation of college and university board members.—Lowell C. Cooper, Vice President, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



VOTED, To adopt the statement, “Governing Board Autonomy, Independence, and Accountability in Colleges and Universities—Guidelines,” and recommend its use as guidelines and orientation for boards of trustees/governors in denominational institutions, which reads as follows:

1. Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to provide trustees and constituencies with information and guidelines concerning the role of governing boards in Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities. The document describes how governing boards of trustees practice self-governance and function autonomously within the framework of:

- a. Fiduciary obligations of trustees
- b. Educational objectives of the institution and the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- c. Denominational policies regarding higher education
- d. Board accountability to multiple interest groups

Autonomy and independence in this context refer to the freedom and responsibility of governing boards and constituencies to govern an institution in light of its mission and identity and to do so without external interference. Trustee independence, a term widely used in the context of governance, differs from board independence. In order to reduce misunderstanding of these terms this document presents a definition for trustee independence and how it relates to the larger topic of board independence.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has established institutions of higher education in many countries. Political, social and regulatory environments differ considerably. In responding to the particular obligations of governments or regulatory bodies the constituencies and boards of trustees (variously called councils or board of governors) of denominational institutions will maintain the ethos and quality that makes Seventh-day Adventist education a distinctive contribution to society.

2. Underlying Principles

Governance of denominational institutions is

built upon several underlying principles and assumptions including:

a. Trust—Denominational organizations that establish educational institutions entrust a constituency with the responsibility for providing quality education within a distinctive Seventh-day Adventist ethos and mission. Governing boards of trustees function as stewards of the institution and, on behalf of the Church, strive to meet all their fiduciary obligations in delivering excellence in education.

b. Autonomy and Responsibility—Governing boards recognize that while they have an obligation to demonstrate self-governance in regard to institutional direction, all Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities are part of a network of educational institutions committed to the preservation and transmission of specific identifying values in education. A governing board also works collaboratively and creatively with external agencies to provide uniquely Seventh-day Adventist education within the social and regulatory environment of the institution.

c. Integrity—Constituencies and governing boards recognize their obligations to act with integrity and transparency, to comply with legal and regulatory standards, and to appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

d. Mission—Constituencies and governing boards recognize the importance of focusing on the specific educational and mission goals of the institutions they serve while proactively embracing the denominational purposes and goals for education.

3. Definition of Board Independence in Seventh-day Adventist Educational System

The discovery and transmission of knowledge is an essential part of the Church’s mission. Educational institutions therefore represent an ex-

pression of the Church in action. The Board of Trustees, established in harmony with relevant institutional governance documents,² is the group responsible for linking the educational focus of the institution with the interests, mission and educational objectives of the Church.

Board independence emanates from the constituency's confidence and expectation that the board, relying upon its own processes and commitments to quality education and to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, will ensure that the operations of the institution serve the educational mission of the Church and provide practical benefit to the community and the world. Governing boards earn and maintain the respect and trust of their constituencies by demonstrating accountability to:

- a. Quality in student learning outcomes
- b. Denominational identity in education
- c. Professional standards adopted by regulatory agencies
- d. The needs of society
- e. Commitments expressed to students, donors and other benefactors
- f. Agreed strategic direction and fiscal policy

Constituencies of educational institutions protect and preserve board independence by the election of boards of trustees with competency-based membership, by respecting the board's authority to govern the affairs of the institution between constituency meetings without interference, and by holding the board accountable through reports provided to periodic constituency meetings.

4. Definition of Trustee Independence

Trustee independence is a specific term in governance to describe a trustee's relationship to the institution. It is not required that all trustees meet the conditions for trustee independence as described below. However, regulatory and/or funding agencies may require a certain proportion of the board membership to qualify as independent trustees. Local jurisdictions may have specific standards for trustee independence. Generally the term refers to persons who 1) are not employed by the institution, 2) receive no compensation, other than modest stipends, from the institution,

3) receive no non-economic benefit from the institution, 4) have no immediate family members employed by, or conducting business with, the institution.

Whether or not a trustee qualifies under the requirements for an "independent trustee" all trustees are required to complete the institution's Conflict of Interest and/or Commitment declaration and to remain in compliance with its conditions.

5. Practices and Procedures Respecting Board Independence

The following list of best practices contributes to but does not necessarily guarantee that a board functions within the definition of independence outlined above. Ultimately, the test of independence is whether or not the board demonstrates its ability to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and its role in denominational structure and, in doing so, is free from the influence or control of persons or parties with competing or divided loyalties.

a. The organization's Articles and Bylaws clearly identify the institution's relationship with the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its commitment to furthering the mission and values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within an educational context.

b. The organization's Articles and Bylaws clearly define the constituency of the institution, the frequency of constituency meetings, the role of the constituency in amending the constitution and bylaws, and the method of appointment of trustees/board members.

c. Persons selected for membership³ on the board of trustees are capable of reflecting Seventh-day Adventist Church interests in education.

d. The governing board has a competency-based membership appropriate to the level and scope of education offered and the nature of any institution-related business enterprise. Board membership includes gender and ethnic diversity in order to represent the constituency being served. Trustees are informed regarding their fiduciary obligations and participate in continuing education concerning governance.

e. The organization's Bylaws define the author-

ity of the board with respect to the removal of individual trustees and the process for selection of new trustees to fill any board vacancies.

f. A majority of the trustees shall qualify as “independent” trustees. (See paragraph 4. above.)

g. The board of trustees is granted, by governance documents, full authority to govern the institution in harmony with established denominational working policies.

h. The board serves as the policy-making body for the institution. In particular, the board subscribes to the denominational policy on academic freedom,⁴ defends the principles of academic freedom in the interest of advancing knowledge, and rigorously follows due process in the protection of faculty, staff, and students.

i. The board demonstrates its trustee role by consistently making policy and operational decisions in reference to the institution’s mission as an expression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s purpose in operating educational institutions.

j. The Bylaws of the institution empower the board with authority to retain, evaluate, and discharge the administrator(s) of the institution.

k. The board has a published conflict of interest and/or commitment policy, including disabling guidelines, and adheres to a transparent process of conflict of interest disclosures. The board manages and documents situations where conflict of interest may be present.

l. The board governs as a body. Although vigorous discussion and dissent is welcome in the journey to a decision, once the decision is made all trustees respect it as the decision of the group.

m. The board empowers committees to address focused attention on various aspects of the board’s responsibilities. However, no committee is given so much authority as to subvert the authority of the board. Board committee charges require the committee to report in sufficient detail to the board so that all trustees are well informed and statutorily-required items are addressed by the entire board for final determination.

n. The board has a process for contemporaneous documentation of its decisions.

o. The board demonstrates commitment to

ethical conduct on the part of all trustees and, between constituency meetings, holds trustees accountable for always acting in the best interests of the institution, including the preservation of confidentiality on matters so identified by the board.

6. Powers of Related Entities

Boards of trustees govern their institutions as part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and thus carry very significant responsibility for knowing and assuring that institutional strategies/policies/practices are consistent with established denominational policy and mission purposes. Seventh-day Adventist members and organizational units recognize the need for the board to function autonomously, as outlined in this document, and will therefore respect the protocols for communication concerning the institution and its leadership.

7. External Influences on the Board of Trustees

Governing boards are expected to be responsive to the interests of many stakeholders including governments, regulatory bodies, faculty, students, donors and alumni. Boards must demonstrate the ability to engage in active dialogue with these stakeholders without compromising their fiduciary obligations to the institution and its educational mission.

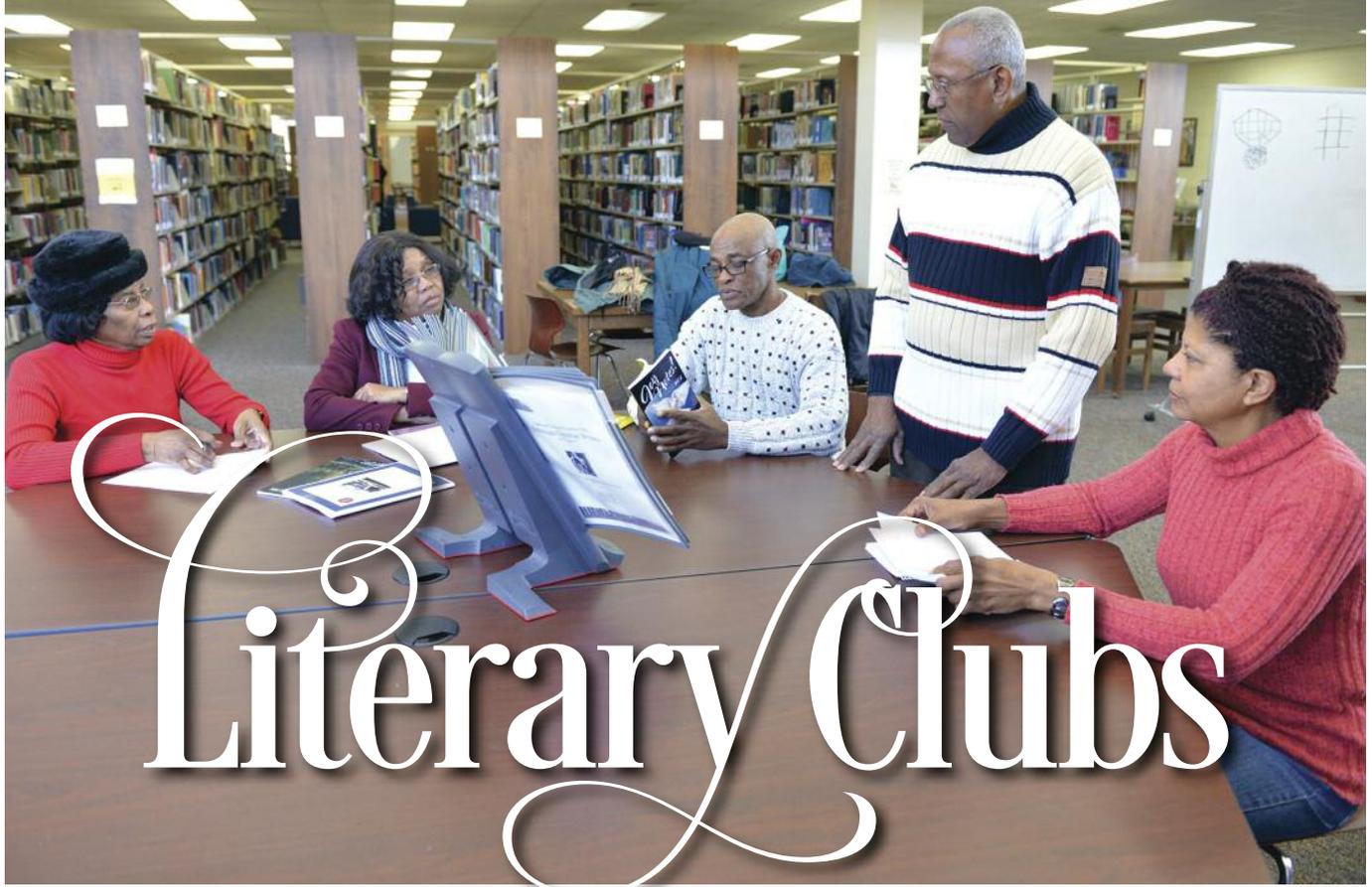
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. 141-13G, voted at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Annual Council in Silver Spring, Maryland, October 2013.

2. Articles and Bylaws, Government Charter, etc.

3. General Conference *Working Policy* FE 20 10: “Subject to applicable civil laws and regulations, members of the governing boards of Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities shall be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing. Others may serve in advisory capacities.”

4. “A Statement on Theological and Academic Freedom and Accountability” can be found at <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/statements/main-stat36.html>.



Literary Clubs

Promoting Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing Skills

College educators whose student body includes large numbers of freshmen who are underprepared, non-traditional students, teens, and minorities will face special challenges in facilitating reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills. While classroom assignments are essential, extra-curricular activities are a creative and entertaining way to sharpen students' writing skills. The forgotten ones, the strugglers, the non-traditional students, referred to by Mike Rose as "sitting on the threatening boundaries of the classroom"¹ must not be overlooked. Teachers and mentors must empower these students to use critical thinking, reading, and writing skills so that college assignments will not intimidate them.

Over the years, literary clubs have proved a successful and enjoyable approach to assist students who find themselves challenged by academic standards in the college/university environment.

The university academic club is one such organization. This club can extend a welcome to all who want to develop an appreciation of varied extracurricular activities foundational to college reading and English classes. This type of club meets to read original poetry, review books, and learn writing tips; visits literary and historical locations; and conducts activities that enhance critical thinking, reading, and writing. It may also publish a quarterly newsletter.

The Oakwood University Literary Guild, an affiliate of American Christian Writers (ACW), is the 27th chapter of this 80-chapter national organization, and the first and only ACW chap-

ter in Alabama. However, before assuming its present name, the club experienced several name changes: The Reading Club, Reading/Writing Club, and Literary Links.

This type of academic club uses a variety of methods to achieve literary excellence. Historical perspectives, integration of faith and learning, service learning, and academic perspectives all enhance that goal. Included in this quest for literary excellence is the challenge of promoting a Christ-centered atmosphere that enables club members to integrate faith and learning in every aspect of the club life and activities.

By focusing on student-centered goals and providing a variety of opportunities, schools can help at-risk students increase their reading achievement and writing proficiency while

BY CECILY DALY

keeping student interest high. To that end, each November has been designated as the Month of Literary Creations on the Oakwood University campus, when the focus is on producing various literary creations.

Historical Perspective

The year 1985 saw increased activity within the reading classes at Oakwood University, and this sprouted the seeds of what would become a new and permanent club: the Reading Club, established in 1986 in the Reading Lab of the Developmental Resource Center, now known as the Center for Academic Success. The group's first notable events were a "Fall Leaves Reading Fest" and a book fair called "A Celebration of Reading."

The mission of this club was to provide out-of-class assistance for students as well as in-class interest-based activities that would enhance their literary skills through critical reading, creative writing, and a variety of fun activities. Since its inception, the club has sponsored numerous activities, including a Fall Leaves Reading Festival, Month of Reading, educational book fairs, International Culture Fest/Tasting Fair, educational trips, poetry parties, Author's Chair, book links, and article-writing competitions.

Annual writing workshops, author-in-residence weekends, and Accolades, which was geared to combine reading and writing, have added both interest and motivation to the sessions. In addition, students' articles and poems have been consistently published in recognized publications. Also, since 2001, the club has maintained a need-based textbook scholarship for deserving students.

This article provides a brief overview of some of the club's literary contributions and educational services to the community. During the past 28 years, the club has held several writing work-

shops, aired five radio programs, produced one international play, hosted three annual campus-wide educational book fairs, and published several inspirational books: *Joy Notes 1, 2, and 3*; a prayer devotional, a prayer journal, the 25th-anniversary souvenir journal, *Therapy of the Brush*, as well as more than 300 articles. The Guild, a club of committed students, has been guided and directed by committed sponsors who lead talented but inexperienced young people into the literary arena.

Faith and Learning Perspective

University Guild planners have given much thought to building a strong, spiritual overtone that will keep the guild moving forward. Special effort has been expended to integrate faith and learning in order to enhance the development of mind, body, and spirit. Oakwood University's Literary Guild promotes a biblical, Seventh-day Adventist perspective while promoting learning.

Each annual consecration ceremony focuses on a biblical theme, such as, "Stir up the gift of God which is in you" (2 Timothy 1:6, NKJV)²; or, "Write the vision, and make it plain" (Habakkuk 2:2). Christian workshop presenters have been carefully selected from editorial employees of the church's publishing

houses and AdventSource to enhance the integration of faith and learning. Students are excited to see their submissions published in *Insight*, *Cornerstone Connection*, *Collegiate Quarterly*, *Message*, *Women of Spirit*, and the Women's Ministries devotional books. The club has published four volumes of their own inspirational works, which are known in the international community.

Service Learning

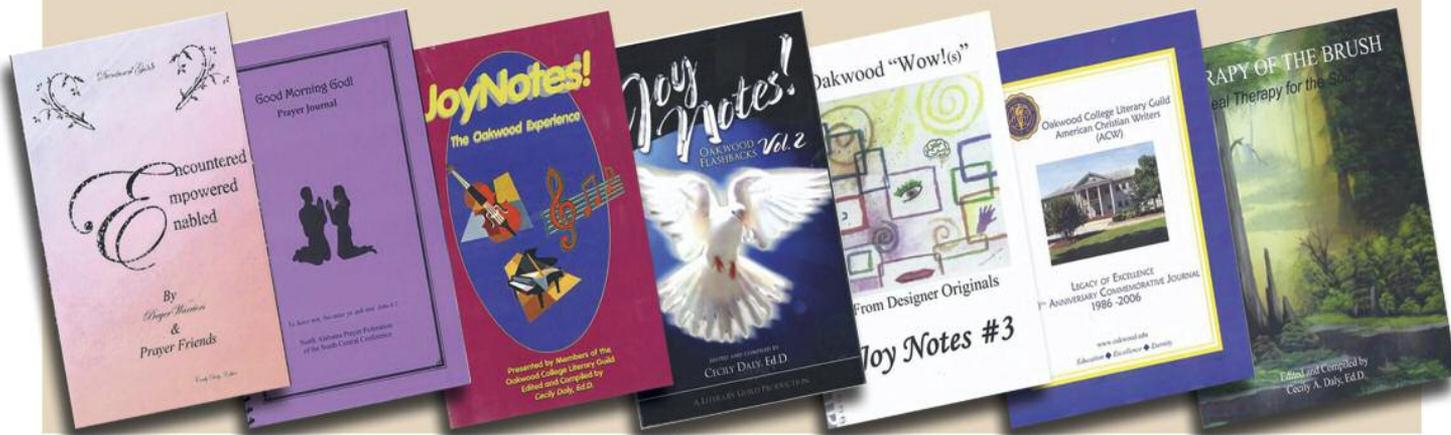
Service Learning (SL) offers a quality performance-based approach to learning. The 10- to 15-hour service-learning slot in English Education classes is linked with the guild and represents an effort to facilitate learning. Service learning provides opportunities for students to acquire practical knowledge while improving their academic learning as they participate in enjoyable structured activities. These interactive, informative, and innovative projects link students' academic knowledge with community needs.

First, students identify needs in the community. They then structure a plan to benefit members of a specific group. Thus, the club has been able to venture beyond academics as they learn how to help various groups.

Page 41 photo: Literary Guild supporters discuss the plans for the Textbook Scholarship. Left to right: Cecily Daly, founder and sponsor; Ingrid Ennis and Deril Wood, Oakwood University education faculty members; Michael Sales, marketing consultant; and Rhoda Benjamin, a participant in the Kenya Book Project.



Literary Guild Fest/Tasting Fair



Students' Literary Guild publications

Literacy Guild Community Projects

- The Adopt-a-School project venture by the Literary Guild has worked well. Club members visit students in a selected school, read to them, help them with English projects, and engage them in mentoring sessions.
- Elderly homebound people have been cheered with prose and poetry readings through an Adopt-a-Grandparent project.
- Local Spanish-speaking 5th- and 6th-grade students have received assistance to better communicate in English through an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tutorial.
- Earliteen youth have been taught to communicate with pen pals in New York and Chicago.
- The Hands-in-Action earliteen group has been engaged in a Pause and Pray workshop with prayer journaling, as well as arts and crafts sessions.
- Club members have also worked with the local Boys and Girls Clubs and Oakwood University's Youth Ministries Department.
- Recent service-learning projects include the unveiling of the "Young Writer's Project" and mentoring a group of Latino adults who want to learn English.

During November each year, the University Literary Guild provides opportunities for individuals to celebrate a variety of topics related to the three rights of the club. These rights, established in 2000, are still essential today:

"the right to know, the right to read, and the right to write." The right to write matches the university's Quality Enhancement Plan, an accreditation requirement that focuses on the improvement of critical thinking skills through writing. The plan emphasizes bringing clarity and strength to writing through use of the elements of thinking, a model of critical thinking by Paul and Elder³ and Nosich.⁴

Academic Perspective

The Literary Guild has an academic component. Book fairs (educational or general) readily capture the interest of youth at the elementary, academy, and college levels. Two of the more memorable book fairs were "Hats Off to Literary Links" and "A Celebration of Reading."

Using the first slogan, "Hats Off to Literary Links," in 1999, we set aside a special time for the campus family that also included students, community friends, and other literary-minded people. This festival featured information and activities that brought to life the pages of books, newspapers, and journals through displays and shows. Participants competed for prizes and other incentives. Since reading was promoted as the key to knowledge, club members emphasized that getting involved was important—indeed, probably the best way to integrate literary activities into a campus program.

Another campus-wide educational

book fair, "A Celebration of Reading," was the largest single, one-day activity that catered to elementary, academy, and college students. This project generated much interest and became an annual affair for three years. Elementary students participated from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., academy students from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and college students and community members joined in from 1:30 until the book fair closed at 3:00 p.m.

The campus-wide focus on reading motivated a number of students to become involved with the club and with writing. The Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, Barnes and Noble bookstore, Lifeway Christian Books and Supplies, and the Oakwood University bookstore contributed discount vouchers, while businesses provided other incentives. One local department store donated 50 dictionaries. McDonald's supplied drink and food coupons, and a local baker provided bread and cakes for a bake sale. Community members were invited to share their family and ethnic recipes, as well as written stories about the recipes. A later service-learning experience, which we called Literary Guild Culture Fest/Tasting Fair, involved more members than ever before.

Twelve Steps to Building and Maintaining Successful Literary Clubs

Building and maintaining literary clubs that motivate college students to engage in critical thinking, reading,

and creative writing can be challenging. However, it becomes manageable when divided into small steps:

1. Find a sponsor who is passionate about writing and working with students.

2. Find a capable public relations person who will publicize the club to the student body and the community.

3. Start with an exciting event to grab students' attention.

4. Use the talents of a nucleus of interested students.

5. Form working teams and organize in-house writing competitions.

6. Vary the writing activities.

7. Keep the club fresh with new ideas; young people like change.

8. Display and reward members' accomplishments.

9. Increase student involvement and enjoyment; encourage the use of computers.⁵

10. Find and incorporate additional ideas and opportunities.

11. Use regular announcements and fliers to arouse the curiosity, interest, and attention of the campus population.

12. Work with the school librarians to develop a Literary Alcove in the library.

Step 12 has served as a great advertisement for the Literary Guild's activities in the college community. It was a College Reading Strategies class that started a show-and-tell session, which culminated with the school's first reading/writing club.

Promote Process, Not Product

According to Lipson and Wixson, "A somewhat different . . . approach to improved reading comprehension ability involves providing an extensive experience with writing,"⁶ so don't be afraid to try something new. Use the following process-writing ideas, which have great potential for enhancing students' critical thinking, reading, and writing abilities.

• **Poets' Chair:** Student club members and local or foreign authors are invited to participate by occupying the Poet's Chair (decorated for the occasion) as they share their literary creations with attendees.

• **Book Link (Centennial Book Link):** A read-a-thon geared to college-

level students. This project allows them to read and record 100 pages of material of their choice.

• **Essay/Poetry Contest:** Original essays and poetry from several categories are solicited from the college family. These works are evaluated, showcased, and given awards.

• **The Pen Pal League:** a card- and letter-writing project and online pen pal league that can also be used with younger students. This encourages them to first write their stories, and then progress to more complex articles.

• **Poetry Parties:** open or closed poetry reading sessions, which add much interest to creatively titled projects.

Writing Workshops That Capture Interest and Work Wonders

1. **Right-to-Write Workshop:** a two-day writing workshop by a prominent magazine editor or book author.

2. **Hands-On Writing:** a week-long writing workshop for those who want to write for magazines, featuring a variety of topics such as Elements of Good

Writing, Developing Better Writing Skills, What Editors Look for, and How to Critique Your Writing.

3. **A Writer-in-Residence Weekend:** a writing workshop presented by a prominent magazine editor or book author, whose purposes are as follows:

- To seize the attention of community members and invite their participation;
- To give new writers an overview of what it takes to be published;
- To help professional authors discover the right market for their work.

Literary Art and Expression

Janet Emig, a leading writing and pedagogy expert, says, "No matter how well we teach, learning belongs to the student."⁷ She adds, "Learning doesn't always follow teaching, but leads a marvelously independent life of its own."⁸ When students are able to maximize their abilities, this helps them create fulfilling, independent lives. Facilitating reading success, then, must be the goal of mentors, instructors, and sponsors,



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who should use every method, technique, and strategy available to hone students' skills and increase their interest in critical thinking, reading, and writing performance. One strategy that has worked well for Oakwood University is the National African American Read-In Chain, which occurs during the first week of February.

In addition, the Literary Art and Expression Workshop has allowed us to incorporate art and literary expression into a club where people could engage their artistic talents by producing paintings and writing about them. The workshop sessions were arranged in pairs. Session 1 was the painting session; Session 2 was the literature information session, which included an expression or writing activity. This approach piqued the interest of students with an inadequate literary background, enabling them to develop their interest and writing skills and to achieve a measure of academic success. The reading/review sessions reminded them of their right to read, and provided a way for them to read books on their own, after which they met and discussed the books at length, and sometimes wrote reviews about them.

Working with a large number of reading and writing projects on a yearly basis can become tedious for planners and members, making it more difficult to maintain their enthusiasm. That's the time to infuse the organization with the enthusiasm of new participants. One plan that worked well for the guild was to celebrate November as a month of reading. Club members and their sponsors gathered for a brainstorming session to generate activities for the new school year.

When students are motivated, their achievement improves. Recently, the president of the club questioned what could be done to reignite the group. The response, from a young foreign national, was a surprise but served as strong motivation for the club. He said, "Write a story book for third graders, with each club member submitting one story." The project, based on values clarification (kindness, honesty, forgiveness) is now underway and includes various activities, puzzles,

and games. The club has been energized as the members write. There is no limit to what can be done with motivated group members.

A club newsletter has helped students realize that they have the "right to write." We selected an editor whose fervor was contagious and who would request articles and focus on reading/writing activities. This kept members motivated and having fun together. Utilizing each one's talent proved to be a source of inspiration and interest. Faculty support by an eager, passionate sponsor worked wonders, too.

Student-Centered Goals

The goal of a literary club is to motivate reluctant readers and to help struggling students become strategic readers and proficient writers. As the program has expanded and involved more student participation at Oakwood University, it has produced heightened motivation and greater literary achievement. The rewards have far surpassed expectations.

We have been able to expand beyond mere academics to reach out into the community with our services. The literary club, sponsors, students, and some community members have linked service with learning and witnessed to their faith. Critical thinking, reading, and writing have been presented in a variety of formats that empower students to practice their skills in interesting and fun-filled ways. By planning and focusing on student-centered goals and providing a variety of opportunities, the club helps at-risk students increase their reading achievement and writing proficiency while maintaining student motivation.

Like other literary clubs, the Oakwood University Literary Guild seeks to enhance critical thinking, reading, and creative writing. It also provides publication opportunities, literary activities, and a service-learning component. Organizing and maintaining such a club can be demanding, but the rewards are great. Using the suggestions in this article will enable you to savor the joys of accomplishment as you watch students discover their latent abilities; integrate faith and

learning; enhance their thinking, reading, and writing skills; feel justifiably proud of their literary progress; and succeed on their academic journey. ✍

This article has been peer reviewed.

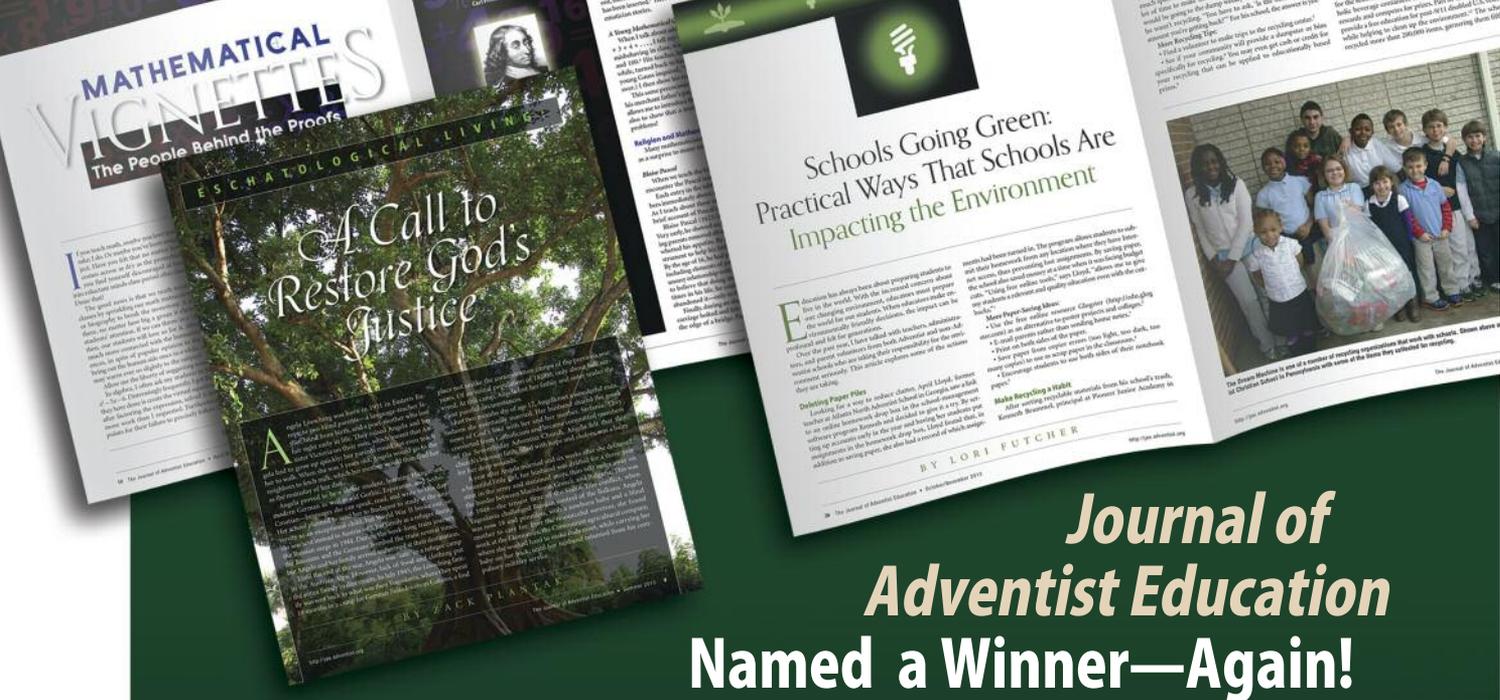


Dr. Cecily Daly is a Professor in the Department of English and Foreign Languages at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. Her doctoral

study dealt with the Effects of an Integrated Reading/Writing Curriculum on the Academic Performance of Underprepared College Students, and her teaching areas include Composition, English Methods and College Reading Strategies. An author of books and articles, her passion to assist students in developing effective reading/writing skills made her establish and then maintain the Oakwood University Literary Guild, American Christian Writers Chapter 27.

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2. Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible texts in this article are quoted from the New King James Version. Texts credited to NKJV are from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982, by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
3. Richard Paul and Linda Elder, *Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life* (Boston: Pearson Education Inc., 2012), third edition.
4. Gerald M. Nosich, *Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum* (Boston: Pearson Education Inc., 2012), fourth edition.
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7. Janet Emig (1992) cited in "Exploring Theories of Learning for Teaching" by Rhoda J. Maxwell, Mary J. Meiser, and Katherine S. McKnight, *Teaching English in Middle and Secondary Schools* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2011), fifth edition, p. 12.
8. Ibid.



Journal of Adventist Education Named a Winner—Again!

We are pleased to announce that *The Journal of Adventist Education* has just won two awards from the Associated Church Press and a Finalist designation from the Association of American Publishers.

From the Associated Church Press: (1) the Award of Excellence for Reporting and Writing: Theme Issue, Section or Series Journal (coordinator Wil Clarke) for the special Math section in the April/May 2013 issue. (2) Honorable Mention for Theological: Theological/Scholarly Article All Media (“Eschatological Living: A Call to Restore God’s Justice” by author Zack Plantak) in the Summer 2013 issue.

Also, the *Journal* has been named a Finalist in the Distinguished Achievement Awards for the article “Schools Going Green: What Schools Are Doing to Save the Environment” by Lori Futcher (October/November 2013 issue) in the category Periodicals; EDITORIAL - Feature Article, Adult.

The *Journal* has won eight Distinguished Achievement Awards, six Finalist classifications, and one Founder’s Award from the American Association of Publishers (formerly the Educational Press Association of America); and two previous Honorable Mention designations from the Associated Church Press.

Guest Editorial *Continued from page 3*

Zane Yi is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California. He has a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Fordham University and currently serves as President of the Society of Adventist Philosophers. Dr. Yi has also served as a campus minister and pastor.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. On Sunday, November 3, 2013, Clint Jenkins, vice president for research for the Barna Group, presented a report to the delegates of the NAD Year-End Meetings on the Seventh-day Adventist Millennials Study. For slides, handouts, and a summary of the report, see <http://www.adventistyouthministries.org/resources/articles>.

2. A total of 482 Adventist young adults were surveyed. Their responses were compared with those of other Christian millennials. See also *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity... And Why It Matters* by David Kinamen and Gabe Lyons (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books,

2007), which analyzes perceptions of Christianity shared by non-Christian young adults.

3. Ellen White’s influential ideal is well known to Adventist educators: “Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do . . . It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men’s thought” (*Education* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903], p. 17).

4. William Desmond warns, “Philosophy is a dangerous vocation. There are thoughts that can warp the soul,” “Despoiling the Egyptians—Gently” in *Gazing Through a Prism Darkly: Reflections on Merold Westphal’s Hermeneutical Epistemology*, B. Keith Putt, ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), p. 34.

5. Ellen White describes how youth might be trained to be thinkers, writing, “Instead of *confining* their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation” (*Education*, p. 17, italics supplied). The word *confining* indicates a narrow focus, which can be avoided by acquiring a well-rounded education that develops both practical and theoretical skills, plus ensures that students attain a familiarity with both philosophical and biblical ideas.

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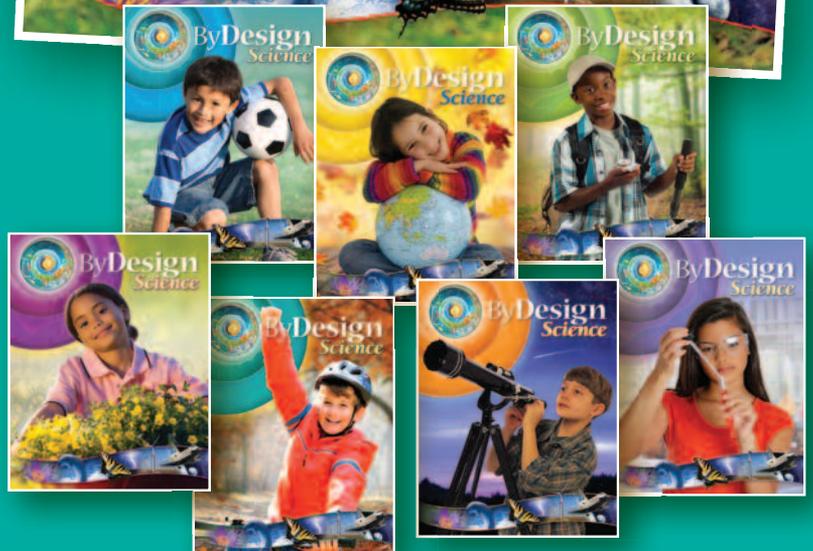
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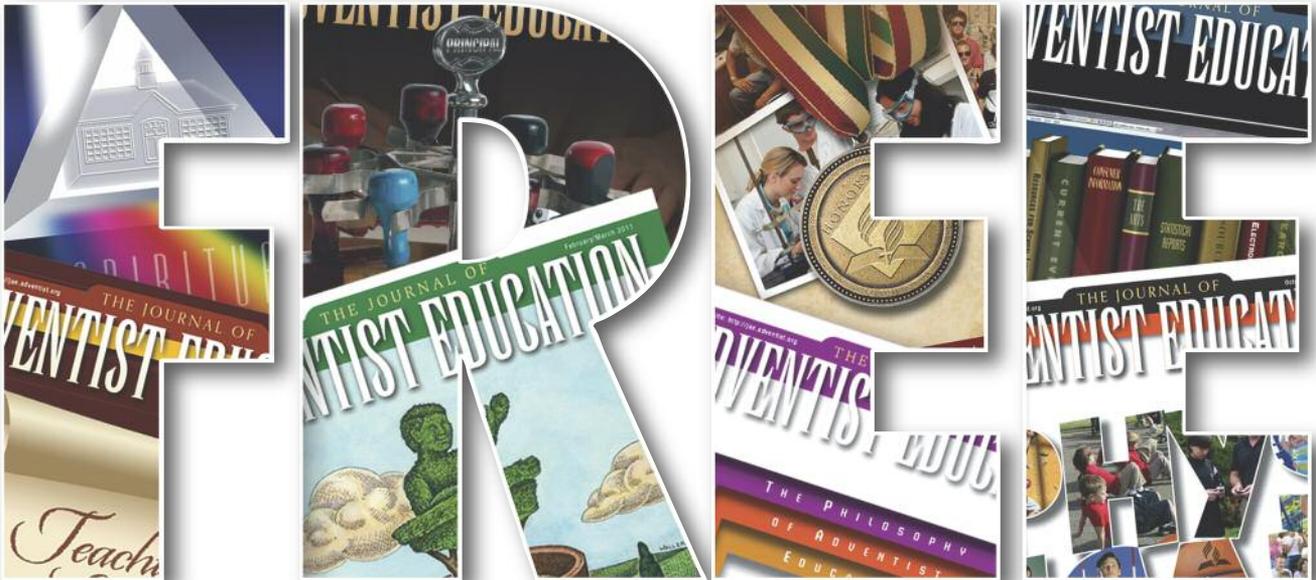
"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made". John 1:3

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