

Doing “Good” and Doing “Well”: Shalom in Christian Business Education

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ABSTRACT: *As Christian business faculty members, we believe it is our purpose to prepare students both to do “good” and to do “well.” We therefore offer in this paper: (1) definitions of “good” and “well” from a particular Christian worldview and (2) theoretical propositions that connect the alumni outcomes of doing “good” and doing “well” with student outcomes and the learning environment.*

INTRODUCTION

Charles Colson writes that Christians have an obligation to pursue not only the Great Commission (Matthew 28) but also the Cultural Commission (Genesis 2). In other words, Christians are commanded not only to tell others about the Good News but also to redeem culture by “boldly and confidently” committing to “engaging contemporary culture with a fresh vision of hope” (Colson, 2004). This vision of hope is based on a vision of shalom, or the “webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight” (Plantinga, 2002, pp. 14).

Therefore as Christians in the pursuit of shalom, one of our desires should be to determine how we can most effectively implement the Cultural Commission. We believe that the most effective way for us to engage in this mandate is to pursue God’s calling,¹ and that our calling has two dimensions: to do “good” and to do “well.” As economics and business faculty in a Christian college, then, we believe it is important for us to address the issue of how we prepare students to do “good” and to do “well” as alumni given their calling to business. Thus, our paper will (1) define “good” and “well” from a particular Christian worldview, showing how they are connected to the idea of shalom; and, it will (2) outline theoretical propositions that connect the alumni outcomes² of doing “good” and doing “well” with student outcomes and with the learning environment.

DOING “GOOD”: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

We define doing “good” in terms of the biblical notion of shalom. Shalom describes not only a future condition — the end of time when “justice and peace embrace” (Wolterstorff, 1983) — but also that which we strive for now. We think the pursuit of shalom incorporates the Cultural Commission and calls us to the social response of doing “good.” This means we are to develop “right relationships” at three levels. The first relationship we strive for is a right and harmonious relationship to God (Wolterstorff, 1983, p. 70). As the prophet Isaiah said: “In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains” (Isaiah 2:2 NIV), meaning that “shalom is perfected when humanity acknowledges that in its service of God is true delight” (Wolterstorff, 1983, p. 70). The second relationship we strive for is a right and harmonious relationship to other human beings (Wolterstorff, 1983, p. 70). As the Psalmist said: “Love and faithfulness meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other” (Psalm 85:10 NIV). The third relationship we strive for is a right and harmonious relationship to our environment (Wolterstorff, 1983, p. 70). As Isaiah prophesied, “My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest” (Isaiah 32:18 NIV).

It is very difficult to *a priori* define a concept such as “right relationships.” But we can talk about the “fruits” of right relationships. This is similar to the way difficult Biblical concepts such as “being filled with the Spirit” and “knowing what is in the heart” are understood. These concepts are not *a priori* defined; rather, the Bible discusses the “fruits” of the Spirit and the sharpness of our tongues. Likewise, we can think of right relationships in terms of their fruit; in other words, those who live in proper relation to God, people, and creation will leave the fruit of justice in their wake. For God has showed us “what is good,” and he requires us to “act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly” with Him (Micah 6:8 RSV). If our students’ calling is in the sphere of business, then it is our task, as economics and business professors at a Christian college, to prepare them to develop right relationships (doing “good”) in this field. One of the many positive results that stems from these right relationships is the fruit of justice. We now turn to connecting the alumni outcome of doing “good” to student outcomes and the learning environment. These connections are highlighted in Figure 1.

Disposed To Do “Good”

In order for alumni to do “good,” we believe we must help prepare alumni to be disposed to do good. To understand the power of dispositions, we must develop an understanding of the person as it relates to behavior. First, we are creatures of habit; that is, we partake in certain undertakings without thinking. But before that, we are creatures of dispositions; that is, we have tendencies or the capacity to act in certain ways. Thus while we have the freedom to choose whether we will act a certain way, we are still inclined to act in ways based on our dispositions.

As I see it, we all have an enormous array of *dispositions* (emphasis ours), the activation of which accounts for a great deal of what transpires within us. Each of us is disposed, for a vast array of specific cases, to respond in such-and-such a way upon such-and-such stimulation in such-and-such circumstancesIndeed, it seems to me that far and away the most fundamental concept in contemporary psychological models of the person is the concept of a disposition.

Wolterstorff, 2004a, p. 59

Since dispositions precede actions, we believe we must focus on influencing dispositions. If we desire that our alumni do good, then we have to mold their disposition to do good, for we believe that the right disposition can lead to beneficial action. For example, as business people, will our alumni be disposed toward treating all employees, cus-

tomers, and suppliers with dignity or will they be disposed toward “squeezing” pennies out of them? If alumni are more disposed toward treating everyone with dignity, more beneficial actions will ensue. Therefore,

P1: Alumni are likely to do more good (pursue right relationships with God, others, and creation) the more they are disposed toward doing “good.”

Ability To Empathize

But what influences dispositions? Wolterstorff concludes that there are five shapers of inclinations to act: discipline (classical conditioning), modeling (operant conditioning), reasoning, radical conversion, and empathy (Wolterstorff, 2004b, p. 99). Traditionally faculty members have utilized the first three of these shapers to dispose students to behave in the “proper way.” For example, faculty use grades, extra credit, and verbal and non-verbal feedback to reward and direct student initiative. They also model proper behavior by trying to “walk the talk.” In addition, faculty members devote much time and effort to teaching students moral and ethical frameworks in order for them to utilize rational thinking for doing what is right. Although much less frequent in its use, faculty may also attempt radical conversion. However, one option Wolterstorff believes is underutilized in academe and yet highly effective as a means to influence dispositions is the use of empathy.³

Our dispositions model of behavior parallels hierarchical models used in the study of consumer behavior and advertising; that is, we believe tendencies to act in certain ways are related to cognitions (thinking) and affect (feeling). Therefore, we see two sides to empathy, an intellectual (cognitive) and an emotional (affective) side. Intellectual empathy “implies understanding cognitively” the circumstances of others, otherwise known as “perspective taking” (Sparks and Hunt, 1998, p. 96). Emotional empathy, on the other hand, can follow from intellectual empathy or it can be a response “induced by the emotion of others” (Sparks and Hunt, 1998, p. 96). Both types of empathy are related to the formation of dispositions.

Thus, we believe that traditional methods used in academe for developing dispositions (conditioning, modeling, and reasoning) could be enhanced by the building up of empathy in students. To help students develop a disposition toward doing “good,” Wolterstorff suggests the following strategy:

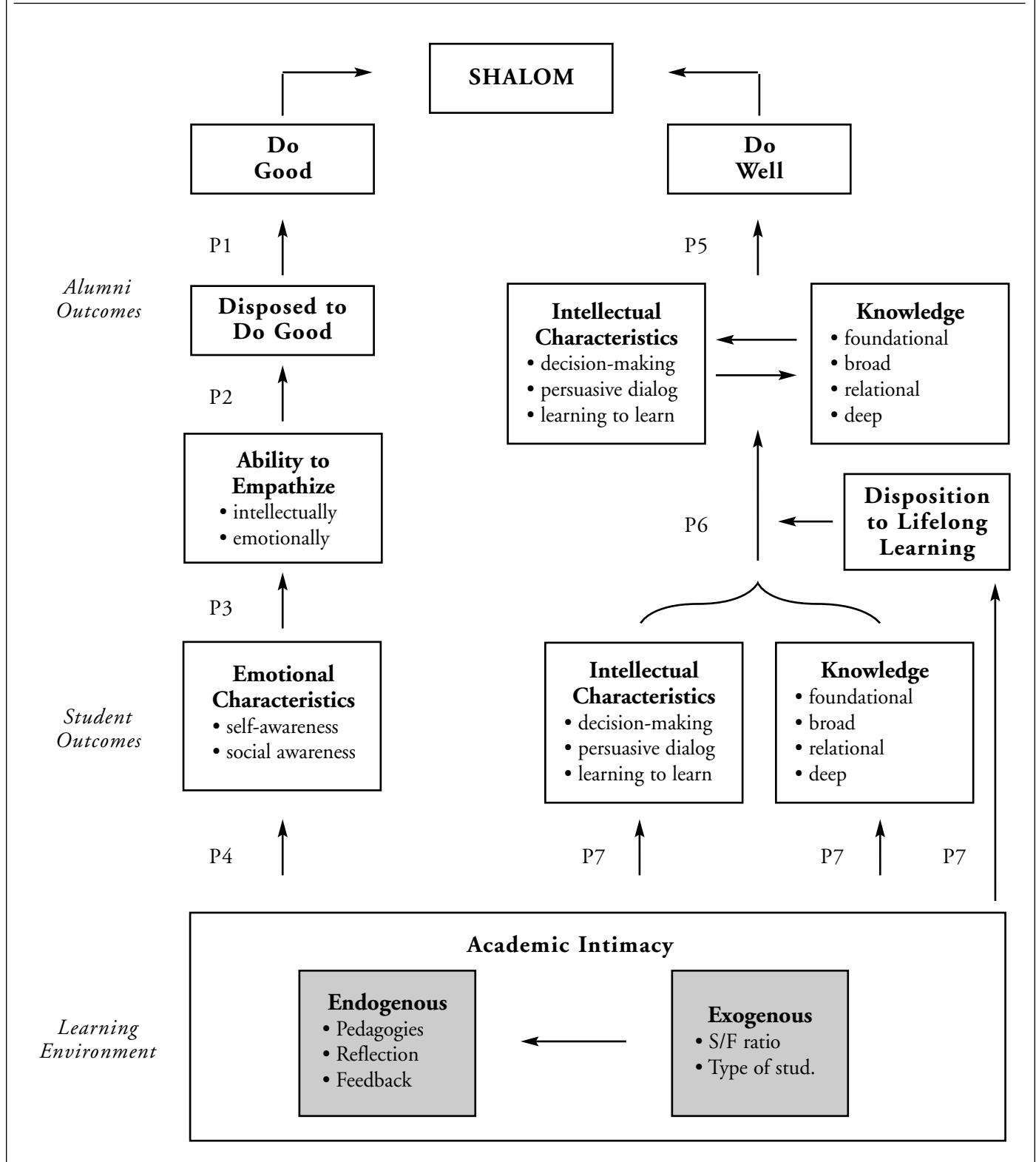
Critical ethical discussions conducted in the academies of the well-to-do in the West lose touch with human reality. To compensate, a Christian university must do

what it can to confront its members with the suffering of the world — partly to let us learn from the wisdom so often present in the voices of the suffering, partly to evoke in us the empathy that is the deepest spring of

ethical action, partly to remind us that an ethic that does not echo humanity’s lament does not merit humanity’s attention.

Wolterstorff, 2004c, p. 133

Figure 1: Theoretical Propositions Connecting Student Outcomes and the Learning Environment with Alumni Outcomes



In other words, by utilizing the traditional techniques and by confronting students with the suffering of the world, we can better “spring” them into doing “good.”⁴ While traditional techniques such as reasoning can motivate students intellectually, confronting students with the suffering of the world can motivate students emotionally. The motivational tension in their “springs” is based on the extent to which students feel and know what the suffering feel. Developing empathy among students, then, should foster dispositions such that when students are alumni they will be more disposed to do “good.” Therefore,

P2: Alumni are likely to be more disposed toward doing “good” the more they are able to empathize with others.

Emotional Characteristics

We now turn to the challenge of developing in students the ability to empathize with others. (Refer back to Figure 1 for a summary of our theoretical connections.) As mentioned above, this challenge has two dimensions. One dimension is intellectual: we want to develop in students the ability to understand others (this dimension will be addressed later in the paper). The other dimension is emotional: we want to develop in students the ability to feel what others are feeling. If, for example, students feel what those subjected to injustice feel, students may develop an inclination, or a stronger inclination, toward working for justice. We argue that certain emotional characteristics are related to the development of empathy. We believe that empathy is the result of what the emotional intelligence literature calls “social awareness.”⁵ Social awareness has been described as “being attuned to how others feel in the moment” (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002, p. 30).

To become socially aware requires that one first become self-aware, meaning that one must become aware of one’s vision and values, strengths and weaknesses, and emotions (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002, pp. 31, 111ff). Being self-aware of one’s vision and values and strengths and weaknesses allows one to better take the perspective of others; being aware of one’s emotions allows one to better feel what others are feeling.⁶ Thus, the ability to empathize begins with self-awareness and is then applied in social settings.

According to Goleman, the emotional characteristics of self-awareness and social awareness significantly contribute to “what makes people do well in the practicalities of life” (Goleman, 1994, p. 42). We argue that these emotional characteristics also significantly contribute to one’s ability to do “good” in life, because their emphasis is on the *social* aspects of intelligence. This line of thinking

extends the benefits noted in the literature on emotional intelligence beyond the realm of personal success and into the realm of social justice. Therefore,

P3: Alumni are likely to be more empathetic with others the higher the level of the emotional characteristics (self-awareness and social awareness) they acquire as students.

Academic Intimacy

All education takes place in a learning environment. In order to better develop the emotional characteristics of self-awareness and social awareness necessary to better empathize with others and to ultimately acquire a stronger disposition to do “good,” we believe that a business education must be delivered in a learning environment that has a high level of “academic intimacy.”⁷ It is the direct effect of several variables, endogenous and exogenous, as well as their interaction, that creates a particular learning environment and determines the level of academic intimacy in that environment. Endogenous variables, those under the control of faculty, include the types of pedagogical strategies used, the amount of student reflection required, and the amount of faculty feedback given. Exogenous variables, those beyond the control of faculty, include the student/faculty ratio and the type of student. These exogenous variables influence the effectiveness and intensity of the three endogenous variables.

Two of the endogenous variables that influence the level of academic intimacy in the learning environment are student reflection and faculty feedback.⁸ Reflection is the idea of “not only contemplating an issue or event but moving to the point of making an assessment in order to affect change in the contemplator’s established frame of reference” (Schutte, 2002, p. 7). Faculty feedback is a process that can then enhance these changes.⁹ A high level of academic intimacy is achieved through the proper amount of the complementary and synergistic processes of student reflection and faculty feedback. This has the natural result of making students more self-aware by helping them discover their vision and values, strengths and weaknesses, and emotions (see Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002, pp. 60, 61).¹⁰ The proper amount of reflection and feedback also helps students become more socially aware. This occurs because student reflection and faculty feedback help students broaden their frame of reference to include not only their own but that of others (see Schutte, 2002).

A third endogenous variable that influences the level of academic intimacy in the learning environment is the types of pedagogical strategies used. One pedagogical strategy relevant to our outcomes of providing students with *emo-*

tional characteristics is experiential learning.¹¹ Experiential learning can be defined as a way in which learners are in “direct contact with the subject of study. They do not merely think about [the subject of study] or consider doing something with it; rather they are actually encountering the topic of investigation” (Keeton and Tate, 1978, as reported in Schutte, 2002, p. 3). This experience provides a rich opportunity for deeper student reflection and faculty feedback. Therefore, a higher level of academic intimacy is achieved when experiential learning is intentionally coupled with student reflection and faculty feedback. An even higher level of self-awareness and social awareness can be achieved when these experiences expose students to those less fortunate, or “confront” them with the “voices of the suffering” (Wolterstorff, 2004c, p. 133).

The effectiveness and intensity of these three endogenous variables are significantly influenced by two exogenous variables. A low student/faculty ratio enables professors to assign more reflective exercises which provide professors the opportunity to effectively probe student thoughts. In addition, a low student/faculty ratio makes it possible for faculty to increase the level, frequency, and quality of feedback. Active and curious students also influence the effectiveness and intensity of the endogenous variables. Students who are more active and curious are more likely to engage in reflection and then process and incorporate the feedback (see, for example, Schutte, 2002) necessary to make the learning environment more academically intimate.

Thus, endogenous variables are more effective when they work in a collective fashion. Endogenous and exogenous variables can also work independently and compensate for each other. For example, although faculty do not have much control over whether students are active and curious, students are more likely to participate within certain pedagogies when the student/faculty ratio is low. In other words, the factors of pedagogical strategies and student/faculty ratio can compensate for a lack of active and curious students by enhancing their passion and increasing their accountability.

In summary, we believe that the necessary emotional characteristics are better learned in a learning environment that has a higher level of “academic intimacy.” Academic intimacy is the result of the direct effect and the interaction of several variables. The learning of the emotional characteristics of self-awareness and social awareness is enhanced when these variables interact to create a learning environment with a higher level of academic intimacy. Therefore,

P4: Students will acquire a higher level of the emotional characteristics necessary for doing “good” the higher the level of “academic intimacy” within the learning environment.

Up to this point we have described the alumni outcome of doing “good.” In this discussion, we have outlined several propositions related to ultimately achieving this outcome. For a summary of these propositions, refer back to Figure 1. In particular, we have argued that to achieve this outcome alumni need to become disposed to do good. To develop this disposition, alumni need to develop as students the character trait of empathy. This trait is built on student outcomes that include the emotional characteristics of self-awareness and social awareness. We believe that the degree to which students achieve these outcomes is highly dependent upon the student’s learning environment, and we argue that this environment must be structured in order to achieve higher levels of “academic intimacy.”

DOING “WELL”: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

We turn now to the alumni outcome of doing “well.” We define doing “well” in terms of the biblical notion of shalom. As Christians we are called to do “well,” which we believe is a *personal* response to the Cultural Commission. Being called to do “well” means that God invites us to be successfully engaged in whatever stations he calls us to. In other words, we are to work with all of our heart, “as if working for the Lord, not for men” (Colossians 3:23 RSV). As with trying to define “right relationships,” it is difficult to *a priori* define the concept “successfully engaged.” But similar to our approach to understanding “right relationships,” we can talk about the “fruits” of being successfully engaged. We believe two of the fruits of being successfully engaged in one’s calling are genuine delight and fulfillment. If students find their calling is in the sphere of business, then it is our task, as economics and business professors at a Christian college, to prepare students to be successfully engaged (doing “well”) in this field. One of the many positive results that stems from being successfully engaged is the fruits of delight and fulfillment. Thus doing “good” and doing “well” are complementary in terms of pursuing shalom in that together they engage in the “webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight” (Plantinga, 2002, pp. 14). We now turn to connecting the alumni outcomes of doing “well” to student outcomes and the learn-

ing environment. These connections are highlighted in Figure 1.

Intellectual Characteristics and Knowledge: The Skill/Knowledge Loop

The competence to do “well” (be successfully engaged in the sphere of business) is the result of the interaction of four types of knowledge, the type of interaction that should occur in a solid liberal arts curriculum, and certain intellectual characteristics, fueled by a disposition toward learning. How frequently this interaction occurs determines how “well” alumni do in the stations to which they are called. We call this interaction the “skill/knowledge loop.”¹²

The four types of knowledge are foundational, broad, relational, and deep. Foundational knowledge refers to “language” and “logic.” While language provides alumni with the vocabulary of business, logic teaches them “how to use a language,” such as how to “define” terms and “make accurate statements, how to construct an argument, and how to detect fallacies in an argument” (Sayers, 1947). Language and logic are foundational because language provides the vocabulary for broad, relational, and deep knowledge while logic provides the rules that undergird relational and deep knowledge.

Broad knowledge can be defined as a far reaching but shallow knowledge. In other words, alumni with broad knowledge know a little about a lot of things. This makes it possible for them to relate to various specialists within organizations and to “draw on all the knowledge and insights” of the various academic disciplines (Drucker, 2001, p. 13).

Relational knowledge can be defined as the type of knowledge that makes it possible for managers to “find a third way,” or to synthesize disparate information. Relational knowledge helps alumni to “make connections” between “spheres of knowledge,” and “transfer intellectual skills” across subjects (cf. Sayers, 1947). Thus relational knowledge is related to broad knowledge in that one needs broad knowledge in order to make connections. For example, Alfred Sloan had much success in finding a “third way” between the extreme centralization of Henry Ford’s corporate organization at Ford Motor Corporation and the extreme decentralization of William Durant’s corporate organization at General Motors. His third way, “Decentralization with Coordinated Control,” was based on his knowledge of political governance.

Deep knowledge can be defined as “perspectival knowledge” (further addressed in next section). This type of knowledge makes it possible for managers to understand

not only the theories utilized by various business specialists but also to discern the assumptions underlying those theories. As such, deep knowledge makes it possible for alumni to see and reframe issues and phenomena by questioning and revising the assumptions of models and theories meant to address those issues. For example, because of Douglas MacGregor’s deep knowledge, we now have the ability to reframe questions regarding job design because we know that the use of Theory X assumptions leads us toward alternatives quite different from options based on Theory Y assumptions.¹³

The four types of knowledge enhance the ability of alumni to make decisions, to dialog persuasively, and to learn (intellectual characteristics). First, alumni need skills in decision-making. This is because managing a business is, in essence, decision-making (Drucker, 1954, p. 351; Kerin and Peterson, 2004, p. vii). At the same time, decision-making enhances the learning of knowledge. This is because knowledge is learned through an iterative process, and in order for the iterative process to work, decisions must be made.

In this iterative process, people learn by making decisions and then observing and reflecting on the repercussions of those decisions. If, for example, a manager decides to change his organizational structure from a centralized one to a decentralized one, she likely already increased her breadth of knowledge. At the same time, her depth of knowledge will increase because she will learn whether her assumptions about workers hold true. Finally, she will also gather some insight concerning the wisdom (or lack thereof) behind existing political structures (relational knowledge).

Second, alumni need skills in persuasive dialog so that they can effectively “find out what other people are after,” understand other people, and then be able to get their ideas “across” (Drucker, 1954, p. 36). Therefore, students need to be placed in situations that force them not only to present their ideas persuasively but also to defend those ideas and critique the ideas of others. Because learning occurs through an interactive process, the ability to present and defend ideas and the ability to listen to and critique the ideas of others is a critical skill.

Third, alumni need the ability to independently learn. We define learning simply as gaining knowledge or skill. This is a critical skill for alumni to have given the increasing ambiguity and complexity of the management decision-making environment. According to researchers at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, well-paying jobs of the future will be those that are hard to reduce to a “recipe.” These “attractive jobs . . . require flexibility, creativity, and lifelong learning”

(BusinessWeek Online, 2004). Clearly, the more alumni have learned how to learn, the more able they will be to acquire the necessary and applicable knowledge.

While the level of intellectual characteristics and knowledge acquired determines *how able* alumni are to engage in the skill/knowledge loop, their level of inclination toward learning determines *how often* alumni engage in this “loop.” Thus, to do “well,” alumni need a disposition toward lifelong learning. The more they are disposed toward learning, the more they will engage in the iterative process; the more they engage in the iterative process, the more skilled they will become in terms of making decisions, persuasive dialog, and learning how to learn. The more skilled and knowledgeable alumni become, the more successfully engaged they will be in the sphere of business. Therefore,

P5: Alumni will do better (more “well”; that is, be more successfully engaged in the sphere of business) the more often they engage in and the more able they are to engage in the management skill/knowledge loop.

How often and how able *alumni* are to engage in the skill/knowledge loop depends on how often and how able they are to engage in the skill knowledge loop as *students*. This is because learning skills and knowledge is a continuous iterative process fueled by a disposition toward lifelong learning. As professors of economics and business, it is, then, our responsibility to not only provide students with the necessary intellectual skills and knowledge, but also to implement pedagogies that instill a true joy for learning that will help begin and continue this process of self-directed learning.

To instill this joy for learning and to help give students the necessary intellectual characteristics and knowledge, we need to provide students with the proper context for continuous learning. We believe this means we need to expose students to an environment where ambiguity and complexity exist. This type of environment not only challenges students (and, therefore, instills a joy for learning for those students who are most likely to engage in the skill/knowledge loop and do “well”), it also reflects the environment in which business decisions are made¹⁴ (see Deming, 1986, Pfeffer, 1992). If, then, we can provide for students this environment and begin them on the continuous iterative process of learning via the interaction of intellectual characteristics and knowledge, then it stands to reason that our students, as alumni, will continue this practice. Therefore,

P6: Alumni will be more *able* to engage in the management skill/knowledge loop the higher the level of intellectual characteristics and knowledge they acquire

as students; alumni will more *often* engage in the management skill/knowledge loop the more they are disposed toward lifelong learning as students.

Academic Intimacy Revisited

Earlier we argued that all education takes place in a learning environment. In order to help alumni develop the emotional characteristics that lead to doing “good,” we asserted that the learning environment required a high level of academic intimacy. We also argued that it is the direct effect and the interaction of several variables, endogenous and exogenous, that creates a particular learning environment and determines the level of academic intimacy in that environment.

One endogenous variable that influences the level of academic intimacy in the learning environment is the types of pedagogical strategies used. One pedagogical strategy relevant to the outcomes of providing students with *intellectual* characteristics is “perspectival” learning. “Perspectival Learning” is learning to see phenomena, old and new, from various viewpoints (perspectives) (VanderVeen and Smith, 2005). Because it introduces students to ambiguity and complexity, “perspectival” learning provides a rich opportunity for deeper student reflection and faculty feedback. Therefore, a higher level of academic intimacy is achieved when “perspectival” learning is coupled with student reflection and faculty feedback. Many times it is faculty feedback that encourages students to continue to be disposed toward learning, despite the frustration that comes from being exposed to ambiguous and complex situations. “Perspectival” learning, then, not only helps students obtain the intellectual characteristics that lead to doing “well,” but also helps *students* gain “intellectual empathy” (mentioned earlier in this paper) which leads to doing “good.”

In summary, we believe that a business education must be delivered in a learning environment that has a higher level of “academic intimacy.” Academic intimacy is the result of the direct effect and the interaction of several variables. The learning of the intellectual characteristics of knowledge of terms and concepts (relevant vocabulary), skills in decision-making and persuasive dialog, and a disposition toward lifelong learning are enhanced when these variables interact to create a learning environment with a higher level of academic intimacy. Therefore,

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper was to address the issue of preparing students to do “good” and to do “well” as alumni given their calling to business. Therefore, our paper (1) defined “good” and “well” from a particular Christian worldview, showing how they are connected to the idea of shalom; and it (2) outlined theoretical propositions that

connect the alumni outcomes of doing “good” and doing “well” with student outcomes and with the learning environment. Embedded in our discussion of the propositions were descriptions of pedagogical strategies and tactics that cultivate a soil for preparing students to pursue shalom. In this way we believe we can prepare students to do “good” and to do “well” as alumni given their calling to business.

ENDNOTES

¹ We agree with those scholars who believe we are called both to “sainthood” (our “general” calling) and to a specific occupation (our “particular” calling) (see Hardy, 1990, pp. 80ff).

² We use the term “alumni” instead of “graduates” because the phrase “alumni outcomes” seems better suited to discuss the activities of our former students than does the phrase “graduate outcomes.”

³ We do not contend here that empathy “trumps” other means of influencing dispositions including radical conversion. However, we do wish to focus on empathy in particular because we think it has generally been neglected as a means of influencing dispositions.

⁴ While we realize that our definition of shalom involves doing “good” within three sets of relationships, we choose to concentrate on relationships among people. We also realize that these relationships are interrelated in that when we pursue justice for the “least of these,” we do so to Christ in service to God. In addition, we note that pursuing justice for others has implications for nature and our physical surroundings in that the “least of these” have a right to flourish and delight in God’s creation. Wolterstorff includes this right in his definition of “primary justice” (Wolterstorff, 2005).

⁵ Goleman, Boyatzis, and McGee (2002) seem unclear on this point. We hold that empathy is a result of social awareness and that social awareness is a result of self-awareness. In other words, higher levels of self-awareness lead to higher levels of social awareness which lead to higher levels of empathy.

⁶ The reason being aware of one’s emotions allows one to better feel what others are feeling has to do with the intervening step of self-management (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2002). Being aware of one’s emotions allows one

the opportunity to manage those emotions. Being able to manage one’s emotions then allows one the opportunity to feel the emotions of others. In other words, by managing one’s own emotions, one leaves more room to experience the emotions of others.

⁷ We define “academic intimacy” in broad terms as a measure of the quality and quantity of student/faculty collaboration. We understand “intimacy” is a concept with negative connotations. However, we wish to emphasize the power individualized teaching has on learning. Learning among individual students is enhanced the more they come into contact with individual instructors and the more they work with individual instructors on particular and significant academic projects.

⁸ Student reflection is collaborative in the sense that faculty provide the “fodder” for students to reflect upon. Both student reflection and faculty feedback can occur both inside and outside of the classroom.

⁹ Faculty feedback is normally thought to be comments on papers, exams, and homework assignments. This type of feedback enhances intellectual characteristics and will be referred to later in this paper. We wish to extend the definition of faculty feedback to include that which enhances the emotional characteristics of self-awareness and social awareness.

¹⁰ The impact of student reflection and faculty feedback on intellectual characteristics will be discussed later in the paper.

¹¹ There are other pedagogical strategies available that can influence (both positively or negatively) the level of academic intimacy in addition to experiential learning such as knowledge dissemination, service learning, online classrooms, etc.

¹² This idea is developed more fully in a discussion about the “management skill/knowledge loop.” See Smith and VanderVeen (2006).

¹³ Clearly, foundational, broad, relational, and deep knowledge are related. Ideally, one would have deep knowledge in all academic disciplines so that one could make connections. Realistically, we know there are tradeoffs. In a management theory class, for example, should faculty survey a broad spectrum of management models and theories or a narrow spectrum but at a deeper level? Such considerations are beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁴ A decision-making situation is ambiguous when some phenomenon is encountered for the first time or when resolution to a problem is unclear. A decision-making situation is complex when there are multiple dimensions and viewpoints (perspectives) to deal with.

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