Higher Education and Workplace Spirituality

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF FACULTY RESISTANCE AND SUPPORT

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Focus of Today’s Research

- From a larger study comparing faith-based and secular organizations on:
  - Spirituality in the workplace
  - Organizational commitment
  - Organizational culture
  - Job satisfaction
  - Optimism
Four Qualitative Questions

- What gives you the most meaning and purpose in your work?
- When you think of those who are most committed to your university, what are three or more characteristics that they demonstrate?
- How comfortable do you feel talking about your faith or spirituality while at work at your university? Why? (Lourdes)
- What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university? Please briefly describe the situations that evoke these thoughts and/or feelings.
How comfortable do you feel talking about your faith or spirituality while at work at your university? Why?
Methodology

- 900 responses
- Linda and Judi coded first 200
- All other data coded by at least 2 people
- Nvivo Analysis
- 118 nodes
- Nodes of High Interest
  - Religion, faith, spirituality as appropriate or inappropriate
  - Act rather than speak
  - Work and job implications
How comfortable do you feel talking about your faith or spirituality while at work at your university? Why?

- Faith, spirituality, religion
  - Inappropriate (PI)*
  - A personal discussion not for work – (PI)
- Act Rather than Speak – (PI)
- Work and Job Implications*
  - Positive and Negative Impact
What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university? Please briefly describe the situations that evoke these thoughts and/or feelings.
Methodology

- 305 faculty responses
- 4 coded first 60 responses to identify workable nodes.
- All other data coded by at least 2 people
- Nvivo Analysis
- 52 nodes
- Nodes of High Interest
  - Appropriate and Inappropriate
  - Contingent
  - Positive View and Impact
  - Negative View and Impact
RI Faculty Hierarchy Chart
RI Faculty Hierarchy Chart

Positive Views
- Acceptance: 59.6%
- Appreciative, Grateful
- Admirable, Valued

Negative Views
- Avers, ...
  - 7.0%
- Contingent
  - 5.3%

Positive Impact
- Inspired - Encouraged: 45.6%
- Connected (Community)
- Beneficial, Supportive
- Learning, Personal Growth
- Studen...
- Conne...
- Caring
PI Faculty Hierarchy Chart

Positive Views
- Acceptance
- Admirable, Valuable
- Appreciable

Negative Views
- Avers, Uncomfortable, Off-Putting
- Disrespectful
- Skeptical
- Not Supportive
- Not valued

Contingent
- 28.2%

Inappropriateness
- Inappropriate - Work...
- 23.7%

Positive Impact
- Inspired
- Like
- Beneficial
- Lead
- Care

Negative Impact
- Stifled
- Not...

Appropriateness
- Appropriate
What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate – RI / PI -2.4%</th>
<th>Inappropriate – PI (23.7%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Spirituality &amp; Whole Person</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Transformative in Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Authenticity</td>
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<td>• Church &amp; State</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Proselytizing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Misunderstanding of Faith, Religion, Spirituality</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university?

- **Contingent – PI (28.2%) RI (5.3%)**
  - Judgment unacceptable
  - Diversity Important
  - No proselytization
  - Respect
What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university?

- **Positive Views PI (34.7%) RI (59.6%)**
  - Accepted
  - Valued & Appreciated

- **Positive Impact PI (8.1%) RI (45.6%)**
  - Inspiring & Encouraging
  - Supportive of Others
What do you think or how do you feel when others talk about or act upon their faith or spirituality at your university?

- **Negative Views PI (37.1%) RI (7.0%)**
  - Proselytizing
  - Church & State

- **Negative Impact PI (2.1%) RI (0%)**
  - Conservative Christianity
  - Exclusive rather than inclusive
  - How to respond to students
## Implications for Overcoming Resistance

### Educate Faculty & Admin

- **Definitions**
  - Faith, Spirituality & Religion
  - Church & State
  - Transformative Teaching

### Course Design

- **Pedagogical Style**
  - Inclusive Climate
  - No Proselytizing
  - Ground Rules
  - Promote Diversity