

## ***For Your Bookshelf...***

Two recent publications offer comprehensive insights into current ideas and practices in the burgeoning field of higher education and spirituality. Both books offer a diverse assortment of perspectives and can be read in their entirety or as individual chapters, depending on the specific sub-topics of interest to spiritually-oriented readers. A synopsis of each multi-authored work follows. A third book offers an in-depth exploration of church-related colleges to identify features of campus environments and collegiate experiences that are supportive of holistic student development.

**Chickering, A.W., Dalton, J.C., and Stamm, L. (2006). *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 358 pp.**

This eleven-chapter volume sets forth three important facets related to the burgeoning movement within higher education for greater authenticity and meaning in the lives of faculty, students, and other educational participants. In the first part of the book, called *Framing Perspectives*, Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm outline foundational issues regarding spirituality and organize information from multiple periods and perspectives to justify the centrality of spirituality in higher education and situate it within a larger cultural and historical framework. The second part of the book centers on a guiding construct developed by the authors called *institutional amplification*. Rather than discount current ideas, practices, and programs that promote spiritual integrity and authenticity, the authors desire to augment and extend existing higher education endeavors that promote spiritually viable, educational experiences. The middle chapters address institutional concerns regarding the constitutional separation between church and state, innovative campus approaches to students' contemplative development, the role of student affairs in students' moral and personal growth, and factors critical to developing an authentic, integrated higher education community. The final section of the book, *Getting There from Here*, offers concrete examples and strategies for fostering institutional amplification. In the final chapters, the authors explore institutional planning informed by meaningful community reflection and dialogue; professional development that addresses interior growth; awareness of the challenges inherent to assessing spirituality and authenticity; spiritually generative leadership, and institutional approaches that nurture students' search for deeper meaning and purpose. The book is a comprehensive resource that covers the gamut from philosophical bases for spiritual exploration to real-life examples of syllabi and course outlines that encourage students to delve deeper into what it means to *be*, *know*, and *do* in modern global life.

**Awbrey, S.M., Dana, D., Miller, V.M., Robinson, P., Ryan, M.M., and Scott, D.K. (2006). *Integrative Learning and Action: A Call to Wholeness*. New York, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 216 pp.**

This collection of essays is a multi-faceted exploration of the justifications and means by which human beings can develop a sense of wholeness. The book has four sections: a *Prologue*, *Integrative Epistemology*, *Integrative Learning*, and *Integrative learning and Action*. The first half of the book extols the benefits that human beings stand to derive from integrating rationality with more spiritual and intuitive conceptions of knowing and being. In the spirit of integration, the different authors do not attack scientific knowledge or methodologies; they contend that non-rational perspectives complement, extend, and enrich the human condition and our understanding of it. The next section focuses on integrative approaches in learning environments through recommendations such as clarifying institutional values, modeling wholeness for students, developing educational partnerships, and fostering students' emotional intelligence. In the final chapters of the book, the essayists examine workplace integration through greater mindfulness, awareness of work-based disconnect, and meaningful self-inquiry at the organizational level. The sheer breadth of disciplines and constructs represented in this collection highlights the generative potential of integrative approaches to education and praxis.

**Braskamp, L.A., Trautvetter, L.C., and Ward, K. (2006). *Putting Students First: How Colleges Develop Students Purposefully*. Boston, Massachusetts: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 246 pp.**

Given the explicit interest of today's college students in issues of purpose and meaning, the authors examine holistic development at church-related colleges of various denominations to present institutions of all types with reflective principles and suggestions for educating the minds and hearts of their students. The findings presented are based on survey data, follow-up interviews with responding institutions, and in-depth visits to ten diverse campuses, each with a missive focus on holistic student development and a historical affiliation with a particular religious faith or tradition. The organization of the book compliments its use as a heuristic for institutions interested in providing for the comprehensive needs of their students. Using Personal Investment Theory as a framework for the findings, the book focuses on three constructs: 1) students' sense of self; 2) patterns of behavior exhibited by students; and 3) the nature of students' socio-cultural context, namely the culture, curriculum, co-curriculum, and community that constitute a campus environment. The book provides a realistic account of the challenges faced by colleges and universities intent on providing a holistic education, which include meeting the careerist needs of students, balancing self-serving academic goals with those that benefit the public good, teaching students to be critical in their search for meaning, and overcoming campus compartmentalization. The authors conclude that the ten colleges authentically support holistic education, implement approaches that integrate learning with the multiple dimensions of student development, and provide students with rigorous and challenging forms of engagement that nonetheless support their total growth.