

William Jewell College

President's Statement

Implementing the Christian Mission of the College

Introduction

This statement on the Christian mission of the College represents the culmination of two years of observing, listening, learning and working with you as President of William Jewell. It is my hope that you will receive it for what it is, my affirmation of the College's historic mission and my call to the collegiate community to embrace and fulfill that mission. My call is for us to be the college we were founded to be, a college that provides a superior liberal arts education in a distinctively Christian environment.

The observations and recommendations contained in this statement have been significantly influenced by the report conveyed to me by the Christian Mission Implementation Task Force.¹ I am tremendously grateful to the Task Force members who produced the report. After much honest conversation they produced a report that is substantive, thoughtful, and insightful. They did what colleges are supposed to do; they approached a very difficult subject and addressed it in a disciplined fashion.² In this statement, I will not respond to every point and recommendation of the Task Force. Instead, I have taken this opportunity to write a statement that reflects what I believe to be true about the Christian mission of William Jewell College, with the Task Force report providing a very strong background.

It is incumbent now upon our community to extend this work into a clear understanding of how our Christian mission is implemented. I agree with the Task Force that we are living and working in a time that calls us to be intentional about our Christian mission. At the very least, all facets of the campus must articulate the College's Christian mission with consistency. But even more important, we must move from articulation to consistent, effective implementation, in part for our students and prospective students, our alumni, and other constituencies, but primarily for those of us who are the College. This clear sense and consistent implementation should lead us to a deep and shared confidence that we know who we are and what we are trying to accomplish.

¹ "Faith and Learning at William Jewell College" Christian Mission Implementation Task Force Final Report, July 2002. The executive summary and recommendations of the final report are included with this statement. The complete report is available on reserve at Curry Library.

² As Gary Armstrong said to me, this group touched the third rail (a rail many thought they could not touch) and lived to tell about it.

The Christian Mission of the College

The history of William Jewell College sheds light on the nature of her Christian mission. The genesis of the College and the formation of the state Baptist denomination were contemporary events. The impetus for the College came from Missouri Baptists who were concerned about spreading the gospel on the frontier and recognized that colleges were necessary to provide and prepare competent ministers for churches. Even as Baptists led the effort to establish a college, it was intended that instruction at the College be non-sectarian. Non-Baptists were included among the first trustees, and a non-Baptist was hired to serve on the faculty. It is clear through early College documents that William Jewell was founded as a school which would combine Christian truth with the course of higher learning. A statement in early catalogues (1871-1903) is explicit in this regard:

William Jewell College is not a sectarian school, but a religious one... , the Christian religion, a pure morality and earnest philosophy shall be exhibited and enforced on principles common to all Christian churches.

Almost a century later, Dr. Thomas Field, President of the College, noted that the job of the Christian college is to construct an experience that benefits students, not to allow the experience to evolve with only cursory thought and direction.

We are at a key point in the constructive task of implementing our Christian mission. It seems to me that each generation in the life of the College must do two things. First, each generation must embrace the College's historic Christian mission and take ownership of it. Second, each generation must implement the historic Christian mission of the College in the specific context of its time. The context in which we must implement and apply the College's historic Christian mission includes denominational turmoil in Southern and Missouri Baptist life; ever expanding religious pluralism among all religions and within the Christian faith; and a social wasteland where morality and ethics are concerned.

As we contemplate the implementation of our Christian mission in such a context, two general educational options lie before us: the indoctrination model and the exploration model. Baptist theologian Fisher Humphreys has characterized these two models.³

³ Fisher Humphreys, The Way We Were: How Southern Baptist Theology Has Changed and What It Means To Us All Revised Edition (Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 2002), pp. 101-103.

Indoctrination: *Indoctrination is carried out on the assumption that the primary purpose of education is the faithful transmission of a heritage by teachers to students. This transmission includes active resistance to every view that contests the heritage; it is only to refute them and to show the superiority of the heritage. Indoctrination sometimes includes a fortress mentality, motivated by the fear of dangerous ideas to be found outside the heritage. Furthermore, faithfulness to the heritage is sometimes equated with faithfulness to Christ; as a consequence, any view that contests the heritage must be unfaithful to Christ, and this leads to very intense reactions to people who hold such views.*

Exploration: *Like indoctrination, exploration supports the idea that education includes the transmission of a tradition because it believes that the tradition contains truth that students need. However, this view is open to the presence of truth outside the heritage and to views that contest the heritage. In this kind of education students are challenged to develop a critical appreciation for the tradition and a critical appreciation for views contesting the tradition, and they are entrusted with the responsibility of deciding for themselves which view is truthful. In this kind of higher education the clash of views is understood not as a conspiracy to subvert the truth, but as the honorable effort of finite, fallible human beings to understand the truth, a project that often exceeds everyone's grasp.*

One must keep in mind that no single model will fit every situation at any given institution. Thus, we cannot apply either model to the complete exclusion of the other. In fact, these models are not singular points in a universe, but rather reflect the continuum of options available. Having said that, it seems to me that William Jewell College was founded upon and continues to be devoted to the model of education as exploration. There are some who want us to adopt the model of indoctrination, simplifying truth to easily digestible nuggets and translating it into uniform action, both personal and corporate. We cannot do that. Diversity of views, ambiguity, and creative conflict are necessary parts of the enterprise of higher education. We are at our best, and we serve our Baptist constituencies best when these qualities are present in the collegiate experiences of our students. As a result, we expect our College to address any and all topics, confident in the academic freedom we enjoy. We also expect that freedom, like every freedom, to be exercised responsibly.

As we move forward, we will do what intelligent people everywhere do; we will keep in front of us two ideals that will often be in tension: faith and learning. Ian Barbour uses the following terms to illustrate ways in which faith and learning can interact with each other on a college campus: “conflict,” “independence,” “dialogue,” and “integration.” I think he is right and I think that all four should be part of the full college experience of our students. To do this, we will do what William Jewell has done from its founding, engage in meaningful conversations about how faith and

learning interact.⁴ How we integrate faith and learning is no mere academic exercise. It strikes at the heart of what we are about--students. A primary consideration as we undertake to meet this challenge is our responsibility to our students to challenge and support them in this endeavor.

Ideals of Christ and Missouri Baptist Heritage

The third part of our mission statement says that Jewell is to be “an institution loyal to the ideals of Christ, demonstrating a Christian philosophy for the whole of life, and expressing the Missouri Baptist heritage which is the foundation of the College.” This mission statement raises the questions of “What are the ideals of Christ?” and “What is the Missouri Baptist heritage that served as our foundation?”

The early catalogues of William Jewell stated that the principles of the College should be “principles common to all Christian churches.” What then are those ideals of Christ around which all Christians (Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and non-denominational) may gather?

The foundation of Christian faith is the person and life of Jesus. Christians believe that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Every person is to follow Christ, doing so in the unique giftedness that he/she is as a unique creation of God. There is not one expression of the Christian life to which all of us should conform. Each of us is called to live our own unique life as an expression of Christian faith. To attempt to live the life of another would be to live without authenticity and genuineness. Our goal as a community is the kingdom of God. God calls us to practice love and justice in our relationships. The clearest guideline for all relationships is from Jesus, “Love one another as I have loved you.”

Particular groups or individuals would want to say more but none could argue for any less. The intent of the College’s adherence to the ideals of Christ is not to be exhaustive or prescriptive but to express the desire that the heart and life of the College be inspired by and patterned after Christ.

The nature of the Baptist heritage, which is the foundation of the College, is two-fold. First, as Ken Chatlos has written, “Missouri Baptists have been and are committed to supporting quality higher education within a Christian context.”⁵ Second, in their

⁴ In Jewell’s history, several terms have been interchangeable related to how we have referred to the college. Those terms have included religious, denominational, Christian, Baptist, and church-related. As I look at these terms, I would say, “Yes, we are all those things. Each one represents a facet of our identity yet no one term can be applied to the exclusion of the others.”

⁵ Dr. Chatlos made this observation in a memo to me dated 7 August 2002.

various associations, Baptist churches have balanced independence with cooperation. Baptists recognize that more can be achieved when churches work together than any single church can achieve by itself.

The balance of independence and cooperation hints at another phrase that has meaning for us: open and anchored. Our heritage calls us to be open, to recognize that we (the many denominations) are all fellow strugglers in our quest to “love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with our God.” Our heritage also calls us to be anchored in the ideals of Christ and the conviction that each person must choose to stand where his or her informed conscience dictates.

Implementing the Christian Mission: Ethos

The ethos of William Jewell College is a Christian ethos. Our mission statement defines our ethos as “demonstrating a Christian philosophy for the whole of life.” The ethos of a Christian college begins with Christian people who bring a Christian worldview to the work. We acknowledge that not every act of every person on campus, nor every act of the corporate College can or will stand up to the test of being “a Christian act.” But because the College is Christian (though not all of its members may be Christian) our acts will grow out of Christian ideals that provide a purity of motive and love for one another that will sustain us through the diversity of views, ambiguity and conflict that is inevitable when we grapple with difficult issues, with the goal of preparing our students for living valuable and valued and value-filled lives.

Robert Benne, in his book Quality with Soul, identifies several normative criteria which a Christian college may use for self-assessment. Benne says that a Christian college must have three parts to its Christianity in order to be whole. First, it must have an identifiably Christian vision for its programs and curriculum. Second, it must have a Christian ethos. Third, it must have Christian people.⁶ Furthermore, a Christian college’s programming must have strong intentional Christian components. It must provide an environment in which Christians are comfortable yet challenged; it must hire people with a sensitivity to the challenge of integrating faith and learning who, preferably, come to the work with a Christian worldview.

If Benne is correct that these three are the criteria for a Christian college, then William Jewell is a thoroughly Christian college. We have three particular places in the General Education curriculum in which discourse on Christian issues intentionally

⁶ Robert Benne, Quality With Soul: How Six Premier Colleges and Universities Keep Faith with Their Religious Traditions (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

occurs. We intentionally provide an ethos in which the Christian voice is afforded a privileged place. We provide Christian worship and service opportunities to students and staff. We endeavor to hire and retain, especially among teaching faculty, persons who profess a Christian faith and practice.

I would describe Jewell as a Christian college with a strong Baptist heritage that has shaped us, but allows us to pursue, both individually and collectively, the “lived” Christianity that Jesus urged on his followers. William Jewell College is clearly and strongly both Christian and Baptist, in the most positive and inclusive sense of those terms. We value loving-kindness; we value community; we value extending our hands to others; we value justice; we value excellence in all we undertake.

Implementing the Christian Mission: Practical Approaches

I believe the members of the Task Force and I are in agreement that the model of education as exploration has been and should be our self-understanding as a liberal arts college. What then, is my response to the recommendations in the Task Force report? What are we going to do? Please note that though I have not addressed all of the recommendations of the Task Force directly, I will continue to consider those not addressed in this statement.

Implementing the Christian Mission: Practical Approaches, Short Term

In the short term, we will endeavor to accomplish the following:

1. Appoint a small committee of department chairs and two members of the Task Force to make recommendations to improve the tenure and hiring processes in general, but especially as they relate to the level of attention given to the intersections of faith and learning. Improving our processes will require departments to be very intentional as they communicate with prospective faculty members. Our faculty and staff are clearly Christian, but it concerns me that we may not have effectively informed, equipped, and encouraged more faculty and staff members to view the integration of faith and learning as an essential part of their desire to teach and work at William Jewell and an essential part of ongoing professional development. William Jewell needs a core of faculty and staff who are vitally interested in and equipped to articulate the Christian mission of the College. The Task Force also made several suggestions regarding the establishment of faculty/staff development programs that will support the work done by this committee. We will develop some of these suggestions fully during the 2002-03 year and consider others in the coming years.

2. Appoint the Chaplain as Dean of the Chapel and Assistant Professor of Religion. The Dean of the Chapel will have the primary responsibility to create and sustain the on-going conversation on the topic of faith and learning.
3. Ask that the Binns Lectures be expanded and dedicated to “the life of the Christian mind.” It may be that this lecture series would continue to be a traditional one, inviting outside speakers and presented at a special time. However, it should also have a faculty and staff component that features members of the campus community.
4. Continue to make the Christian mission of the College and our commitment to the model of education as exploration explicit in our public statements and publications. As was noted above, “each generation must implement the historic Christian mission of the College to the specific context of its time.”
5. Nurture and sustain a network of Missouri Baptist churches for communication and support. Enhance our relationship with Baptist churches by continuing to provide speakers, youth leaders, choirs and other resources that are of value to them. We have a historic responsibility to the Baptist people of Missouri. In order to be faithful to this responsibility, our primary goal is the quality of experience our students enjoy. We will continue to emphasize the highest quality Christian education experience possible. Through our graduates, we will continue to provide committed and thoughtful lay and cleric leadership to Baptist churches.
6. Initiate and sustain an ongoing community conversation by dedicating at least one forum per semester to the discussion of a paper or book chapter related to the integration of faith and learning.
7. Create an annual faculty retreat on the topic of faith and learning.
8. Solicit the Lily and Pew Foundations for funding to support some of these initiatives.

Implementing the Christian Mission: Practical Approaches, Long Term

In the longer term, we will endeavor to accomplish the following.

1. Evaluate the success of the General Education curriculum in accomplishing all it set out to accomplish when it was designed, with particular emphasis on how it addresses Christian traditions. This will be addressed through the existing methods of evaluating the General Education program.

2. Evaluate the role of the Partee Center in the life of the College, considering how that role might be expanded in the future and made to relate more directly to the interaction of faith and learning.
3. Solicit funding for either a visiting scholar program or a Chair of Christian Studies that emphasizes the integration of faith and learning.

Conclusion

Our work as a Christian college has been well done for over 150 years. But there is no merit in merely displaying the achievements of the past. We are not a museum; we are a college. Our charge now, and my primary purpose for this statement and the Task Force work upon which it is grounded, is to take our College to new levels of achievement and thoughtfulness as we continue to be and become the kind of college our founders envisioned.

In closing, I leave you with the words of the second verse of our College hymn. May their poetry and meaning resound in our hearts and minds.

God of art and love, Teach us how to see.
Grant us insights clean and true, Thy fairness making free.
Help us labor long, To build Thy city bold.
Faith and vision leading on, To fullness yet untold, To fullness yet untold.

Appendix

Reading List

This is a list of books I have read in preparing for this conversation on implementing our Christian mission.

Benne, Robert. Quality With Soul. 2001. Eerdmans.

Hodgson, Peter. Christian Faith. 2001. Westminster John Knox.

Holmes, Arthur F. Building the Christian Academy. 2001. Eerdmans.

Holmes, Arthur F. The Idea of a Christian College. 1975. Eerdmans.

Hughes, Richard and William Adrian. Models for Christian Higher Education. 1997. Eerdmans.

Hughes, Richard. How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind. 2001. Eerdmans.

Humphreys, Fisher. The Way We Were. 2002. Smyth and Helwys.

Palmer, Parker. The Courage to Teach. 1998. Jossey Bass.

In addition, I would like the reader to see several other statements or excerpts that influenced my thinking on this topic. I do not agree with everything said in every reference, but the ideas expressed here did influence my thinking.

The tension between indoctrination and exploration is expressed in the following passage about Samford University from Models for Christian Higher Education, edited by Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian.

Some suggest that, unlike institutions in the Roman Catholic or Reformed traditions, Baptists have no uniform theology of education. Rather, one administrator suggested, Baptists, like Christian restorationists, are pulled between forces of dogma and sociology, often being overwhelmed by both. That is, they desire schools that reflect a strong doctrinal base but, lacking a clear doctrinal consensus, are shaped by varying regional, pragmatic, or cultural dynamics. Ironically, questions of theology have often consumed segments of a constituency that was unable to establish frameworks for theological and educational unanimity.

Lacking a creedal base and appealing to a primitive approach to Scripture, the Baptist tradition was less helpful in shaping a Christian institutional identity in an increasingly pluralistic university environment. Some faculty agreed that Baptists had never developed a clear-cut theory of Christian education. The challenge, therefore, might be to articulate one at Samford, since there is still opportunity to do so in the changing climate of Baptist denominationalism.

One professor commented that some students seemed ‘afraid of certain thoughts’ regarding social, political, or theological issues. Some students seem to think that they had been sent to Samford so that they would not have to confront certain questions. Another teacher wondered about the common student questions, ‘Can you teach that at Samford?’ concerning discussion of such issues as abortion, homosexuality, or evolution, as if even raising such issues was out of place in a Christian university. Thus, many faculty wondered about their roles in the learning community at Samford. Were they to reinforce existing beliefs or challenge them?’

From a paper on Christian Intellectual Discourse that Gary Armstrong wrote at my request in the summer of 2001:

Our educational commitments as reflected in our mission statement have deep and abiding roots. Our calling demands that we introduce our students to the complex questions and competing answers which are considered in public theology. Good stewardship demands that we faithfully and wisely continue to serve our constituents, our sponsoring Baptist churches, the larger Christian community, and all those who hope for more than an Enlightenment Education.⁸

David N. Duke, writing in a 1986 essay entitled “What Makes the Christian College Christian,” addressed the question of the effect that the broadening nature of superior education and the questioning that is necessary to create such an education has on individual faith.

As Wood [Ralph Wood, who was, at the time, at Wake Forest University] says, a student’s faith should never be subject to ridicule, but neither should it go unchallenged. Students need to be encouraged to own their faith, not simply relying on those who have told them about it. This process of moving from ‘borrowed faith’ through ‘searching faith’ should eventually lead to ‘owned faith.’⁹

Brad Chance addressed the challenge of integrating faith and learning in a postmodern context.

⁷ Richard T. Hughes and William B. Adrian, eds. *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), pp. 398-399.

⁸ Gary Armstrong, “Christian Intellectual Discourse,” 2001, p. 7.

⁹ David Nelson Duke, “What Makes the ‘Christian College’ Christian?” 1986, p. 4.

Postmodern thought also encourages communities to be forthright about the perspectives, preunderstandings, and biases that we bring to the table of discourse. If Jewell identifies herself as a Christian college, we can be forthright in acknowledging that we privilege Christian perspectives on issues, even if such perspectives are, themselves, open to dialogue and debate. If Jewell identifies herself as an ecumenical and inclusive Christian college, we can be equally forthright that all expressions of the Christian faith are welcome and no one is excluded, save those who choose to exclude themselves or who make clear that it is their agenda to exclude those who are different than they.¹⁰

Insights on integrating “Christian” and “education” may be found outside our College as well. Sounding the call for authenticity, Parker Palmer reminds us that ultimately, we “teach who we are.”¹¹

The consequences of a studious approach to Christianity are well described in these excerpts from the St. Olaf College “Identity and Mission for the Twenty-First Century”:

Free inquiry is not always easy or free of significant consequences. Usually it’s just the opposite. Sometimes at a college you find that what you learn confirms what you believe. Sometimes you find that what you learn challenges what you believe and that you have to search deeper for the resolutions of understanding and belief. Sometimes the challenges result in harmonies, other times in dissonance. Sometimes this counterpoint of mind and soul leads to transformation. Sometimes this transformation is dramatic and other times nobody but yourself knows it.

Because the Christian religion is about the practice of freedoms, students at St. Olaf are free to make their own religious choices. They may worship or not, pray or not, sing hymns or not, join Bible study or not. And they do just that. St. Olaf schedules daily Chapel and Sunday Services but not all of our students go. In religion classes, students are not graded on their religious commitments; they are graded on their understanding of religious issues. We hope that religious learning will sometimes lead to religious transformation, but we teach for the sake of learning not for the sake of conversion. Students are free to practice their faith or not but they are required to think about faith. St. Olaf students must engage in the conversation and confrontation of Christ and culture, but what they say and what they hear is entirely up to them.¹²

¹⁰ Bradley Chance, “An Appeal for Ecumenism and Inclusion in Defining the Identity of William Jewell College, 2001, p. 3.

¹¹ Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*, pp 1-7.

¹² St. Olaf College 2000: Identity and Mission for the 21st Century, pp. 45, 49.

“Faith and Learning at William Jewell College”

Christian Identity Task Force Final Report July 2002

Executive Summary

This July 2002 Report, commissioned by President Sallee, begins with the self-evident: “a Christian vision was our founding paradigm and continues to guide us” (Appendix F, pp. 43-44). During our Task Force’s deliberations, we listened to the varied voices from our campus community (p. 3). We also considered the perspectives offered by outsiders who know “the road” well but see it differently (Appendix G, p. 45). Our descriptions of the ways in which Jewell implements its Christian mission reflect our best understandings of these realities. Our evaluations and recommendations to deepen Jewell’s Christian mission normally move along complex “middling positions” between those who argue for pluralistic privatization and secularization, and those who argue for a public homogeneity governed by creedal agreements (pp. 5-7). Finally, we hope that our community conversations, reflected in our Report, will be continued (pp. 25-27).

I. ACADEMICS AND VISION:

Descriptions: Jewell implements its academic Christian mission in its focused, yet “non-intrusive” hiring policy (pp. 9-10), and in its new (begun in 1996) general education program (p. 13). The hiring policy has given the College a distinctly Christian faculty that reflects diverse theological and ecclesiastical positions. The general education program insures that virtually every student will consider theological and/or biblical emphases in three different courses.

Evaluations and Recommendations: Jewell should deepen the ways in which it implements its academic Christian mission. Faculty development and hiring will be central to this effort (pp. 10-12, 12-13). For the College to move in this direction, it must pursue programs and policies that will create a diverse yet “critical mass” of faculty who can bring theological and biblical sophistication in appropriate ways and at appropriate places to the classroom. As one such classroom initiative, Jewell should strengthen its general education program (which already has promising beginnings in the way it reflects our Christian identity) (pp. 13-15).

II. CAMPUS LIFE AND ETHOS:

Descriptions: Jewell implements its Christian mission in significant ways in the ritual life of our community (*e.g.* voluntary chapel, ceremonies, Binns lectures) (pp. 20-21). That mission plays a limited (and sometimes confusing) role in our public rhetoric (pp. 22-23) and in our student life policies (pp. 18-19). Because of current tensions in the Missouri Baptist Convention, our long-term cooperative relationship with the MBC may be put to the test (pp. 23-24).

Evaluations and Recommendations: Jewell should articulate a complex but consistent description of its Christian mission and practices in its public rhetoric (p. 23). Student Life policies (from athletics, to residence halls, to health services) ought to embody that mission (p. 20). Likewise, the ritual life of the campus ought to reflect an engaging Christian vision that “extends to the whole of life” (pp. 21-22).

III. WHERE WE GO FROM HERE? This Report represents a good first step (but certainly not the final word) in establishing regular conversations about Jewell’s Christian identity. We need to bring imagination, energy, and resources together to support specific projects (suggested one-year and three-year projects, pp. 25-27) that will embed that identity more winsomely, more firmly, and more deeply into our collegiate and community life.

Deo Fisis Labora

“Faith and Learning at William Jewell College”

Christian Identity Task Force Final Report

Catalog of Recommendations

Academics and Vision

As a Task Force, we unanimously recommend the following:

- The key goal of the College must be to recruit a strong core of faculty willing and able to engage Christian intellectual life in their classrooms and the College curriculum with full academic rigor and integrity. In this regard, we have discussed the policy of restricting tenure to Christians. A large majority of the Task Force recommends that we not change that policy. But the Task Force reached a unanimous consensus that the tenure policy simply is not the most important issue here. In other words, we do not recommend a change in the tenure policy, but we also recommend that the College leadership see that the policy is not a particularly powerful tool in effecting or deepening the Christian mission of the College.
- With regard to faculty hiring, we recommend that departments be very clear with candidates that Jewell is committed to providing an excellent liberal arts education and to a Christian academic mission. We do not recommend that candidates be examined for their theological positions in a series of litmus tests. Rather, potential faculty should be invited, in their letter of application as they discuss their educational philosophy, to reflect on how they believe their Christian faith and philosophy could contribute to Jewell's academic mission
- The College should aim to recruit a core of minimally 10 additional faculty vitally interested in, and willing and able to engage/lead/speak for the Christian academic mission of the College in their respective disciplines and in General Education. The College could recruit this core of faculty over the next few years in its normal process of filling positions vacated by departures or retirements. In so doing, the College should intentionally seek a variety of Christian perspectives and traditions, making clear that vigorous and lively exchange of ideas, not conformity to prescribed patterns of thought, is our goal.

Faculty Development

In addition to its hiring practices, the College must identify on-going programs to cultivate faculty members in its Christian academic mission. The Task Force strongly urges that the College, if it is serious about such faculty development, be willing to invest the necessary resources. Examples of possible things that the College could do would include:

- Faculty development summer seminars on theology and ethics.¹³
- Identify 5 key faculty members and determine ways the College can provide them with resources to get up to speed on the intersection of Christian traditions and their disciplines or General Education courses that they teach.
- Periodic faculty workshops, speakers, *etc.*
- Fund a rotating chair to allow a worthy faculty member to teach about the Christian Liberal Arts mission of the College and invite outside speakers.¹⁴
- Establish a Chair of Christian Studies for a senior scholar, part of whose responsibility would be to offer and coordinate on-going faculty development for new and established faculty. (For a fuller elaboration of this, see Appendix B, pp 35-37.) As illustrations, this Chair could conduct development programs described below.
 1. A one-year (two-semester) class for all new faculty that offers a critical survey of the Christian tradition, including 4-7 week modules on the following:
 - a. Biblical Studies
 - b. Church History
 - c. History of Christian Thought
 - d. Theology
 - e. Ethics (both Christian and philosophical)
 2. A Summer Institute for Christian Studies. This would allow current faculty to have the opportunity to engage in a serious 3-4 week summer seminar on one of the modules listed above. Different modules would be offered on a rotating basis each summer. Admission to the seminar would be competitive and limited to 10 faculty each summer.

¹³ St. Olaf College has such a program.

¹⁴ See, as an example, the Boldt Professorship at St. Olaf College.

General Education

The College should see the GEN program as an important flagship that relates Christian traditions in a way that students will find inviting to a wide variety of problems, issues, and perspectives.

- The GEN program should consider ways to improve theological and biblical literacy. Perhaps the College should acknowledge that interdisciplinary dialogue is useful and valuable, but that some areas are too complex to be taught by well-meaning faculty who can find some time over some summers and a couple of semesters to do some study in the Bible and Christian tradition. The College rightly requires scientists, or at least those with some formal credentialing in science, to teach Science and Technology. The same recognition of minimal professional preparation may be necessary for something as significant as theological, biblical, and ethical literacy.
- Faculty should strive to counter impressions of being anti-Christian or anti-theistic. The College also needs to support serious engagement with varying perspectives and should not direct that faculty need to be sure that when all is said and done, not a student has been bothered or offended.
- We recommend that the faculty consider a basic “Introduction to Christianity” course as a required course in Level I of the Gen Ed program; this course might include a segment on Baptist history and practice. The faculty should also consider restoring the “Intro to Bible” course as a requirement in the Gen Ed program.

Flagship departments and programs

Our recommendations here are most tentative, given the particular challenges that we foresee Jewell having to face.

- The College should consider identifying departments that might be competent leaders of the Christian academic mission of the College. Such departments would need to make the case for the designation. We would reject both the exclusive “top down” and exclusive “bottom up” articulation of what particular expression of Christian theological tradition will be considered normative. A department that wanted to offer some expression of the Baptist tradition as a possible framework could do so; a department that wanted to offer some expression of the liberal Christian tradition as a possible framework could do so; a department that wanted to offer some expression of a Reformed tradition as a possible framework could do so; a department that wanted to offer some expression of a neo-Thomist tradition as a possible framework could do so; a department of diverse theological traditions might suggest an intentionally ecumenical framework.
- Should the proposed OXB chairs be funded and opened, the College should expect their holders to contribute to the Christian academic mission of the College. Diversity of understandings and expression of the Christian tradition would be valued.

Membership and Governance

As a Task Force we have not carefully examined the merits of changing that practice. However, William Jewell’s Christian identity requires a well-informed and sophisticated leadership at the Administrative Council and Trustee levels. There must also be persons at that level willing and able to articulate the Christian mission of the College to a variety of audiences; minimally, the President, the Provost, and the Chaplain should be able to offer such articulation. We do strongly recommend that the Administration develop soon an orientation process for the Trustees as a body about the Christian mission of the College.

Student Life Policies and Their Justifications

As a Task Force, we want to express our great confidence in the Student Affairs leadership and staff. They deal with very ticklish problems of community living on a daily basis and do so well.

- We recommend that the Student Affairs staff consider carefully the wisdom of incorporating rationales drawing on Christian explanations of the moral life as *one among other* rationales for policies regarding alcohol, drugs and visitation.
- College officers, including our new athletic director and chair of the PE Department, must have the courage, integrity, and authority to look into the signals we send to athletes about the College's identity. In athletics, an area that reflects in important ways campus life and ethos, we must be vigilant to insure that Jewell's practices reflect the Christian mission that it embraces.

We strongly encourage the College, especially the offices of Student Affairs and the Chaplain, to find appropriate ways to ensure both a careful reality and a careful rhetoric of the value of community life in a world of great diversity. We especially suggest that those offices consider the value of emphasizing the practice of hospitality rather than emphasizing the language of tolerance. Although a majority of the Task Force does not recommend the official recognition and support of a gay and lesbian student group, the majority of the Task Force's members strongly recommends that the College maintain its current complex "middle way" reality of College life regarding this intricate issue.

Ritual Life of the Campus

The Chapel should be a unifying force and a means of developing community, as well as an opportunity for worship and spiritual development. The Chapel and its leader, the Chaplain, should help also with community understanding of the mission and renewal of the Christian intellectual tradition and the life of the mind. We know these are very high expectations. But the Chapel is not meeting them.

We are happy, as a Task Force, to defer to the new Chaplain regarding ideas for the Chapel. We would recommend:

- The Chaplain should be called the Dean of the Chapel and given commensurate control of the chapel schedule and use of the facilities.
- The Chaplain and director of the Partee Centers should hold a Ph.D. or equivalent degree and be given faculty status.

We also recommend:

- The College should consider dedicating a new lecture series, or re-dedicating the Binns lecture series, to the “life of the Christian mind.” The College should reconsider the outreach function of that lecture series.
- The College should consider carefully the balance of public honors it bestows. Some believe that our honorees are too easily seen as donors or potential donors to the College. No one denies that this is an important rationale for granting honors. But they suggest the College should seek to honor great servants and/or religious leaders more often.
- The College should create a public “wall of honor” to memorialize students who dedicate at least one year of life to missionary service.¹⁵
- The Provost should consider re-dedicating the “D” block to community life, blocking out class scheduling in that time or curtailing offerings there. The time would permit one additional day for faculty, staff or student meetings. The remainder of the time would be “protected” as the current Chapel time is for additional community programming, including a possible expansion of Chapel.

Public Rhetoric

As a Task Force, we strongly commend the recent efforts to craft a more unifying image of the College and its Christian identity and mission. We hope these will continue.

Relationship with Baptist Constituencies

If the MBC fundamentalist leadership continues its current trajectory while Jewell tries to continue its historic friendship with the MBC churches, it seems likely that the relationship between the MBC and Jewell will become increasingly strained. We would not be surprised if the MBC leadership were to direct punitive financial action against Jewell. (Note: No Board “takeover” is possible because Jewell has a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees.)

¹⁵ As at Wheaton College. See Benne, p. 151.

The College would do well not to inflame the already strained relations. We should continue to work with the MBC as we do now (*e.g.* attend the Convention, set up our booth, send brochures and promotional materials to MBC churches).

The College might use its limited resources to assist our churches in their mission (*e.g.* provide on-line copies of our new chaplain's sermons; provide training for Bible study leaders; re-establish the pastor outreach part of the Binns lectures; develop a speakers' bureau—the Reformation, Bonhoeffer and Nazi Germany, Baptist history, the Just War, bioethics, psychology and the Christian life—which could help interested churches). Such simple efforts might help us maintain a good relationship with particular MBC churches and/or with MBC leaders. We note, however, that such efforts and goodwill must be maintained by both the College and the MBC if our cooperative relationship is to continue. The SBC leadership's directives over the past 20 years do not make us overly optimistic that fundamentalist MBC leaders will take a different direction; we would love to be proved wrong in this judgment.

The College should continue to embrace its Baptist identity. Baptists take seriously the authority of Scripture, the priesthood of all believers, and the autonomy of the local church. We Baptists have historically found good reasons and ways to cooperate (*e.g.* associations, fellowships, conventions, societies). We recommend that such cooperation continue in Missouri (hopefully, with the MBC). If the MBC severs its relationship with William Jewell College, then we must, as an integral part of our Christian identity and mission, find ways to continue our historic relationship with Missouri Baptists and other Baptists who, along with Jewell, value our Baptist identity.

Where We Go From Here

For implementation within one year:

- Expand colloquia for Scholar/Student Interaction (*e.g.*, *Journeys of Faith and Mind Series*). This would be a series of four informal presentations in which faculty of the college with a variety of theological positions and, perhaps, one outside guest speaker of some repute would speak on the subject of how she or he integrates the life of faith with academic work.
- Each semester use a faculty forum (example: 9:45 on Monday's, but held in Gano Chapel or WSC 107) to respond to a particular text or paper. This event,

open to the entire campus community, would involve both a presentation and time for discussion.

- Regularly, appropriate College officers (minimally, the President, the Provost, and the Chaplain) should address in the context of Chapel issues pertaining to the integration of faith and learning as it directly pertains to the mission of WJC.
- Once a semester have interested faculty and staff lead discussions with small groups of students on a wide range of topics important to their intellectual, spiritual, and personal development. The topics are numerous and could be proposed by the students. Some examples are: how to manage a career and family; how to be a loving and supportive spouse; parenthood; can science and religion coexist? what are the central tenants of the various Christian denominations? how does a church really work?
- Fund a rotating chair to allow a worthy faculty member to teach about the Christian Liberal Arts mission of the college and invite outside speakers.
- Offer a faculty retreat, coordinated by the Chaplain in conversation with members of the Task Force, on the specific issue of the intersection of faith and learning.
- Create a Speakers' Bureau.

Create the means to respond (*e.g.*, seminars, forums, prayer services, service learning, missions) to national and international events (*e.g.*, 9/11, Matthew Shepard, natural disasters) in a timely and appropriate manner. Intellectualism and Christianity are not passive endeavors. The College should model a proactive response to the needs of the world.

For implementation within two to three years:

- Host major Christian scholars, intellectuals and artists to lecture, debate, perform—and preferably even for a time to *live with* our community—with the goal of both energizing and refreshing, and to expand our horizons as a community.
- Establish a lecture series sponsored by the Partee Center that revisits the College’s Baptist heritage.
- Build Religion and Philosophy departments that are large, prestigious, trusted to lead in the Christian academic mission, and staffed with faculty who speak *for* the mission, and not simply *about* it.
- Establish a Chair of Christian Studies for a senior scholar, part of whose responsibility would be to offer and coordinate on-going faculty development for new and established faculty.
- Create major new streams of faculty development seminars and workshops to develop both widespread faculty resources and ownership in the Christian academic mission. Summer seminars could include topics in theology and ethics.
- Find a way to involve the Greek organizations in the discussions, and to create a cohesive campus community rather than one fractured by various organizations.