

The Role of Faculty in Students' Spiritual Development

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(Editors Note: Please see the concurrent publication of the slides for this report.)

(Slide #2) I want to begin this morning by addressing the question, "What do we know about college faculty, and what one of the students who participated recently in our focus group interviews termed "internal stuff." □

The answer to that question, essentially, is not a lot. Although we have recently witnessed increased interest in issues of meaning, purpose, and spirituality within the higher education community, to date there has been very little empirical research conducted on these topics specifically within the context of college and university campuses. This is especially true with respect to how faculty view spirituality and its expression within the campus community.

Nonetheless, through interviews they conducted in the late 1990s with 70 professors from a wide array of disciplinary backgrounds and professional fields who were employed in diverse types of institutions, Sandy and Lena Astin found that interviewees did, indeed, want to talk about these issues. However, as a whole they reported that their employing institutions provided few, if any, opportunities for such conversations.

From Larry Braskamp's recent research on chief academic officers at church related colleges, we have learned about administrator expectations of faculty with respect to various dimensions of their work including the relative importance these administrators ascribe to faculty assisting students in developing their spirituality, faith, and religious perspectives. National faculty data collected as part of our most recent HERI Faculty Survey that we administered in the fall of 2001 offer additional insight regarding the importance of spirituality to college and university professors.

That survey did not focus largely on spirituality per se. However, we did include several items that are directly germane to this topic. I want to spend the next few minutes sharing with you a much-generalized overview of some of our normative findings on faculty members' goals for undergraduates, their personal goals, and their perspectives on institutional priorities.

I should note at the outset that the percentages I will be sharing with you are aggregates of faculty responses that have been weighted to represent the roughly 400,000 full-time undergraduate professors in the United States. Having said that, I also want to acknowledge that our emphasis within this survey enterprise on creating nationally representative profiles of full-time faculty does not reflect our lack of awareness that we have a growing cadre of part-time faculty in this country who contribute in essential and meaningful ways to educating our country's undergraduate students. What it does reflect is recognition that,

regrettably, there is a limit to the number of research endeavors that we as individuals and as an Institute can commit to simultaneously and expect to do each well.

In my role as director of our faculty survey, one of my dreams is to be able to develop similar additional surveys that focus on part-time faculty and graduate school faculty, not to mention institutional staff of all sorts and graduate students—the sooner the better, of course, given all the interesting and informative things we could learn from such surveys. So, if any of you have ideas for how to create more hours in the day, more days in the week, and more weeks in the year—or at least some combination thereof—please let me know!

In the interim, let me tell you some of what we know about faculty at different types of institutions and how they think about this so-called “internal stuff,” starting with some selected goals that faculty have in working with undergraduate students (slide #3).

You can see that faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which I will refer to as HBCUs from this point forward, prioritize enhancing students’ self-understanding to a greater extent than do faculty at other types of institutions. As indicated, 79% of HBCU faculty consider enhancing students’ self-understanding as “essential” or “every important” relative to approximately 70% of faculty at Catholic Colleges, Protestant Colleges, Private Nonsectarian Colleges, and Two-Year Colleges. Comparatively speaking, public university faculty “in the aggregate” are the least inclined to place high value on their role in promoting this aspect of student development, with just 57% endorsing “essential” or “every important” status. (Slide #4)

A similar pattern is evident when we look at the importance faculty ascribe to developing students’ moral character. In the interest of time, I am not going to go through each of these slides in detail. What I would like from you to glean from this display, however, is the general pattern that prevails across measures. Here again, you see a roughly 30 percentage point range between faculty at HBCUs, 81% of whom believe that developing students’ moral character is “essential” or “every important” and faculty at public universities, 50% of whom attach similar importance to this goal. (Slide #5)

Looking at the priority faculty place on developing students’ personal value, we see essentially the same institutional ordering with the exception that faculty at Protestant Colleges, on the whole, place slightly greater importance on this goal for undergraduates than do their counterparts at HBCUs. If you want to think hierarchically about this, it’s safe to say that as we go through these various items, public university faculty are holding firm in last place! As the data confirm, those of us here today who work at public universities and who, if asked to complete the faculty survey, would make it a point to underline this particular item, highlight it, and bubble in the “essential” response option with great enthusiasm are indeed statistical outliers among our institutional colleagues. (Slide #6)

Finally, we see equally prominent—although clustered—distinctions in the degree to which faculty at different types of institutions emphasize providing for students’ emotional development. The low percentages of faculty at universities and public colleges is especially troubling given that the largest numbers of undergraduate students are educated at these types of institutions and given that the challenges we face today and in the years ahead as local, national, and international communities require emotional maturity, strength, and courage.

Let us turn now to the two items on our 2001 faculty survey that focus on selected goals that faculty hold for themselves. (Slide #7)

One of these items asks faculty the extent to which they prioritize “developing a meaningful philosophy of life.” In looking at this graph, it is notable that there is significantly less variation among faculty at different types of institutions, including those at public universities, than we saw when comparing faculty goals for undergraduate students across institutional types. True to form, however, public university faculty continue to hold firm in last place. More marked variation returns, however, when we ask faculty to indicate how important it is to them personally to integrate spirituality in their lives. (Slide #8)

You can see here that across the board, the percentages of faculty who indicate that integrating spirituality in their lives is an “essential” or “very important” life goal is notably lower than is the case for developing a meaningful philosophy of life. While not inherently surprising, these figures are interesting to note and have important implications when we think about the extent to which faculty within different types of institutions may be receptive to institutional efforts aimed at facilitating students’ spiritual development.

The last three survey items from 2001 that I want to focus on within the context of “what do we know about faculty and spirituality?” focus on faculty members’ perceptions of their employing institutions. (Slide #9)

For example, when we ask faculty to rate the priority level their institution places on helping students to examine and understand their personal values, we see that upwards of three-quarters of faculty at religiously affiliated colleges feel that their institution places high priority on this goal for undergraduate students. At private colleges and universities and at HBCUs, roughly two-thirds of faculty indicate high institutional priority. In contrast, fewer than half of two-year college and public college faculty and just one-third of public university faculty indicate the same. (Slide #10)

Not surprisingly, institutional differences become even more pronounced when we ask faculty to indicate the level of priority that their employing institution places on helping to promote students’ religious/spiritual development. We see here a high of 78% of Catholic College faculty who feel that their institution prioritizes this aspect of student development down to single digit percentages of public college and public university faculty who indicate the same.

Certainly, issues related to the appropriate role that faculty should personally play in students’ spiritual development are multifaceted and complex, even within religiously affiliated institutions. Larry Braskamp, for example, recently found that chief academic officers at church-related colleges and universities do indeed expect faculty to be role models for students. However, the administrators he surveyed also believed that faculty should not be too influential on students with respect to “personal matters.”

From our recently collected College Students’ Beliefs and Values (CSBV) Survey data that Sandy focused on in his presentation yesterday, we gain additional insight into how students perceive their campus environments with respect to spiritual matters. While three-fourths of the students (78%) report that they discuss religion/ spirituality with friends, just 58% say that they have such discussions in class, and less than one in ten (8%) report that their professors “frequently” encourage classroom discussions of religious or spiritual matters. (Slide #11)

Similarly, as Sandy shared with you yesterday, we find that just 8 percent of students say their professors “frequently” provide opportunities to discuss the purpose/meaning of life. Over half of the students (62%) report that their professors never encourage discussions of religious/spiritual matters, and nearly as many (56%) report that their professors never provide opportunities to discuss the purpose/meaning of life. Approximately one student in three (39%) reports that his or her religious/spiritual beliefs have been strengthened by “new ideas encountered in class,” compared to 53 percent who report “no change” or “not applicable” and Nine percent who say that their religious/spiritual beliefs have been weakened by such ideas. (Slide #12)

Why is it important to study faculty perspectives on spirituality? As I mentioned at the outset, with few exceptions (see e.g., Astin & Astin, 1999; Braskamp, 2003), the research on spirituality that has been conducted within higher education institutions has focused on students, ignoring completely the experiences, attitudes, expectations, and influences of faculty. The result is a critical gap in our understanding of how we can create educational environments that maximize the personal and professional potential of students and faculty. Indeed, at the heart of higher education’s capacity to change are faculty, who play a central role in shaping both the culture and the climate of their departments and their institutions. As Astin and Twede (1989) have suggested, the values and beliefs of college and university faculty represent the fundamental standards by which institutional decisions are made and priorities are set. Consequently, for spirituality to become an integral part of higher education, faculty support is of paramount importance.

The significance of including faculty data in our analyses of students’ spiritual growth and development during their undergraduate years is underscored by the fact that faculty attitudes and behavior are known to have important implications for student development. The actions of faculty both within and outside the classroom influence the learning and development of future teachers, lawyers, physicians, and policymakers, not to mention their very own academic successors and the thousands of others whose daily work and personal activities affect our lives. Interpersonal interaction with faculty are known to enhance a wide variety of student outcomes and, as various student development researchers (see e.g., Terenzini, Pascarella, and Blimling, 1996) have shown, are one of the most influential sources of undergraduate student learning.

As the primary adult agents of socialization within the college environment, faculty have the ability to impact student experiences and outcomes both positively and negatively (see e.g. Chickering, 1969; Terenzini, Theophildes, & Lorang, 1984). Beyond influencing students’ intellectual and career development, interacting with faculty has been shown to enhance students’ personal identity awareness and moral development (see e.g., Bowen, 1977). In addition, student outcomes research shows that informal (i.e., out-of-class) interaction between students and faculty increases faculty influence on undergraduate students’ values, beliefs, and behaviors (see e.g., Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991) and positively affects students’ intellectual curiosity, interpersonal skills, and maturational development (see e.g., Astin, 1993; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1994). Faculty mentoring has also been positively associated with student inclinations toward humanitarian behavior (Kuh, 1995). To date, however, there has been no large-scale empirical research that focuses specifically on how faculty values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions affect the spiritual growth and development of undergraduate students. Why should that matter?

It matters because we are beginning this new century amidst a rapidly changing national and, indeed, international landscape; one that simultaneously presents unprecedented challenges and offers tremendous opportunities for higher education. Historically, higher

education has placed its unquestioned trust in colleges and universities, allowing members of the academy considerable freedom to pursue their work. However, society today is also voicing more loudly the claim that faculty have a social responsibility to contribute more fully to the wellbeing of their institutions, their students, and the larger community. Amidst enrollment uncertainties, pressures for accountability, financial cutbacks, and the increasing prevalence of part-time and non-tenure track faculty appointments (see e.g., Altbach, 1999), pressures on the new generation of faculty to be more inclusive, expressive, and responsive are intensifying. At this critical juncture for the professoriate, questions of meaning, purpose, connection, and authenticity are more critical than ever before.

To enhance the capacity of colleges and universities to facilitate students' spiritual growth and development, it is essential that we know what faculty think, what they believe, and what they do. It is also important that we go beyond those pursuits to listen to the heart of who they are and what they feel. Only through seeking this type of multifaceted understanding can we ultimately identify the most effective ways to promote the personal development and wellbeing of students and faculty. In turn, these efforts can help to improve higher education's capacity to effect positive change outside the walls of academe.

As you know, there is a team of six of us at UCLA who have embarked on a journey to try and better understand college student spirituality—the three of us you've heard from here over the last couple of days and three fantastic graduate students who, at the moment, are home attending classes, working on dissertations and, I hope, taking a well-deserved day or two off. The work we are doing is possible thanks, in no small measure, to the support of the John Templeton Foundation and, certainly, to the support of our colleague there, Arthur Schwartz. We're also fortunate to benefit from the individual insights and collective wisdom of our national advisory board and technical advisory panel members; the work of fellow researchers and practitioners who are engaged in similar pursuits; the involvement of wonderful colleagues at institutions across the country who signed on to have their students participate in our pilot survey last spring and who are committing now to administer a revised version of that survey to their incoming freshmen this coming fall. Needless to say, we are also extremely grateful for all that participation and support and we are also deeply indebted to the thousands of college students who have and who will take the time to share with all of us their thoughts and feelings and behaviors related to spirituality.

I am happy to tell you today too that our project team at UCLA recently received the very good news that Templeton has decided to provide us with additional resources beyond the very generous support they have already given us to study student spirituality so that we can begin to address faculty perspectives on spirituality at a national level. (Slide #13)

The primary goal of the work proposed here is to collect and analyze spirituality data from college and university faculty at a nationally representative sample of colleges and universities in the United States in conjunction with our ongoing collection and analysis of student spirituality data. Specifically, the new work will entail modifying the upcoming 2004 HERI Faculty Survey to include a major emphasis on spirituality and collecting Faculty Survey data at many of the approximately 150 institutions that will be administering the 2004 College Students' Beliefs and Values (CSBV) Survey to their incoming freshmen.

While our primary goal is to collect and analyze information from faculty about themselves and their institutions that can ultimately inform our understanding of students' spiritual growth during their undergraduate years, we also seek to understand how faculty perceive

and experience their own spirituality. Faculty are rarely asked questions related to how they view themselves, how they conceive of their mission and purpose in life, what personal meaning they make out of their work, or how the spiritual dimension of their lives interfaces with their institutional activities and professional pursuits. Such questions have never been asked of large numbers faculty from many different backgrounds, disciplines, geographical regions, or types of institutions and there has never been such an opportune time to do so. Given the scale and scope of both the forthcoming HERI Faculty Survey and the longitudinal student data that we are able to begin collecting thanks to the support of the Templeton foundation, we have an exciting opportunity to learn a tremendous amount about spiritual experience, growth, and development. Our hope, of course, is that the new data sets that will be created because of this research will also provide a valuable resource for researchers from a wide range of academic disciplines in their search for empirical answers to questions about student and faculty spirituality within higher education. We also believe that information generated from this research can aid colleges and universities in their efforts to develop more holistic approaches to faculty and student development. For those of you who may not be familiar with our faculty survey, let me give you a quick overview of how it works. (Slide #14)

Beginning in 1989, HERI has conducted five triennial national surveys of college and university faculty that have been completed by over 300,000 faculty at more than 1,100 accredited two-year and four-year colleges and universities nationwide. In each administration year, the HERI Faculty Survey is completed by approximately 50,000 faculty at more than 400 colleges and universities nationwide.

Survey items reflect five broad categories of faculty information: demographic characteristics; values (including personal and professional goals, political orientation, and goals for undergraduate students); work-related activities (including engagement in research, teaching, and service); institutional perceptions (including perceived institutional priorities and values); and affective measures (including work-related stress and sources of job satisfaction).

Ultimately, surveys from those institutions providing the most representative samples of their faculty are used to compute the national norms, which are statistically adjusted to represent the nation's total population of full-time undergraduate faculty.

Following each survey administration, the HERI staff prepares institutional reports for all participating colleges and universities. This report provides in-depth profiles of male faculty, female faculty, and all faculty, along with comparative normative data for faculty in similar types of institutions. The HERI staff also publishes a monograph, "The American College Teacher," that summarizes survey highlights and reports normative data separately for men and women and for 12 different institutional groupings. Policy analysts, campus administrators, and educational researchers subsequently use the data to understand the perspectives, practices, and experiences of the American professoriate. (Slide #15)

This new project officially begins in March, although we have already had some preliminary conversations about survey design and those discussions will continue through this coming spring. Within the next month or so, we will also be inviting institutional participation (by the way, all of your institutions are invited to participate). The survey itself is administered in a two-wave process with the first wave going out in October of 2004 and the second wave going out to first-wave non-respondents in early January of 2005. By late winter, the data will be completely collected and we can begin analyzing it and sharing what we have

learned. We will then continue that analysis and dissemination process through the summer of 2005 and beyond.

The following questions related specifically to students' spirituality are among those that will guide our development of items to be included on the 2004 HERI Faculty Survey questionnaire: (slides #16, 17)

Given the shortage of research on spirituality within the academic workplace, we also plan to include questions on the 2004 Faculty Survey that will enable us to analyze how faculty view their own spiritual expression and development within their academic work environments. The questions we will address through subsequent analyses include: (slides #18, 19)

At this point, we have many more questions than answers about issues related to spirituality within the context of higher education. I want to shift gears here now though and use our remaining time this morning to talk about some of the hypotheses we have pertaining to this new faculty component of our research. (Slide #20)

When considering the effects of college on students' spiritual development, it is critical to analyze the interpersonal context of students' experiences within the campus environment. Relationships with peers, faculty, staff, and administrators have a potentially powerful influence on students' academic and social values and attitudes. A considerable body of research, for example, supports the notion that faculty do indeed serve as role models for students. More specifically, there is evidence showing that during the undergraduate years, students tend to acquire their faculty's values. Moreover, research suggests that students are most likely to identify with faculty in the smaller, residential institutions. This effect is attributable, in part, to the increased likelihood of frequent and meaningful student-faculty interaction within this type of environment.

Residential effects on college student development have been well documented. At all types of four-year colleges and universities, students who live on campus show comparatively greater change over time (relative to those who commute to campus) in their aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual attitudes and values. To date, however, the within-college sources of influence on students' religious values have received little attention and the effects of the college environment on students' spiritual development have been largely unexamined. Nonetheless, given the existing empirical evidence that students are significantly influenced in many ways by interactions with their professors, we anticipate that students' relationships with faculty—both those who prioritize their own spirituality and those who do not—will affect their spiritual/ religious development. (Slide #21)

Our recently collected 2003 student survey data show that 76 percent of students are "researching for meaning and purpose in life," yet as I shared with you earlier, more than half say that their professors never provide opportunities to discuss the meaning and purpose of life. Similarly, nearly two-thirds of the students say their professors never encourage discussion of spiritual or religious matters.

The seminal research that Sandy and Lena conducted several years ago on issues of meaning and spirituality in the lives of college and university faculty revealed that while most of those interviewed wanted to engage in conversation about these issues, their institutions provided few, if any, opportunities for such dialogue. Some faculty felt that frank, collegial discussion of such issues was hampered by the inherent cultural and structural constraints imposed both by their profession and by their institutional work

environments. What Weathersby calls the prevailing "rational academic paradigm" may indeed interfere with faculty being spiritually present in their work and, by extension, may make it difficult for them to facilitate effectively student development in this realm. Stockton's analysis of attitudes toward spirituality among faculty and administrators at public universities revealed a common theme of "curiosity tempered with caution." While this research revealed a clearly identified need for more open dialogue, faculty and administrators alike were unclear how best to engage in such conversations given issues of terminology, worry about being perceived as proselytizing, concern about first amendment issues, and fear of isolation and labeling.

We anticipate that perceived barriers to engaging in conversations with colleagues and students will likely be more formidable in public colleges and universities. However, we also suspect that there will be similar perceived tensions within religiously affiliated institutions. The presence of a strong denominational bias may thwart open exchange and personal exploration of issues related to meaning, purpose and spirituality. Like some of their colleagues at secular institutions, administrators and faculty at religious colleges and universities may also feel that there are simply more "appropriate" (that is, less controversial) aspects of student development to focus on within the campus environment. (Slide #22)

Spiritual quest has been identified as an important factor in the process of meaning making and transcendence, key components of adult development. Nino, for example, has identified the degree and quality of engagement in three areas—"inwardness, relationships, and generativity"—as critical in determining overall developmental coherence and resilience. Analyzing faculty responses to two items on the 2001 HERI Faculty survey that address the value that respondents place on "integrating spirituality in my life," and "developing a meaningful philosophy of life," we have found that, on the whole, women and racial minority faculty are more inclined than men and non-racial minority faculty are to rate these life goal as "every important" or "essential."

When we examine aggregated gender differences in the extent to which faculty place high priority on developing a meaningful philosophy of life, we see that 80% of women and 74% of men indicate this as an "essential" or "every important" life goal. We can't lose sight though of the fact that when we examine gender differences on this and other measures across racial and ethnic groups a different, and to my mind, more interesting picture emerges—particularly when you think about these differences in the context of implications for higher education. In the interest of time, I will just quickly share a couple of examples with you that focus on the extent to which faculty prioritize integrating spirituality in their lives. (Slide #23)

Here we see that, overall, African American faculty are the most inclined to view integrating spirituality in their lives as "essential" or "every important." However, there is also a tremendous gender difference within this group, with African American women faculty inclined to place high priority on this personal pursuit by a margin of 15 percentage points over their male counterparts. By contrast, among Asian Americans, there is only a 1-percentage point difference between men and women. We see similarly divergent patterns when examining gender and racial differences in responses to other survey items that query the value faculty place on various aspects of students' personal development including enhancing students' self-understanding, developing students' personal values, developing students' moral character, and providing for students' emotional development. We also see some interesting patterns when we examine generational cohort differences on these measures.

Strauss and Howe view generations as “people moving through times,” with each generation possessing a distinctive sense of self. During childhood and, especially, during coming-of-age experiences, a generation’s age location produces what they refer to as a “peer personality,” or a set of collective behavioral traits and attitudes that later expresses itself throughout a generation’s life trajectory. In other words, the general notion is that shared life experiences tend to distinguish one generation from another.

Of course, it must be recognized that just as with race, gender, discipline, and the like there can exist clearly identifiable variations in attitudes, values, and beliefs within a given generation. Advocacy of a generations approach to analyzing differences in faculty perspectives and practices does not mean that we ignore the potentially powerful influence of age and social cohort effects among others. Traditionally, however, we have largely ignored taking a generational approach to analyzing faculty perspectives and practices. Such a perspective simply offers another way to understand better faculty attitudes and behaviors.

Certainly, today is not the occasion to delve deeply into generational theory, cohort characteristics and the like—that is a presentation or two, or ten in itself. Nevertheless, just as one quick example, let us take the same “integrating spirituality in my life” item and compare the respective priority that students and faculty of different generations assign this life goal. (Slide #24)

Based on the categorization put forth by Strauss and Howe, so-called Silent Generation faculty were born between 1925 and 1942; Baby Boom faculty were born from 1943-1960; and members of my own infamous “slacker” generation were born between 1961 and 1981. The 2003 entering freshmen are part of the so-called Millennium Generation. There are just a couple of things I want to point out here. First, it is apparent that, overall, faculty of all generations place higher priority on integrating spirituality in their lives than do today’s entering college freshmen. Second, note the general consistency in the degree to which “integrating spirituality in my life” is prioritized among men across generations relative to the difference between Generation X women and women of both the Baby Boom and the Silent Generation cohorts.

Certainly, there is much to learn about generational differences within the professoriate on this as well as other survey measures. Also important to consider are implications for higher education as generational cohorts move through various stages of their careers. The exciting thing from a research standpoint is that in the 2001 data set and, I am anticipating, in the 2004 data set, we will have solid representation among faculty from all three of these generational cohorts and can explore in greater depth areas of similarity and difference. (Slide #25)

Bob Clark was among the first to analyze extensively the intellectual and organizational differences associated with academic disciplines as well as the pervasive influence that normative disciplinary perspectives and practices have on their members. Tony Becher has built on that work to show how various forces operate together to shape disciplinary cultures. The cultural effects of disciplinary differentiation, of course, are manifested in both obvious and subtle ways. It is also reasonable to presume that the personal proclivities of individuals who are attracted to various disciplines in combination with the effects of disciplinary training will have implications for the extent to which faculty value spirituality in their own lives and in their students’ lives.

Within our 2001 faculty data, we see some interesting disciplinary differences among men and women faculty on measures that pertain both to goals for undergraduate students and personal aspirations. For example, take again the “integrating spirituality in my life” item: (Slide #26)

You can see that, overall, Education and Business faculty are more inclined than their colleagues in other fields to prioritize integrating spirituality in their lives. However, you can also see that for both men and women there is tremendous variation by field in the percentage of faculty who view integrating spirituality in their lives as “essential” or “every important.” It is also readily apparent that within disciplines and fields, there is considerable variation in the extent to which notable gender differences exist. Certainly, additional analyses are needed with this and related measures to discern the relative prominence and resulting effects of race, gender, disciplinary field, and generational cohort differences. (Slide #27)

Palmer has written eloquently about the emotional and spiritual dimensions of life and the unique potential educators have to help students develop their capacity for connectedness, responsiveness, and accountability. Similarly, Laurence and Kazanjian maintain that through examining issues of purpose and meaning within the context of the campus environment; acknowledging the multiple aspects of self that operate simultaneously within individuals; and celebrating the diverse experiences that people bring to their encounters with one another, colleges and universities have tremendous potential to shape society positively. One challenge that faculty face in facilitating less well-studied and understood aspects of student development is in identifying the pedagogical tools that are most useful in achieving desired outcomes. A related challenge for faculty is developing the personal expertise to use these potentially new teaching and evaluation methods effectively.

Among the most commonly used teaching methods to promote students’ spiritual learning and development are experiential pedagogies such as participatory learning, and experiences in other cultures; contemplative practices such as meditation, silence, and reflective learning; and biographical techniques such as journaling (see Zajonc).

Data collected through the 2004 HERI Faculty Survey will enable us to profile normatively the pedagogical and evaluative practices of faculty by disciplinary affiliation and personal characteristics and to build on our knowledge in this area. Ultimately, this line of inquiry can inform empirical analyses of the effects that learning experiences have on students’ spiritual development. Findings can also be used to engage members of campus communities in conversation about effective teaching practices and strategies for faculty development. (Slide #28)

Paralleling findings from the pilot survey and focus group interview phases of our “Spirituality in Higher Education” project that show that college students conceive of their own spirituality in a variety of ways, Sandy and Lena found that college and university faculty also define spirituality and its role in their lives in divergent ways. Here is how some of those they interviewed talked about spirituality: (slide #29). Another says: (slide #30). Finally, another faculty member tells us: (slide #31). As is the case with students, some faculty do indeed view their spirituality as largely inseparable from their religious faith, while others view their spirituality as an aspect of their lives that transcends any particular set of religious beliefs. Still others are likely to perceive themselves as completely non-spiritual beings.

The Astins also found that while some of the faculty they interviewed struggled to find any meaningful connection between their spiritual and work lives, others viewed their entire professional lives as an expression of their spirituality. In analyzing data generated from a much broader sample of faculty, we anticipate that significant numbers will view their work—particularly their teaching and related work with undergraduate students—as a vehicle for expressing their spirituality. Moreover, we expect that many faculty will view their work as vocation, or calling. (Slide #32)

One of the compelling reasons for undertaking this work is our realization that the structure and culture of academia has encouraged faculty to act as if their most deeply held values and beliefs are irrelevant to their work. The resulting tensions have serious implications for the quality of life within academic communities and associated ramifications for the students who are educated in these environments. Given the current state of disconnect for many faculty between their own values and those that predominate within their institutions, we anticipate that faculty who are highly spiritual; who are most committed to being authentic in their interactions with students and colleagues; who strive to achieve a sense of balance and wholeness in their lives; and who prioritize the more holistic aspects of their own and their students'™ development will be more inclined to experience feelings of disconnect within their institutional work environments.

Analyzing data from the 2001 HERI Faculty Survey, we have found that faculty who place high value on “integrating spirituality” in their lives also tend to emphasize the importance of achieving congruence between their own values and institutional values. Not surprisingly, we also find notable differences in the importance faculty ascribe to achieving this congruence based on combinations of their race, gender, and generational cohort as well as the type of institution in which they work. (Slide #33)

Finally, data from our most recent Faculty Survey show that “time pressures” are a significant source of stress for over 80 percent of faculty regardless of the type of institution in which they work (e.g., university, public college, private nonsectarian college, religiously-affiliated college, etc.). For 78 percent of faculty, “lack of personal time” is a considerable source of stress. Returning to the voices of those who the Astins interviewed several years back, one faculty member tells us: (slide #34)

Another faculty member, likely one from my own generation—or, if not, one who at the very least in the late 1990s echoed sentiments that I think many of my generational peers in academe would concur with today tells us: (slide #35)

What we cannot tell here, of course is whether “hopefully” refers to the prospect of having time to reflect more deeply on that part of life or simply to the prospect of getting tenure. No doubt, it is some combination of both.

At any rate, given the myriad responsibilities of today's™ faculty, the tight academic labor market, and rising institutional performance expectations for granting promotion and tenure, it is not surprising that many faculty, when forced to make decisions, will forego focusing on their own spiritual enrichment and personal renewal in favor of meeting professional expectations and family responsibilities. Indeed, Sandy and Lena's™ earlier work on meaning and spirituality in the lives of college faculty revealed that time was a major constraint for faculty in attempting to find space in their lives for reflection, given the multiple and often competing demands of their personal and professional lives.

The inherent tensions of balancing work, family, and personal needs can be especially challenging for young faculty. Given the popular view that faculty work is characterized by a good deal of personal autonomy, it is perhaps ironic that Menges and his colleagues found not long ago that new faculty who leave their institutions in search of other jobs within or outside academe often do so "to gain more control" over their lives. Intuitively, it makes sense that faculty who are unable to establish and maintain a healthy balance among work, family, and personal growth and renewal will feel fragmented. Over time, this lack of coherence is likely to affect faculty negatively on multiple levels including their physical health, psychological wellbeing, and effectiveness in their roles as parents, teachers, scholars, and colleagues. Moreover, the less present faculty are in these respective roles and the less authentically they present themselves to others, the more improbable it is that they will be able to contribute in any meaningful way to creating, modeling, and maintaining the kinds of healthy relationships and vital communities that our futures are so heavily dependent upon.

For these reasons and for the others I have spoken of this past hour, I am very much looking forward to beginning this new aspect of our work. I'm also leaving you this morning feeling very fortunate to have been able to make this trip and to share time with all of you these past few days and very appreciative to Jon Dalton and all the terrific students we've met here and who have created this space for us to talk about things we care very much about, especially to Allison who has been so gracious in helping me this morning to compensate for my technological limitations by helping with these transparencies. I hope that our paths cross again soon.

Thank you.