



**Boston Faculty Fellowship
Academics as Salt & Light in the University
January Retreat 2017
Schedule**

Session 1. Engaging (in) Scholarship

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In this session we ask – how do we engage the university dialogically/conversationally in its scholarly activities?

ENGAGING SCHOLARSHIP

Let me give you a thumbnail of my own scholarly experiences:

As undergraduate in New Zealand

As graduate student at the U of Toronto and U of Chicago

As a teacher at the Australian National University, University of Chicago, and elsewhere

Scholarship

What do we mean by “scholarship”?

There is an enormous range of possibility. It can include all the sites of academic life [net of teaching, administration, public intellectuals] and all the goals of advancing frontiers of knowledge, developing understanding, discovering truth.

Scholarship will certainly include:

1. Research – discovery – empirical, theoretical/philosophical
Cf. my research methods, which have included ethnography, surveys, interviews, rhetorical/textual analysis, jurisprudence/political philosophy, demography
2. Critical reading – perspectives on work of others
Cf. the writing of review essays on a cluster of books or articles
3. Syntheses –
Cf. the writing of surveys of a field, e.g., in the Annual Reviews of our fields
4. Orchestration of scholars for purposes of stimulating scholarship/focusing scholarship/cross-fertilizing scholarship, e.g., on research teams, networks, listserves
Eg. my collaborative project for 25 years on lawyers and the struggle for basic legal freedoms across the world since the 17th century.
5. Participation in academic publishing
Eg., as journal or book series editor – as referee of articles
6. As panelist or reviewer for scientific grant bodies
Eg., National Science Foundation, European Research Council

7. Participation in scholarly societies, networks
E.g., giving papers, organizing sessions, creating programs, participating in scholarly networks

Topic 1: Identifying Big Scholarly Questions/Big Debates

My research covers huge areas, technical areas, many of which are way beyond my training.

In my interdisciplinary fields of law and social science I join efforts to counter-balance the tendency in scholarship to over-specialization.

When we seek to identify big issues, big questions, they can:

Span a given discipline:

From the macro to the micro

Involve sharply contrasting theories, e.g., that assume rational assumes v. other bases for action (social, psychological, cultural, institutional)

Cross disciplines:

Confronting the same basic puzzle from many differing disciplinary perspectives

e.g., economic development, the rise and fall of democracies, altruism

Frequently these encounter reductionist or emergent moves where scholars from one discipline seek to overtake or minimize or absorb the explanations of another, e.g., a psychological syndrome reduced to a biochemical explanation

Span university?

They may involve ideas that are salient to every corner of the university, e.g.,

Virtues – humility – integrity

In my own work I find myself being compelled to:

- Identify big questions
- Draw big brushstrokes on big divides over how those questions are answered
- Draw sweeping arcs of the alternative approaches to crossing divides (theoretical, methodological)

I propose that these big questions *must* be brought into our Christian witness on campus [discuss later how]. They are integral to our graduate and faculty presence.

Topic 2: Choosing Research/Scholarly Topics

Let me give two examples from my own research trajectories:

- Mobilization for basic legal freedoms – struggles for political liberalism across time and place (Halliday and Karpik 1998; Halliday, Karpik, Feeley 2007; Halliday, Karpik, Feeley 2012)
- Crafting of laws for world markets, trade (Carruthers and Halliday 2009; Block-Lieb and Halliday 2017).

Contrast two approaches as Christian scholars:

a. we might begin with the topic, then move to faith

Think of this in purely academic terms

- Start with big questions
- Choose institutions, e.g., a given discipline, problem, lab and allows its currents to sweep us along
- We might be directed to projects by mentors
- Opportunities open – we seize them, ask faith questions later

Thus – we follow an academic trajectory – and we hope for God’s grace, for a faith light to shine, for a redemptive moment that presses for integration of faith and learning

This raises the critical question – how to effect the faith move?

- Do we proceed in passive hope?
- Do we seek out faith interlocutors?
- Do we draw on IVCF/IFES/Developing a Christian Mind resources?

OR

b. we might begin with faith, then move to a topic

In some fields this move has more possibility than others. If so, can and do we choose Christianly?

An immediate question arises: Are there topics more inherently *Christian* or *biblically salient* than others?

Yes, some questions seem to be more immanent for some disciplines

Yes, but some are much deeper and more difficult to discern in other disciplines

Some are completely imperceptible.

Pure mathematics
Logic
Musicology
Theoretical physics
Computing languages
Properties of materials

And if we choose, what theological armory do we have?

Who provides it?

How do we get it?

All of which confronts us with several puzzles we’ll consider in our breakout groups:

- Do we *choose*? Or are we *chosen*?
Perhaps we are chosen and choose in subtle, even imperceptible interplay
- What if the Christian significance of a topic is not obvious?
Providential or serendipitous moments – new ideas, new opportunities, new data access
Do we plunge in?

Eg. My research opportunity with the International Monetary Fund.

- When to say “no” to opportunities – and why?
- What theological resources do we have for matching our passions with our faith – to “think Christianly”

Topic 3: Doing Scholarship/Research

Let us now hold the topic constant and focus on *process*. Can we think Christianly about:

- Collaborators – yes or no? criteria for collaborators? How to work with collaborators?
--only Christians? [I have seldom worked with Christians and more often with Jews and Buddhists)
--only those who share our values? [Surely yes and no – some values are imperative if we are to trust and respect the other; some may not be relevant to our working relationship].
--those who might otherwise be overlooked (race, gender, personality?)
[TH: yes, persons seen to be too difficult – women
- Choosing teams and research assistants – who to choose? How to nurture, encourage, acknowledge?
- Dynamics/ethos of teams – what would a Christian *esprit* look like in research teams?
Include both together – an ethos of . . .
--encouragement
--discipline
--dignity & respect, e.g., for new ideas – deferring to ygr scholars
- Funding – the theological ethics of seeking funding, seeking funders?
Do the origins of the funds matter?
- Mentoring – standards, ways, tones?
It is hard work – time-consuming – emotionally draining
- Ethics of research process itself, e.g., protection of human subjects?

TH: does most of this apply to collaborative research?

What about solo researchers – not working with persons?

e.g., literary, philosophy, theoretical ‘x’

Puzzles:

- Is there any inherent benefit/theological justification to solitude or community in scholarship?

Topic 4: Conveying Scholarship

We turn to faith perspectives on what to do with our research.

Here we confront persistent issues:

- Publication ethics – who gets authorship? What kind of recognition is appropriate for various contributors to a piece of scholarship?
 - A different Christian way?
 - Cf. the senior U of Virginia economist who always gave younger colleagues first authorship
 - Senior scholar (for whom senior authorship less consequential) versus a junior scholar (for whom it is highly consequential).

- Audiences

How do we think Christianly about reaching:

 - University constituencies – wonder, application, curiosity, fresh readings of literature, history, self
 - Inside our universities
 - Choices about where we seek to publish, where we publish, with the various trade-offs involved? And in some disciplines, how we convey our findings, ideas?
 - Echowarly audiences – our disciplinary fields/networks – advancing frontiers
 - Publics – are we called to inform wider publics? Who are the most salient publics for our research? How do we reach them? What are trade-offs in allocation of effort to scholarly v. public audiences? (cf. here the increasingly strong emphasis of the National Science Foundation to convey results meaningfully to broad audiences –
 - I am finding myself increasingly doing it – our primary funders expect it – Twitter advertising
 - The church
 - Christians on campus – faculty with grad students/ugs
 - The local church – Cf. the experience with First Faculty, First Presbyterian Church of Evanston
 - The church universal --
 - InterVarsity and IFES worldwide – signaling that Christian academics in disciplinary areas
 - Idioms of communication
 - Within discipline academic prose?
 - Cross-discipline academic prose?
 - Educated audiences?
 - Christian audiences?
 - Communication outlets
 - Conventional journals/presses
 - New academic media – SSRN, Google Scholar, open source journals
 - General print media
 - Social media – Twitter

DISCIPLINARY GROUP DISCUSSIONS (30")

Reporter for each

Exercise for each of the above?

Exercise 1: identify one big disciplinary, cross-disciplinary, or scholarly question with which your discipline is wrestling or where research is vigorous.

This issue should be irrespective of ostensible sacred/secular, Christian/academic modalities.

Express in language non-specialists can comprehend.

Exercise 2: have you seen any place where that issue has been engaged "Christianly," "through the eyes of faith," with a "Christian mind"?

If yes, where and how?

If no, where might you imagine such engagement? Indicate one place/one setting in which dialog could be initiated/has been initiated that stimulates conversations into which faith can be infused, organically or explicitly.

Other: reactions, comments to presentation.

REPORT BACK – GENERAL DISCUSSION

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