2014 Higher Education Symposium
October 15-16, 2014

Wednesday, October 15, 2014

7:00 PM – Registration / Coffee & Dessert Reception – Euler Atrium

8:00 PM – Welcome / Plenary Session I – Euler 109

A Conversation with Christian Smith

Timothy W. Herrmann, Professor of Higher Education and Chair of the Department of Higher Education and Student Development at Taylor University, will lead a discussion with Christian Smith regarding his investigations of emerging adulthood, culture, and faith. The focus of this exchange will be to explore the implications of Christian’s research concerning emerging adults and particularly to consider how the college experience might be optimally fashioned to prepare students for life after college, so that it nurtures a resilient faith that will sustain them through the personal and cultural challenges they will face.

Christian Smith is the William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame, Director of the Center for the Study of Religion and Society, Director of the Notre Dame Center for Social Research, Principal Investigator of the National Study of Youth and Religion, and Principal Investigator of the Science of Generosity Initiative. He is the author, co-author, and editor of numerous prize-winning books including What Is a Person?: Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up; Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Emerging Adults; and Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers.

Session Host: Stephen Bedi,
Professor of Higher Education and Provost Emeritus, Taylor University
Thursday, October 16, 2014

8:00 AM – Continental Breakfast – Euler Atrium

9:00 AM – Plenary Session II – Euler 109

Walking with Emerging Adults on the Spiritual Journey

Holly Allen, Lipscomb University

Emerging adults are navigating a culture that finds Christianity too narrow and judgmental. For this reason, as well as others, many 18-to-30-year-olds are walking away from church—though not necessarily their faith. Our task is to find ways to join twentysomethings during these crucial formative years as they enter the work force, forge adult identities, re-visit childhood beliefs, and re-story their lives. Often emerging adults desire authentic intergenerational relationships as they enter adulthood. They need those older and wiser to listen as they voice doubts and fears, negotiate peer and hierarchical relationships, and integrate who they were with who they are becoming. As we facilitate these differentiation and individuation processes, we are living out the commitment to connectedness and community to which Christ calls us.

Holly Catterton Allen is Professor of Family Studies and Christian Ministries at Lipscomb University in Nashville, TN where she holds a joint appointment in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Bible and Ministry. She teaches undergraduate courses such as Early Childhood Development and Family Ministry. Holly’s areas of research interest include children’s spirituality and intergenerational issues. Her most recent book (with Christine Ross) is Intergenerational Christian Formation: Bringing the Whole Church Together in Ministry, Community, and Worship (InterVarsity Press, 2012). Her first book, Nurturing Children’s Spirituality: Christian Perspectives and Best Practices (Cascade) was released in 2008.

Session Host: Kelly Yordy, Program Services Director, Department of Higher Education and Student Development, Taylor University

10:15 AM – Break – Ford Conference Room, Euler 113

10:30 AM – Concurrent Session I
Concurrent Session I.A – Euler 100

Nurturing ‘Holy Grit’: the Emmaus Scholars Program – an Innovative Experiential Model of Faith Formation

Mark Husbands, Hope College

Leading cultural forces have left the vast majority of emerging adults morally lost at sea without the intellectual/spiritual means to safely navigate their way to shore. Christian Smith and Tim Clydesdale have shown that in spite of forbidding currents, a small minority (10-15%) of emerging adults follow an “interdependent” trajectory marked by purposeful, productive living and global citizenship. The Emmaus Scholars Program is a one-year intentional Christian learning community focused upon nurturing what Clydesdale calls “holy grit” by cultivating a lifelong commitment to reenact the loving obedience of Christ in order to serve as a sign of God’s redemptive purposes for the world.

Mark Husbands occupies the Leonard and Marjorie Maas Chair of Reformed Theology at Hope College. Originally from Wales and Canada, Husbands is a Christian theologian whose work focuses upon the moral theology of Karl Barth, reconciliation, world Christianity, and political theology. His directorship of the Emmaus Scholars Program reflects his deep commitment to integral mission and the transformative power of the eloquent God of the Gospel. He and his wife, Becky, have three children: Olivia, Elliott, and Ethan.

Session Host: Mackenzie Lechlitner, First-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

Concurrent Session I.B – Euler 108

The Role of Campus Ministers in Relation to Institutional Mission at Non-CCCU, Church-Affiliated Institutions

Aaron Morrison, Nebraska Wesleyan University

A number of small private institutions with a traditionally church-based background exist, but for a number of reasons these places no longer maintain the same level of religiosity as when they first began. One of the marks of an institution’s religiosity is what role the campus minister plays in relation to the institution’s mission. Utilizing a qualitative, narrative methodology, a number of administrators at these institutions were interviewed over phone or email in response to prompts asking for their description of the campus minister role and its relationship to the mission of the institution. In this manner, the session offers a deeper understanding of the emphasis of religiosity as an institutional goal at these church-affiliated, non-CCCU institutions.

Aaron Morrison serves as a Residential Education Coordinator for Plainsman Hall at Nebraska Wesleyan University. He previously served as a Program Assistant in the Honors Guild at Taylor University while pursuing a degree through Taylor’s MAHE program. His research
interests include faith and culture, spiritual formation among college students, religiosity in higher education, theology of scholarship and the mind, social media ethics, and history of higher education. He hails from Crawfordsville, IN.

Session Host: Amy Nicols, 
Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

Concurrent Session I.C – Euler 118

The Theology of Immersion

Micah Weedman, Belmont University

This session will explore the theoretical concerns and motives behind adopting “immersion” language for alternative spring break missions trips, with special focus on the long-term implications. Immersion language allows the introduction of themes like catechesis, pilgrimage, and spiritual formation that traditional missions language often does not, providing more fertile ground for long-term impact on student-participants.

Micah B. Weedman is Director of Outreach and Associate University Minister at Belmont University in Nashville, TN. He holds an MDiv and is a PhD candidate.

Session Host: Hayley Meredith, 
Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

11:30 AM – Lunch – Dining Commons, Alspaugh East

Welcome and Prayer: Steve Morley, 
Dean of Residence Life and Discipleship, Taylor University

1:00 PM – Concurrent Session II

Concurrent Session II.A – Euler 100

Spiritual Struggle within a Faith-Based Institution

Hannah Schundler, Gordon College

During four critical years in college, students ask big questions and begin to form a stronger sense of identity, purpose, and personal conviction. Recent studies in the area of college student spirituality indicate that while college students have an increased interest in spirituality and meaning-making, many students experience spiritual struggle during these formative years.
These questions and uncertainties about identity and spirituality are not absent from faith-based institutions. In fact, some research indicates that students at faith-based institutions are actually more likely to experience spiritual struggle during the college years than their peers at other institutional types, for reasons that have not been previously researched. This qualitative study examined factors that contribute to spiritual struggle within a faith-based institution, the educational and personal experience of students experiencing struggle within a faith-based institution, and the institutional elements that effectively support or challenge students towards commitment during this time of developmental “crisis.” This study discusses implications for educators at faith-based institutions who desire to create an environment in which students can wrestle with questions and ideas and grow in spiritual and intellectual maturity.

Hannah Schundler received an MA in Higher Education and Student Development at Taylor University and currently works in the Office of Community Engagement and the Center for Student Development at Gordon College. Hannah is a graduate of Gordon College and believes wholeheartedly in the value and formative influence of faith-based higher education. Prior to graduate school, Hannah worked with student groups in short-term missions, which deepened her love of student development and community development. She is very interested in the topic of college student spirituality and, more specifically, spiritual struggle. Hannah desires to help college students ask big questions about faith, meaning, purpose, and calling in the world.

Session Host: Jordan Bolte,  
Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

Concurrent Session II.B – Euler 108

On Creating Space for Mentors to Become

Guy Chmieleski, Belmont University

Every spring we host a baccalaureate service that features four to six student speakers who share how they encountered God and had a transformational experience during their time as a student. Without fail, they all mention a faculty or staff member that had a profound impact on them – someone who formally or informally played the role of mentor in their lives. This prompted me to begin hosting spiritual mentoring reading groups for our faculty and staff as a way of creating conversations around the topic of mentoring, with the intent of encouraging, equipping, and inspiring all members of the professional campus community to better recognize the already present opportunities around them, begin to establish a common language, equip them with ideas about how to initiate this kind of relationship, and encourage them to prayerfully take their role on campus to a whole new level.

Guy Chmieleski is the University Minister at Belmont University in Nashville, TN, where he has served since 2005. Guy is also the Founder and President of Faith On Campus (http://FaithOnCampus.com), an organization committed to exploring the convergence of Christ, culture, and the college experience and equipping students, parents, and mentors to make the most of the formative college years. He is the author of three Seedbed published books –
Shaping Their Future: Mentoring Students through Their Formative College Years; CAMPUS gODS: Exposing the Idols That Can Derail Your Present and Destroy Your Future; and Noise, Hurry, & Crowds: Creating Space for God Amidst the Chaos of Campus and Culture (coming January 2015).

Session Host: Kirsten TenHaken, Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

Concurrent Session II.C – Euler 118

Cultivating Faith: Toward a Model of Spiritual Formation

Bill Kuhn, Crown College

How do emerging adults make sense of their spiritual formation experience? This phenomenological study explores faith formation through in-depth interviews with students. From student narratives, a model for spiritual formation is proposed with implications for higher education professionals.

Bill Kuhn serves as Campus Chaplain at Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN. He teaches courses in adult ministry, spiritual formation, and leadership and earned a doctorate in education from St. Mary’s University (MN).

Session Host: Grant Henry, Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University

2:00 PM – Concurrent Session III

Concurrent Session III.A – Euler 100

The Soul of Purpose: The Meaning of Religious and Non-Religious Identity for Students’ Purpose Development

Perry L. Glanzer, Baylor University

As part of a larger qualitative study of how college students think about purpose development, we found that non-theists and theists perceive the contribution of their worldview to purpose development differently. The non-theists largely understood their quest for purpose as enhanced by freedom from a particular religious narrative, but they also admitted that creating their own freedom proved a particular burden and a difficulty. In contrast, the theists identified a variety of ways their religious commitments shaped their views of purpose. Most importantly for students, their religious identity and tradition provided a narrative larger than one’s self that provided specific direction and guidance.
Perry L. Glanzer is Professor of Educational Foundations at Baylor University and a Resident Scholar with Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion. Most recently, he is the co-author with Todd C. Ream of *The Idea of a Christian College: A Reexamination for Today’s University* (Cascade, 2013) and co-editor with Joel Carpenter and Nicholas Lantinga of *Christian Higher Education: A Global Reconnaissance* (Eerdmans, 2013).

**Session Host: Hannah Adderley,**  
*Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University*

**Concurrent Session III.B – Euler 108**

**What’s Wrong with ‘Meaning Making’ to Describe ‘Faith?’**  
The Problem of Sharon Parks’ Kantian Assumptions for Student Development

*Stephen Rankin, Southern Methodist University*

Colleges and universities affiliated with Christian denominations who describe themselves as non-sectarian and thereby distinguish themselves from confessional Christian schools, largely do not recognize the corrosive effects on church affiliation from otherwise friendly sources. One example in student faith development comes from the work of Sharon Daloz Parks in her influential book, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*. The Kantian underpinnings of her view of dogma inevitably weaken the role of theological claims in student development. This paper analyzes the central problem of Kant’s contribution to Parks’ view and serves as a ground-clearing exercise for a subsequent constructive proposal.

Stephen Rankin serves as University Chaplain at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. He has worked in higher education for nearly twenty years, both as a full-time professor and chaplain at two United Methodist-affiliated schools. He holds a PhD in religious studies from Northwestern University.

**Session Host: Josh Riedel,**  
*Second-Year Graduate Student in Higher Education, Taylor University*

**3:00 PM – Break – Ford Conference Room, Euler 113**
3:30 PM – Plenary Session III – Euler 109

Millennials, Parents, Grandparents: Are Families Still Passing on Their Faith?

Vern L. Bengtson, University of Southern California

From the media as well as from religious leaders, we frequently hear messages that families are in a precarious position and that young adults are increasingly leaving the faith of their parents. Is this true? Professor Vern Bengtson has recently completed a 35-year study of four-generational families looking at how families pass down their faith across generations and why they do not. The results suggest that the “faith generation gap” is a myth, and that most churches are woefully blind to the opportunities and challenges of intergenerational ministry.

Vern L. Bengtson is Research Professor of Social Work and Senior Scientist in the Roybal Institute on Aging at the University of Southern California. A Past President of the Gerontological Society of America, he is the author of seventeen books and over 250 research articles on families, the life course, and theories of aging. His most recent book, *Families and Faith: How Religion Is (and Isn’t) Passed Down across Generations* (with Norella Putney and Susan C. Harris), has received reviews in the *New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, USA Today*, and on National Public Radio.

Session Host: Drew Moser,
Associate Dean of Students, Director of Calling and Career Office, and Assistant Professor of Higher Education, Taylor University

4:45 PM – Concluding Remarks – Euler 109

Timothy W. Herrmann, Professor of Higher Education and Chair of the Department of Higher Education and Student Development at Taylor University, will offer summative reflections and remarks concerning the impact of various sessions for professional practice.