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A Survey of Student Religious Attitude at Tusculum College to Determine if an Increased Religious Life Program Could Impact Retention.

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A SURVEY OF STUDENT RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AT TUSCULUM
COLLEGE TO DETERMINE IF AN INCREASED RELIGIOUS
LIFE PROGRAM COULD IMPACT RETENTION

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Societal Factors Affecting Education

Nova University

by

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A Practicum presented to Nova University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

December, 1985

ABSTRACT

A SURVEY OF STUDENT RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AT TUSCULUM COLLEGE TO DETERMINE IF AN INCREASED RELIGIOUS LIFE PROGRAM COULD IMPACT RETENTION

Stephen Ranken Weiss

This study sought to discover if there was a significant difference between freshmen and sophomores enrolled at Tusculum College during the Spring of 1985 in terms of religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes. This study was undertaken because a low interest in religious activities was observed among students during their first two years on the Tusculum campus. Tusculum is a four-year liberal arts college related to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The study was conducted shortly after a report was released that indicated that only twenty-three percent of the freshman class entering in 1981 would be graduating from the college at the end of the spring semester of 1980.

The results of the study were based on data received from a questionnaire which was adapted from The College Freshman Questionnaire developed by Devolder and Hummer (1977). The questionnaire was sent to 103 freshmen and 93 sophomores enrolled at the college in the spring semester of 1985. Fifty freshmen and fifty-one sophomores responded to the survey.

The subjects responded to thirty-three items pertaining to religious doctrine and teaching, ethical and

social issues and attitudes toward religious activities both on and off campus. Respondents were asked to respond to each of the items with a yes or no answer. Respondents were also asked to give complete sentence answers to the items, especially to items related to the existence or expansion of religious programs at Tusculum College. The responses from both groups indicated a high orientation to the Christian belief system and a high interest in religious activities especially of the voluntary kind.

The null hypothesis that there was no significant difference between freshmen and sophomores in terms of religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes was accepted. The null hypothesis was tested with an alpha of .05 and the Chi-Square was calculated to be .0050.

It was recommended to the Administration and the Board of Trustees at Tusculum College that consideration be given to strengthening the Religious Life Program at the college. It was recommended that more courses be taught in religious studies. It was recommended that more budget be devoted to the work of the Campus Pastor. It was pointed out that since seventy-four percent of the Freshman class returned in the Fall of 1985 and sixty-eight percent of the Sophomore class returned that students were probably not leaving college because of dissatisfaction with the religious emphasis at the school.

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INTRODUCTION

As they approach adulthood, college students are led to question and challenge all aspects of the world and society in which they live. They challenge tradition and authority. They raise serious challenges concerning God, organized religions, specific churches or church people. Their reactions and responses are often a far cry from those of the adolescent period when they were comfortable with the religion of their homes. Those from strong religious backgrounds search for a deeper understanding of their tradition. Those with unstable backgrounds want to receive questions which haunt them. Some who never have had much of a religious heritage are curious and come to the college campus asking questions.

It has been observed at Tusculum College, a four year liberal arts college related to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., that students take an indifferent attitude toward programs of a religious nature that are offered on campus. The average attendance at voluntary worship is less than ten students out of a student body of 350. Less than fifteen students are members of the Student Christian Association. Only eight students belong to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Only four students out of twenty-five enrolled in a New Testament Class, when expected to attend one service during the semester in the Presbyterian Church on campus,

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availed themselves of that opportunity. Less than fifteen students registered an interest in forming a Circle K service organization sponsored by the local Young Men's Christian Association. Thus, even though students have enrolled at a church related college, the majority of them do not become involved in religious life activities. Only a part-time campus pastor is employed at the college.

It has also been observed that for the past five years, retention of students beyond the freshman and sophomore year has been a problem. Only twenty-three percent of students entering the college have remained to graduate.

The purpose of this study was to survey the religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes of students who were freshmen and sophomores during the spring semester of 1985. This was conducted in order to get an indication of how religiously oriented students were at the level where retention was most serious.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Many college students are searching for truth. They are aware that they do not know everything and that is one of the reasons they are continuing their formal education. Religion, in many cases, is becoming a very important area for the student of the eighties. The great increase in the number of students freely electing courses dealing with the

study of religion, in public, as well as church-related schools, is one evidence of this. Matthew F. Kohmescher made an intriguing analysis of the situation. He perceived that college students at some stage of their growth and experience became pregnant with an adult faith. No two of these pregnancies were alike. Some went very smoothly; others were very rough and demanding. As they approached adulthood, students were led to question and to challenge all aspects of the world and of the society in which they live and for which they are going to be responsible. They challenged traditions and authority. They raised serious challenges concerning God (How can an all-powerful God allow evil to happen to those he loves?), organized religion (attendance at irrelevant worship services), specific churches or church people (clergy, religion professors). Their reactions and responses were often a far cry from those of the adolescent period when they were comfortable with their religion. Those from strong religious backgrounds searched for a deeper understanding of their tradition. Those with shaky backgrounds wanted to resolve questions which, in a way, haunted them. Even those who had never had much of a religious heritage were curious and came to the college campus asking questions (Kohmescher, 1981).

U. S. News and World Report (1981) stated in the article "A Turn Back to Traditional Values" that instead of anti-establishment outbursts, today's generation had become more thoughtful and serious. There was a heightened concern

for the future of the country and a yearning for traditions and support systems that gave security in the past. College age students were taking on a set of attitudes and values remarkably different from those of the stormy sixties and seventies. Many students were having second thoughts about the "new morality." They spoke openly of gaining strength from religion.

When it came to drawing a religious profile of America's college age young adults (18-29 years old), the Christian Century Gallup Poll reported that the picture was fuzzy at best. Young adults may say they have faith, but have a hard time practicing it. Nine out of ten stated a belief in God, but only four out of ten drew much consolation from their belief. However, seven out of ten had a respect for the Deity in the sense that they believed He rewards and punishes according to deeds done. Other results of the Gallup Poll indicated that college age students lacked strong religious commitments, were ignorant of religious doctrine and were uninvolved in the life and ministry of the churches. More than two-thirds of those aged 18-29 reported never having a life-changing religious experience. However, there was an indication that a religious experience of some kind had touched the lives of a significant portion of college age young people. Thirty percent reported some kind of life-changing spiritual experience (Reansome, 1988).

A more recent survey of the Gallup organization

suggested that American college campuses were becoming places where religious renewal was occurring. The survey, in which 507 full-time students from ninety-six campuses nationwide were interviewed, was published in 1984 (Christianity Today). Thirty-five percent of respondents said their religious commitments had become stronger since coming to college; only sixteen percent said they were weaker. More than eighty percent said their religious beliefs were important to them; about fifteen percent said they were not.

An article accompanying the survey cited growth in conservative evangelical fellowship groups like Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and Campus Crusade for Christ. Also, there was a renewed interest in religion as an academic subject. Stanford University began limiting enrollment in religious studies classes because of overcrowding. At Michigan State University, enrollment in religion classes increased sixty percent in 1983. The results of the survey also suggested a decline in the influence of naturalism. More than ninety percent of those surveyed said they believed "in God or a universal spirit". Other surveys taken by Gallup, however, indicated a growing belief in astrology and reincarnation. There was also an indication from surveys that extremist cult groups, like the Moonies and Hare Krishnas, were gradually disappearing from college campuses (Christianity Today, 1984).

Paul Robinson writing in the Stanford Diarist (1981)

made some comparisons with student attitudes today toward sexuality, with Stanford students a decade ago. Sexuality has been traditionally linked with religious values. The past ten years have seen a number of alterations in the structure of the university. Such things as co-ed dorms and gay student unions have developed. These changes, in conjunction with the generally more indulgent attitude of society, ought to have resulted in a liberalization of sexual behavior. But as one soon learned, a majority of the students were extraordinarily chaste. At Stanford the number who enjoyed sexual relations with the kind of regularity that adults take for granted was miniscule. Moreover, there was no obvious correlation between abstinence and the much discussed revival of Christian fundamentalism: it was common to the secular and the religious alike. Robinson indicated that the persistence of such relative austerity showed that sex is not a matter of institutions but psychology. College was a time when energies were concentrated on fashioning an ego and the id necessarily was neglected (Robinson, 1981).

To determine what social habits they found to be acceptable, at four conservative Christian colleges, students were asked how they felt about six "worldly practices." Sixty percent felt that listening to rock music and social dancing would not compromise their spiritual values. Dating non-Christians, performing rock music and drinking alcoholic beverages rated close behind at forty

percent, but were not acceptable. Students at all four schools rated smoking at least acceptable; twenty-five percent at one school felt it would not compromise their values. Three-fourths of those surveyed felt that they would be involved in "full-time Christian service." Many, however, made a distinction between full-time ministry in a vocation and being full-time Christians. Spiritual renewal was what these college students thought was the greatest need in the church. The students seemed to recognize the shortcomings of the church today, but realized it was their responsibility to deal with them (Suckles, 1979).

Devolder, Hummer, and Robinson (1979) were particularly interested in the religious values and practices of college freshmen. Their study was done with students at Western Illinois University where they observed that many students appeared at the University Counseling Center during their freshmen year with questions about adjustment to college, their personal identity, relationships with others, and problems concerning their personal values. Some of the expressed values were of a religious/philosophical nature and took on dimensions of atheism, agnosticism, Christianity, Judaism, and Eastern religions. Students who were willing to expose their value system would inevitably experience value differences in the persons they related to. This interaction created an ideal, if somewhat threatening opportunity to examine one's own values as well as the values of others. The inevitable

question from such a discussion was, "Whose values are right?" Devolder, Hummer and Robinson conducted a survey with 141 freshmen at Western Illinois University concerning their spiritual values. Their findings indicated that the religious value structure of students did not change radically during their first year of college. They did find, however, that the religious practices of freshmen diminished when compared to their prior religious activity. It would appear, that freshmen students were in a process of examining and clarifying their religious views. Some were exploring social opportunities rather than placing emphasis on religious practice. The survey indicated a feeling of security for many in religious beliefs (Devolder, Hummer and Robinson, 1979).

Eugene Bianchi in working with students at Emory University indicated that he had learned a great deal about the psychological and spiritual life of students by exploring their dream journals with them. He found a continuity or linkage between a life stage marked by the struggle for self-identity and a student's religious maturing. His data is based on eighty-four students who participated in courses he taught on Dreams in Spiritual Development in the undergraduate religion department at Emory. He found that active dream study fostered a sense of wholeness in psycho-spiritual development. Students came to see that their unconscious scenarios on the level of peer or parental conflicts were part of a wider scheme of spiritual

growth. They came to understand that the arduous process of becoming a freer and more loving person was continuous with spiritual maturity (Bianchi, 1979).

Kenneth McGuire held the view that college students were often very aware that traditional values and ways of acting had not worked out very well. Wars still raged, injustice and hunger still existed. Democracy was not really working. In short, the world was in a mess. Therefore, students often distrusted the assumptions and injunctions of their elders, parents and school officials. The search for alternatives then began. New ways of life, especially Eastern religious movements, were appealing because of the promise of a fresh start as well as the seeming simplicity of their assumptions and demands. McGuire found that students seriously considered who they were and on what basis their lives could make sense. He found significant differences between freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students regarding these questions. As they matured, their attention shifted. They were more concerned with values and appropriate means for understanding and articulating the fullness of their experience. In the later college years, especially, students were beginning a real spiritual search. The "Seeking Generation" might be the appropriate appellation (McGuire, 1979).

Kadem and Bar-Lev conducted research to investigate whether Middle Eastern students felt that attaining the

status of a "Western Modern Man" was incompatible with maintaining a traditional, religious way of life. The students of Middle Eastern origin proved to be more religious than their Western counterparts, however, their feeling about themselves was that not only were they less religious than their parents and grandparents but that they were less religious than they themselves had previously been. The degree of religiosity among these students and their Western counterparts was strongly influenced by the home, the high school attended and youth movement membership. The findings showed that though there was some loosening of certain extreme practices on the part of the Eastern student, there was no revolt against home or tradition and the student had found the way to the "new life" without breaking off from the "old ways" or the parental culture (Kadem and Bar-Lev, 1983).

In summary, religious beliefs and spiritual values among college students, according to a review of the literature, falls along a rather wide spectrum. We live in a society where there are strong religious as well as secular influences. Students must decide for themselves, once they are on campus, how much emphasis they want to place on strengthening their religious beliefs and spiritual values.

PROCEDURES

An instrument (Appendix A) consisting of thirty-three questions about religious values and practices expanded from The College Freshman Questionnaire developed by Devolder and Hummer (1977) was sent to the 103 freshmen and 93 sophomores who were enrolled at Tusculum College during the Spring Semester of 1985. The students were asked to respond to each of the items and to return the questionnaire in a self-addressed stamped envelope which was provided. The adapted questionnaire was considered to be a reliable and valid way of surveying student opinions according to the faculty of the Psychology Department at Tusculum. A forty percent return on the survey was considered to be sufficient for the purposes of this study.

Students were asked to give a yes or no answer to each of the thirty-three items and to indicate at the end of the questionnaire whether they were a freshman or a sophomore. The subjects were also asked to give complete sentence answers to each of the items and to give particular attention to items 18-24 and 27-28 since these questions had to do with specific religious life programs on campus and how they felt about the existence of these programs or the expansion of them.

The following null hypothesis was tested in this study. There is no significant difference in terms of

religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes between freshmen and sophomores at Tusculum College. A Chi-Square analysis was conducted and for the purposes of this study the level of significance was .05. This kind of statistical test was used because the significance of the difference between two sample proportions was being tested.

Limitations of the Study

1. There were only two hundred students in the freshman and sophomore category who could be surveyed for this study and therefore, the results of the study may not apply to a universal trend among college underclassmen even at church-related colleges.
2. There may have been a reluctance on the part of those surveyed in this study to accurately report their attitudes since college students vacillate between feelings of "high" and "low" religious orientation. Such factors as peer pressure, depression, exhilaration and indifference characterize the typical college student's life.

Assumptions of the Study

1. It was assumed that those students who responded to the survey were interested in the kind of religious life program that exists or could exist at Tusculum.
2. It was assumed that the respondents honestly reported

their responses to the questions asked on the Religious Beliefs and Spiritual Attitudes Questionnaire at the time they were filling out the survey (See Appendix A).

RESULTS

This study attempted to determine if the null hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. The null hypothesis tested was that there is no significant difference in terms of religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes between freshmen and sophomores enrolled at Tusculum College during the Spring semester of 1983. The null hypothesis was accepted and indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups. This study did not show the alternate hypothesis to be true.

Fifty freshmen and fifty-one sophomores responded to the questionnaire. They completed the thirty-three items and returned the instrument. The questionnaire was so designed that a yes response to any item would indicate a strong religious belief, an interest in religious activities on or off campus and a strong religious value system on the part of the respondent.

Using a Chi-Square analysis, the degrees of freedom were one. There were 879 yes responses given by freshmen and 882 yes responses given by sophomores. There were 488 no responses given by freshmen and 521 no responses given by sophomores. The Chi-Square was calculated to be .0050. The

null hypothesis was therefore accepted at the .05 alpha level of significance (see Table 1).

Table 1
Responses to Questionnaire on Religious Beliefs and Spiritual Values

| Responses | Freshmen | Sophomores | χ^2 |
|-----------|----------|------------|----------|
| YES | 879 | 882 | |
| NO | 488 | 521 | |
| Total | 1367 | 1403 | .0050 |

Responses to the questionnaire are summarized in Tables 2 through 5. Table 2 covers questions one through nine concerning doctrinal and biblical beliefs. There were no significant differences between freshmen and sophomores in this section of the questionnaire. Table 3 covers questions ten through seventeen concerning religious practices and values. Twice as many sophomores indicated they were not members of a church or religious society. (Twelve sophomores said they were not church members while only six freshmen reported that they were not church members). This may indicate that more sophomores either stop attending church in their second year of college because of increased activities on weekends or perhaps because their names have been removed from church rolls once they stop attending or leave home. Twenty-seven sophomores indicated on item twelve that they do not read the Bible

regularly while only sixteen freshmen said they do not read the Bible regularly. This may indicate that sophomores have less time than freshmen to read the Bible, or it may indicate that freshmen tend to refer to the Bible during their first year of college as a source of consolation when they are making a major life adjustment.

Table 4 covers questions eighteen through twenty four concerning On-Campus religious involvement. Significant differences between freshmen and sophomores appeared only on item eighteen which asked if the student's religious involvement had increased since coming to college. Twenty-three freshmen indicated yes and twenty-one replied no. However, only twelve sophomores answered yes on this item while thirty said no. This might indicate that sophomores take less of an interest in structured religious activities than freshmen. It does not necessarily mean that sophomores have rejected their religious beliefs and values but they may not be seeking as many formal ways to explore and express their beliefs and values. Further study in this area is needed.

Items eighteen through twenty-four were also subjected to a content analysis since comments that students made on the questionnaire about religious involvement on campus might indicate how they felt about staying at a church-related college with a low emphasis on religious life beyond the sophomore year. Comments by students in this area might be useful in analyzing whether a stronger

religious life program on campus might impact retention. A paraphrasing of the students' comments in this section follows.

Student responses to item eighteen, "Has your religious involvement increased since you came to Tusculum?" were generally positive although some students indicated the change occurred not because they were at Tusculum but because of some experiences they had with their home church or on a retreat during the summer. Several indicated that their religious involvement had increased because of taking a Religions of America class taught by the college chaplain.

Responses to question nineteen were largely negative concerning the desirability of required chapel on campus. A number of students indicated that religion should not be forced. Some indicated that a person should have a desire to attend a chapel service. Some indicated that as Christians they should make others want to come but that they could not force anyone to come. One person said they did not perceive Tusculum to be a Christian college anyway and that people forced to come would often rebel. One student went as far as to say that "forced religion stinks in God's nostrils." A few students indicated that required chapel would at least bring the college together in a spirit of unity.

In response to item twenty which dealt with the matter of requiring students to attend church there were also many negative responses. Most students indicated that

God gives man the right to choose. Others said a person who was a dedicated Christian would attend church anyway. Others stated that requiring students to attend a church while they were at Tusculum might "turn more people off than on."

Item twenty-one which dealt with whether there should be a visible and active Christian Association at Tusculum brought a variety of responses. Some indicated that "for those who want it, it's great!" Others were more restrictive and mentioned that fundamentalism should not rule the campus. Some near the other end of the spectrum indicated that such an association would open doors to get people involved in Christian activities and expose them to Christ. Still others expressed indifference saying that students had a right to belong to such organizations but that it mattered little to them.

With regard to item twenty-two which asked if Tusculum should provide a religious life program, several students indicated that they simply did not have time to get involved in more activities. Some felt it should be optional. Others cautioned about creeping fundamentalism on the campus. Still others indicated that it would only stand to reason that a church-related college should have a strong religious life program because it was the foundation of such a school and the administration should be entirely dedicated to advancing religion.

In response to item twenty-three which inquired

about voluntary worship experiences on campus, students on the whole felt this was needed. They felt that it was especially needed for students from out-of-state who have no home church in Greeneville. Some indicated that such opportunities would provide students and faculty alike with guidance for daily living. Some indicated that on-campus worship would be convenient for those who lacked transportation to get into town. Some indicated it would give those preparing to go to a seminary an opportunity to lead worship and get some good experience.

Responses by students to question twenty-four concerning the opening of classes in religious studies with prayer were for the most part very positive. One student said that a prayer before class would put her more at ease. One went so far as to say that the class had to occasionally remind the religion professor to offer a prayer before the instruction began. Some felt this practice was acceptable but that if any students objected to prayer then it should not be given in that class. Several students indicated that each class should decide for themselves if a prayer was needed or appropriate. One person said that they knew others received comfort from such an act, especially on the day an examination was given.

In response to whether more on-campus worship experiences were needed at the college as asked in item twenty-seven, students again were overwhelmingly positive. One person said that to meet their needs more worship was

needed perhaps even on a daily basis. Some indicated that there was a definite need for Sunday Services on campus. Others indicated that only a few would attend and such services would receive little attention. A few students indicated that such services needed to be aimed at a broader range of people. A few students indicated that Vespers once a week might work.

Item twenty-eight which asked if students felt more religious activities needed to be on campus, brought several comments. Several students indicated that there was a definite lack of religious activities on campus. Some indicated that very few would attend. Others felt that any religious oriented programs should be planned by students. Others pointed to the need for Christian concerts, prayer groups, Bible study groups, and religiously oriented retreats on and off campus.

Except for item nineteen concerning the desirability of required chapel on campus, all the other items having to do with religious life programs indicated a high interest in religious activity on and off campus. The fact that students did not indicate an interest in required chapel on item nineteen, however, did not indicate that they were not interested in attending chapel on a voluntary basis. Table 5 covers questions twenty-five through thirty-three which concern social, moral and academic issues. No significant differences between freshmen and sophomores were found on these items.

Table 2

Results of Student Religious Beliefs
and Spiritual Values Questionnaire
(Doctrinal-Biblical Beliefs)

| | Freshmen | Sophomores | Total |
|--|----------|------------|-------|
| 1. Do you believe in the existence of a deity? | | | |
| YES | 43 | 42 | 85 |
| NO | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 2. Do you believe in a physical or spiritual heaven? | | | |
| YES | 40 | 36 | 76 |
| NO | 3 | 6 | 9 |
| 3. Do you believe in a physical or spiritual hell? | | | |
| YES | 39 | 36 | 75 |
| NO | 4 | 7 | 11 |
| 4. Do you receive consolation from God when troubled? | | | |
| YES | 36 | 35 | 71 |
| NO | 8 | 8 | 16 |
| 5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior/Redeemer? | | | |
| YES | 40 | 37 | 77 |
| NO | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| 6. Have you had a life-changing religious experience? | | | |
| YES | 24 | 26 | 50 |
| NO | 18 | 17 | 35 |
| 7. Do you believe in life after death? | | | |
| YES | 38 | 37 | 75 |
| NO | 4 | 13 | 13 |
| 8. Do you believe the Bible to be the primary source of religious authority? | | | |
| YES | 38 | 35 | 73 |
| NO | 6 | 7 | 13 |
| 9. Do you believe the Ten Commandments should be followed? | | | |
| YES | 38 | 37 | 75 |
| NO | 5 | 9 | 14 |

Table 3

Results of Student Religious Beliefs
and Spiritual Values Questionnaire
(Religious Practices-Values)

| | Freshmen | Sophomores | Total |
|--|----------|------------|-------|
| 10. Are you a member of a church? | | | |
| YES | 37 | 31 | 68 |
| NO | 6 | 12 | 18 |
| 11. Do you contribute time, talent and finances to your church? | | | |
| YES | 27 | 28 | 55 |
| NO | 16 | 15 | 31 |
| 12. Do you read the Bible regularly? | | | |
| YES | 16 | 15 | 31 |
| NO | 18 | 27 | 55 |
| 13. Do you attend worship services regularly? | | | |
| YES | 28 | 20 | 48 |
| NO | 16 | 21 | 37 |
| 14. Do you believe the creation of the world was divinely ordered? | | | |
| YES | 32 | 33 | 65 |
| NO | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| 15. Is it wrong to engage in pre-marital sex? | | | |
| YES | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| NO | 17 | 17 | 34 |
| 16. Is it wrong to engage in homosexual activities? | | | |
| YES | 29 | 36 | 65 |
| NO | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| 17. Should children be exposed to religious education? | | | |
| YES | 35 | 37 | 72 |
| NO | 7 | 6 | 13 |

Table 4

Results of Student Religious Beliefs
and Spiritual Values Questionnaire
(On-Campus Religious Involvement)

| | Freshmen | Sophomores | Total |
|---|----------|------------|-------|
| 18. Has your religious involvement increased since you came to college? | | | |
| YES | 23 | 12 | 35 |
| NO | 21 | 30 | 51 |
| 19. Should Tusculum require Chapel? | | | |
| YES | 14 | 6 | 20 |
| NO | 29 | 36 | 65 |
| 20. Should Tusculum require Chapel attendance? | | | |
| YES | 10 | 7 | 17 |
| NO | 33 | 35 | 68 |
| 21. Should there be an active Student Christian Association here? | | | |
| YES | 33 | 32 | 65 |
| NO | 11 | 10 | 21 |
| 22. Should a religious-life program be provided at Tusculum? | | | |
| YES | 28 | 31 | 59 |
| NO | 14 | 12 | 26 |
| 23. Should on-campus worship experiences be provided? | | | |
| YES | 33 | 32 | 65 |
| NO | 11 | 8 | 19 |
| 24. Should religious studies classes begin with a prayer? | | | |
| YES | 31 | 29 | 60 |
| NO | 12 | 8 | 20 |

* All items in this table were subjected to a content analysis (See Results Section).

Table 5

Results of Student Religious Beliefs
and Spiritual Values Questionnaire
(Social, Moral and Academic Issues)

| | Freshmen | Sophomores | Total |
|--|----------|------------|-------|
| 25. Is abortion a moral issue? | | | |
| YES | 33 | 33 | 66 |
| NO | 10 | 8 | 18 |
| 26. Does capital punishment require a religious consideration? | | | |
| YES | 22 | 23 | 45 |
| NO | 22 | 20 | 42 |
| 27. Are more on-campus worship services needed on campus? | | | |
| YES | 25 | 23 | 48 |
| NO | 18 | 20 | 38 |
| 28. Are more religious activities needed at Tusculum? | | | |
| YES | 25 | 21 | 46 |
| NO | 19 | 22 | 41 |
| 29. Is the nuclear freeze a religious issue? | | | |
| YES | 8 | 4 | 12 |
| NO | 36 | 39 | 75 |
| 30. Is hunger a religious/moral issue? | | | |
| YES | 30 | 24 | 54 |
| NO | 14 | 19 | 33 |
| 31. Is poverty a religious/moral issue? | | | |
| YES | 28 | 27 | 55 |
| NO | 16 | 27 | 32 |
| 32. Should religious studies be part of the CORE? | | | |
| YES | 24 | 28 | 52 |
| NO | 20 | 15 | 35 |
| 33. Should Tusculum students be required to take more than one religious studies course? | | | |
| YES | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| NO | 41 | 39 | 70 |

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the study did not reveal that there was any significant difference between freshmen and sophomores in terms of religious beliefs and spiritual values at Tusculum College no implications were made to suggest that students at Tusculum College become dissatisfied with religious life, whether personal or corporate, at any particular point during their first two years on campus. The fact, however, that students responding to the survey were of a high religious orientation did imply that they were interested in attending and perhaps remaining at a religiously-oriented college. The fact that seventy-four percent of the freshman class did return in the Fall of 1985 and that sixty-eight percent of the sophomore class returned may indicate that students still have faith in the college and that their spiritual needs and interests can be met at Tusculum. Students enrolled in the freshman and sophomore classes during the Spring of 1985 may, in fact, want more of a religious emphasis at the college.

It was recommended therefore, to the Board of Trustees and the Administration of the college that the Religious Life Program of the college be given more emphasis and that more of the college's budget be devoted to the strengthening of a Religious Life Program. It was recommended that the position of Campus Pastor be changed from a

part-time position to a full-time position. It was also recommended that the Synod of the South and the Presbytery of Holston, the two supporting agencies of the Presbyterian Church responsible for Tusculum College, contribute more funds to the campus ministry program of the school.

A recommendation was made to the President and to the Dean of the Faculty requesting that additional faculty be sought to teach in the Religious Studies Department. There has only been one part-time professor in this discipline of the Humanities Division.

Another recommendation to the Director of Admissions was that more effort be put into marketing the college as a religiously oriented school. Statements from the Campus Pastor, and students involved in religious life should be included in the college's new viewbook.

A recommendation to the Dean of Students was made that more funds from the Student Government Association be devoted to religiously-oriented films, concerts, guest speakers and programs. It was also suggested that the Student Christian Association be given more funds to operate their program on campus.

It was recommended to the Director of Development that more grants be written to support religious activities on campus. It was further recommended that the position of the Campus Pastor be endowed through funds from a foundation concerned with the development of religious values within academic communities.

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APPENDIX A

Religious Beliefs and Spiritual Attitudes
QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle YES or NO to the following questions.

1. Do you believe in the existence of a Deity (God, Supreme Being?) YES NO
2. Do you believe that there exists a physical or spiritual heaven? YES NO
3. Do you believe that there exists a physical or spiritual hell? YES NO
4. Do you receive consolation from faith in God when you are troubled? YES NO
5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Redeemer? YES NO
6. Have you had a meaningful religious experience that has been life-changing? YES NO
7. Do you believe in life after death? YES NO
8. Do you believe the Bible to be the primary source of religious authority? YES NO
9. Do you believe the Ten Commandments should still be followed? YES NO
10. Are you a member of a church or religious society? YES NO
11. Do you contribute in terms of time, talent or finances to the religious group to which you belong? YES NO
12. Do you read from the Bible regularly? YES NO
13. Do you attend worship services on a regular basis? YES NO
14. Do you believe the creation of the world was divinely ordered? YES NO
15. Do you believe that it is wrong to engage in premarital sexual relations? YES NO
16. Do you believe that it is wrong to indulge in homosexual activities? YES NO
17. Do you believe that children should be exposed to religious education? YES NO

18. Has your religious involvement increased since you came to Tusculum College? YES NO
19. Do you feel this college should require chapel attendance? YES NO
20. Do you feel this college should require church attendance? YES NO
21. Do you feel that there should be a visible and active Student Christian Association on this campus? YES NO
22. Do you think that a church-related college such as Tusculum should provide a religious life program? YES NO
23. Do you believe that on-campus worship experiences should be provided? YES NO
24. Do you believe that religious studies classes should be opened with prayer? YES NO
25. Do you think that the issue of abortion should include moral considerations? YES NO
26. Do you think that the issue of capital punishment requires religious considerations? YES NO
27. Do you feel that more on-campus worship services are needed at Tusculum? YES NO
28. Do you feel that more religious activities are needed at Tusculum? YES NO
29. Do you believe that the Nuclear Freeze is basically a religious issue? YES NO
30. Do you believe that hunger is a religious or moral issue? YES NO
31. Do you believe that poverty is a religious or moral issue? YES NO
32. Do you think that requiring a religious studies course as part of the CORE at Tusculum is appropriate? YES NO
33. Should Tusculum students be required to take more than one religious studies course? YES NO

Please indicate whether you are
Freshman Sophomore

tusculum college

1985

Office of the Dean of the Chapel

April 15, 1985

Dear Student,

I am conducting a survey on religious beliefs and spiritual attitudes among freshmen and sophomores presently enrolled here at the college. The results of the survey will be used to determine if more religiously oriented programs are needed on our campus.

I would appreciate your participation in this survey. In addition to your yes and no responses to each of the items I would also like to have your written comments especially to items 19-24 and 27-28.

It is not necessary to indicate your name anywhere on the questionnaire but please do indicate on the last item if you are a freshman or sophomore. I am going to make a comparison of the two classes to see if there are any significant differences.

When you complete the questionnaire please return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. No stamps are necessary since it may go through campus mail.

I will be happy to make available to you the results of the study when the data is compiled. This survey is also a part of my doctoral research and will be evaluated by Nova University.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Steve Weisz
 Stephen R. Weisz
 Campus Pastor