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## Student Conduct Codes at Religious Affiliated Institutions: Fostering Growth

Emily Longshore  
*University of South Carolina - Columbia*

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# **Student Conduct Codes at Religious Affiliated Institutions: Fostering Growth**

by

Emily Longshore

Bachelor of Arts  
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Accepted by:

Julie Rotholz, Director of Thesis

Christian Anderson, Reader

Lacy Ford, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this work to my Heavenly Father for giving me the ability to write and the focus to finish - for He is worthy of all praise - and to my earthly mother and father for their unwavering love and support.

## **Acknowledgments**

Many thanks to Julie Rotholz for her constant support and for answering all of my questions; her help throughout this process was invaluable.

Thanks also to Christian Anderson, who never ceases to amaze me with the wealth of information he possesses; he was always quick to share his thoughts and provide sources of information.

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Finally, a very special thanks to Cara Sullivan, who was brave enough to read my entire work, provide meaningful feedback, listen to me when I was stressed, and help me with a mock defense. Cara, thank you for your patience and your steadfast belief in my abilities.

## **Abstract**

The following study focuses on student conduct codes at two religiously affiliated universities in the southeastern portion of the United States (El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University) and the extent to which these codes foster whole student development.

In order to develop a well-formed understanding of this topic, the background information contains a brief summary of the historical beginnings of the colonial college in America and an explanation of the role codes of conduct have played in higher education over the years, including relevant disciplinary theories and findings from previous studies.

Finally, my own findings gleaned from school histories, mission statements, handbook overviews, and interview data are expressed and analyzed. These findings inform the concluding remarks regarding the hegemonic questions: Do the student codes of conduct at the two religiously affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States foster the growth and development of the whole student? Why or why not?

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

Since their beginning, colleges and universities have had a hand in shaping the character of their students. In the early years, this often manifested itself in the form of restrictive rules wherein the college acted as a paternal disciplinarian. The majority of early colleges were founded on Christian values, which influenced all other aspects of their governance and treatment of students, but even during periods when students were subject to more restrictions, the goal was to properly educate the whole student. Colleges have never sought to affect just intellect, but have always assumed the purpose of developing all dimensions of the student in order that they may become a well-rounded, whole person. Colonial colleges aspired to the task of fostering the growth of students academically, intellectually, morally, and religiously. Even today, institutions of higher learning believe themselves to have a positive effect on student growth, and “This belief, as expressed by Bowen (1977), assumes that academic ‘environments [are] calculated to bring about desired change in people’ and that colleges are ‘places of stirring, catalysts to help people find their unique ways’ ” (Wolf-Wendel as quoted by Bowen, 1999, pg. 15). This goal of bringing about positive change in the lives of students has not changed, but the methods and reasoning behind it have shifted over the years as many colleges and universities have transitioned from religious foundations to a more secular outlook on the institution’s role in student development.



This study will focus on how student codes of conduct at two religious universities affect the development of the whole student. This research is significant because it is important to explore the validity and usefulness of student conduct codes, and this study provides a look through a (perhaps) lesser-known lense of student development where spiritual development is central. Therefore, I have chosen two religiously affiliated universities in the southeastern portion of the United States and their student codes of conduct as the objects of my study. The following overarching questions must be answered: Do the student codes of conduct at the two religiously affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States foster the growth and development of the whole student? Why or why not?

Several assumptions will be made during the course of this study. To name a few, the student codes of conduct at the institutions I have chosen will be assumed to be fair and just, because this is a basic requirement for all codes of conduct. It will also be assumed that the religious values of the institutions will be infused into their codes, and it is obvious that the interviewees may give biased opinions. Other terms requiring definition and other assumptions being made will be explained as they appear.

Since I am researching student codes of conduct at two religiously affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States, I intend to begin my search by laying out a brief history of how institutions were originally founded on Biblical doctrines but gradually moved away from their religiously-infused doctrine towards the scientific. This will lay the groundwork for a discussion about schools that are still religiously affiliated and the extent to which they infuse religion into their mission and codes of conduct. This will illuminate the lesser-known picture of religiously-infused

codes of conduct in the modern college and university, and it will help to define the relationship that exists between each school's mission and its code of conduct.

In addition to thoroughly comparing each school's student conduct code, I interviewed the Dean of Student Affairs and current students (juniors and/or seniors) at each institution. I wanted to discover how members of the administration see their student conduct code as facilitating the growth of their students. How does their code of conduct enable and enhance the development of the whole student and why? Current students should be able to reflect on the degree to which the student conduct code at their institution has had a positive or negative effect on their growth.

Finally, it is necessary to briefly mention my personal beliefs and values and how they influenced me to take a particular interest in this topic. Growing up in a Christian home that espoused Christ-like behavior, I accepted Christ as my Savior and followed Biblical teachings (much like the ones found in the student conduct codes at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University) at a young age. Thus, I commenced work on this paper with a clear understanding of and agreement with many of the beliefs practiced at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. I would be remiss in saying that my personal beliefs in no way influenced my interest in this research topic. Because of my upbringing, I am intrigued by those who hold similar beliefs and carry them out in the university setting. These are potential biases of which the reader should be aware upfront. In order to guard against these biases in my research, I relayed all interview data accurately. Meaning, what my interviewees said is what I typed. There is some paraphrasing, but I tried to use as many direct quotes as possible. Furthermore, I have also employed the use of a particular secular student development theory to help in

analyzing the results of the data. All of these precautions give the reader as accurate and unbiased picture as possible.

In her book, *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual Transformation and the Marginalization of Morality*, Reuben (1996) points out that many educated nineteenth century Americans believed in the “unity of truth.” This belief included assumptions that all truths agreed and that knowledge had a moral dimension (Reuben, 1996). Following this deeply-rooted train of thought, early educators saw the pursuit of knowledge for the purpose of illuminating the Divine as a religious obligation. Therefore, many early American colleges were founded on Biblical principles, allowing religious concerns to determine the structure of higher education. Thus, it is no surprise that these colleges took on the role of moral disciplinarian, creating student regulations that they assumed would most fully develop students’ “whole intellectual, sensitive, moral and religious nature” (Reuben, 1996, pg. 23).

Today, institutions of higher learning have, for the most part, relinquished their role as paternal disciplinarians and instead realized the benefit of allowing students to govern themselves. As Harvard’s past president, Charles Eliot, once said, ““The moral purpose of a university’s policy should be to train young men to self-control and self-reliance through liberty”” (Christensen, 1972, pg. 5). This does not mean that colleges have given up all aspects of regulation; student codes of conduct are still written and adhered to, but they are less likely to legislate each decision a student makes. While colleges and universities have largely bought into the idea that students should be allowed self-governance, studies have shown there are still a few outlier institutions that continue to strictly regulate the actions and freedoms of their students (Christensen,

1972). These types of schools tend to be smaller private colleges and religious colleges. Many religiously affiliated colleges remain true to a conservative interpretation of the Christian beliefs upon which they were founded, and if these foundational belief systems are upheld across the board, they influence all other institutional policies that are created, including student codes of conduct.

Codes of conduct have long been a part of life for working professionals, students, and many other members of civil society. According to Gilman (2005), codes of conduct can also be referred to as codes of behavior, and they are created for the primary purpose of guiding behavior. The effectiveness or impact of a code is measured by how it affects behavior, positively or negatively. One might ask why codes are even necessary; do people really need a written code in order to act as “good” citizens? Perhaps not, but as Gilman quoted from James Madison, “‘If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary’” (Gilman, 2005, pg. 7). Men are not angels; thus, the existence of codes in everyday life is necessary to guide behavior in some instances. At the very least, codes of behavior may produce a sense of hesitation to commit wrong acts if people think that others are keenly aware of what is considered wrong. Of course, no matter how many codes are in place and how severely they are enforced, no codes can make a truly bad person good (Gilman, 2005).

No matter the location, codes of conduct generally reflect the core principles and values of the institution they serve. In higher education, this would mean that student codes of conduct mimic the values present in the college or university's mission statement and core beliefs. J.J. Bach (2003), writer of *Students Have Rights Too: The Drafting of*

*Student Conduct Codes*, explains that student codes of conduct have a twofold purpose in the realm of higher education: “(1) to guide student behavior and (2) to establish procedural mechanisms that safeguard the rights of students accused of conduct that violates a campus code” (Bach, 2003, pg. 2).

Student codes of conduct generally include language that justifies the existence of the regulations found therein. According to a study done by Christensen (1972) on the design and significance of student conduct codes, reasons for code justification fall into three main categories: “The opportunity of all members of the university committee to attain their educational objectives, the generation and maintenance of an intellectual and educational atmosphere throughout the university community, and protection of health, safety, welfare, property, and human rights of all members of the university community, and the safety and property of the university itself” (Christensen, 1972, pg. 9).

Christensen also notes several recurring trends in the language and development of student conduct codes. He says that the legal authority for colleges and universities to develop codes of conduct is usually given to them by the state legislature (Christensen, 1972).

In many cases, should a student violate the college or university's code, “due process is not required in campus hearings and courts must yield to the ‘educational’ and ‘developmental’ mission of the institution” (Bach, 2003, pg. 2). “Whatever they [code developers] feel is best for the institution and students can be enacted into regulations, so long as the rules do not violate civil law” (Christensen, 1972, pg. 9). Thus, codes of conduct appear to be an important mechanism for fostering growth employed by modern-day colleges and universities. To a certain extent, these codes of conduct must impact the

development of the students who are contractually bound to uphold them. In particular, student codes of conduct that are still infused with religious principles ought to have an effect (positive or negative) on student development.

According to the article *Shaping Character: Moral Education in the Christian College*, education, in its most basic form, is the transmission of values, and the transmission of moral values infiltrates every part of a student's education at a religious college or university (Holmes, 1991). For a Christian college, there is a holistic integration of faith and learning in all things in order to promote a Christian worldview through-and-through (Holmes, 1991).

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

The exploration of relevant literature in this section will provide historical background on the religious foundations of colonial colleges and the eventual shift towards a more scientific approach to the appropriation of knowledge. This will lead into a discussion about the general purpose and formation of codes of conduct and their use in the realm of higher education, both historically and currently as a mechanism by which to encourage the development of the whole student. The literature review will be concluded by the recapping of a study done at two Christian liberal arts institutions on the reasons for student behavior codes.

#### **Historical Beginnings of Colonial Colleges**

The “unity of truth:” This phrase was generally understood by educators during the early years of the colonial colleges as having two important implications for their role as teachers of truth. “First, it supposed that all truths agreed and ultimately could be related to one another in a single system. Second, it assumed that knowledge had a moral dimension. To know the ‘true,’ according to this ideal, was to know the ‘good’ ” (Reuben, 1996, pg. 17). Viewing the pursuit of knowledge as a religious obligation, early American instructors saw the ultimate role of seeking knowledge as illuminating the Divine, while recognizing their limited capacity for understanding (Reuben, 1996). At this point in history, the primary sources used for guidance in the pursuit of knowledge

were the Scriptures and God's creation (Reuben, 1996).

The popular approach to learning at this time was influenced by ideas from the French philosopher, Peter Ramus. Ramus suggested that all fields of learning began with the dialectic, or the art of rational thought, which was not linear, but circular with God occupying the center of all knowledge (Reuben, 1996). This sort of God-centered thinking about a liberal arts education was soon to be challenged and replaced by a model created by Samuel Johnson (17th century). Johnson replaced the Ramist notion of the liberal arts with his own "general View of the whole System of Learning" (Reuben, 1996, pg. 18). Johnson's modified classification of the arts broke down all knowledge into three categories: rational, natural, and moral philosophy (Reuben, 1996). This new classification managed to maintain many aspects of the ideal of the "unity of truth," but certainly paved the way for shifting the focus of higher education in the future.

The early American college was modeled after the administration's ideal of the unity of truth. "They saw the primary purpose of college as 'educating young men to the highest efficiency of their intellectual faculties, and the noblest culture of their moral and religious nature.' Religious concerns determined the structure of higher education" (Reuben, 1996, pp. 21-22). These colleges were often subject to the beliefs of a particular religious denomination, and it was common for the faculty members and president of the college to be ministers. Teachers were expected to infuse religious doctrine into all of the subjects they taught; everything was to be tied together in a Christian framework. (Reuben, 1996). Even in these early days, educators worked towards the goal of developing the student's whole nature. This meant students would be trained in the faculties of observation, memory, logical reasoning, aesthetic taste, and moral sense



(Reuben, 1996). In addition to training the faculties, students were expected to cover all branches of knowledge in their studies; they were to complete a comprehensive education that examined everything from history to chemistry to political economy (Reuben, 1996).

Eventually, the development of a “common-sense” philosophy fostered the belief that valid knowledge could be derived via empirical methods of study (Reuben, 1996). A “common-sense” epistemology supported the idea that knowledge could be derived from more than Scripture and God’s creation; learning could occur by simply observing human nature and by experiencing the surrounding objective world (Reuben, 1996). Slowly, this idea of using objectively-observed patterns of human behavior to form a moral philosophy evolved into acceptance of the study of the scientific in higher education.

By the 1870’s, many critics complained that higher education still relied too heavily on the spiritual, and this reliance on the spiritual stifled the college’s ability to effectively teach and appreciate the scientific. “A growing contingent of educators and scholars charged that colleges’ efforts to combine spiritual, moral, and intellectual training slighted the last component. Colleges, these critics asserted, suppressed intellectual inquiry” (Reuben, 1996, pg. 23).

For a time, educators considered creating separate schools for the study of sciences and technical fields, but creating separate schools for more objective fields of study was not the best answer. Many thought it was best to create schools that encompassed all branches of study, and these new branches of study could (and perhaps should) be incorporated into the already existing classical colleges and universities. The interest in practical education was further reflected in the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862. Many felt that the shortcomings of college education were to blame for America’s

low position in the sciences. Commentators believed that continued religious concerns overshadowed the needs of intellectual inquiry. Denominational control of the colleges hurt science education (Reuben, 1996). Chemist Frank W. Clarke “blamed the proliferation of underfunded schools on sectarian rivalry and an improper balance between the various aims of education” (Reuben, 1996, pg. 29). Clarke noted, ““If there were such things as Presbyterian mathematics, Baptist chemistry, Episcopalian classics, and Methodist geology, such a scattering of educational forces would be pardonable: but, as matters really stand, it is a nuisance for which no valid excuse can be found”” (Reuben, 1996, pp. 29-30). In order to move forward in the pursuit of science, colleges needed to repair the imbalance between the intent of religion and the needs of science.

Heated debates between theologians and scientists continued for years and still continue to this day. However, as the previous paragraphs have pointed out, the aims of education have changed since colonial America. Colonial colleges relied heavily on Scripture and spiritual revelation, but time brought a change in the college curriculum and its aim to morally educate its students. Though colleges still seek to educate the whole student, the methods of achieving this goal have shifted, at least in the realm of secular higher education. Some colleges and universities, particularly ones tied to a religious affiliation, still resemble the colleges of old in their ways of regulating student behavior and their God-centered teachings.

### **General Codes of Conduct**

The word “code” in “code of conduct” is not synonymous with the word “law.” While codes of conduct do prescribe specific behaviors and prohibit others, codes of conduct are generally written in broad language that lacks specific legal jargon and

delineation of exact consequences. Codes of conduct are more than mere text. According to Gilman (2005), codes should reflect the values and principles of the institution for which they are created. In order to explain the difference between values and principles, Gilman (2005) relies on the 18th century writer Jeremy Bentham. Bentham defined a principle as “‘a general law or rule that guides behaviour or decisions,’ whereas values articulate ‘an aspiration of an ideal moral state’” (Gilman, 2005, pg. 10). Effective codes of conduct generally operate on two levels, the symbolic and the institutional. At the institutional level, codes create boundaries and expectations for behavior. Symbolically, codes represent the ideal worker (student, person, etc.) one would like to become and would like to see others become (Gilman, 2005). Thus, codes that are successful often prescribe high standards to which individuals aspire.

According to Gilman (2005), codes of conduct can also be referred to as codes of behavior, and they are designed to anticipate and prevent specific types of behavior. For this reason, codes of conduct often tend to be rather lengthy and proscriptive rather than prescriptive. Codes often focus on the “do not” rather than affirmatives. In general, codes are not developed for “bad” people; rather, they are put into place for those who wish to act ethically (Gilman, 2005). In some cases, codes can have a positive effect on influencing behavior. If one feels that everyone knows the code and is working to adhere to it, this can create hesitancy to commit acts in violation of the code. However, no matter how strictly a code of behavior is enforced, it can never make a truly bad person good (Gilman, 2005).

When working properly, codes are a healthy part of life. However, codes often fail for a number of reasons. Many times, codes fail because they raise unrealistic

expectations or because they try to control too much and make it impossible for one to do a job efficiently while also abiding by the code of conduct (Gilman, 2005). Once the kinks have been worked out and there is a proper balance between prescriptive and proscriptive behaviors, codes generally do not change much over time because behavior does not tend to change over time. The means of acting out certain behaviors may change, but the behavior itself remains constant. For instance, Gilman (2005) noted that an 1829 code of conduct for postal workers talked about such things as not using free time for personal activities such as reading and not stealing company property such as quills and ink. Today, the behaviors are the same - using company time for personal activities and stealing company property - but the code might instead prohibit spending free time on the Internet and not stealing the company's computer, copier, etc.

Codes of conduct/behavior create high standards of civic expectations, and the creation of such documents encourages people to strive for excellence as envisioned in the code. Codes of conduct can be tailored for specific professions, organizations, and institutions. For the purposes of this study, the focus will be on student codes of conduct at religious colleges and universities. The previous paragraphs gave an overview of the purpose of codes, in general. The ensuing paragraphs will look more closely at codes of conduct in the world of academia.

### **Codes of Conduct in Higher Education**

Codes of conduct in higher education can often be seen as a list of rules for students to follow. However, in addition to providing guidelines for best practices of behavior, student codes of conduct also protect attendees of a college or university from the rather autonomous and ambiguous roles of many members of the administration

(Braxton, 2012). Codes of conduct can help shape the way members of a college or university view their roles as responsible citizens of an academic community. Furthermore, “Codes of conduct play an important role in the social control of wrongdoing through deterrence, detection, and the sanctioning of professional impropriety” (Braxton, 2012, pg. 3). Conduct codes in higher education fulfill a two-fold purpose: “(1) to guide student behavior and (2) to establish procedural mechanisms that safeguard the rights of students accused of conduct that violates a campus code” (Bach, 2003, pg. 1). In order to fully grasp an understanding of student codes of conduct in higher education, it is relevant to look at the purpose of student conduct codes both historically and currently. In looking at the historical purpose of codes, this study will rely heavily on the work of Dannells (1997) in his piece entitled *From Discipline to Development: Rethinking Student Conduct in Higher Education*.

It is beneficial to realize the different purposes student conduct codes can serve as a means of student discipline in order to foster student development. There is a difference between student discipline that is categorized as keeping law and order and student discipline that serves the purpose of educating students to specific patterns of behavior and values (Dannells, 1997). Most student codes of conduct contain elements of both law and order and education on values and appropriate behaviors, but there has been a shift in the direction of the latter in recent years. This shift in views of student discipline (student codes of conduct) will become more apparent in the following paragraphs, as a brief history of student discipline is reviewed.

*History of Student Discipline as a Mechanism for Development.* According to Dannells (1997), there is no topic that is “such a dramatic reflection of our attitudes and

assumptions about the nature of our students, our relationship to them, and our role in their development” than student discipline (pg. 14). Part of understanding the purpose of student codes of conduct and higher education's role in imposing standards of behavior as a means of student development is understanding the history of what has been done in the past. Appreciating the origins of student discipline and the way it has changed is a necessary step in understanding the current trends and future goals of student discipline in academe.

*The Colonial College.* Early American colleges were primarily established for the purpose of educating the future leaders and ministers of the colony in Scripture, letters, and manners (Dannells, 1997), and they were strictly governed by the beliefs of their founding religious denomination. Thus, moral and behavioral discipline were synonymous and standards were derived from religious doctrines. Many of the ideas expressed in this section reflect and are congruent with those mentioned in the section *Historical Beginnings of Colonial Colleges*, especially in regard to the colonists’ adherence to the “unity of truth” and the purpose of education being for the illumination of the Divine.

During this period, colleges housed boys who were the age of today’s high school students or younger. Because the college was often a significant distance from town (in order to eliminate distractions), colleges during the colonial period were empowered to act *in loco parentis*. Instructors and administrators during this time period were given the authority to act as parents of the young students placed in their charge. As stand in parents, these authority figures had a duty to not only educate young men in the liberal arts but also to train them in proper manners and all things moral. In the words of

Dannells (1997), the colonial college “required rigorous and extensive regulation of conduct” (pg. 15). Each member of the college set about the task of disciplining the young men in their care through careful shaping of moral character, rigorous academic studies, long and detailed codes of conduct, and strict scheduling. “No portion of the day was unaccounted for, and no misbehavior was too small to go unrecognized and unpunished” (Dannells, 1997, pg. 15). Consequences for breaking the rules (or code of conduct) included anything from expulsion to flogging. Often, students were demoted in rank, given extra assignments to complete, charged fines, or required to publicly confess their wrongdoing. Lenoard (1965), as quoted by Dannells (1997), recorded the following of colonial student codes of conduct:

...students were forbidden to lie, steal, curse, swear, use obscene language, play at cards or dice, get drunk, frequent inns, associate with any person of bad reputation, commit fornication, fight cocks, call each other nicknames, buy, sell, or exchange anything, or be disrespectful, or tardy, or disorderly at public worship...

Many of these regulations obviously stem from the religious beliefs that the ruling denomination would have held and expected the college to mimic. These rules also reflect the colonial colleges’ commitment to training young men in more than mere academics but also teaching them proper manners, morals, and values.

This sort of authoritarian form of governance over the students during this time period was extremely paternalistic but was perceived as appropriate by the families who sent their children away to college to be educated in all things proper. College officials were expected to uphold the community and religious standards of the time, and this

required strict governance of nearly every area of a student's life.

*The Early Federal Period.* As the states gradually adopted more democratic ideals, the old form of strictly proscribed behaviors in the college was becoming more unattractive and less effective. The old paternalistic style of student body governance clashed with the ideals of liberty the students adopted during the revolutionary period (Dannells, 1997). This clash produced many student rebellions on college campuses during this time. Records document the burning of college buildings and assaults or even deaths of instructors in response to college rulings which students felt decreased their rights (Dannells, 1997).

In line with the Collegiate Way, all colleges provided dining facilities (commons) and dormitories for their students. Students were to be monitored and regulated even when eating and inside their dormitories. Since faculty and administrative members of the college lived on campus for the most part, they were burdened with maintaining order and enforcing regulations at all times. According to Dannells (1997), “Acting *in loco parentis*, the teachers and tutors were expected to patrol the dormitories, demand entrance, inspect all rooms for violations of the myriad rules, and to generally supervise the students, while squashing the seemingly ubiquitous food riots” (pg. 17). Subject to numerous student pranks, faculty members grew to resent the constant task of keeping students in line, in addition to their classroom responsibilities. As Dannells (1997) points out, the dual responsibilities of instructors - teachers and disciplinarians - put an unnecessary strain on the instructor's relationship with his students. If students thought of instructors as their enemies, it was nearly impossible for amicable relations to develop between teacher and student (Dannells, 1997).



During the late 1700s and early 1800s, colleges began to increase in numerical size and intellectual ambitions. This trend led to the gradual withdrawal of faculty and administrators from the role of disciplinarians. During this period, the first “disciplinary specialists” positions were created, and harsh punishments became less frequent and more counseling-type approaches were used to address minor student behavior or conduct problems (Dannells, 1997). The new disciplinary specialists were able to employ the use of more democratic methods of dealing with troublesome student conduct. Though many of the early approaches may not have been entirely successful, they did pave the way for more effective methods of managing student conduct. “In what she called ‘the years of expansion’ (1812-1862), Leonard (1956) concluded that student conduct was much less violent than in earlier periods, while student-faculty relationships improved markedly” (as quoted in Dannells, 1997, pg. 18). The creation of separate roles for teachers and disciplinarians increased good-naturedness between students and faculty because it decreased the intrusiveness of the faculty's role in students’ lives. Another aspect of the decrease in student rebellions may have been due to the creation and allowance of student clubs and extracurricular activities. Activities outside of academics provided opportunities for students to unleash their passions in other avenues besides rebellion. Though extracurricular activities were not immediately adopted by college administration, their eventual acceptance most likely brought relief to school administrators who had previously dealt with severe student rebellions on a regular basis (Dannells, 1997).

*Post Civil War.* This period in the history of student discipline in higher education has been described as an era of “disciplinary enlightenment” (Dannells, 1997). Students

began to be viewed as independent agents who could take responsibility for their educational decisions and conduct. One of the most prominent leaders in this push to view students in a more positive light was Charles Eliot, Harvard's president from 1869 to 1909. In Eliot's opinion, there were three essential elements a true university college should give its students, one of those being "a system of discipline which imposes on the individual himself the main responsibility for guiding his conduct" (Dannells, 1997, pg.19). This view gradually engulfed colleges across the nation, and the old paternalistic style of governance seemed more and more out of place in light of this democratic approach to student governance. Disciplinary practices became more humane, and students were granted greater liberty to act as free agents, as emphasis was placed on student rights.

As faculty became less involved in the maintenance of student conduct, someone was needed to fill this role, but in a new way. Disciplinary specialists, known as Deans of Men/Women and later as Deans of Students, filled this role. Deans of Students were the first student personnel workers, and these types of positions were established on nearly every college campus by the early 1900s (Dannells, 1997). According to Dannells (1997),

The early deans expanded on both the philosophy and practice of student discipline. Philosophically, they were humanistic, optimistic, and idealistic. They approached discipline with the ultimate goal of student self-control or self-discipline, and they used individualized and preventative methods in an effort to foster the development of the whole student. (pg. 20)

These new methods of approaching student conduct spread to all campuses in the nation,

and the old view of collegiate governance as *in loco parentis* slowly became non-existent.

Much progress was made in fostering the idea that students are capable of conducting themselves in a manner appropriate for collegiate life and in giving students the option of self-governance. However, a discrepancy in the philosophy of the early deans and first student personnel workers eventually developed. The job of disciplining students for misconduct befell the deans; thus, deans' methods of discipline were seen by many as going against their aim of development. According to Dannells (1997), "Records of the early meetings of the deans show they spoke of their work in terms of 'character formation,' 'citizenship training,' and 'moral and ethical development,' and not in terms of punishment and control" (pg. 21). Student personnel workers tended to see their role as more of the promoter of students versus the disciplinarian of students, and early deans were often wrongly labeled "the bad guys" (Dannells, 1997). In reality, the interest of both deans of students and personnel workers was human development. It is unfortunate that any sort of schism came between these early developers of the whole student, as their goal was nearly one and the same (Dannells, 1997).

As time progressed, the GI bill brought a new type of student to campus, and strict student conduct codes often seemed unnecessary to these more mature students who had served during wartime. The surge in adult student enrollment after the passing of the GI bill has been viewed as "the calm before the storm" of the 1960s (Dannells, 1997). According to Dannells (1997), the events and changes during the 1960s dealt *in loco parentis* an apparently fatal blow. The 60s and 70s brought about a more contractual and consumerist view of the student-institution relationship. In addition to these new views about the student-institution relationship, students became more aware of their

constitutional rights and civil liberties or negative liberties.

As noted, student discipline has been an important part of the educational system since the beginning of higher education in America. In the colonial colleges, discipline was a central issue that governed all aspects of the students' lives. Enforcing regulations and upholding moral correctness complemented the colonial college's mission and the belief in the unity of truth. Perceived as constraints of liberty, student codes of conduct and the enforcement of them by faculty members often created enmity between students and professors. Rebellions were a common occurrence. Eventually, colleges began to realize the necessity of treating students as free agents, capable of self-governance. In order to create more amicable relations in the classroom between students and faculty, instructors were eventually relieved of their laborious duty as full-time disciplinarians, and this job was handed over to disciplinary specialists. These specialists morphed into Deans of Men (later Dean of Students), and after some time became what we know today as student personnel staff. Once an essential element of education, today, student discipline is not considered nearly as imperative and is often overlooked in favor of development. As Dannells wrote (1997), "Within the student personnel profession, student discipline has been a source of disagreement on such issues as 'punishment versus development' and 'process (especially legal) versus outcome (education)'" (pg. 24).

### **Disciplinary Theory**

Up to this point, much has been said concerning how student conduct codes looked over the years, but little has been mentioned about how institutions of higher learning justify their authority to regulate student conduct. There are two common views on discipline in higher education. One is "pure intellectualism," which states that the

purpose of college is purely to train the intellect without reference to the moral (Dannells, 1997). The other is the “legalistic” or “strict constructionist” view. This view regards the discipline of students as a means of protecting the educational environment (Dannells, 1997). Several theories exist that suggest from where colleges and universities obtain the authority to discipline students. The scope of the institution’s role in student discipline is outlined in the following approaches: *in loco parentis*, contract theory, educational purpose, constitutional theory, fiduciary theory and status theory.

*In loco parentis.* The phrase *in loco parentis* literally means, “in the place of a parent or instead of a parent.” Derived from early English common law, this legal doctrine has been applied to the college-student relationship in past court cases such as *Goitt v. Berea College* (1913) (Dannells, 1997). This doctrine viewed the college as a replacement parent for its students, and it was the right and duty of the college, in this role, to attend to the general welfare and conduct of the students. According to Dannells (1997), this meant the college was allowed “great latitude in the disciplinary process, and ‘permitted the institution to exert almost untrammelled authority over students’ lives’” (pg. 31). This approach was generally taken in American higher education prior to the 1960s. In the wake of new visions of student governance that valued self-governance, the *in loco parentis* model eventually took a back seat.

*Contract Theory.* This theory basically defines the students’ relationship to the college as a contractual one. Viewing students as legal adults, contract theory posits that students are consumers capable of entering into a contractual agreement with a college upon their entrance. This agreement is usually spelled out in various forms such as student handbooks, catalogs, and other publications. Students agree to abide by the institution’s

conduct rules and academic regulations when they sign their enrollment papers (Dannells, 1997). Some schools may even have a signature page in the back of the handbook, which must be turned in each semester or annually. (This will be discussed more in the *Findings* section.) Contract theory methods were once restricted for use in private institutions only. However, as students are increasingly being seen as legal adults capable of entering into contractual relationships, this theory is being used at all types of institutions (Dannells, 1997).

*Educational Purpose Theory.* Pertaining to disciplinary authority, this theory is preferred by members of institutions of higher learning, and is seen as the best method by which to justify their authority in disciplinary action. Educational purpose theory “defines the student-institutional relationship as an educational function and limits its authority to behavior that is related to the institution’s pursuit of its educational mission” (Dannells, 1997, pg. 32). By requiring colleges and universities to explicitly state how their disciplinary methods align with the core values of their mission, educational purpose theory helps protect institutions of higher learning from unwanted litigation. If such intentional language concerning the institution’s ability to exercise authority in matters of discipline exists, courts generally exercise judicial restraint in particular cases.

*Statutory Theory.* This theory refers to the granting of legal authority to the institution of higher learning to act as disciplinarian through local, state, or federal legislation (Dannells, 1997). These types of laws generally grant authority to the school at large or directly to faculty or the board of trustees. According to Dannells (1997), there are those who claim this theory provides the most practical approach to obtaining legal authority, but others note the courts limited use of this theory.

*Constitutional Theory.* Civil liberties are negative liberties or, in other words, civil liberties are the things with which those in authority (government and institutions of higher education) can not interfere. Students' liberties are to be protected in the institutional setting just as they would be outside it. Thus, constitutional theory "describes the legal limitations on public institutions' power to enact rules that affect individual liberties" (Dannells, 1997, pg.32). These limitations are expressed by the rights found in the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Finally, *fiduciary or trust theory* and *status, custom, or usage theory* are theories of disciplinary authority found in the realm of higher education. Though they are seldom used in court, they are worth briefly mentioning. Fiduciary theory assumes that the college or university is primarily responsible for maintaining a trust relationship between the institution and the student. This relationship also assumes that the institution will "act for the benefit of the student in 'all matters relevant between them'" (Dannells, 1997, pg. 33). Status theory (also referred to as custom or usage theory) views the relationship between students and the institution as one that is inherently understood and is derived from commonly understood practices and policies (Dannells, 1997).

Knowledge of these various theories of disciplinary authority is beneficial for those working in the field of higher education. An understanding of how and where colleges and universities derive their power and the various methods by which discipline is carried out is essential to a functioning student-institution relationship. This information is also relevant to the study of student codes of conduct. The language found in codes of conduct at institutions of higher education often reflects a combination of several of the aforementioned disciplinary approaches.

## **The Whole Student**

Up to this point, much has been said pertaining to the term the “whole student.” It is necessary to clearly define this concept in order to understand how student codes of conduct at religious colleges and universities affect the development of the whole student. Thus, the following paragraphs will clarify the meaning of educating and developing the whole student, as the term is used in the realm of higher education.

Since the 1600’s, American higher education has worked to bring about change in people and has assumed that it can positively affect the growth and development of its students. According to Wolf-Wendel & Ruel (1999), “It is clear that the domain of influence in American higher education has never been focused exclusively on the intellect. Rather, one of the major purposes of American higher education is to develop the whole person” (pg.35). As mentioned previously, the task of developing the whole student was originally the job of the faculty (in addition to their duties as instructors), but eventually this role shifted away from faculty members and became the responsibility of student personnel administrators. These new student affairs administrators were committed to educating the whole person. Over the years, several statements were issued to reinforce the importance of their task. The following statement was published as a revised “Student Personnel Point of View Statement” in the year 1949:

The development of students as whole persons interacting in social situations is the central concern of student personnel work..., The concept of education is broadened to include attention to the student’s well-rounded development - physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually, as well as intellectually. The student is thought of as a responsible



participant in his own development and not as a passive recipient. (Wolf-Wendel & Ruel, 1999, pg.36)

The whole student encompasses more than just the intellect. This term embodies the student as a person, including all aspects of what makes them who they are and their personal steps towards full development. Recognizing students as whole persons and helping them achieve their fullest potential in all areas of their development requires liberty and support from all members of the college or university campus.

Too often, student affairs and academic affairs act as separate (sometimes rival) members of the administration and see their goals as being different from one another. However, this is not the case. Both student affairs and academic affairs have the same goal - to fully develop the student, and both perspectives are necessary to create a well-rounded experience for the student. Collaboration between faculty and student affairs leaders must exist in order to truly educate the whole student. As Sandeen (2004) stated, “Student affairs professionals cannot expect to be real contributors to the educational program if they are not familiar with what freshman and sophomores are reading in their history, political science, and English classes, or what these same students are studying in their math classes and their science laboratories” (pg. 32). A lengthy discussion concerning collaboration between student affairs and academic affairs is not necessary for the purposes of this paper. However, it is important to note, when talking about and defining the term the whole student, that both academic leaders and student affairs leaders play an integral role in fostering and shaping the total student experience. Without both parts, students will only be encouraged towards growth in a limited number of areas rather than in all areas of their personage.

## **Behavior Codes at Christian Liberal Arts Institutions: A Previous Study**

Before I discuss my personal findings, it will be beneficial to look at a similar study by Brad A. Lau (vice president for student life at George Fox University). Lau's study, *Reasons for Student Behavior Codes: A Qualitative Study at Two Christian Liberal Arts Institutions*, was conducted in 2006, and it included opinions from administrators, faculty, and students of each school in the study. The data were gathered using questionnaires and follow-up interviews based on individual responses to certain questions.

Lau (2006) notes that both secular institutions and Christian institutions are concerned with creating behavior codes that balance individual choice with the good of the community as a whole. Codes at Christian or faith-based institutions are often more restrictive in nature - defining and regulating lifestyle choices such as student dress code and entertainment options - than those at secular institutions, but conduct codes are an important part of both types of institutions. Lau (2006) observes that Christian colleges' more restrictive nature may reflect their adherence to a somewhat *in loco parentis* philosophy. He says of Christian institutions, "These institutions are more likely than their non-faith-based counterparts to see the traditional 18-22 year old as in need of guidance. Further, there is a sense that such institutions function as extensions of the home and assume some parental roles and responsibilities" (Lau, 2006, pg. 557). The *in loco parentis* theory of discipline was mentioned previously, and it was discussed as having been the primary viewpoint of the early colonial college. Though *in loco parentis* is not as widely practiced today as it was in early years, it does still exist, primarily at faith-based institutions.

Christian institutions have coined the phrase ‘integration of faith and learning:’ “This concept of integration holds intellectual and spiritual development as equally important” (Lau, 2006, pg. 551). However, according to Lau, both types of institutions are concerned with the basic character formation of their students, and if colleges ignore the critical area of character development they are doing a disservice to their students. It should never be a question of whether or not higher education is in the business of human engineering. As Chickering (1997) stated, “Every college and university, public or private, church-related or not, is in the business of shaping human lives” (Guthrie as quoted by Lau, 2006, pg. 551). Even some secular institutions have moved towards tightening restrictions on students. “In fact, institutions such as Boston University have tightened behavior codes not ‘to promote morality’ but to improve students’ ‘quality of life’ (Thomas as quoted by Lau, 2006, pg. 552).

Lau (2006) points out the purpose of discipline in higher education (Christian education in particular) by suggesting three broad goals of disciplinary policies: the development of character, wisdom development, and goals based on the types of behavior codes.

In the process of developing character, universities (Christian ones in particular) are also promoting institutional values. The instillation of institutional values should take place as a natural part of the overall educational experience for students, and character development in relation to institutional values should spur students to ponder moral and ethical issues. Thus, colleges and universities must consider what types of students they are hoping to produce in order to best carry out this goal of discipline. Christian institutions, in particular, believe “obedience to Christ is one of the primary goals of

education. The integration of faith and experience or faith expressed through action is a central tenet of Christian higher education” (Lau, 2006, pg. 553).

A pivotal part of establishing a Christian and moral environment at faith-affiliated institutions is the concept of wisdom development. The concept of wisdom development, as defined by Guthrie (1997), suggests that “growing in wisdom consists of establishing and reestablishing connections among three interrelated processes: remembering, discerning, and exploring” (Guthrie as quoted by Lau, 2006, pg. 554). Therefore, at Christian institutions, the primary goal of wisdom development is to encourage students to grow and mature in their faith and their knowledge of God and the universe. Behavior codes that foster a value-driven learning experience stimulate moral and ethical ponderings which reinforce institutional values.

The goal of discipline or behavior codes in higher education may vary depending on the types of codes being implemented. Lau (2006) suggests four reasons codes may exist: legal, health and safety, community enhancement, and academic integrity. Many codes exist for practical legal reasons. Having such codes helps reduce litigation, and Altschuler and Kramnick (1999) “assert that this is actually the driving force behind what some argue is a return to *in loco parentis* on the part of public institutions” (Altschuler & Kramnick as quoted by Lau, 2006, pg. 554). Other codes have more to do with providing for the health and safety of the students. Such codes may include statements pertaining to the possession of weapons, illegal drug usage, pet policies, fire codes, and more. Regulations on quiet hours, residence hall conduct and visitation, and university-sponsored event protocol are all policies meant to enhance the community and quality of life. Finally, every college or university includes codes in their handbook that discourage

the practice of cheating and plagiarism. These are meant to maintain academic integrity. Thus, as noted previously, there are multiple types of codes, each one covering a slightly different aspect, but all working to maintain a healthy and learning-friendly environment for a well-rounded total student experience.

In his multisite, descriptive case study, Lau (2006) gathered a wealth of information from students, faculty, and administrators at two Christian liberal arts colleges, each composed of approximately 2,600 students. While Lau admits that the information he gleaned does not meet qualitative research standards, it does, however, provide a rich base of detailed opinions and experiences from those he interviewed. Besides using questionnaire and interview data, Lau also found a great deal of information in each school's primary vehicle for communicating behavior codes - the student handbook. Various marketing materials and websites provided additional information pertaining to the mission and purpose of each school.

The methodology and findings of Lau's study are similar to those found in this paper. While the material gathered for this study is not exhaustive enough to meet qualitative research standards, the interview data and opinions provided are detailed and worth consideration. Most, if not all, of the themes that emerged from Lau's research can also be found in the findings section of this paper. Thus, similarities in the studies and findings allude to the significance of the research.

The primary research question of Lau's study "explores the reasons why a particular institution [Christian institutions in this case] chooses to adopt a given set of behavior codes" (Lau, 2006, pg. 555). Lau saw the emergence of ten main themes behind the rationale for behavior codes at the two schools he included in his research. The

following list will state and give a very brief overview of each theme that contributed to the adoption of particular behavior codes in Lau's (2006) study:

- 1) To promote Christian distinctives and values - the behavioral expectations of each institution are derived from a thorough understanding of the Christian character and mission of respective campuses
- 2) Often a reflection of the campus ethos and dialogue - there are traditions and history that factor significantly into the selection and implementation of behavior codes (commonly denominational history)
- 3) To project a certain "image" in the community and among constituency groups
- 4) For issues of safety - living in community entails privileges, but it also mandates responsibilities of behaving in such a way as to promote the safety of others
- 5) *In loco parentis* - Christian institutions are more likely than their non-faith-based counterparts to see the traditional 18-22 year old as in need of guidance
- 6) To enhance the educational environment and aid in the integration of faith and learning - the notion of the institution as a "training camp" for character is one of the more obvious outgrowths of these foundational beliefs and principles
- 7) To promote a sense of Christian community that is evidenced in civility and respectful relationships - when students, faculty, or staff agree to join the university community, they are agreeing to give up certain rights for

the benefit of the entire group

8) To prepare a person for life after college - behavior codes ARE the real world vs. behavior codes create “culture shock” when entering the “real world”

9) To provide protection from the “world” or from the “slippery slope” - Christian institutions, especially conservative ones, tend to provide an extra hedge of protection to keep students from falling into “big” sins

10) For issues of liability and legal safeguards - federal and state regulations regarding discrimination, sexual harassment, privacy, safety and security, discipline processes, and other issues often force institutions to adopt increasingly complex and far-reaching behavior codes. (pgs. 555-559)

Each of the above themes emerged from the questionnaire responses and interview sessions Lau completed at the two Christian liberal arts institutions he included in his qualitative study. From these themes, Lau gleaned five practical principles for all institutions, whether secular or faith-based. According to Lau (2006) behavior codes should: “demonstrate a clear sense of institutional mission, purpose and ethos; reflect an understanding of educational goals; be reinforced by consensus-building activities; respect and value both personal constraint and personal freedom; and be enforced in a way that respects the perspectives and values of others” (pgs. 561-562).

In summary, Lau (2006) maintains that Christian institutions of higher education must address the spiritual and moral needs of their students in addition to stretching their minds, otherwise they are abdicating their responsibility of character development.

Christian institutions should intentionally develop codes of conduct that enhance faith development, even if this includes difficult or inconvenient dialogue. Furthermore, discipline often creates areas of crises for students, but these crises are common transition points in the character development of students. According to Lau (2006), “Part of the task of education is to create meaning and a cognitive dissonance that allows development and learning to occur. The heart and soul of a Christian education is centered on infusing standards of morality and fundamental values into the educational and ‘meaning-making’ process” (pg. 563). Thoughtfully-designed behavior codes that are flexible and mirror the institutional mission work to the school’s advantage. Well-designed behavior codes are an asset, not a liability.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

Operating within theories of authority to discipline and whole student development, this study seeks to analyze student codes of conduct at two religiously-affiliated universities in the southeastern portion of the United States and determine the effect the codes have on the development of the whole student. This research is significant because it is important to explore the validity and usefulness of student codes of conduct, and this study provides a look through a lesser known lense of student development where spiritual development is central to the growth of the whole student. Codes of conduct (in this case codes that are infused with religious principles) ought to have an effect on student development. This study will seek to understand what this effect is and how it is interpreted by members of school administration and by the students who are contractually bound to uphold the codes adopted by their particular institution.

#### **Sites of Study (Locations)**

I chose two religiously affiliated universities in the southeastern portion of the United States and their student codes of conduct as the primary subjects of analysis for my study. Since this study primarily seeks to analyze codes of conduct that contain infused religious principles, the schools used in this study were chosen based on their religious affiliations. More general information about the individual schools, their

founding, mission, and purpose can be found in the opening of the fourth chapter on findings. In order to maintain confidentiality, the schools mentioned above will not be referred to by their real names. Instead, they will be referred to as El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. The only individuals besides myself who know the real names of the universities whose student codes of conduct are being analyzed are my two thesis readers.

### **Participants**

Participants in this study consist of members of administration (titles vary depending on the institution) and students (juniors or seniors only). A generic e-mail was sent to each institution, letting them know the basic premise of my study and my intention to interview several members of the campus community. Attached to each e-mail was a copy of the potential interview questions and informed consent document. A copy of these documents and the initial e-mail can be viewed in the Appendices (pgs. 105-107). After initial contact was made and permission to interview members on each campus was granted, a date was set for me to travel to the universities and meet with each individual in person. In some instances, the students I interviewed were chosen for me by members of the administration at each institution. However, in other instances, I was able to make direct contact with students with whom I had established previous relationships prior to this study. Initial contact, in each case, was via e-mail. Personal phone numbers were only exchanged if the participant volunteered this information without any prompting from the interviewer. There were some students who preferred this method of communication, and the sharing of their personal contact information was entirely voluntary.

I chose to interview Deans of Student Affairs because I wanted to find out if and how members of the administration perceive their student codes of conduct to be facilitating growth amongst students. I also felt that these members of the administration could help describe how their codes of conduct enable and enhance the development of the whole student and why. Obviously, by interviewing these members of the administration, the potential existed for me to receive contrived answers to my questions. At the same time, the answers could be genuinely insightful. Either way, the opinions of these individuals were helpful in analyzing the usefulness of the student codes of conduct.

Choosing to interview only students who were either juniors or seniors was a conscious decision that was made early in the process. I felt that students who had been enrolled in a particular institution and subjected to their codes of conduct for at least two or more years would have had adequate time to analyze and reflect on how abiding by the codes of conduct had affected them as students. Thus, the only requirements I had for which population of students to interview were that they be either a junior or senior and that they be willing to share.

## **Interviews**

After the initial contacts were made and interview times were set up, I traveled to each institution to meet with the volunteer interviewees. Because each person had received a copy of the prompting questions, most participants came to the interview session having already thought about the answers they would give. However, the format of the interview was not restricted to the initial prompts. The questions provided to the interviewees were meant to spark thoughts that would lead to follow-up questions and

answers as was necessary and appropriate for each person. Therefore, there was not a strict interview format.

Each person was allowed one hour of time to discuss their response to the prompts. Before the interview began, I verbally relayed the basic purpose of my study and the elements of the informed consent document. (The informed consent document can be viewed in Appendix D, pg. 107.) The participant was encouraged to ask any questions they had about how the information they provided would be used, and I provided my contact information for any questions they might have in the future. All participants were made aware of the fact that the interview was being recorded for purposes of retaining clarity, and each person was informed that if they were uncomfortable with being recorded, the recording device could be turned off at any time.

The following questions were used as prompts during each in-person interview:

Questions for Dean of Student Affairs and Conduct Officers:

- 1) Tell me a bit about yourself and what drew you to work at El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University.
- 2) College is often a time when students grow and change a great deal. In your opinion, what type of development does El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University hope to foster?
- 3) Tell me about the formulation of your student conduct codes.
  - Did you have a hand in crafting those policies?
  - In your opinion, what is the purpose of El Shaddai University's/Cornerstone University's code?
- 4) Much of the professional literature in College Student Personnel stresses the development of the whole student. What does this phrase mean to you?
  - What role, if any, do you think El Shaddai University's/Cornerstone University's code of conduct has in fostering this type of development?

- In your opinion and based on your experience with students here, what role does the student code of conduct play in shaping students' experiences?
- Can you give me some examples or **tell me some stories** about how students grow from El Shaddai University's/Cornerstone University's conduct policies?

#### Questions for Students:

- 1) What does the phrase “developing the whole student” mean to you?
- 2) Why do you think your institution has student conduct codes?
- 3) Did the rules/expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person? Why? Examples?

At the end of the interview, participants were thanked for their willingness to share and participate in my research. Ample time was allowed for discussion of final questions or concerns. Finally, thank you notes were mailed to each participant within the week, outlining my appreciation for their time and, once again, giving them my contact information, should they have follow-up questions or concerns.

#### **Procedure for Maintaining Confidentiality**

Approval for this study and its methods was granted by the University of South Carolina's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Therefore, each of the following procedures was deemed appropriate and an acceptable means by which to maintain confidentiality by the IRB at the University of South Carolina. The study number is Pro00034617. (See Appendix E, pg. 108.)

As interview data were collected, it was transferred to my personal computer, which is password protected. After being transferred to my computer, all recordings were erased from the device used during the interviews. Therefore, I am the only person who

has access to the interview data collected for this study. When not in use, all written documents are kept in a single folder in a locked location. These precautions are being taken in order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants.

### **Data Analysis**

All recorded data collected during the interview process were transcribed and placed in a Microsoft Word document. The data were organized by school and type of interviewee (administrator/student). To enhance the flow of the paper and ensure reader comprehension, the findings section groups interview responses by questions. Each student's response to the first question was recorded before discussing responses to questions two and three. This process was repeated for each student at both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. Recurring themes in the interview responses were categorized and used to aid in the writing of the findings section.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Findings**

The following section of this paper will include a brief history of the schools included in the study and their current mission statements. The opinions gathered from administrators and students during interviews will be presented and analyzed, and a comparison of the ethos at each campus will ensue. An analysis of the findings serves to better understand the relationship between religiously-infused codes of conduct and the development of the “whole” student from a student and administrative perspective. An analysis of the findings also serves to answer the primary questions posed by this study: Do the student codes of conduct at the two religiously affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States foster the growth and development of the whole student? Why or why not?

#### **School Histories**

Before launching into a discussion of each school’s student code of conduct, it is first necessary to explore the background of each school included in this study. This involves examining the historical beginnings of El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. Each school was founded in the southeastern portion of the United States between the years 1923 and 1927, and both are affiliated with religious denominations. This section will include a brief synopsis of each institution’s founding, their religious affiliation, and their current affiliation.

*El Shaddai University.* El Shaddai University was originally established as a college in 1927 by an evangelist (Nestor, 2008). Having witnessed students whose faith had been shaken at both public and Christian universities, the founder of El Shaddai University became burdened with the task of creating a school where young people could receive a solid liberal arts education in an environment that maintained the absolute authority of the Bible (El Shaddai University website). The founder endeavored to create a place where “Christ would be the center of all thought and conduct” (El Shaddai University website). When El Shaddai University opened its doors in 1927 as a two-year college, it had nine faculty members and 88 students. For financial reasons, the college was forced to relocate in 1933, and the college made a third and final move in the fall of 1947 (Nestor, 2008).

Today, El Shaddai University is an accredited Christian liberal arts university where “the founder’s emphasis on ‘the old-time religion and the absolute authority of the Bible’ remains paramount” (Nestor, 2008, pg. 8). El Shaddai University describes itself as a Biblically faithful Christian liberal arts university, and it has a student body of over 3,000 with a 13:1 student to faculty ratio (El Shaddai University website).

*Cornerstone University.* Cornerstone University primarily attributes its existence to the prayers of one woman. It was not until she filled in for her sister teaching Sunday school in a local mill village in 1913 that this praying woman recognized the material and spiritual needs of the surrounding community. Burdened with the task of learning more of the Bible, she traveled away from the southeastern portion of the United States in order to attend a Bible training school. Upon her return, she realized the need for a local Bible institute that could teach those who wished to receive more instruction in Biblical



education. She was joined by several other praying women in the community; they banded together and lifted up prayers asking for a man who would be willing to start such a Bible institute.

Little did these praying women know that in 1921 the plans of an aspiring young missionary would be redirected and lead him to preach the message of the gospel in the same town where they had been working to establish a small Bible institute. This young man was asked to become the first dean of the school, and after a few months of prayer, he accepted the position, writing in his letter, “What a mighty power for missions and for soul-winning evangelism the school may be!” (Cornerstone University website).

The school’s first classes were offered in the fall of 1922 in a rented room and the local YMCA. The dean of the school was the only instructor, and he chose to remain unpaid, as the school had little funding, and he was still speaking at conferences, on occasion. The few faculty and staff who were hired the next year were only paid \$100 a month, but even that was cut when the budget could not support such an amount. Students were not charged tuition; their only expenses came in the form of room and board. One of the first brochures to promote the school listed the following three goals:

- 1) To train for Christian service at home and on the foreign mission field  
young men and women who are not able to take the more extended  
Seminary courses.
- 2) To help any Christians who wish to gain a better knowledge of the  
Bible, to the end that they may have God’s power for Christian living and

service.

3) To win souls and to teach Christians the secret of ‘walking in the Spirit.’

It was not until 1929 that Cornerstone University started to offer bachelor's degrees and became a college, and graduate degrees were offered starting in 1936, making it a university. The first dean of the school guided the school through its changes as it slowly became a college and then a university. This founder remained president until his death in 1952. He has since been succeeded by five presidents, one of which was his son.

Cornerstone University currently has more than 17,000 alumni serving in nearly 150 countries. The current president proudly proclaims “The dream of one praying woman is alive and well” (Cornerstone University website).

### **Mission Statements and Philosophies**

*El Shaddai University.* El Shaddai University’s current mission statement is as follows:

“Within the cultural and academic soil of liberal arts higher education, El Shaddai University exists to grow Christlike character that is scripturally disciplined, others-serving, God-loving, Christ-proclaiming and focused above” (El Shaddai University website). The following three core values also help define the purpose of the institution: “Love for and faithfulness to God and His Word, Unashamed testimony for Jesus Christ, the only Savior, and Edifying love for God’s people” (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 4). El Shaddai University further explains and expands the meaning of its mission statement and core values in two paragraphs found online and in their student handbook.

Notably, they mention their commitment to the education of regenerate men and women of varying backgrounds and the education of the whole person through a Biblically-integrated liberal arts curriculum. As the previous statement implies, only those who profess faith in Christ are considered for admittance into the university. Even faculty members must be professing Christians in order to work at El Shaddai University, because all classes are expected to be taught from a Christ-centered perspective, in order to carry out the university's mission of "fostering spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical development and cultural expansion of the individual" (El Shaddai University handbook). Furthermore, El Shaddai University holds students to the high expectation of pursuing excellence and Christ-likeness in all they do. On the part of the university, this involves teaching all members of the institution to apply the Scriptures to practical Christian living, which creates a community of individuals who are committed to Jesus Christ and are faithfully upholding the Biblical doctrines in the university's founding charter. According to El Shaddai University's handbook, all these things should "develop a constituency of regenerated students who have adequate preparation to profit from a Christian college education" (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 4).

El Shaddai University's mission statement also includes a brief version of the university's philosophy of education. This philosophy is primarily concerned with investigating in the process of spiritual development in the image of God - teaching students to know and imitate God in both His character and works. The handbook describes this process as something that occurs both inside and outside the classroom. Knowledge of God's word, the Bible, is the central focus; all academic studies radiate from this point, and Biblical truth is infused into all areas of the curriculum and daily

living. El Shaddai University's philosophy of education statements also reiterate the conviction that knowledge about God is not enough. Students must have a personal knowledge of God that precedes their admittance into the university. This personal knowledge is defined by El Shaddai University as "repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ" (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 4). Thus, the environment of the university is structured in a way that promotes an understanding of how the work of God intersects with the work of man. To this effect, El Shaddai University, like other faith-based institutions, exercises its ability to be selective in its educational decisions - including elements that enhance the mission and exclude those which hinder the mission or are deemed unfavorable. El Shaddai University "does not apologize for the prescriptiveness of the educational experience. Its character goals require it" (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 4). Therefore, students and all members of the faculty, staff, and administration are encouraged and expected to live out their faith on a daily basis in all their undertakings on and off campus.

*Cornerstone University.* Cornerstone University summarizes its mission in the following statement of purpose: "Cornerstone University educates people from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ" (Cornerstone University website). Cornerstone University's mission is also grounded in its five core values: Authority of Scripture, Victorious Christian Living, World Evangelization, Prayer & Faith, and Evangelical Unity. In order to emphasize their commitment to upholding the core values and to serve as a reminder to students, each of the core values is etched on a rock on the campus grounds. These core values create a solid foundation for the university - one which is primarily laid on The Rock - Jesus Christ. In order to fully comprehend

Cornerstone University's beliefs and mission, it is necessary to briefly describe the meaning and purpose of each of their five core values.

**Authority of Scripture:** Cornerstone University places an emphasis on mastering God's word, which requires learning to understand and apply it to one's life and works. This core value also depicts Scripture as having the final say in all things, thus, requiring one to accept the veracity and total authority of God's word. Thus, the Bible is a foundation on which all else stands.

**Victorious Christian Living:** This value recognizes the importance of walking in Christ-likeness in all aspects of student life, including personal and academic. In order to live out this value, one must yield to the will of God and trust in Him out of humility, because God will avoid those who are proud.

**World Evangelization:** Cornerstone University believes the Bible is not just a jumble of random stories or pieces of advice but is held together by one central theme: "For God So Loved The World He Gave..." (Cornerstone University website). Believing in and being blessed by the truths found in God's word, each member of the university should find themselves driven to pour out blessings to others. The outward expression of this core value (led by the Spirit) should result in witnessing locally, regionally, and around the world.

**Prayer and Faith:** Recognizing the human race's utter dependence on Christ, Cornerstone University holds prayer in high regard. Walking by faith through prayer promotes a community in which all are characterized by a "joyful reliance upon God for

material provisions, victory over sin, growth in Christlikeness, and fruitfulness in ministry” (Cornerstone University website).

Evangelical Unity: The practice of Evangelical unity involves intentionally accepting other Christians for purposes of fellowship, encouragement, and ministry, regardless of denominational or theological views. According to Cornerstone University, this means that the university “intends to include in their circle of fellowship as many Christians of evangelical faith as possible, and to exclude as few as possible” (Cornerstone University website). Unity is an important element to any organization in which differing points of view exist. Cornerstone University believes the unity found in Christ allows for the celebration and appreciation of diversity.

To finish this portion of Cornerstone University’s mission and philosophies, it is relevant to mention their educational philosophy, which they refer to as the Educational Triad. The triad consists of head, heart, and hands, because Cornerstone University believes in “total life training” (Cornerstone University website). The following is Cornerstone University’s explanation of the triad: “Head: Strive for academic excellence with the Bible at the core of all learning. Heart: Grow in maturity in Christ. Hands: Practice skills related to personal and vocational in the community away from the classroom” (Cornerstone University website).

## **Handbook Overviews**

*Handbook Overview for El Shaddai University.* The student handbook for El Shaddai University is 72 pages long. It includes general student information such as a letter from

the president, attendance policies, dress codes, an outline of the disciplinary system, and student resources. Because El Shaddai University bases many of its rules on Biblical principles, there are multiple sections denoting appropriate lifestyle choices. Some of these include: regulations on music and the appropriate use of technology, the university's position on sexuality and marriage, and a section explaining how to take a Biblical approach when evaluating objectionable forms or elements of entertainment. The last page of the handbook is what El Shaddai University calls the Student Covenant. The covenant explains that each of the policies found in the handbook are based on scriptural commands, Biblical principles, and principles that promote harmonious living among the members of the university community. Thus, by choosing to enroll as a student at El Shaddai University, all students are expected to read the handbook and abide by the policies found therein. The covenant page includes a signature line, which students are to sign (stating they have read and agree to live by all policies found in the handbook) and turn in to their supervisors in the residence halls or the dean of men's or women's office in early September.

In order avoid an extensive and lengthy overview of each policy that is listed in El Shaddai University's handbook, this section will illuminate only five of their many policies. The five that have been chosen do not have any particular significance, except that they are unique to an institution that is faith-based. Many of the policies found in El Shaddai University's handbook would not be found in a secular institution's code of conduct simply due to the public vs. private dichotomy and the freedoms religious institutions are allowed to exercise when it comes to their disciplinary methods and codes of conduct. Furthermore, the five policies mentioned below were also chosen because

interviewees may have mentioned or alluded to them during their interview. Thus, these policies provide background for the comments and references made during interviews.

*Chapel Attendance.* All students living on campus are expected to attend chapel services Monday through Thursday. There are very few exceptions to this mandate. If a student is on campus during the chapel service, they are expected to attend, sit in their assigned seat, and bring a Bible. Students who wish to work an off-campus job and need to miss chapel are allowed to do so once a week with prior approval. Students who do not live on campus (Day Students) are also required to attend chapel daily if they are taking 12 or more hours. Day students are excused from chapel only on days when they do not have class, but they still have to fill out a form explaining why they should be excused.

*Men's and Women's Dress Codes.* According to the handbook, El Shaddai University's dress code guidelines exist to help the university reach its goal of educating the whole person. Specifically, they say, "Our dress guidelines are designed to help students model biblical modesty in ways that are distinct from the world and that reflect the God-ordained differences between men and women" (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 32).

For both women and men there are lists denoting what can and cannot be worn, in general, but there are also very specific guidelines for various locations and activities. Sections on clothing include: class attire, nonclass campus attire, casual attire, rehearsals, formal or Sunday attire, and recreational or work attire. The women's section also includes guidelines for the wearing of jewelry and makeup as well as hair color and styles. Women are permitted to wear earrings, but they must be worn in the lower lobe;



all other types of piercings and tattoos are not appropriate. All makeup must be worn in moderation so as not to draw attention. As for hairstyles, both males and females should sport styles that are deemed appropriate for their sex, and everyone's hair color should appear natural. Specifically for men, the dress code denotes that they should not have facial hair unless they are over the age of 25, even then, facial hair must be kept trimmed and neat. Men are not permitted to have tattoos or wear any form of jewelry, unless it is a finger ring or wristband worn for medical purposes or one which conveys principles consistent with El Shaddai University's mission (El Shaddai University handbook, pgs.36-37). Finally, El Shaddai University includes a statement about avoiding clothing from stores that "glorify the lustful spirit of our age in their advertising," in particular *Abercrombie and Fitch* and its subsidiary *Hollister* (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 33).

*Entertainment, Music, and Technology.* El Shaddai University's handbook includes statements pertaining to the following: music, movies, television, computer and video games, Internet, social media, periodicals, and gambling. As stated in their mission, El Shaddai University is committed to helping students develop a Christlike character; thus, all the guidelines enumerated in this section of the handbook are meant to encourage students to make Biblical decisions when it comes to entertainment. Furthermore, the university stresses the risk of becoming desensitized to the negative effects of popular entertainment through excessive exposure and implores students to go about their decision making in a wise manner.

El Shaddai University goes into great detail concerning the guidelines for the

various elements of entertainment; however, for the purposes of this paper, only a few specific guidelines will be mentioned. For instance, the section on music indicates that students are prohibited from listening to music (both on and off campus) derived from the following genres: rock, pop, country, jazz, electronic/techno, and rap/hip-hop.

Furthermore, students should abstain from listening to Christian lyrics set to music of any of the aforementioned genres. In order to maintain accountability, students are asked to refrain from using headphones; headphones, when used, are to be used solely for academic purposes. Related to this section, students are also prohibited from all forms of dancing, due to “the sensual nature of many of its forms” (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 29). While El Shaddai University acknowledges the wholesome qualities that can be gleaned from movies and television, the university has a strict policy concerning these forms of entertainment as well. All movies, television shows, and video games. should be rated G, PG, or E10. If student are unsure if a certain form of entertainment is deemed acceptable, they are encouraged to ask for the opinion of a faculty or staff member prior to listening or viewing.

*Social Life.* In order to aid students in their pursuit of long-term spiritual success, El Shaddai University encourages students to practice Biblical principles in all aspects of daily living, including the friendships they build with fellow believers on campus. Students’ social lives should be rich and Christ-honoring. Therefore, the numerous regulations found in El Shaddai University’s handbook pertaining to social life are for the following purposes: to “Ensure safety, Promote purity, Build Christ-honoring relationships, Provide accountability, and to Give graduated privileges” (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 20).

The section on social life covers the following topics: physical contact and an explanation of student privileges (which are divided into three categories): on-and off-campus social life guidelines, overnight trip guidelines, and regulations for working off campus. Many of the rules of conduct in this section pertain to mixed group interactions. Since physical contact between unmarried men and women is not allowed on or off campus, it makes sense that El Shaddai University would have strict rules pertaining to mixed group interactions and curfews. The handbook states, “Male and female students should guard their testimonies; they are not to be alone together in a classroom, rehearsal studio or other room” (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 22). There are several specific instructions in the handbook that denote when and where couples and mixed groups may congregate and in what sorts of activities they may engage.

The category of student privileges defines what is meant by the phrase “giving graduated privileges.” There are three categories of privileges: First-year, General, and Advanced. These three levels of freedom primarily apply to off-campus activities. A student with first-year privileges is limited in the amount of time they may spend off-campus, and they may only leave campus for church, outreach ministries, work and home - checking-out and checking-in each time they leave from and return to campus. General privileges allow students to leave campus without having to check-out as frequently, and students with these privileges are also allowed to leave campus to run personal errands. Advanced privileges are earned when a student demonstrates academic and social maturity. To obtain advanced privileges, a student must meet several requirements, one being a recommendation by at least two faculty or staff members and approval from student life staff to be a student leader. Advanced privileges allow students more

freedoms, but they also require a willingness to serve and take on leadership/mentoring responsibilities.

*System of Discipline.* Apart from providing a solid liberal arts education, El Shaddai University's mission is to help students develop a Christlike character both for personal growth and for the edification of those around them. Thus, a disciplinary system aids in maintaining an environment that promotes spiritual growth. "El Shaddai University bases its system of accountability and correction on the functions of Scripture taught in 2 Timothy 3:16: teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness" (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 44). Thus, El Shaddai University hopes to lovingly convey truths that equip students with the proper tools for developing in Christlikeness, and the university expresses that its ultimate concern is students' long-term spiritual success versus mere compliance. While El Shaddai University realizes that perfection is impossible, their approach to discipline is consistent and individually focused and it places importance on students' heart responses to reproof. In order to track disciplinary offenses, El Shaddai University utilizes a demerit system. Minor offenses can garner 1-25 demerits, and major offenses can result in 50-150 demerits. Minor offenses can include: absences, late assignments, breach of dress, failure to check in or out, and failure to pass room inspections. Major offenses include: misuse of media, disrespect or disobedience, profanity or sacrilegious behavior, theft or dishonesty, and smoking (El Shaddai University handbook, pgs. 44-45). An accumulation of demerits can eventually result in suspension from the university.

Finally, this section of El Shaddai University's handbook enumerates the legal

rights of the university. Some of these include being able to contact a student's parents or pastor concerning any situation involving the student, searching and inspecting residence halls, and restricting school services and meetings from being recorded on personal communication devices (El Shaddai University handbook, pg. 46).

*Handbook Overview for Cornerstone University.* Cornerstone University's student handbook is roughly 40 pages in length, but only the first 25 pages relay information pertinent to the focus of this study. The handbook includes opening letters from the President and Dean of Students, the university's mission and philosophy, a section on students' rights and responsibilities, explanations about entertainment and lifestyle policies, and additional information concerning the dress code. Cornerstone University makes a point to explicitly express and explain the fact that not all of the rules found in the handbook are based on Biblical mandates. An attention-grabbing block quote in the handbook reads, "Not all of our standards are straight out of Scripture! Some are there because we live in community" (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 7). The handbook goes on to define what Cornerstone University means by Scriptural commands, Scriptural principles contextually applied, and community standards.

Like El Shaddai University, Cornerstone University also requires all students to read the handbook in its entirety and submit a signed page stating that they have read the handbook and agree to abide by the policies found therein. Unlike El Shaddai University, which requires students to read the handbook every year and sign every year, Cornerstone University only requires first year students to read the handbook and submit their written agreement to the Student Life office by late August. Returning students are not expected

to re-read the handbook. However, they will be notified at the beginning of each year of any campus policies that have been added, eliminated or changed.

Again, it is not necessary to go into great detail about each and every policy found in Cornerstone University's handbook. Therefore, only five pieces of the handbook will be briefly covered. The five that have been chosen are not particularly important, but they successfully illustrate unique policies found within the codes of conduct at religiously-affiliated institutions. Also, the five that have been chosen are policies that interviewees may have mentioned or placed emphasis on during their interview. Thus, giving a brief overview of the handbook provides a good foundation for understanding the context of the views expressed by interviewees.

*Chapel.* Students at Cornerstone University are required to enroll in a pass/fail course called CHL 1000, which is a graduation requirement. In order to earn a satisfactory in this course, students must attend chapel every Monday through Thursday. If students use one of their ten excused absences, they are still required to listen to the service online. There are exceptions, such as obtaining a permanent waiver from chapel in order to work, but these requests must be submitted and approved on a semester-by-semester basis. In addition to chapel attendance, all students are expected to attend and be involved with a local church on Sundays. Furthermore, Cornerstone University observes Sundays as a day of rest. Therefore, students are to refrain from any school related work or study on Sundays, in order to give their "minds and bodies a well-deserved break" (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 17). Finally, the university sets aside days each semester for prayer. All students, faculty, and staff are required to attend these campus-

wide prayer days as part of their commitment to being spiritually focused.

*Movies, Music, and Computer Use.* Much like students at El Shaddai University, students at Cornerstone University are asked to refrain from forms of entertainment that are not God-honoring. In choosing movies, students should not consider viewing movies that have a rating of X or NC-17. Even if the rating is PG, students should use discretion, because, as it states in the handbook, movie ratings are unreliable guides for determining the appropriateness of a film. Ultimately, the university realizes that it is up to each person to hold themselves accountable for their own media intake, but the rules exist to encourage students to “refrain from movies that diminish their concern for human suffering or decrease their desire to live with purity in thought, word, and deed” (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 19). Ultimately, all movies, music, Internet usage and other forms of entertainment should be pleasing to the Lord, and all members of the university community should strive to encourage one another to avoid temptations that may exist with the good.

*Human Sexuality.* This section of the handbook fleshes out Cornerstone University’s position on all things sexual, including: gender related issues, homosexuality, and premarital sex. Basing their views on Scriptural references from the books of Genesis and Matthew, Cornerstone University deems marriage to be appropriate only between one man and one woman. Therefore, marriage and sexual relations between people of the same sex is forbidden. Not only is homosexual behavior prohibited, but any public support of such behavior is also deemed unacceptable. Cornerstone University takes a strong stance on homosexuality, because they believe God’s word is clear in

defining, over and over again, that marriage should be between a man and a woman. Furthermore, because Cornerstone University believes that God created man and woman separately, they do not condone any type of gender change. All those associated with the university should not promote or support transgender expressions.

Cornerstone University acknowledges that relationships are good, and God created people with a desire to enter into relationship with one another. Therefore, Cornerstone University has set forth Biblical guidelines for how students, faculty, and staff should interact in friendships, discipleships, courtships, marriage, and mentoring. Ultimately, each person on campus should strive for purity in their relationships with others so as not to defile themselves or defraud others. Therefore, “appropriate boundaries are necessary in order for these relationships to be of the greatest benefit” (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 20).

Romantic relationship boundaries are set forth within the following categories: casual dating couples, committed couples who are thoughtfully considering engagement for purposes of marriage, engaged couples, and married couples. The boundaries for these various levels of romantic relationships are laid out in the Expression of Affection section of the handbook. Casually dating couples are to refrain from all types of physical expression other than brief hugs - the kind of hugs that would be exchanged between brother and sister. Committed couples are encouraged to establish clear boundaries and are to refrain from all types of physical intimacy on and off campus other than hugs, hand holding, and a brief kiss. These couples should also seek to form accountability relationships with mature believers. Engaged couples are held to the same standards as



committed couples, in order to maintain purity and set a Godly example for other members of campus. Finally, the handbook states the following concerning married couples: “Out of sensitivity to our unmarried students and campus atmosphere, married couples should be exemplary models of appropriate public physical expressions of romantic affection” (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 21).

*Attire.* The overarching principle found in the dress code for both men and women at Cornerstone University is modesty; modesty should be practiced at all times. While there are a few specific guidelines, the majority of the verbiage in this section asks students to use their own discretion, and if they have questions about appropriate attire, they should direct their inquiries to the dean of student life. Compared to El Shaddai University, Cornerstone University is far less strict in terms of their dress code. For instance, Cornerstone University does not forbid body piercings or facial hair. They simply say that piercings may be deemed inappropriate when representing the university in an official capacity and all hair styles should be neat and orderly. Cornerstone University advises students to use their own discretion in dressing modestly.

*Vacation Periods.* Students at Cornerstone University are expected to live by the Scriptural principles found in the student handbook even during the months when they are not enrolled. Cornerstone University believes “we are commanded to pursue holiness all of our lives, in every aspect of our lives, and in every location” (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 27). The logic behind this principle comes from 1 Peter 1:14-19, which emphasizes obedience and the pursuit of holiness. The university implores all students to maintain a pure lifestyle no matter where they are or what they do. Thus, the

handbook points out that one should “pursue holiness and honor God first - even on vacation” (Cornerstone University handbook, pg. 27). This rule also takes into account the fact that humans are habitual creatures, and if students get in the habit of doing something that is prohibited during summer vacation, it will be hard for them to discontinue this habit when they return to campus. Therefore, it is best to observe the rules, even during periods of vacation. Cornerstone University admits that they cannot monitor students during breaks, but if it is found out that a student failed to practice a Biblical lifestyle (especially issues of morality), disciplinary action will ensue.

*Comparison of student codes of conduct at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University.* After reading through the handbooks of both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, there are quite a few similarities (which is to be expected since they are both faith-based institutions), but there are also several differences. Many of these similarities and differences were noted in the preceding paragraphs, but a brief comparison and contrast will serve to further clarify.

Both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are upfront and explain the reasoning behind the rules found in their respective handbooks. Both institutions clearly emphasize the fact that their codes of conduct are based on Biblical commands, Biblical principles (applied), and practices that are best for the community. Neither school specifically states that all the rules found within their handbook are based on exact Scriptural mandates. However, in some instances, El Shaddai University diligently includes Biblical references to backup many of the specific rules found in their handbook. Cornerstone University also uses Scripture to validate their expectations, but in a more

general, overarching sense than El Shaddai University.

In general, El Shaddai University is stricter and lays out more specific expectations than does Cornerstone University. As noted in the previous paragraphs, El Shaddai University is more rigid than Cornerstone University in the following areas: chapel attendance, dating relationships, dress code and appearance, off-campus activities, and entertainment. For instance, students at Cornerstone University are allowed to listen to Christian music of any genre, and there are no specific rules denoting to which types of music they can and cannot listen. The handbook simply asks that students use Biblical discernment in all of their decisions. El Shaddai University, on the other hand, specifically lists the genres of music that are prohibited, and students are not to use headphones to listen to music. This is just one example of where El Shaddai University's rules are far more narrow and tailored than those at Cornerstone University. Cornerstone University makes overarching statements directing students to live in a way that honors God, but they are given more freedom in their ability to make decisions for themselves about what this means when it comes to the specifics of lifestyle choices.

To sum up this brief comparison, one of the most striking differences between the two institutions included in this study is found within the generalities of their codes and their mission statements. For example, one of Cornerstone University's core values in their mission statement is Evangelical Unity, which burdens the university with the task of accepting as many Christians of evangelical faith as possible and excluding as few as possible. Language expressing a goal of inclusion and the celebration of diversity (within limits) is not explicitly expressed in the mission or handbook of El Shaddai University.

Overall, the idea of freedom of choice (because of freedom through Christ) flows more obviously out of the language found within Cornerstone University's versus El Shaddai University's mission and handbook. While both have similar purposes, Cornerstone University appears to give students less detailed rules and more opportunities for exercising Godly decision making based on the general rules that are provided via the handbook and other institutional teachings. Thus, these are similar yet different approaches to fostering the development of the whole student.

### **Interview Opinions and Analysis**

The following section will include a summary and analysis of the opinions expressed during one-on-one interviews with administrators and students on the campuses of El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. The general question posed to each interviewee was, "What does the phrase 'developing the whole student' mean to you?" After this initial brainstorming question, several questions were posed that pertained to the university's student code of conduct. (To revisit the exact questions that were asked of each individual during the interview, please see the methodology section of this paper or Appendices B and C, pgs. 105-106.) Ultimately, the interview opinions will be analyzed to determine whether or not the codes at these faith-based institutions foster growth of the whole student.

*El Shaddai University Interview Opinions.* The interview data from El Shaddai University consists of opinions from the dean of students and three current students. Of the students who were interviewed, two had junior class standing and one was a senior. Thus, there were four total (administration and students) interviewees at El Shaddai

University, three male and one female.

*Dean of Students, Chief Student Life Officer.* For the purposes of this paper, the dean of students interviewed at El Shaddai University will be referred to as Jonah. To start, Jonah provided a little background information about himself and the acquisition of his current position at El Shaddai University. Receiving both his B.A. in History and his Ph.D. in Theology from El Shaddai University, Jonah initially wanted to pursue seminary. However, upon graduation and some time working as the student organization director at El Shaddai University, Jonah was asked if he was interested in stepping into the position of dean of students. Jonah expressed that this position was not something he had anticipated, but it was what the Lord had in store for him. When asked what his role is as dean of students, Jonah replied that he is “trying to lead the efforts of discipleship and leadership development, because El Shaddai University is all about helping students grow towards Christ-likeness” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). For clarification, Jonah defined discipleship as “Biblically, learning and attempting to follow the words and ways of Jesus Christ to the point of imitation” - making it a whole-life kind of thing (personal communication, May 7, 2014).

According to Jonah, higher education is necessary and important, and it is, therefore, also necessary to have a mission that seeks to develop the whole person. In order to support his assertion that higher education is important, Jonah quoted from Luke 2:52, which says: “And Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man.” It makes sense that Jonah would reference this verse to support higher education. After all, he stated that one of his goals as dean of students was to try and lead students in

discipleship, which encourages them to imitate Christ. If growing in knowledge was good for Christ, it must be good for man. Jonah explained that, for El Shaddai University, the concept of developing the whole person means “educating the whole person as a person inside the classroom and outside the classroom” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Being able to accomplish this mission requires clear expectations, such as those found in the El Shaddai University student handbook.

Viewing the code as a tool for discipleship, Jonah said codes of conduct are a component of the collegiate discipleship environment found at El Shaddai University. In response to a question about the tendency to think one is “okay/saved/good” by adhering to rules but never having a change of heart, Jonah stated that you “have to work against the tendency for people to think they are ‘good’ if they always follow the rules” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). As seen in a previous section, El Shaddai University has many strict guidelines for appropriate attire, entertainment, and visitation, but Jonah and the university see these guidelines as an encouragement for all members of the campus to develop good patterns so as not to stumble in their walk with Christ. Jonah explained that part of the school’s philosophy for discipline comes from II Timothy 3:16-17 (rebuke and train in righteousness). Jonah said the following of the discipline system: “There is correction - it is like setting a bone; it is painful, but it is a major step towards healing” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). In making this point, Jonah emphasized that the consequences of breaking the rules are not the major focus of El Shaddai University. Instead, if a student is having trouble keeping the rules, Jonah and the El Shaddai University are more concerned with a student’s relationship status with Jesus and spiritual maturity. If students do not have a natural appetite for the principles found

within the handbook, Jonah wonders if they really know and love Jesus - this being of utmost importance. The point of the rules is not to label students as bad people if they break them. Instead, the rules are in place to help students honor the Lord in everything.

When asked how the rules are communicated to students (other than by reading the handbook), Jonah mentioned several outlets. He first said that the values of the school are reiterated during chapel, and he also mentioned that orientation sessions are held for each level of students, referring to the privileges hierarchy mentioned previously (first-year, general, and advanced). What is permitted and not permitted for each level of privileges is very detailed. Thus, orientation sessions for each group of students provide careful communication of these various intricacies. Furthermore, students who enjoy advanced privileges and who serve as student leaders on campus act as a liaison to the administration, gently reminding their fellow students of campus policies. Any parts of the handbook that students feel ought to be discussed can be voiced via various suggestion boxes located on campus.

Jonah also mentioned that he plays a large role in the formation of the policies at El Shaddai University, and he usually makes biannual suggestions for improvement. Most recently, he took part in working to reduce the size of the handbook and making the principles found within it more clearly Biblical. According to Jonah, over the years there has been some streamlining of the rules, and students have been granted more privileges and flexibility. A biannual review of the handbook is a good practice, because, as Jonah pointed out, “Technology changes and there are different ways to manifest our hearts. So, the rules need to shift a bit to include new idols our hearts lust after...” (personal

communication, May 7, 2014). In other words, sin has not changed. As the world advances, the objects of sinful affections are different, but the motivation behind sinful acts is the same as it was when time began.

Overall, Jonah said he enjoys getting to see the growth in students. He recalled times when students who did not understand why they needed to follow the rules while they were enrolled would come back and say they finally understood the good things that came from the strictness of the policies. He said we “don’t just teach people how to make a living, but how to live” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Ultimately, Jonah attributes students’ growth and success to God, not El Shaddai University or any policies that it has in place.

*Students: Hiram, Esther, and Jethro.* Each student at El Shaddai University responded to three prompting questions. The following paragraphs will summarize each student’s answer to the following questions: (1) What does the phrase “developing the whole student” mean to you? (2) Why do you think your institution has student conduct codes? and (3) Did the rules and expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person? Why? Examples?

In response to the first question, Hiram responded that the whole student is made up of many pieces including: the academic (classes), the social (events), the physical (sports), and the spiritual. Hiram explained that development of the whole student is not a stagnant process; one should constantly be growing and developing. Furthermore, Hiram sees that his time at El Shaddai University has developed him as a whole student by requiring him to take classes and attend cultural events that have little to do with his



declared major. All of these things make up what “developing the whole student” means to Hiram.

Esther responded to the question about “developing the whole student” by saying that this is accomplished by creating a well-rounded person. She said this can be done by instituting ways to challenge students to grow (spiritually and academically). When asked what she meant by the term “develop,” Esther defined “develop” as “to create or grow,” which is the opposite of remaining the same or becoming stagnant.

According to Jethro, the term “develop” implies training and instilling habits with a particular outcome in mind, and the opposite of this would be destroying or tearing down. Jethro answered the first question by stating how he thought El Shaddai University might respond. He said developing the whole student involved both academics and spirituality, because El Shaddai University wants students to develop both discipline and character. Ultimately, he stated, by developing the whole student, El Shaddai University wants “God to be glorified” (personal communication, May 7, 2014).

In response to the second question, Hiram answered that the rules in the handbook are meant to protect students; they are good accountability rules. He said, “Nothing runs smoothly without rules - some rules are straight from the Bible, some are principles of the Bible, and some are just to keep us in order” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Although Hiram does not agree with all of the rules instituted by El Shaddai University (the music regulations in particular), he understands that deviating from the rules after graduation will not make him less of a Christian. He said El Shaddai University tells them not to live by the handbook after they graduate; they must come to their own

conclusions about what is acceptable.

Esther had quite a lengthy response to the second question. She had much to say about why El Shaddai University needs student codes of conduct - all schools have to have something for students to abide by, and the rules provide unity amongst members of campus. However, Esther noted that being unified as believers does not mean agreement on everything; she said rules that might not be meant for her might exist for someone else, and she needs to respect that. Esther admitted, “I do not love to abide by everything in the handbook - it’s easy to criticize the rules, but it benefits me to look at the rules in a positive light. El Shaddai University desires to see us grow; they are not trying to hinder us” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Furthermore, she stated that she will not feel terrible about herself if she does not abide by all of the rules after graduation; she said, “We all have different convictions” (personal communication, May 7, 2014).

According to Jethro, the reason El Shaddai University has a student conduct code stems back to their goal of developing the whole student. Some of the rules deal with academics, but many of the rules are concerned with spiritual matters; thus, the code of conduct is adopted in order to help shape well-rounded individuals. Jethro expressed that some of the rules prohibit practices that are clearly sinful, while others simply help teach students good cleanliness habits and create accountability. Because the rules are based primarily on Biblical principles and because they build discipline, Jethro finds that it behooves him to try to submit to and follow the rules El Shaddai University has laid out in the handbook. However, he feels that “the school might be trying to control too much of your life” (personal communication, May 7, 2014).

In response to the third question - “Did the rules/expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person?” - Hiram replied that having to abide by El Shaddai University’s policies has taught him self-control. There are days when he would rather wear a t-shirt to class instead of having to follow the dress code, but he has learned to deny himself, and he sees honoring the authority of the school as ultimately honoring God. Because he has learned self-control, he feels prepared to enter the job world, where there will certainly be regulations that must be followed. Besides, getting in the habit of dressing up and shaving now is good because it is always “easier to downgrade rather than upgrade,” he said (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Even though he finds some of the regulations annoying (needing a pass to go off campus, in particular), Hiram said he respects the fact that the student handbook is a covenant between him and the university. He said, “It is a two-way agreement; if I put forth the effort they [El Shaddai University] will as well” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Ultimately, Hiram is okay with following the rules, even if they are inconvenient at times, because if one looks at the spiritual side of things, the rules are there to encourage students to become more like Christ.

Esther reflected that abiding by the rules set forth by El Shaddai University has “helped me really focus on Christ, even though there have been trials along the way; the El Shaddai University community is really uplifting” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Looking back, Esther admitted that she did not always think about the rules in a positive light, and she found it hard to submit sometimes, but she has grown to understand the benefits of the rules. Furthermore, she recognized that by choosing to attend El Shaddai University and signing the covenant, she agreed to abide by the

handbook, and she wants to uphold her end of the agreement. The following are some of the specific issues with which she mentioned struggling: having to wear skirts to class, needing a pass to go off campus, not being able to listen to certain types of music, and not being able to wear headphones to listen to music. Even though she finds some of the rules annoying, Esther said she understands why the rules are in place. For instance, she knows that El Shaddai University does not allow headphones because they want students to be relational with others and to make sure no one is listening to inappropriate music.

Regulating the types of music students listen to helps students to set themselves apart from the rest of the world, she said. Furthermore, she said the dress code at El Shaddai University was understandable because they want to prepare you for the job world.

However, she noted that the dress code is “El Shaddai University’s convictions about how they want you to look,” and she will not feel terrible if she does not abide by all of the dress code rules after she graduates.

According to Esther, it has taken her three years to realize the benefit of the rules - she is not the same person she was freshman year. She admitted that there are many students who are dismayed by all of the policies and become anti-rules, but Esther said she prefers to remain optimistic because the rules help her to do what is right and stand out. Finally, Esther said El Shaddai University loves their students and all of the requirements are “ultimately for the glory of God” (personal communication, May 7, 2014).

Jethro openly admitted that the longer he is at El Shaddai University the harder it is for him to conform to the rules; he finds the rules to be too controlling, and he

struggles with the school's teaching on sanctification. He said it tends to be too man-centered, and there is not enough focus on Jesus and the good news (that Jesus saved us from condemnation). Student 3 said, "There is too much focus on what we have to do versus what Jesus has done - sanctification by faith not by works" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). The rules do build discipline, but Jethro worries that much of the discipline is just for discipline's sake, and El Shaddai University tries too hard to communicate a spiritual reason behind the rules when it's really just a rule. While the school might have good motives, too much authority is bad, and good motives do not always justify the outcome. Jethro expressed that he is very thankful for his local church and the clear teaching on the good news that it provides. "Honestly," he said, "the church's influence has been the best influence on me" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Jethro would align authority figures in the following order: Jesus, the local church, El Shaddai University and its rules. Finally, he said, it was "part of God's sovereignty that God brought him to El Shaddai University and the local church" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Even though he thinks some of the regulations and teachings are too controlling, Jethro knows it is God who put him where he is for the present, and he will abide by the rules while he is under the authority of the university.

*Administration/Student Comparison.* For the most part, the students' and the administration's points of view expressed in these interviews aligned and were in agreement. Both Hiram and Esther commented on the support and care they felt from the administration. Esther said, "The administration is on the same page as the students, and they are very active in students' lives" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). In his interview, Jonah (dean of students) mentioned several times that the point of the rules

found in El Shaddai University's handbook is not to label students as bad people if they break them, but to help students honor God in every aspect of their lives. Each student seemed to have an understanding of this overarching principle, because each one commented on bringing glory to God by following the rules (even if they did not entirely agree with them), while under the authority of the university. Even Jethro, who found the regulations too controlling, was willing to submit to the authority of El Shaddai University and find good in seemingly restrictive policies.

Finally, it was interesting to note that Jonah, the dean of students, mentioned having recently tried to make the regulations in the handbook more clearly Biblical, but Jethro expressed that some things in the handbook did not need a Biblical/spiritual reason. Jethro said some of the rules were just rules, and it was not good for El Shaddai University to try to make something spiritual that was clearly just a rule for discipline's sake.

*Cornerstone University Interview Opinions.* The interview data from Cornerstone University consists of opinions from the associate dean for student life and three current students. Of the students who were interviewed, two had senior class standing and one was a junior. Thus, there were four total (administration and students) interviewees at Cornerstone University, two of which were male and two female.

*Associate Dean for Student Life.* For the purposes of this paper, the associate dean for student life interviewed at Cornerstone University will be referred to as Mark. Before Mark answered specific interview questions, he provided a bit of background about himself. After Mark served in the Navy, he felt called to be a missionary overseas. Thus,

he planned to enroll at Cornerstone University for a year before going overseas, but he ended up staying to finish his bachelor's degree. After graduation, he left to teach elementary school for a while before he came back to Cornerstone University as the dean of married students. Mark never made it overseas to be a missionary, but he is content, for now, to be part of what God is doing at Cornerstone University.

In his position, Mark said he is interested in the development of the whole person, which he described in two ways. First, he used the analogy of a three-legged stool. He said each leg represents a part of the person that should be developed: spiritual formation, academics, and ministry skills. Second, Mark explained that the university describes this type of development as total life formation, which includes the head (academics), heart (spiritual formation), and hands (ministry skills). This three part definition of the development of the whole person comes from the Educational Triad mentioned in Cornerstone University's educational philosophy. Mark conveyed that the ultimate goals of Cornerstone University's codes of conduct are to help students "grow to be more like Jesus and to have a better understanding of themselves" (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

Mark explained that all of the rules in the student handbook are Biblical standards, but there are three distinct categories. For instance, he said, "Some are direct Biblical commands, some are based on Biblical principles but not explicitly stated in the Bible, and some are rules for the good of the community, such as bedtimes in the dorm" (personal communication, April 20, 2014). For the most part, the rules have remained the same over the years, but Mark did mention a few changes (loosened standards) he had

seen during his time at Cornerstone University. Two examples of changes he has seen are students being allowed to wear jeans and males being permitted to wear earrings. Lately, Mark has felt pressure from students to change the no dancing rule, but he said he does not foresee this rule being lifted in the near future. Mark said the rules are “pretty much the same every year; it takes a while to change things - things build up over time, and then change takes place” (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

When asked what the role of Cornerstone University’s student code of conduct plays in shaping students’ experiences, Mark responded that this depends “on the students’ attitudes and level of submission - we’re not going to shape them all, because they are sometimes rebellious and resistant” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). According to Mark, if students are willing to work with the administration, then the principles found in the handbook begin to be useful. At this point in the interview, Mark recalled a student who had trouble submitting to the rules, and who complained that what he was doing was not wrong, and Cornerstone University should not be able to tell him what to do. Mark said his response to this student was simply, “Did God send you here to change Cornerstone University? If so, then do it. Otherwise, you do not have to agree with everything, just submit while you are here” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). This example harkens back to Mark’s comment about students sometimes being rebellious and resistant to the policies. Overall, Mark said he tries not to prejudge students; he works hard to try to see students the way God sees them. He said, “You have to hope and expect that they [students] are going to be more useful than you think” (personal communication, April 20, 2014).



*Students: Luke, Lydia, and Priscilla.* Each student at Cornerstone University responded to three prompting questions (the same that were asked at El Shaddai University). The following paragraphs will summarize each student's answer to the following questions: (1) What does the phrase "developing the whole student" mean to you? (2) Why do you think your institution has student conduct codes? (3) Did the rules/expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person? Why? Examples?

In response to the first question - What does the phrase "developing the whole student" mean to you? - Luke distinguished a difference between the whole person v. the whole student. He said the whole student is someone who is enrolled in school, and being a student is just one part of the whole person. So, in answering the question, he referred to aspects of what it means to develop as a whole student. He said wholeness includes academic skills, arts and humanities, spirituality, and physical fitness. Luke defined spirituality as "learning about Jesus and how to apply it to life - living out the call to be more like Jesus" (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

Lydia's definition of what it means to develop the whole student was as follows: "A person pushed to use every resource of him/herself, including physical, intellectual, spiritual, or relational - using everything to the max" (personal communication, April 20, 2014). Lydia concluded by saying that Cornerstone University helps develop her both academically and spiritually.

Finally, Priscilla described ways in which Cornerstone University works to develop the whole student. She said students are developed spiritually, because they have

to major in Bible. They are developed academically through their time spent in the classroom. She also mentioned that students are encouraged to grow in relationship with one another on campus because they live in dorms together. Furthermore, she said the resident assistants in the dorms help keep students accountable. In addition to these comments, Priscilla said developing the whole student should consist of “allowing students to mess up, but reprimanding them in love and teaching them obedience” (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

In response to the second question, Luke answered that he sees the good in having a student code of conduct, but he does not think it is needed. He reflected on his time in high school, where there were also lots of rules - he hated the rules. The teachers who enforced the policies did not really care about building relationships with students, and, for him, this made the rules unnecessary burdens. Luke said, “Rules without relationship equal rebellion” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). Regarding the rules at Cornerstone University, Luke sees them as unnecessary, but he understands that when he is in the job world, there will also be rules. Thus, he realizes that no matter where he ends up, there are bound to be regulations of some sort. However, he would love to see rules such as no dancing, no smoking, and no drinking abolished at Cornerstone University. He said he is “tired of being under the umbrella [student code of conduct], and I am kind of ready to live my own life” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). In Luke’s opinion, many of the rules that are still in place are there to please donors who lived “back in the day.” According to Luke, Cornerstone University was very fundamentalist in the beginning, and many of the financial supporters of Cornerstone University still have the same mindset. Therefore, the more conservative rules found in the handbook are there to

please the donors. Despite these flaws, Luke said he is able to see the good in the rules, even when he does not love to submit.

Lydia began talking about the purpose of the rules by saying, “Rules are always good; they reveal the condition of your heart, and they keep society in a structure and produce harmony” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). She knows that not all of Cornerstone University’s policies are pulled straight out of Scripture, but she still sees them as good, because they help students live in a Godly manner. Furthermore, she said, “The rules help me develop as a whole person because they give me limits and boundaries; I would not know good from bad without the rules. The rules help me to have integrity in public and when I am alone” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). However, Lydia admitted that she finds it hard to keep the rule about not studying on Sunday, especially when she is alone in her room. She found this rule and others especially hard when she was a freshman. Now that she is a junior, it is easier for her to keep the university’s policies because she is familiar with what is good and bad, and as an upperclassman, she wants to set a good example for the freshmen. Finally, Lydia said, “If you are having trouble keeping the rules, you may want to reflect on the condition of your heart” (personal communication, April 20, 2014). Besides, she said, each student knows what they are agreeing to when they decide to attend Cornerstone University - there should not be any surprises.

According to Priscilla, all students come from a different background and have different sin struggles. Therefore, for the weaker brother’s sake, it is good to submit oneself to the standards found in Cornerstone University’s handbook. You never know

what might be a stumbling block for others. So, it is best to have rules in place that keep people safe. Priscilla believes the rules are there to protect students, and she knew up front what she was getting into by deciding to enroll at Cornerstone University. When asked if she thought all of the rules were based on Biblical principles, Priscilla did not respond with yes or no. She brought up the example of David dancing for joy in the Bible. There was nothing sinful about David dancing, but Cornerstone University has a rule against dancing because society has misconstrued dancing and made it into something sensual. Thus, in Priscilla's opinion, there is a need for rules against these types of socially misconstrued activities. Finally, Priscilla noted that she does see a difference in students' willingness to submit to the rules based on whether they are a freshman or senior, especially when it comes to alcohol. Freshmen are more likely to willingly submit to the rules.

In answering the third question - Did the rules/expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person? - Luke said, "The rules have helped me to learn to be disciplined with things I do not want to do" (personal communication, April 20, 2014). He explained that the rules by which he is forced to abide at Cornerstone University will not be carried with him after graduation, unless he works at a church. He will choose to live by the Bible.

For Lydia, the rules have simply helped her grow. She said she did not like them at first because she grew up in a culture where some of the things Cornerstone University finds unacceptable were acceptable for her and her family. However, she knew the school's policies were for her own good, and they created good lifestyle habits in her.

Lydia said she probably will not continue to keep all of the university's rules after graduation, but some of them will be good to keep. She said, "The rules have helped me walk in integrity, live in harmony, strengthen my relationship with the Lord, and it is all for God's glory" (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

Priscilla expressed that the rules found in the handbook do not exist to create a good community but rather, to foster a good environment where students can grow. It is in this type of good environment where she said she has learned obedience and respect for authority in her life. Priscilla said she probably will not carry each individual standard with her into the future, but the general principles of submission and obedience will surely follow her, and for this she is glad. For example, she plans to carry the dress code with her because she wants to be modest, and she does not want to cause her brothers to stumble. Because she has never really struggled with submission to the rules, Priscilla knows she will be able to take the general idea of the rules with her no matter where God leads her after graduating from Cornerstone University.

*Administration/Student Comparison.* Based on the interview opinions, the students and the administration seem to be on the same page concerning their feelings about the student code of conduct at Cornerstone University. The administration means for the code to bring about good in students' lives and help them to be more like Jesus. Each student expressed similar statements of agreement - noting that the rules teach them obedience and help them become more like Jesus. Even Luke, who thinks the rules are unnecessary, said he understands that the rules are, ultimately, good for him.

Mark, the member of administration who was interviewed, mentioned that he has

seen a growing trend of hardness towards the rules over the years. He has observed that knowledge tends to puff up, and students who are in their third and fourth year at Cornerstone University are less willing to submit to the rules because they feel they have outgrown them. A similar comment was made by Priscilla, when she explained that she sees freshmen as being more willing to live by the regulations in the handbook. “Upperclassmen find it harder to submit,” she said, “Especially when it comes to alcohol” (personal communication, April 20, 2014).

Even though there are varying degrees of submission, overall, the students at Cornerstone University seem to view the rules as beneficial to their development as whole persons. While the administration expressed understanding for some students’ unwillingness to abide by all of the policies, they also maintained their view that the rules are inherently good. The students who did not fully agree with all of the rules still knew why they were being asked to live by certain standards. Thus, the communication between the administration and students at Cornerstone University appears to be such that each student understands the reasoning behind the handbook, even if they do not agree with everything.

*Ethos of El Shaddai University versus Cornerstone University.* One of the first noticeable differences between the two institutions is the use of the word “discipline.” El Shaddai University frequently uses this word in their handbook; it is included in the first line of their mission statement. Jonah (the dean of students) used it in his discussion of discipleship, and Jethro used it in his explanation of why he thinks El Shaddai University borders on being a school that promotes “discipline for discipline’s sake.” While there

may be little significance in this observation, it is notable to point out this difference in language between the two institutions. In the literature review, it was noted by Dannels (1997) that there is, indeed, a difference between student discipline that is categorized as keeping law and order and student discipline that serves the purpose of educating students to specific patterns of behavior and values.

Cornerstone University did not place as much emphasis on the word “discipline” as El Shaddai University. Instead, the common word in Cornerstone University’s literature and amongst interviewees was “obedience.” In the context of how these words are used at each university, do they mean the same thing? Perhaps; however, the plain understanding of the word “discipline” is, “The practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behavior, using punishment to correct disobedience” (Merriam Webster.com, 2014). The word “obedience” is commonly understood to mean, “Compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority” (Merriam Webster.com, 2014). Both definitions are similar, but discipline seems to imply a more forceful method of compliance, whereas obedience is a voluntary submission to the rules or authority. In light of how these words are used at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, it seems that discipline places more emphasis on a student’s responsibility to constantly live by the rules. Obedience, on the other hand, puts more focus on choosing to live by the rules because one feels they are worthy of submission. This points back to a comment made by Jethro at El Shaddai University. He said, “There is too much focus on what we [students] have to do versus what Jesus has done - sanctification by faith, not by works” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). In other words, Jethro is suggesting that El Shaddai University’s use of very specific disciplinary methods (or codes of conduct)

places too much emphasis on the works and image of man and not enough emphasis on grace and Jesus Christ. Though a similar dislike for the rules was mentioned by interviewees at Cornerstone University, a statement about placing too much emphasis on the self was not made. Students from Cornerstone University seemed to think obedience to the rules found in the handbook was necessary but not overly burdensome.

No matter how they ultimately felt about the rules, students at both universities expressed a genuine love for growing in Christ-likeness and an understanding that being submissive to authority was honoring to God. Not a single student said they would be following all of the rules found in their respective handbooks after graduation; each one expressed that they were free to make their own decisions. For example, Hiram at El Shaddai University stated, “Students can disagree with rules. The rules are Biblically influenced, but we can make our own decisions” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Students and administrators both expressed the belief that choosing not to follow all of the specific rules after graduation would not make one a bad person. The common theme, at each institution, seemed to be an understanding by both students and the administration that the rules (though they are derived from Biblical principles) are not perfect. However, perfect or not, they provide guidelines for living, which help students pursue holiness, live with integrity, and become more like Jesus. Nearly every interviewee ended their response to the questions with a statement about bringing God glory. Bringing glory to God was the ultimate purpose behind creating the rules for the administration, and it was the ultimate purpose for following the rules for the students. This is certainly a unique perspective, found only at faith-based institutions such as El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University.



## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

Leonard (1965), as quoted by Dannells (1997), recorded the following of colonial student codes of conduct:

...students were forbidden to lie, steal, curse, swear, use obscene language, play at cards or dice, get drunk, frequent inns, associate with any person of bad reputation, commit fornication, fight cocks, call each other nicknames, buy, sell, or exchange anything, or be disrespectful, or tardy, or disorderly at public worship.

Having read the handbook overviews of El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, the regulations listed above for colonial student codes of conduct do not seem far removed from rules found in modern day faith-based universities. Both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University have rules prohibiting drinking, gambling, sexual immorality, and other similar lifestyle choices. Though most colleges and universities have moved away from an *in loco parentis* style of discipline, the universities in this study still practice many of the strict regulations attributed to Colonial American colleges. Time has brought much change in the realm of higher education, but there are still some aspects of education that remain the same for faith-based institutions. As noted, El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University both have rules that mimic the religious beliefs found in their mission. These beliefs influence all aspects of education at

these institutions, and students are contractually bound to submit themselves to the authority of the institutions while they are enrolled (recall Contract Theory). This may seem like a return to a paternalistic style of discipline, but it is actually part of these universities' attempts to foster the development of the whole student. As mentioned in the introduction, colleges have never sought to affect just intellect but have always assumed the purpose of developing all dimensions of the student in order that they may become a well-rounded, whole person. Thus, it is no surprise that El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, as faith-based institutions, see part of this mission to develop students as including a moral and spiritual element. This harkens back to Lau's (2006) study, when he mentioned the phrase 'integration of faith and learning.' This phrase, coined by Christian institutions, holds intellectual and spiritual development as equally important. This is not a new concept; it also brings to mind the early idea of the 'unity of truth,' which held that the pursuit of knowledge was for the purpose of illuminating the Divine. Thus, colleges in Colonial America practiced the 'integration of faith and learning' – combining the liberal arts with Biblical truths, much like modern day El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University.

Student interviewees expressed, in their explanation of what it means to develop the whole person, that spirituality is an important piece of the puzzle. Secular institutions may also emphasize the importance of spiritual development, but the difference, in this case, is that El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University prescribe to a very specific definition of what is acceptable when it comes to spiritual beliefs, and these specifics come primarily from the text of the Christian Bible. However, as it was mentioned in the interviews, many of the rules found in the handbooks of El Shaddai

University and Cornerstone University are simply rules (for the good of the community, for teaching obedience), not derived from Biblical mandates.

One may pose the following question: If students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are supposed to develop as whole persons, but they choose not to carry the specific rules of conduct forward, have they really developed? It is possible to assume that the strict codes of behavior at these universities simply act as a mechanism of social control, prohibiting public behaviors that are deemed unacceptable by each school's standards. Hiram at El Shaddai University claimed that the university tells students not to live by all of the rules found in the handbook after graduation. According to Hiram, they are encouraged to come up with conclusions about what is acceptable on their own. Is not this a form a development - setting guidelines for a time and teaching students to ponder hard questions, but eventually setting students free to be their own informed decision makers? It seems that even if the goal of El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University is simply to enact policies that demand social control, the students at each institution still feel free to make their own decisions. Priscilla at Cornerstone University acknowledged that she will not carry each code of conduct with her, but she will continue to take away the general principles of submission and obedience taught by the specific standards. For Priscilla, development took place when she chose to define the rules of the code as overarching principles of submission and obedience. Though she is not carrying forward a few of the specifics, she is carrying forward what she reasoned to be the important themes and main purpose of the rules. In general, codes that are successful typically prescribe high standards to which individuals aspire. Students at both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University aspire to the

high standards found within their respective codes of conduct while they are members of the university community, and each student will take some element(s) of the code with them after graduation.

As mentioned earlier, developing the whole student requires liberty for students to think for themselves and support from faculty and administration. Though students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University have many specific regulations on their lifestyle choices and even some on their public positions on social issues, nowhere in their prescribed codes of conduct are they prohibited from thinking. Students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are at liberty to think as much or as little as they choose. Furthermore, students at both institutions reported feeling great amounts of support from their teachers and the school administration. As Esther at El Shaddai University said, “Teachers are not content to just leave you where you are; they desire to form relationships with students and push them to grow” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Seeing that both liberty and support are present for students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, it is impossible to declare that the student codes of conduct at these institutions are not fostering the growth and development of the whole student. Just like at other institutions, students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are experiencing what it is like to grow as a whole person. Perhaps the only difference is that they are being developed in very intentional ways.

The intentionality of the development at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University stems from the mission statement of each school. Ultimately, the mission of each institution is to bring glory to God in all aspects of higher education. The schools

cannot achieve this mission if they allow students to develop without spiritual guidelines. Therefore, many of the rules found in the code of conduct are designed to uphold the beliefs found within the Bible. Each school espouses belief in the inerrancy of Biblical texts and uses Scripture to regulate their standards for right thinking and living. Secular institutions operate in a similar fashion; they uphold a mission and create standards for education, but the intentional components of development at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are the results of a conservative Biblical point-of-view.

*Revisiting Lau (2006, pp. 555-559).* The following paragraphs will revisit a few of the reasons for why an institution chooses to adopt a given set of behavior codes as determined by Lau's (2006) study and compare them to my own findings.

The number one reason the institutions in Lau's study adopted certain behavior codes was "to promote Christian distinctives and values." This is certainly true for El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. A Biblical understanding of Christian character heavily influences the behavioral expectations at both schools. Note that while each university is founded on Biblical principles and infuses these principles into their codes of behavior, there are rules that exist for the purpose of campus safety and for the good of the community. Not all of the codes reflect strict Biblical mandates. As Mark at Cornerstone University said, "Some are direct Biblical commands, some are based on Biblical principles but not explicitly stated in the Bible, and some are rules for the good of the community, such as bedtimes in the dorm" (personal communication, April 20, 2014). Though there are three distinct categories of rules, the fact remains that both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University have codes of conduct that promote

“Christian distinctives and values.”

Lau found that a second reason for rule adoption was “to project a certain ‘image’ in the community and among constituency groups.” While I do not have absolute proof that El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University adopted particular rules for the purpose of projecting a certain image in the community, it is reasonable to believe this is true. Each university is surely scrutinized by their surrounding community. It is illogical to think that the community’s perception of the university in no way informs the codes of behavior. It is also relevant to assume that some of the schools’ policies are maintained due to the wishes of donors. Luke, at Cornerstone University, alluded to this point when he commented that many of the rules that are still in place are there to please donors who lived “back in the day.” According to Luke, Cornerstone University was very fundamentalist in the beginning, and many of the financial supporters of the school still have the same mindset. Therefore, the more conservative rules found in the handbook are there to please the donors. Again, I cannot prove that certain rules in the handbook are there to please donors or to keep up a certain image in the community, but it seems feasible.

“To prepare a person for life after college” was a third reason for codes of conduct found in Lau’s study. There is the stigma that students who attend El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are ill prepared for the “real world,” because they are so sheltered during their time in school - often described as “culture shock.” Hiram at El Shaddai University begs to differ. He claims that the codes of conduct have taught him self-control, and he feels prepared to enter the job world, where there will certainly be

regulations that must be followed. There's no questioning the fact that both institutions are preparing their students to dress professionally, follow rules, and respect authority, but I wonder how prepared they are to enter the secular workforce, where not everyone will hold their same beliefs and opinions? I feel that more research and further interview data are necessary to accurately tackle this question. Thus, I will leave further judgment to the reader.

Though I did not analyze each of Lau's findings, the three that were discussed adequately demonstrate the similarities in the findings of the study. Lau's research indicated the possible reasoning behind codes of conduct at Christian institutions, and my interview data support his findings. The similarity of my findings to Lau's findings alludes to the significance of the research.

*Whole Student Development and Self-Authorship.* As mentioned in Chapter 2, whole student development means that students are actively participating in their own development and are not simply passive recipients. As stated previously, Priscilla, at Cornerstone University, demonstrates this sort of active participation when she stated that she would choose to follow overarching principles found in the code of conduct but not each specific rule. For Priscilla, development took place when she chose to define the rules of the code as overarching principles of submission and obedience; at this moment Priscilla took an active role in her own development.

In order to further explore and make concluding remarks about the process of development taking place in the students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University, it will be helpful to employ the use of at least one secular student

development theory. Thus, I have chosen to use Baxter Magolda's theory of Self-Authorship. The following paragraphs will include a brief description of the tenants of self-authorship and a discussion of where the student interviewees at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University (in general) fit or do not fit into the phases of Magolda's theory. Overall, Magolda reminds us "developing self-authorship takes time and energy" (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 184).

Magolda defined self-authorship as "the internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and social relations" (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 183). In her theory of self-authorship, Magolda includes four phases of development. Each of these phases includes epistemological, intrapersonal, and interpersonal elements that are associated with particular questions. The epistemological question students ask on their journey of self-authorship is "How do I know?" – questioning the certainty of knowledge. The intrapersonal elements deal with the question "Who am I?", and the final question, "How do I want to construct relationships with others?", deals with interpersonal elements of the theory. Magolda notes that students on the road to self-authorship will eventually realize that the answers to these questions are inevitably intertwined (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 184). The four phases of self-authorship are as follows: Following Formulas, Crossroads, becoming the Author of One's Life, and Internal Foundation.

In the first phase of Magolda's theory, *Following Formulas*, "young adults follow the plans laid out for them by external authorities about what they should think and how they should accomplish their work" (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 184). Students in this phase desire to gain approval from those with whom they build relationships, and major life



decisions contain very little of their own reasoning. Though students may pretend or make it sound like their decisions are their own ideas, much is decided by important figures in their lives such as parents, teachers, and significant others.

Do the students interviewed at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University fall into the *Following Formulas* phase of Magolda's self-authorship theory? First of all, I would like to point out that it is difficult to draw any final conclusions about where the students I interviewed fall in Magolda's theory, simply because I only had one opportunity to interact with them. To fully address this topic, it would have been beneficial to get to know students as they started school as a freshman and observe their patterns of decision making up to their senior year and post graduation. However, a brief analysis based on the interview data I did glean will suffice.

From a contract theory perspective, it may seem that the students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are simply making decisions based on the rules found in the handbook, which was given to them by authority figures at the school. Many of the students did mention being bound to obey the rules – especially since each school requires them to read and sign the handbook; thus, creating a contract between the student and the institution. Esther recognized that by choosing to attend El Shaddai University and signing the covenant, she agreed to abide by the handbook, and she wants to uphold her end of the agreement. I can see where this might equal following formulas for life. From day one, students at these universities are being told how to live in community with others and what beliefs are acceptable or not acceptable. However, I did not see evidence of the *Following Formulas* phase in the students I interviewed. Each

student agreed that they were submitting to the rules, but they also thought about why the rules were either good or bad and what their decisions about them might mean for their lives after graduation.

Perhaps when students first come to these universities they are more likely to think they will be accepted if they follow the rules. However, the students I interviewed (juniors and seniors) had come to conclusions about what they would follow and not follow after graduation – when they are no longer bound to the agreement they made to their university. Priscilla at Cornerstone University expressed this point when she mentioned that freshmen are more likely to willingly submit to the rules. Had I interviewed freshman, perhaps I would have found these students to be working through Magolda's *Following Formulas* phase.

In the second phase, *Crossroads*, students begin to realize that their initial plans were not best suited to their needs and interests. They also “become dissatisfied with how they have been defined by others and see the need to create their own sense of self” (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 185). Authentic behavior versus behavior based on the approval of others begins to emerge during this phase, as well. *Crossroads* is a time for students to set about determining their own beliefs instead of solely adopting the beliefs of others, as they had done in the past. Based on observations of the students in her study, Magolda said, “A clearer sense of direction and more self-confidence marked the end of the crossroads” (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 185).

I am not sure if any of the students I interviewed at El Shaddai University or Cornerstone University are in this *Crossroads* phase. They each seemed to have a very

clear understanding of why they believed what they believed. I would say it is safe to assume that Jethro went through this phase as he determined that many of the rules in El Shaddai University's handbook were simply rules for the sake of discipline. He probably did not start out at this point; he mentioned that he had learned a great deal from the local church he has been attending. Jethro said, "Honestly, the church's influence has been the best influence on me" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). He most likely entered the *Crossroads* phase when he began to question some of the teachings at El Shaddai University and formulate his own informed opinions. Then again, maybe Jethro is still at the *Crossroads* point, since he is using teachings from a local church to validate his stance that the rules at El Shaddai University inflict "discipline for discipline's sake." However, the fact that Jethro was willing to look outside of his immediate environment for answers and come to conclusions about those in authority over him shows that he is taking steps towards self-authorship.

The third phase, *Becoming the Author of One's Life*, "is characterized by the ability to choose one's beliefs and stand up for them in the face of conflicting external viewpoints" (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 186). Students commence living by the beliefs they have established for themselves, but they also realize that their convictions may need to shift a bit, as circumstances change. During this phase, students may become particularly choosy when it comes to entering into relationships; caution will be exercised when entering into any relationship that would deter them from their new sense of self.

Overall, I sensed that the students I interviewed at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University had taken ownership of their beliefs and their actions towards

others. When asked questions about why they held certain beliefs or practiced certain behaviors, none of the students answered by rattling off rules found in their respective handbooks, quoted professors or other campus officials, or cited school mission statements. Instead, each student used “I” statements when answering these types of questions. In my opinion, students who frequently use “I” statements in answering questions pertaining to their systems of belief have already become or are becoming authors of their own lives. One could argue that these students are actually still in the *Following Formulas* stage and are only using “I” statements to try and pretend that the views they hold are their own. Maybe this is the case for some of the students at El Shaddai University or Cornerstone University, but I did not get that impression from the students I interviewed.

Magolda also mentions that students in the *Becoming the Author of One’s Life* phase are careful not to enter into relationships that would dishonor their new sense of self. Again looking at Jethro at El Shaddai University, I would like to mention a personal story that supports this section. I knew Jethro before interviewing him for this study, and one of our previous conversations involved him counseling me on reasons for not dating someone outside of my faith. Standing up for what he believes in, even in dating relationships, shows that Jethro is certainly on the road to becoming the author of his own life, because he is choosing to follow particular beliefs even when he is not contractually bound to do so.

The final phase, *Internal Foundation*, is made up of students who are “grounded in their self-determined belief system, in their sense of who they are, and in the mutuality

of their relationships” (Evans, et. al., 2010, pg. 186). Because these students have a stable system of belief they are more likely to have inner feelings of peace and contentment. This inner strength not only helps them in a personal sense, but it allows them to more openly and freely interact with others who do not share their system of beliefs. Trusting their own feelings also aids students in curbing the fear of external influences – views different from their own do not affect them greatly (as was the case in phase 1). At this point, all life decisions are based on a student’s internal foundation.

It is hard to judge whether the students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University have reached the *Internal Foundation* phase of Magolda’s theory of self-authorship. At least one of the students mentioned to me that she had never worked with people who did not share her same beliefs until the previous summer. Another one of the students told me that he had attended an El Shaddai University affiliated school ever since kindergarten. Having only been in environments with people who think and believe the same as them, I am not sure if these students have mastered the final phase of Magolda’s theory. They will need more interactions with people who are different from them to test their self-determined convictions. However, as stated in multiple portions of this paper, Priscilla, at Cornerstone University, demonstrates an active participation in her own development when she stated that she would choose to follow overarching principles found in the code of conduct but not each specific rule. For Priscilla, development took place when she chose to define the rules of the code as overarching principles of submission and obedience; at this moment Priscilla took an active role in her own development. Even if each of the students I interviewed has not reached the final phase of self-authorship, many agreed that development is not stagnant – it requires change. Thus,

I feel that the students at both universities are open to progressing along the road of self-authorship.

According to Magolda's study, many of the students she monitored did not reach the final stages of self-authorship until they were anticipating graduation. This is an interesting finding, in light of many of the comments I received during my interviews with students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. Much was said about waiting until after graduation to stop living by certain rules found in the handbook. This can be attributed to the fact that the students feel an obligation to live up to their end of the bargain they made when entering their respective universities. When they graduate, they will no longer be bound to uphold all of the rules they lived under during school and can make their own decisions. Many of the students I interviewed had already decided (prior to graduation) which rules they would not be carrying with them after graduation.

An interesting conundrum I faced when writing this section was the fact that the idea of "SELF-authorship" does not really align with the missions of the schools included in my study. When the students I interviewed espoused statements such as "It is all for God's glory," "...living out the call to be more like Jesus," and "...help me focus on Christ," it became apparent that there is very little "self" involved in their idea of development. Both El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University include similar statements within their mission statements and/or core beliefs. For instance, part of El Shaddai's claims that the university exists "to grow Christlike character" (El Shaddai University website). The students I interviewed at these universities are not working towards SELF-authorship; they are focused on becoming more like Christ – which entails

sacrificing the self. Thus, they believe in the authority that God's word has (or should have) over their lives, and they seek to honor God in all of their decisions. For example, Hiram at El Shaddai University said he has learned to deny himself, and he sees honoring the authority of the school as ultimately honoring God. If this is the case, is it not feasible to state that, according to Magolda's theory of self-authorship, this student would still be in the first phase of *Following Formulas*? In fact, if all of the students I interviewed see their lives as being authored by God and they look to Him (as an external authority figure) for guidance, will they not all be forever stuck in the first phase? Perhaps this is pushing the limits of what Magolda meant by external authority figure, but it seems feasible. It is certainly an interesting concept to consider, and while I do not believe the students I interviewed are stuck in phase one of Magolda's theory of self-authorship, I see where the argument could be made. I bring this up primarily to state that it was difficult to analyze my interviewees using Magolda's secular theory, because the students I interviewed most likely did not see themselves as the authors of their own lives.

*Religion vs. Grace.* Towards the end of Chapter 4 and at the beginning of Chapter 5, I mentioned differences in the ethos at El Shaddai University versus the ethos at Cornerstone University. In particular, I noted the frequent use of the word "discipline" at El Shaddai University and the frequent use of the word "obedience" at Cornerstone University. In this final analysis, I would like to parse out further nuances between the two schools using the concept of Religion v. Grace found in Timothy Keller's book *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*.

One of the very first points Keller makes in his section on religion and grace is

strikingly similar to a comment made by Jethro at El Shaddai University. Keller (2008) says the following: “There is a great gulf between understanding that God accepts us because of our efforts and the understanding that God accepts us because of what Jesus has done” (pg. 186). This is almost exactly what Jethro conveyed during his interview. He said, “...it [El Shaddai University] tends to be too man-centered. There is too much focus on what we have to do versus what Jesus has done – sanctification by faith not by works” (personal communication, May 7, 2014). Thus, religion proposes that one obeys in order to be accepted by God, while grace sets the tone that one is accepted by God, therefore one obeys. As previously mentioned, El Shaddai University fits more with the tone of religion while Cornerstone University is more aligned with the idea of grace.

Keller (2008) does a good job explaining the difference between religion and grace. He says the following of the two:

The primary difference is that of motivation. In religion, we try to obey the divine standards out of fear. We believe that if we don't obey we are going to lose God's blessing in this world and the next. In the gospel, the motivation is one of gratitude for the blessing we have already received because of Christ. While the moralist is forced into obedience, motivated by fear of rejection, a Christian rushes into obedience, motivated by a desire to please and resemble the one who gave his life for us. (pg. 186)

Based on this breakdown of religion and grace, I feel it is accurate to assume that in some ways El Shaddai University operates under a scheme of religion and Cornerstone University is closer to the theme of grace. As Jethro pointed out, El Shaddai University



seems to focus a lot on man and what he must do versus a focus on what has already been done (through Christ) and the proper response to this blessing. This is evident in the general content of the rules found in El Shaddai University's handbook. There are very specific rules prohibiting types of music, certain attire, and limiting time spent off campus. All of these very specific and strict rules seem to force students into obedience. Looking at the rules at El Shaddai University through the lense of religion, students and administrators run the risk of becoming Pharisaic. Keller (2008) says the following of Pharisees: "They build their sense of worth on their own moral and spiritual performance as a kind of resume to present before God and the world" (pg. 184). If one operates under the theme of religion, where one must work to be accepted by God, this runs the risk of becoming very legalistic in one's thinking and actions. Jethro at El Shaddai University expressed this point when he said, "...the school might be trying to control too much of your life" (personal communication, May 7, 2014). By seeking to control minute details of students' lives, El Shaddai University borders on forcing students into obedience, rather than trusting students to make good choices on their own.

The content of Cornerstone University's handbook, on the other hand, is less specific and more general in the sense that in many areas (music, attire, relationships) it simply implores students to exercise discernment. When formatted in this manner, the rules allow students at Cornerstone University more freedom to make their own decisions. Thus, students are obeying the rules out of sheer desire to do so; they are motivated by gratitude for what Christ has done not by fear of rejection. This point is expressed best by Lydia at Cornerstone University when she said, "If you are having trouble keeping the rules, you may want to reflect on the condition of your heart"

(personal communication, April 20, 2014). In other words, Lydia feels that keeping the rules at Cornerstone should be a response that flows directly from the heart – a heart that is grateful for the freedom found in Christ. If obedience does not flow from a grateful heart, perhaps one is following the rules out of obligation or a fear of rejection. According to Lydia, this calls for reexamination.

*Final Thoughts.* This research seeks to answer the overarching questions: Do the student codes of conduct at the two religiously affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States (El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University) foster the growth and development of the whole student? Why or why not? After working through the literature and interview data found in this research, my general conclusion to this question is that the student conduct codes at both universities do foster growth and development of the whole student, but students at Cornerstone University appear to be developing more freely than those at El Shaddai University. Students at these universities are growing in more ways than one - academically, physically, spiritually, culturally, and they are developing the ability to make their own decisions about life and moral dilemmas, despite specific teachings. Are students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University being taught to view the world through a specific lense? Obviously; but this is no different from students attending a secular university. As humans, we are always calculating circumstances and decisions through one lense or another. Just because students at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are asked to look through a Biblical lense does not mean they are developing any less than those students at a university that allows them to choose their own lense. As Chickering (1997) stated, “Every college and university, public or private, church-related or not, is in

the business of shaping human lives” (Guthrie as quoted in Lau, 2006, pg. 551), and this is exactly what El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University are doing - shaping lives.

*Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research.* This study does a good job of summarizing the beliefs and codes of conduct found at El Shaddai University and Cornerstone University. Because I only focused on two schools, I was able to meet one-on-one with interviewees and go more in depth concerning their handbooks than might be feasible if more schools were included. However, the greatest limitation of this study, in my opinion, is the relatively small sample of students and administration I was able to interview. Due to restraints on time and resources, I was only able to interview three students at each campus and one member of administration. I feel that this was adequate for the purposes of this research, but this sample would need to be broadened for further, more in depth research. It would also be beneficial to include other religiously affiliated schools in future studies.

A second limitation of this study is that I was only able to analyze whole student development from a singular point – where the students I interviewed were currently in their development. In a more in depth study, one could build relationships with students entering as freshman and trace their development over four years (or however long it takes them to complete college) and continue the study for up to a year after graduation. This sort of long-term study would give a more accurate picture and allow for a better assessment of student development over time. It would also reflect just how many of the rules are carried over into students’ lives after graduation.

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## **Appendix A: Original e-mail sent out to participating schools**

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Emily Longshore, and I am a second semester graduate student at the University of South Carolina in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program. This semester, I have begun work on my thesis, and I am hoping you will be able to help.

My thesis will focus on how student codes of conduct at religious colleges affect the development of the "whole student." Ideally, I would like to interview the Dean of Student Affairs, and one or two current students (juniors and/or seniors). Attached is a document of the potential questions I will be asking. Since El Shaddai University is not terribly far from where I live, I would prefer to meet with these individuals in-person, at their convenience. Anyone who is willing to participate will be sent a copy of the questions and informed consent document in advance.

Also, I'm not sure if El Shaddai University has any sort of research protocol that I need to follow before I begin interviewing these people. Do you know who I would need to contact about that?

With much appreciation,

-Emily Longshore-

## **Appendix B: Interview questions for administration**

1) Tell me a bit about yourself and what drew you to work at El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University

2) College is often a time when students grow and change a great deal. In your opinion, what type of development does El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University hope to foster?

3) Tell me about the formulation of your student conduct codes.  
-Did you have a hand in crafting those policies?  
-In your opinion, what is the purpose of El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University's code?

4) Much of the professional literature in College Student Personnel stresses the development of the whole student, what does this phrase mean to you?  
-What role, if any, do you think El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University's code of conduct has in fostering this type of development?  
-In your opinion and based on your experience with students here, what role does the student code of conduct play in shaping students' experiences?  
-Can you give me some examples or **tell me some stories** about how students grow from El Shaddai University/Cornerstone University's conduct policies?



### **Appendix C: Interview questions for students**

- 1) What does the phrase “developing the whole student” mean to you?
- 2) Why do you think your institution has student conduct codes?
- 3) Did the rules/expected behaviors outlined in the student conduct code help you in your development as a whole person? Why? Examples?

## **Appendix D: Informed consent document**

Dear Participant,

I am currently a graduate student at the University of South Carolina in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program. As a requirement for this program, I am writing a thesis and will be given 6 hours of course credit upon completion. My thesis work focuses on student codes of conduct at various religious affiliated institutions in the southeastern portion of the United States. Therefore, I am interviewing various students and administrators in hopes of answering the following question: How successful is each institution's student conduct code in fostering the growth and development of the "whole" student? You are being asked to participate in this study because you are either a student (junior or senior) or an administrator at a religiously affiliated university, and your opinion about your institutions' codes of conduct is important for my study. This interview is completely voluntary and confidential, and I appreciate your willingness to work with me in the development of this research.

**Time Commitment.** I will be working on this project for roughly a year. Thus, I would like to remain in touch with you for the duration of my project. However, the initial in-person interview should only last approximately an hour. If at any point during the year you no longer wish to participate, feel free to inform me of your decision, and all previous interviews will be erased and future interviews will be canceled. You have the right to terminate this relationship at anytime. My contact information is as follows: ell@email.sc.edu and/or 803.924.1117.

**Confidentiality.** As a student, I cannot offer any form of legal confidentiality. However, please know that anything you say during our sessions will be kept confidential and will only be used in my thesis work. Should you feel that there has been a breach in our confidentiality agreement or you feel that you have been treated unfairly please do not hesitate to contact my supervisors Julie Rotholz (jrotholz@mailbox.sc.edu) and/or Christian Anderson (anders77@mailbox.sc.edu).

**Videotaping/Recording.** I may choose to record our sessions in order to retain the clarity of what you convey during the interview. If, at any time, you become uncomfortable we can turn off the recording device(s). All videos and/or recordings will be destroyed after my thesis is complete.

**Potential Risks.** The only potential risk is loss of confidentiality.

## Appendix E: IRB approval letter



OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

April 30, 2014

Ms. Emily Longshore  
College of Education  
Education Leadership & Policies  
Wardlaw 307  
Columbia, SC 29208

Re: Pro00034617

Study Title: *Student Conduct Codes at Religious Affiliated Institutions: Fostering Growth*

FYI: University of South Carolina Assurance number: FWA 00000404 / IRB Registration number: 00000240

Dear Ms. Longshore:

In accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2), the referenced study received an exemption from Human Research Subject Regulations on 4/25/2014. No further action or Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. However, you must inform this office of any changes in procedures involving human subjects. Changes to the current research protocol could result in a reclassification of the study and further review by the IRB.

Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, consent document(s), if applicable, are not stamped with an expiration date.

Research related records should be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the study.

The Office of Research Compliance is an administrative office that supports the USC Institutional Review Board. If you have questions, please contact Arlene McWhorter at [arlenem@sc.edu](mailto:arlenem@sc.edu) or (803) 777-7095.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lisa M. Johnson".

Lisa M. Johnson  
IRB Manager