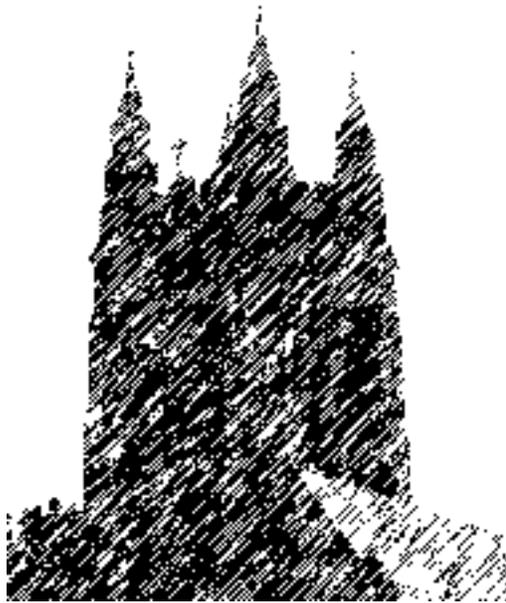

Revitalizing Religion in the Academy

*Summary of the Evaluation of Lilly Endowment's
Initiative on Religion & Higher Education*



Kathleen A. Mahoney, Ph.D.

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November, 2000

PREFACE

Revitalizing Religion in the Academy

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This report summarizes a recently completed evaluation of Lilly Endowment's Initiative on Religion and Higher Education. In making our findings and recommendations available to grantees and a wider public, we hope to contribute to the current, broad and rather lively conversation about religion in the academy. In particular, we wish to encourage those engaged in efforts to strengthen the religious identity of church-related colleges and universities. Chief among our findings is the emergence of a movement to revitalize religion in higher education that gathered momentum in the 1990s.

The Religion Division of Lilly Endowment launched the Initiative on Religion and Higher Education in 1989. Concerned most immediately with an apparent decline in the religious vitality of church-related higher education and a growing distance between many colleges and their sponsoring religious bodies, Religion Division program officers developed this Initiative hoping it would religiously strengthen church-related colleges and heighten the profile of religion in the academy at large.

During the course of the Initiative, the Endowment made seventy awards totaling \$15.6 million in support of approximately 45 projects. These projects included 1) in-depth studies to illuminate the history and current state of religion in higher education; 2) programs to help faculty and staff integrate faith and learning; and 3) conversations at the campus, denominational, regional, and national levels to deepen understanding of church-related higher education and the role religion plays in the academy. Awards were made to small denominational colleges, large religious universities, and secular research universities, as well as seminaries, independent research centers, church boards of education, and denominational associations of higher education.

Convinced that evaluation is critical to effective grant-making, in 1999 the Religion Division initiated a major, external review of the Religion and Higher Education Initiative. This evaluation was designed to

- ❖ determine and describe the quality and impact of the Initiative, mapping and analyzing the results of funded projects with an eye toward assessing the degree to which they helped realize the larger goals of the Initiative;
- ❖ assess grant-making strategies employed during the course of the Initiative with an eye toward helping Lilly Endowment program officers become more effective grant-makers;
- ❖ identify issues, problems, and questions warranting further examination and attention with an eye toward shaping the future of the Initiative on Religion and Higher Education.

Our evaluation team spent the 1999-2000 academic year talking with project directors, visiting colleges and universities, attending conferences, conducting surveys with program participants, studying the literature on religion and higher education, and interviewing more than 150 persons interested in and knowledgeable about religion and higher education.

We found that Lilly Endowment's Religion Division realized, in large measure, the goals of the Initiative on Religion and Higher Education, its efforts both strengthened by and a contribution to a broader religious renewal of higher education begun in the 1990s. Through the work of its grantees, the Initiative on Religion and Higher Education contributed to the religious revitalization of the academy by 1) fostering high quality discussions about the relationship between faith and learning; 2) creating a sense of community, locally and nationally, among those interested in religion and higher education; 3) heightening a sense of religious vocation especially among younger faculty; 4) supporting production of serious research about religion and higher education; and 5) encouraging church-related colleges and universities to strengthen institutional practices reflecting their religious heritage.

The evaluation team sees substantive opportunities in the immediate future for those who are interested in religion and higher education and committed to the project of Christian higher education—opportunities to capitalize on the groundwork laid in the 1990s, a groundswell of interest in religion and spirituality, and a postmodern moment more conducive to integrating faith and learning than at any time in the past 40 years.

We thank those who contributed to the work of this evaluation by sharing their insights and accounts of their experiences with us. We also acknowledge, gratefully, the efforts of our graduate research assistants, Andrew Simmons, Lisabeth Timothy, Kristin Hunt, Kevin Sayers, and Mandy Savitz.

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November, 2000*

Revitalizing Religion in the Academy

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A Religious Revitalization of Higher Education

Religion steps into the twenty-first century with remarkable vitality. Both traditional religion and popular spirituality make impressive showings in the public square of American life—on the campaign trail, in the media, in the workplace, and on American campuses.

Religion's relentless insistence on a place in the public square is keenly felt on college campuses where it was once written off as academically passé, as little more than a vestige of higher education's medieval past. Not so as the new millennium begins. Fueled by religious dynamism within society, widespread interest in spirituality, and postmodern disenchantment with the concept of value-free inquiry, religion has rallied on campuses across the country. Increased interest in religion, spirituality, and religious activity throughout the academy, coupled with substantive efforts by Protestant and Catholic colleges to strengthen their religious identities, comprise one of the most striking trends in the recent history of American higher education.

The religious revitalization of the academy cuts a wide swath across the landscape of American higher education—through state universities and private colleges, elite research institutions and community colleges, secular universities and religiously affiliated institutions.

- ❖ A review of websites of colleges whose faculty and staff participated in programs funded through this Initiative uncovered more than 130 centers and institutes with a religious mission or focus, with most established within the past fifteen years. Such centers are found not only at church-related institutions, but state universities and elite private institutions such as Yale and Princeton.
- ❖ Efforts to move the study of religion out of the confines of religious studies and theology departments and into interdisciplinary forums multiplied. Tellingly, more than ten percent of the nation's 230 Catholic colleges and universities established Catholic Studies programs (with offerings that include concentrations, minors, and majors at the undergraduate and graduate levels).
- ❖ Scholars produced a host of new books on religion and higher education with historians making a particularly strong showing. New journals and reviews were founded, while hundreds of articles about faith and learning, religion and the disciplines, spirituality and teaching, and religion in the academy were published in popular and scholarly journals.
- ❖ Foundations, centers, and universities established prestigious fellowship programs for scholars interested in religion, while secular and religious universities created endowed chairs in religion.

- ❖ Scholars swelled the ranks of almost 40 religiously oriented professional and scholarly associations, ranging from Christians in Political Science to the Association for Religion and the Intellectual Life to the Association of Christian Economists. Some of the larger disciplinary based groups, such as the Society of Christian Philosophers, represent a significant proportion of faculty in their respective disciplines (upwards of five percent in some cases).
- ❖ Conferences and workshops on the role of spirituality in teaching, the place of religion in the academy, and the future of church-related higher education proliferated. These included meetings sponsored by denominations and religious orders, conferences devoted to religion and various academic disciplines, workshops aimed at deepening a sense of vocation and spirituality among participants, and national gatherings designed to celebrate religious diversity.
- ❖ After decades of attenuation, relations between colleges and their sponsoring denominational bodies began to warm in some instances. At the local level, colleges and congregations took concrete steps to strengthen ties between the two, while denominational leaders, college administrators, and faculty convened conferences and revised statements on college-church relations.
- ❖ Applications to and enrollments at many church-related colleges swelled, with evangelical colleges doing particularly well. Enrollments at the ninety-five member institutions of the Council of Christian Colleges and University increased 24 percent between 1990 and 1998 while enrollments at other institutions rose by less than five percent.
- ❖ Students demonstrated a keen interest in religion and spirituality. Volunteerism and service, chapel attendance, devotional participation, and religious extracurricular activity are on the increase. Tens of thousands participated in campus-based para-church organizations such as InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Campus Crusade for Christ, with the last reporting a 73 percent increase in student membership between 1995-96 and 1998-99.
- ❖ Enrollments in religion and theology courses have been robust. Popular with administrators, faculty, students and local communities, service-learning courses and programs mushroomed. A UCLA study estimates that 30 percent of college students enrolled in a service-learning course in 1998.

Religion's presence in the public square and the academy seriously challenges theories of secularization once popular with social scientists. Mid-century, conventional wisdom held that society would become less beholden to religion as it became more enamored of modernity—to rational government, science, and technology. But this has not happened. Religion proved more tenacious in the face of all-things-modern than social scientists predicted. Religion refused to go quietly into that good night of marginalization. Spurning a minor role in public affairs, it insists on a major, ongoing place in American public life.

So too with religion on campus. All-things-modern, especially prevailing intellectual norms, quite effectively pushed religion from the center to

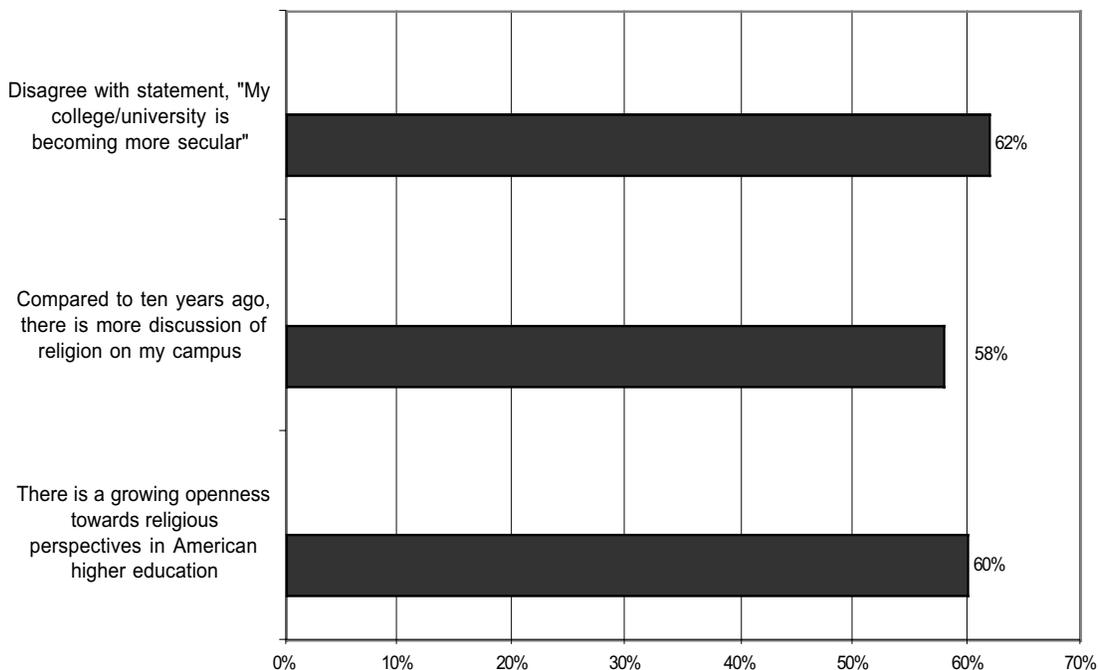
the periphery of the academy over the course of the twentieth century. The processes of academic socialization clearly contributed to the marginalization of religion as scholars were trained to leave their religious beliefs and spiritual values behind when they stepped into their offices, laboratories, and classrooms. In like vein, colleges and universities severed their ties with or distanced themselves from ecclesiastical bodies as the master narrative of modernity cast religion as a regressive force that impeded scientific inquiry and constrained academic freedom.

But religion ultimately refused to decamp an institution it had called home since the Middle Ages. In this postmodern moment, religion and spirituality hold forth for a place in higher education, as individuals and institutions heed the religious, spiritual and moral in academic life.

Religious Revitalization and Lilly Endowment's Contribution

Renewed interest in religion and spirituality on campus has not gone unnoticed in the press, nor has it escaped the attention of faculty, staff, and administrators. People interviewed as part of the evaluation often commented on the recent surge of interest in religion; it was “really sort of stunning,” remarked one faculty member, since the issue of religion “wasn’t even on the table” ten years ago. Others concurred. In a survey of faculty and staff members who participated in Lilly-funded programs, 60 percent claimed there was “growing openness toward religious perspectives in American higher education,” while 58 percent reported “more discussion of religion on my campus” over the past decade.

Alumni of Lilly-Funded Programs are Hopeful About Religion and Higher Education



Ten years ago, as the religious revitalization of the academy was gathering momentum, discussion about religion in higher education focused almost exclusively on its fragility rather than its vitality. Jarred by the loss of communal religious discourse occasioned by increased religious diversity and decreased theological literacy, saddened by the disappearance of cherished religious symbols and traditions, disheartened by the growing distance between many colleges and their churches, many wondered whether religion in the academy had finally given way to modern, secular culture. Had the modern university banished religion and its once best patron, Christianity, from the intellectual work of the academy? Had church-related higher education the requisite vision, will, and resources to stay the religious course and fulfill its distinctive mission? Had the light of Christian higher education expired in the face of secularization and other socio-historical forces?

Concerns about the role of religion in the academy surfaced in the 1980s and persisted through the 1990s. The recent surge of interest in religion and spirituality notwithstanding, many remain concerned about the limited role religion plays in scholarly life. Such concerns are understandably more pronounced in church-related quarters where the loss of religious identity and the separation of faith from learning go to the very soul of the enterprise. Though they acknowledge increased interest in religion on American campuses, those concerned with church-related colleges speak of three factors that make it difficult for such colleges to express their religious identities and fulfill their religious missions: religious pluralism, theological illiteracy, and professional loyalties.

Pluralism While religious pluralism is considered a valuable cultural and intellectual resource in virtually every academic community, it presents challenges for institutions wishing to express their religious identity in a denominationally specific manner. How can a college honor its particular denominational heritage in a religiously pluralistic context? This issue is felt sharply in a number of institutions where only a small percentage of the faculty, staff and students are members of the denomination to which the college is tied.

Literacy Many express concern over a lack of theological and religious literacy, especially among the faculty. Though many faculty support the religious mission of the colleges in which they work, few possess a deep understanding of the denominational heritage of the college or the Christian intellectual tradition in general. In light of this lacuna, how can the faculty integrate faith and learning and advance the religious mission of the college or university?

Loyalties The profound influence of the research university model, wherein moral values and religious beliefs were separated from teaching and scholarship, eroded a sense of vocation among scholars during the course of the twentieth century. Insofar as loyalty to disciplinary guilds, membership in professional associations, and a long record of scholarly publications are the chief criteria for tenure and hallmarks of an academic life honorably lived, what resources and motivation do faculty members have to contribute to the religious mission of their college or university?

These deep concerns for the place of religion in the academy and the future of church-related higher education played a significant role in the

development of a movement aimed at the religious and spiritual revitalization of higher education that took shape during the 1990s. This movement found an important ally in philanthropy. Its efforts complemented by those of other major foundations and individual donors, Lilly Endowment supported 45 projects that examined religion's role in higher education and helped church-related colleges to strengthen their religious identities and advance their religion missions. These included book-length studies, conferences and seminars, and programs designed to help faculty and staff integrate religion with their work. Conducted during the 1999-2000 academic year, our evaluation found that Lilly Endowment grantees made five important contributions to efforts aimed at the revitalization of religion in American higher education.

❖ *Lilly-funded projects brought high quality conversations about religion and higher education to a large audience within church-related higher education and beyond.* Thousands of administrators, faculty, and staff attended more than 50 regional and national conferences, consultations, seminars, and colloquies to discuss religion in the academy. Faculty members formed discussion groups on more than 70 college and university campuses. Over 1200 people from 177 colleges and universities (one-fourth of the religiously affiliated schools in the United States) took part in programs designed to heighten a sense of faith and vocation.

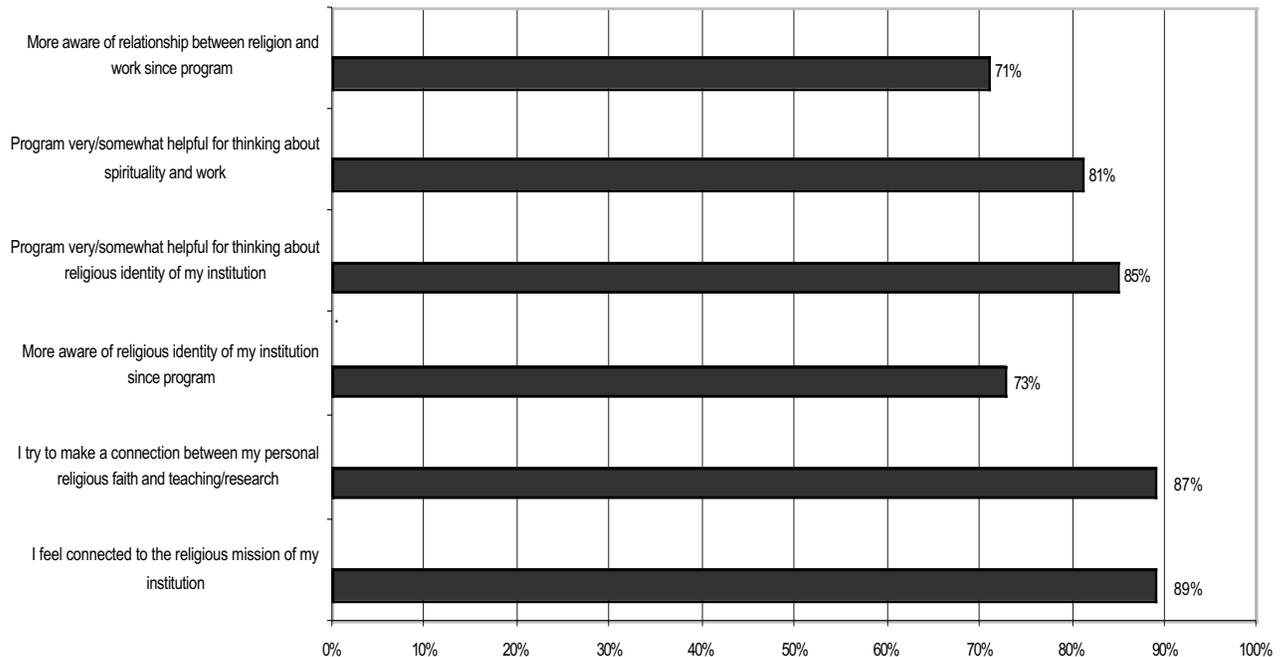
A survey of individuals who participated in major faculty/staff formation programs funded by Lilly Endowment (Collegium, the Lilly Fellows Program, the Rhodes Consultation, the Institute for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges, and the Association for Religion and Intellectual Life mentoring communities) provides insight into those who are interested and active in efforts to revitalize religion in the academy. (The survey response rate was 62 percent.) The average participant was about 40 years old, with the overwhelming majority employed in church-related institutions. Women and men participated in Lilly-funded programs at roughly equal rates (46 versus 54 percent), while members of minority groups comprised nine percent of participants. Those who participated in these programs manifest notably high degrees of religiosity. Far from the image of the secular professoriate bemoaned by some critics of higher education, 66 percent reported weekly church attendance, with more than a quarter (28 percent) attending services more than once a week.

❖ *Lilly-funded projects helped participants integrate religious commitments with their work in higher education.* Conferences, seminars, faculty/staff formation programs, and various publications encouraged men and women working in higher education to integrate faith and learning, religion and research, spirituality and teaching at personal and institutional levels. Seventy-one percent of those involved in a Lilly-funded faculty/staff formation program told us that participation made them "more aware of the relationship between religion and my work," while 81 percent said it was "very" or "somewhat" helpful for thinking about spirituality and work. An impressive 85 percent of those working at church-sponsored colleges and universities found the programs "very" or "somewhat" helpful for thinking about the mission of their institutions, with 73 percent reporting a greater awareness of their institution's "religious identity." Finally, 87 percent of program par-

I think [participation] has made the folks in our division a lot more self-confident about what we are doing . . . it has enabled us to really hold our mission out there and say this is what we are about and these are the standards of our community. This is who we are and this is what we are about. (Institute for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges participant)

Participants said they “try to make a connection between my personal religious faith and my teaching and my research,” while 89 percent “feel connected to the religious mission” of their schools.

Alumni of Lilly-Funded Programs Integrate Religion and Work in Higher Education



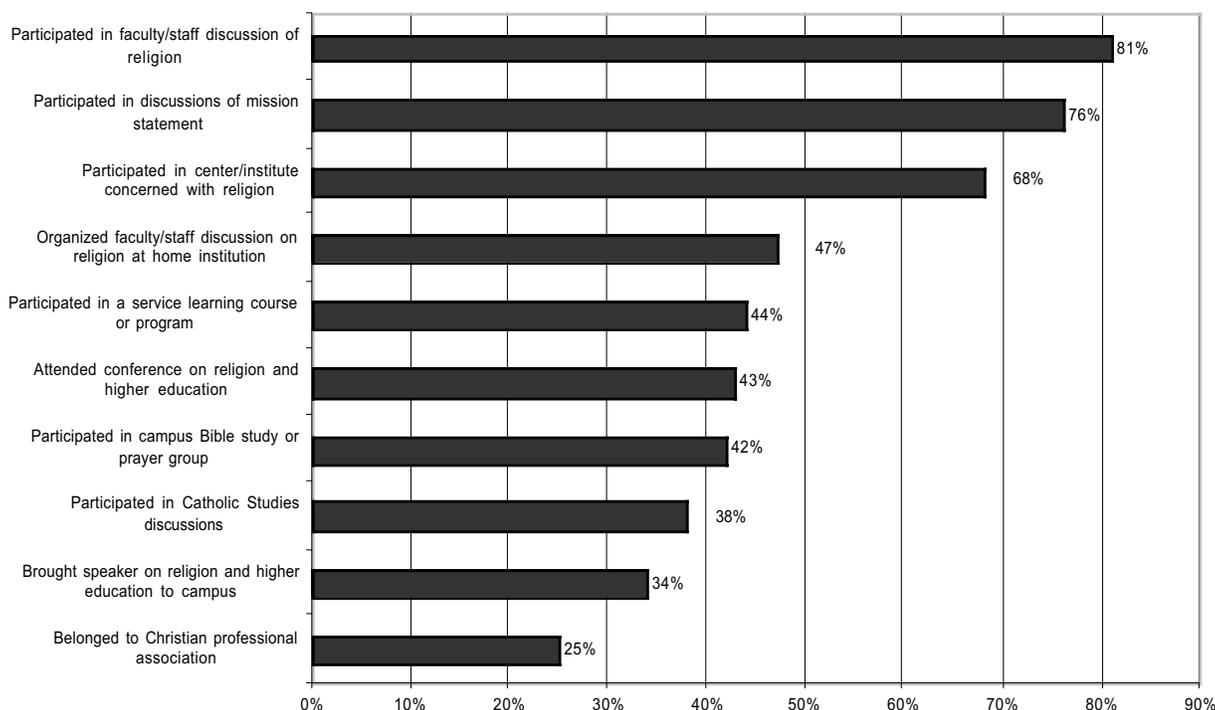
Before [my personal faith] was somewhat compartmentalized. It was important to me—my involvement in the campus parish was important to me, my research has a strong theological component to it, but [religion] being an active part of what I did as an English teacher was latent at best. After Collegium, it became clear to me that compartmentalization was not satisfying to me and I really wanted to integrate better. (Collegium participant)

The 1200 alumni of Lilly-funded faculty/staff development programs have been very active in efforts to revitalize religion in higher education. Comprising approximately 2.5 percent of the faculty at their home institutions, they have exercised influence far beyond their numbers. During the past ten years 81 percent have participated in faculty/staff discussions about religion, 47 percent have organized such a discussion, while 34 percent helped bring a speaker on religion and higher education to campus. More than three-quarters (76 percent) have been involved in discussions of institutional mission, while 38 percent have participated in Catholic Studies activities. They have been involved with service-learning courses (44 percent), campus Bible studies and prayer groups (42 percent), and centers and institutes concerned with religion (68 percent). They have also participated in conversations about religion beyond the confines of their campuses. Ten of the fifty participants (20 percent) in the first national Catholic Studies Conference were Collegium graduates. Along the same lines, 43 percent of program participants have attended a conference on some aspect of religion, 25 percent have participated in a Christian scholarly or professional association, and 15 percent have received a grant in the area of religion.

❖ *Lilly-funded projects helped create networks of individuals interested in religion and committed to church-related higher education. One of the most striking findings of our evaluation is the existence of national, cross-denominational networks of persons involved in the revitalization of*

religion in American higher education. Many Lilly grantees exercise leadership in these networks, and many of these participated in the Lilly-funded National Seminar on Religion and Higher Education. Among the thirty-plus notable scholars involved in this three-year seminar are those whose books and articles have defined the terms of discussion about religion in the academy. They are the academic entrepreneurs who have created the programs, built the networks, and sponsored the conferences. Many are members of what one interviewee described as an “invisible speakers bureau,” who are called upon with regularity to speak about religion in the academy and the future of church-related higher education.

Alumni of Lilly-Funded Programs are Active in the Revival of Religion on Campus



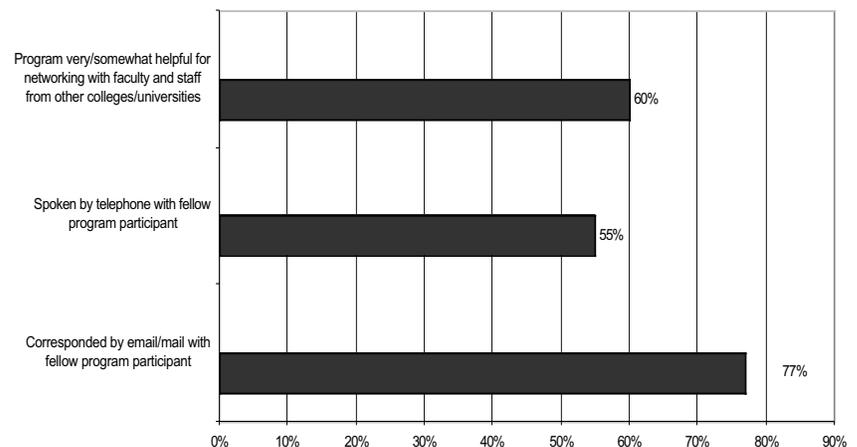
Perhaps the most important fruits of Lilly-funded programs are the networks forged among faculty and staff who participated in various projects. As one interviewee put it, “It seems as if everybody I know is involved in one of these programs.” Many who met at conferences and workshops developed friendships and productive professional relationships. Among those who participated in the faculty/staff formation programs, over 60 percent found the programs “very” or “somewhat” helpful for “networking with faculty and staff from other colleges and universities,” while 77 percent have kept in touch through mail and email.

Networking also occurred at an institutional level among church-related institutions of higher learning. Several *new* networks of religious colleges and universities grew out of Lilly-funded programs, including the Lilly Fellows Program (68 member institutions), Collegium (54 member institutions), and the Rhodes Consultation (90 member institutions). In some cases these networks have been cross-denominational in focus, bringing together representatives of colleges from different religious traditions.

I had virtually every member come up and say this has been really good for me. It has made me more reflective about my teaching. It has made me more reflective about my teaching in a church-related environment. (Rhodes Consultation participant)

At [my] college [religious mission] is very much part of our conversation. There's a new center for religion . . . on campus and I've been involved. This summer I was in a seminar and received some grant money to work on a course. I'm developing a course for January on faith and gender in film and literature, and so I was involved in quite a few discussion about that topic . . . it's an ongoing discussion at [my] college. (Lilly Fellows Program participant)

Alumni of Lilly-Funded Programs are Networking with Fellow Participants



❖ *Lilly-funded projects resulted in scholarly articles, monographs, and edited volumes.* Intended for diverse audiences, these works found their way into popular magazines, campus publications, and leading journals. Some were published electronically, others by leading denominational and university presses. Altogether, at least a dozen books and many more articles and reviews can be traced back to Endowment funding. This panoply of works, dubbed the “Lilly library” by one grantee, has played an important role in efforts to revitalize religion in the academy. Historians deepened readers’ understanding of the processes by which modernity marginalized religion in the twentieth-century academy, providing a historical context for understanding some of the challenges faced by church-related colleges and universities. Other grantees pushed the conversation about religion in higher education forward by examining, theoretically and empirically, the relationship between faith and learning, the interplay between denominational traditions and academic practice, and the vocation of the Christian scholar.

❖ *Lilly-funded programs heightened the profile of religion in the academy.* Beyond specific programs, the Initiative has helped to put religion back on the national academic agenda. In the last decade no less than a dozen pieces by or about Initiative grantees and program participants have appeared in notable venues, including the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and the *New York Times*. In much the same way that the Ford Foundation’s support proved crucial to the development of Women’s Studies programs, support from Lilly Endowment helped legitimize efforts to bring religion back to the academy. Several grantees told us that receipt of a grant from Lilly Endowment was an important stamp of approval for their work, one that carried cachet on and beyond their campuses. Just as importantly, Lilly-funded programs provided impetus and support for concrete, grassroots campus-based efforts that helped Catholic and Protestant colleges and universities strengthen their religious identities.

An Opportunity to Build for the Future

Religion staged a comeback on campus during the 1990s, its return to the academic arena underwritten by the religious dynamism of American society and important support from philanthropy. There is today more discussion about the role of religion in the academy than at any time in the past 40 years and more commitment to the project of Christian higher education than there was just ten years ago. That the light of Christian higher education still burns is testimony to the centrality of religion and spirituality within the human experience and the refusal of religion to absent itself from the public square of America life.

And the future? Although the gains realized during the last decade were noteworthy—even impressive in light of historical trends—the future of religion in the academy remains tentative. Whether renewal efforts will continue, grow, or take new forms, is an open question. Nevertheless, for those committed to heightening the profile of religion in the academy, this postmodern moment presents significant opportunities to solidify and further the gains realized during the past ten years. At the same time, there are factors that might stymie religious renewal, particularly as church-related colleges and universities work to strengthen their religious identities.

Church-related higher education, like higher education at large, has become more socially and culturally diverse over the past four decades. In once relatively homogenous institutions, new voices are beginning to be heard. Despite impressive strides towards diversity, significant challenges remain. One of these challenges is widening the conversation on religion and higher education to include women and minorities. Minority representation is inadequate in many conversations about religion in higher education. And though women participated in Lilly-funded programs at roughly the same rate as men, they are noticeably underrepresented in many discussions on this topic, particularly at the level of leadership. Moreover, while 88 percent of women responding to our survey said they “feel connected to the religious mission” of their schools, a troubling 49 percent claimed that “discussions of religious identity at my college/university fail to address the concerns of women faculty and staff.”

Polarization presents another challenge. Not all denizens of the academy are pleased with increased attention to religious identity and mission. Several interviewees told us that efforts to heighten religion’s profile on campus made some faculty uncomfortable. In our survey, 34 percent of respondents at conservative Protestant schools, 73 percent of those at main-line Protestant schools, and 53 percent of those at Catholic schools agreed with the statement, “faculty at my college/university are divided over the religious identity of the institution.” Or as one Collegium participant reported, efforts to heighten Catholic identity led some to conclude that “some people are not as welcome as others—which I think is a misunderstanding.” In light of these findings, campus leaders at Catholic and Protestant colleges and universities are urged to seek ways of leading discussions about religious identity and mission that are inclusive and likely to build consensus among faculty and staff.

As I looked at other schools . . . it was comforting to know that my college wasn't alone in struggling with what that meant [to be church-related]. . . . It was very informative for me to talk to somebody, say, at [another] college. I think it is very similar to [my college] in that they want to be church-related but they don't want to see themselves as narrowly church-related. . . . It was just nice to talk about, “Well, what is the value added of affiliation with a particular tradition, whether it's Churches of Christ, Baptist, or Roman Catholic?” (Rhodes Consultation participant)

These significant challenges notwithstanding, the opening decade of the new millennium is an opportune time to extend efforts to strengthen religion's place in the academy. The following list of recommendations is based on our examination of Lilly-funded efforts and our reading of the landscape of American higher education at large. It is meant to complement many effective strategies implemented during the 1990s.

❖ *Expand target audiences, drawing critical personnel into conversations about religious identity and mission.* Involving those in leadership positions in substantive conversations about religious identity and mission will help church-related colleges and universities to strengthen and maintain their religious commitments. Many efforts aimed at the religious revitalization of campus targeted or drew primarily from the ranks of the faculty. Faculty are, of course, at the heart of the academic enterprise; without their involvement, efforts to keep Christian higher education Christian will amount to little. There are, however, many other key stakeholders in higher education: trustees, presidents, senior administrators, staff, campus ministers, student affairs personnel, and alumni. We note, in particular, a paucity of religiously oriented programs for trustees and senior-level administrators who as leaders, set forth the vision for their colleges, determine policy, lead by example, and set the tone for much of the day-to-day operations of their institutions.

❖ *Create substantive, campus-based opportunities for faculty development that are geared to each stage of the career trajectory.* During the 1990s a variety of programs were developed for those interested in religion, ranging from year-long fellowships, to weekend conferences, to lunch-time conversations. This menu of options was one of the strengths of the Initiative on Religion and Higher Education; it created opportunities for participation that fit both the life circumstances and levels of interest among participants. That said, programs with more substance by virtue of their length or intensity predictably realized greater positive results.

We recommend initiatives that encourage church-related colleges and universities to establish substantive, campus-based programs for faculty development that begin with hiring and orientation, and continue through a faculty member's career as a junior and senior scholar. We envision seminars and colloquia that would orient interested faculty to the history, theology, and denominational traditions of their institutions, making conversation about religion available from the start of a faculty member's work in a given institution. These conversations would provide faculty with resources, often sorely lacking, for integrating faith and learning. They would foster communities in which religious discourse is central and encourage development of mentoring relationships by allowing more senior members of the college community to interact with junior members in meaningful ways around issues related to mission and identity.

❖ *Complement programs geared for individual development with programs requiring institutional engagement.* In gauging the impact of the Initiative writ large, the scales tipped in favor of personal enrichment over institutional change. Conferences, workshops, and institutes

were enriching, even transformative, experiences for participants; they primed and prepared individuals to advance the religious mission of the institutions in which they worked. But individuals as individuals can rarely affect substantive institutional change. We urge those committed to strengthening church-related colleges to complement these individually oriented programs with projects that invite institutional participation, offering incentives and support for colleges and universities interested in making positive changes relative to their religious identity and mission.

❖ *Heighten a sense of vocation among graduate students and junior faculty through programs that influence the processes of academic socialization.* From graduate school through tenure, younger scholars receive a steady stream of messages about what it means to be a professional: publish or perish, research is more important than teaching, specialized scholarship is more prestigious than general studies. At most institutions, religion is conspicuously absent from the socialization of young scholars. Rarely are graduate students invited to explore the intersection of faith and intellectual life. Seldom are junior faculty encouraged to bring religious and ethical questions into their teaching and research. At some church-related colleges and universities, commitment to advancing the religious mission of the institution is given little weight in the tenure and promotion process. It is clear that any effort to instill a sense of religious vocation among the faculty will have to address this crucial process of socialization. We therefore recommend the development of religiously oriented programs that operate near or in tandem with graduate schools and national academic professional associations.

❖ *Pursue research that heightens the profile of religion in the academy at large and deepens understanding of church-related higher education.* The recent explosion of literature on religion and higher education played an important role in the movement to strengthen religion's role in the academy. These studies provided interpretive frameworks, raised provocative questions, explored institutional practices, and added a theological dimension to efforts to bolster church-relatedness among colleges.

Many scholars explored the relationship between religion and higher education through a historical lens. Few have studied the current state of religion on campus and those who have usually limited their research to in-depth portraits of a small number of institutions. What is missing is a broad, systematic, empirical assessment of the state of religion in American higher education. What is the religious composition of the faculty? Do religious scholars feel marginalized on secular campuses? What percentage of students at denominational colleges were raised as members of the sponsoring denomination? What impact does church-related higher education have on its graduates? Are religious colleges becoming more pluralistic? Do women faculty feel alienated from discussion of mission and identity? At present, answers to such questions are impressionistic or anecdotal. Reliable data gleaned through social scientific research will help move the conversation on religion and higher education forward.

Conclusion

The academy at large gives evidence of greater openness to religion and spirituality. Many church-related colleges and universities indicate renewed interest in religious heritage even as they seek new ways to express religious identity and mission. And a growing number of administrators, faculty, staff and students looks for ways to integrate religious belief and spiritual values with their life and work in the academy. This religious revitalization is in part the work of Lilly Endowment grantees who have, over the past ten years, expended considerable energies in their efforts to renew church-related higher education and heighten the profile of religion in the academy.

But ultimately religion's academic warrant derives from its ability to enrich scholarship and enhance the educational experience. In today's world there are important ways in which religion can do this. Vast intellectual and formidable ethical frontiers open as the twenty-first century begins; technology and the bio-sciences in themselves create once unimagined and almost unimaginable issues critical to human existence. Herein religious scholars and church-related institutions can play an important role: to bring to the public insights rooted in and informed by the worldviews of the great religious traditions. Likewise, American higher education struggles with a host of issues, including curricular coherence, the technological revolution, and vocationalism narrowly construed. Here again church-related colleges are uniquely situated: to afford students opportunities to wrestle with issues of meaning and purpose, to consider transcendent realities, and to define and pursue the life well lived in its fullest sense.

As the twenty-first century begins, those concerned for the place of religion in higher education have grounds for some optimism and satisfaction. Serious challenges persist, yet on the whole, the immediate future bodes well for religion in the academy. The opportunities are great; the promise is rich. ■

Select List of Projects Funded through Lilly Endowment's Initiative on Religion & Higher Education

Published books

- Cherry, Conrad, et al. *Religion on Campus*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming.
- Cuninggim, Merrimon. *Uneasy Partners: The College and The Church*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994.
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Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; Dr. Sandra Estanek, project director.

Lilly Fellows Program in the Humanities and the Arts.

Valparaiso University; Dr. Mark Schwehn, project director.

Mentoring Program: Academic Life as Religious Vocation.

Association for Religion and the Intellectual Life; Dr. Charles Henderson, project director.

Rhodes Consultation.

Rhodes College; Dr. Stephen Haynes, project director.

Workshops for Teaching Religion.

American Academy of Religion; Dr. Barbara DeConcini, project director.

Conferences, seminars and colloquia

Conference on Christian Studies Programs.

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; Dr. David O'Brien, project director.

Consultations on Church-Related Higher Education in Indiana.

Indiana Office for Campus Ministries; Rev. Max Case, project director.

National Seminar on Religion and Higher Education.

University of Notre Dame; Drs. James Turner and Nicholas Wolterstoff, project directors.

Program Connecting Congregations and Colleges.

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Project on the Vocation of Lutheran Colleges.

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Fetzer Institute; Dr. Monica Manning, project director.

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