

## Call for Proposals

### **Christian Faith-learning Integration in Communication Studies: Theoretical Foundations, Practical Applications**

Editors, Robert H. Woods Jr. and Kate Mead

**The Context:** Christian higher education, like the rest of higher education, is in a time of transition. Challenges brought on by population shifts, changing public attitudes toward higher education, rising operational costs, dominance of digital technologies, and decline in a cultural, moral consensus has left many institutions searching for workable solutions. Moreover, Christian higher education institutions are no longer viewed nonthreateningly by the culture in general or the Academy in particular, which is dominated by a post-Christian, post-Truth ethos, scientific naturalism, and secularism. In this cultural scene, Christian faculty seek to guide students in “thinking Christianly” across the disciplines, providing Christ-centered perspectives for lifelong learning that equip students to critically engage culture in biblical and transformational ways. Faculty are charged with a faith-learning integration mission in all areas of service, including teaching, research, and administration. Along the way, helping students navigate the increasingly complex, nuanced social and political issues they encounter often requires new frameworks and training. It takes vision and courage to navigate these challenges and to fulfill this faith-learning calling in ways that sustain institutions and strengthen students’ faithful witness in the uncertain years ahead.

**The Purpose:** Our mission as Christian educators leads us toward an education of the entire student—body, mind, and soul. Christian apologist C. S. Lewis summarizes this mission as a call to “irrigate deserts” because “the right defence against false sentiments is to inculcate just sentiments.”<sup>1</sup> While we may recognize this important calling, its implementation can be difficult. How do we help students “think Christianly,” or integrate their faith with their learning? How do we foster righteous discernment? How do we impart knowledge that leads to true wisdom? What methods do we implement that both display our own faith foundations and encourage students to build their own?

One method of growing in our own teaching is to emulate the success of those who have gone before. We must pull from the “great cloud of witnesses” in the classroom—Christian teachers and mentors and colleagues who have uncovered methods that can lead students to seek after and pursue Truth. This proposed collection endeavors to collect voices from that cloud of witnesses—individuals willing to share testimonies of how learning and faith have been integrated in their own classrooms, research, and administration.

The proposed volume augments training for Christian scholars. Operating from a framework that views lived experience as a valuable teacher, this edited volume seeks to provide personal narratives related to faith-learning integration from Christian scholars who work in Christian higher education. Chapters will present specific strategies coupled with detailed examples. Taken together, the successes and failures of these faculty will generate a corpus of knowledge about how to reason Christianly and integrate faith into one’s classroom and research program.

The professors invited to this collection are professors of communication studies, providing a deep dive into the faith-learning integration practices of a particular discipline. They teach in programs of communication studies, communication and media, and communication and culture, to name several. In comparison, most books similar to our proposed volume provide faith-learning stories and practices across *multiple* disciplines (i.e., one chapter from a philosopher, one from an English professor, and the like). We believe that our focus on communication studies will make this volume stand out. At the same time, given the field of communication's inter-disciplinary status (i.e., communication studies borrows from sociology, psychology, and the like), this collection will also have a broader appeal beyond just communication studies faculty.

**The Invitation:** Contributions should be practical in nature and impart examples that have been implemented in your own classroom. The audience for these testimonies is other Christian faculty and pieces should aim to: 1) encourage them in their own expressions of Christian teaching and 2) provide methods that can be tailored to their own classroom settings

We invite you to submit one of the following proposals:

(1) **Chapter:** This is a brief (3-4,000 words) personal application of a faith-learning integration strategy that has been successful in your classroom. We encourage you to share how you've seen God move in the lives of your students through assignments, lessons, and classroom activities. Together, we can provide a resource for those who are seeking new methodologies in this ever-important labor. Your chapter, written in accordance with style guide in the Appendix below, should include the following:

- a. A personal statement about your faith tradition (e.g., your spiritual journey, how faith impacted your college experience, etc.) and how it influences your integration of faith and learning in the Academy.
- b. A philosophical or theoretical statement about general strategies for integrating faith into the professorship (i.e., your specific approaches or methods or models of integration in research and teaching).
- c. Additional points of reflection or emphasis about faith integration in the academy may be discussed, such as: (a) narratives about expectations and/or sanctions actually experienced at the department, college, university level; (b) personal calculus for career, research, or teaching decisions; (c) samples of how faith has been integrated into theoretical or philosophical material; (d) research examples; (e) administration examples.
- d. A conclusion that provides inspiration, encouragement, or a compelling charge for other communication faculty in contemporary university settings.

(2) **Teaching Case Study/Application:** This is a shorter piece (1,200-1,500 words) that focuses on *one* specific, clear, extended example of how your strategy/approach/method/model of faith-learning integration has been applied in your classroom. Perhaps there is a theory in the field that you help your students critique from a faith perspective? Perhaps there is an assignment or

learning activity that helps students think Christianly about communication or engage faithfully as Christian communicators in contemporary culture? And so forth. Your focus should be on application and practical pedagogical implementation.

**The Audience:** Chapters will be written for other Christian faculty and students training or working in Christian higher education in order to encourage, stimulate, and guide them toward creative and improved faith-learning integration. Faculty teaching in public settings will also be interested in many of the foundations and strategies shared. Encouragement is a key motive for the book. Another key motive is to help readers analyze the experiences of those who have successfully modeled faith-learning integration and draw out theoretically and theologically rich, practically useful, and biblically informed models of faith-learning integration.

**The Editors:** Meet your editors, Woods and Mead.

**Robert H. Woods Jr.** (PhD, Regent University) served as Professor of Communication and Media at Spring Arbor University for nearly 20 years. He currently serves as the Executive Director of the Christianity and Communication Studies Network (CCSN) ([www.theccsn.com](http://www.theccsn.com)). He has served as the President of the Religious Communication Association (RCA). Robert is the co-author with Paul Patton on *Everyday Sabbath: How to Lead Your Dance with Media and Technology in Mindful and Sacred Ways* (Cascade Books, 2021). His book co-authored with Kevin Healey (University of New Hampshire), titled *Ethics and Religion in the Age of Social Media: Digital Proverbs for Responsible Citizens* (Routledge, 2019), received the 2020 Book of the Year Award from RCA. Connect with Robert: [www.roberthwoodsjr.com](http://www.roberthwoodsjr.com).

**Kate Mead** (ABD, Liberty University) serves as Assistant Professor of Communication at East Texas Baptist University. Prior to serving in this role, she held a variety of roles in the corporate, nonprofit, and education sectors. It was through these positions that she found herself more thoroughly appreciating the applicability of communication in every area of life. She now endeavors to bring that combination of knowledge and application to her undergraduate and graduate students through foundational coursework in communication. Above all, though, she seeks to challenge her students to engage with the discipline through eyes of faith. Her current research focuses on uncovering how online communication can create, maintain, and alter a faith group's community and culture. Connect with Kate: <https://www.etbu.edu/about-etbu/faculty-and-staff/ms-kate-mead>

# Appendix

## Style and Formatting Guidelines for Authors

Please follow the general guidelines in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, most recent edition, humanities style, on matters of style and *Webster's Tenth New Collegiate*, Biographical, and Geographical Dictionaries for correct spelling (use the first spelling). Please consult these works if you have any questions.

### A. General Guidelines

- Your chapter should be 3-4,000 words in length (or 1,200-1,500 words for shorter application pieces), not including endnotes.
- As just noted, use endnotes, not footnotes.
- Double space your entire manuscript, including endnotes.
- Use 1-inch margins all around.
- Use non-technical jargon/language accessible to our audience. If you absolutely must use it, then immediately define it.
- Please avoid Christian bashing or proselytizing.
- Use active (versus passive) verbs as often as possible.
- Include only key authors' or scholars' names in the body of your chapter. Use full name the first time it is mentioned and only last name after that. Introduce who the person is, such as "Noted literary critic and Christian apologist C.S. Lewis. . .".
- Use present tense when referring to quoted authors unless the historical context is important (e.g., Smith says, "Yada yada."; Smith said [in 1967], "Yada yada.")
- Include several key/foundational sources for readers early on in your endnotes (more important for chapters that case studies/application pieces).
- Always use the tab key for paragraph indents rather than using the space bar to position text.
- If your manuscript contains special characters or symbols, please consult with us. We will probably need to incorporate custom coding in the final manuscript.
- Font Styles and Sizes, Subsections

Chapter Title: Times New Roman, 16 pt. font, bold

Author(s) Name/Affiliation: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font

Body of Text: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font

Major headings: Times New Roman, 14 pt. font, bold

Main subheads: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font

Second-level subheads: Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, bold, italics, followed by period, then double space to beginning of paragraph on same line.

## **B. What Else to Avoid**

- Do not use contractions.
- Do not hyphenate words at the ends of lines.
- Do not use a hard return anywhere within a paragraph; use hard returns only at the ends of paragraphs, lines of poetry, items in a list, titles, and all levels of headings.
- Do not use centering or other formatting commands (other than bold and italic) in your word-processing software. Include contiguous punctuation in the formatting, that is, punctuation immediately following a word should be in the same format as the word.
- Do not manually insert page numbers in your files. For page numbering, use the numbering feature in your word-processing program. All page numbers should be bottom center.

## **D. Text and Punctuation**

### *1. Abbreviations and acronyms*

Spell out on first use in a chapter or entry; include the acronym in parentheses immediately after the first mention: Department of Transportation (DOT), chief executive officer (CEO). In bibliographic entries and in-text citations, the full name of the organization, author, or entity must be spelled out.

### *2. Spacing/Dashes*

Use EM dashes without spaces on either side (This is an example—so follow it well.)

### *3. Alphabetizing*

See *Chicago*, most recent edition, for details.

### *4. Capitalization*

Titles of positions, even quite long or very important ones, should be lowercase unless followed by the name of a particular person: the director of internal affairs, the secretary of state, the president, but Secretary McNamara, President Wilson. Likewise, full titles of organizations are capitalized but not the shortened form: the University of California, but the university.

Note the capitalization guidelines for certain key words in our series:

Lower Case

evangelical/evangelicalism

church (if local community or group)

Upper Case

Scripture

Christian/ity

God/Creator/Holy Spirit (pronouns referring to God, too)

Bible

Internet

World Wide Web (“website” is lower case.)

Church (if Church universal, or all Christian, and not just local community/group)

5. *Commas*

Use the series comma for three or more items in a series: The basket held apples, oranges, and pears.

6. *Dates*

When citing dates, use the month/date/year style (November 13, 1987).

7. *Numbers*

Spell out whole numbers one through ninety-nine, but use figures for larger numbers, percentages (6 percent—note that “percent” is spelled out as one word), page numbers, and exact measurements (5 feet).

If similar numbers both large and small occur in a single paragraph or section, use figures for all of them. (The group consisted of 29 women and 103 men). (See *Chicago*, chapter 9, for details.)

Some examples:

1890s (no apostrophe); 1871–1875 (NOT 1871–75)

12 percent, 0.4 percent

23 acres, 2 kilograms

25 million people, \$3.5 million

4,000 (comma with ordinary number) but p. 1259 (no comma)

pp. 455–458 (NOT 455–8 or 455–58)

8. *Quotations*

- Any direct quotation in a chapter or entry must cite its source, including page number.
- Do not directly quote your own work from a previous publication until you consult your editor.
- Do not directly quote from Internet materials without properly citing the source just as you would when quoting from a book (That goes for web pages, listservs, and e-books).
- Do not depend on general reference materials such as *World Book*. Although such reference works have their value, the information should come from years of personally studying the subject or from works that treat the topic in some depth. Use substantive sources for obtaining your information.
- Avoid long quotes that may require us to seek permission.

NOTE: Because poems/songs are typically shorter and more dependent on distinctive expression than most prose, even very brief quotations may be considered foul rather than fair use. I have found that in my own work it is often possible to paraphrase and then quote verbatim key words and/or phrases. If it is absolutely necessary to include more, then we will seek permission. If your chapter is one that may include more poetry/songs than others, please let me know as soon as possible so we can work together on this ahead of time.

## E. Citations

### 1. Bibliography

In addition to endnotes, each author is required to prepare a bibliography of sources. We will follow the style recommended in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, most recent edition, referred to as the humanities style, for bibliographic references.

Most of the reference types for endnotes and bibliographic references you will need are given online at: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

NOTE: When necessary, use the two-letter postal abbreviations for state names (Madison, WI); for large cities or if the state name is included in the publisher's name, the state name is omitted (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin).

2. *Subsequent entries of same source*. In your endnotes, be sure to use a shortened entry if it is a reference already given a full treatment.

- Example of the first reference for a source in your endnotes: Walter Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 13.
- Example of the same reference appearing later in the endnotes of your chapter: Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, 42-43. Please consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, latest edition, for additional details.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, in *The C.S. Lewis Signature Classics* (New York: HarperOne, 2017), 699.