



Council for Christian  
Colleges & Universities

# Center for Research in Adult Learning

INDIANA  
WESLEYAN  
UNIVERSITY

**Mission:** *The CCCU Center for Research in Adult Learning will serve Christian institutions by facilitating and encouraging research, which will enhance the quality of Christ-centered adult programs.*

## Announcing Launch of Adult Education Structures Project

The CCCU Center for Research in Adult Learning at Indiana Wesleyan University is commencing a year-long study of different ways to structure adult higher education within colleges that have historically served traditional-aged students. The project will culminate in a book of case studies drawn from examples submitted by CCCU institutions. Richard Ellis, from John Brown University and Steve Holtrop, from Huntington University are co-editors. According to Dr. Ellis, there appear to be three broad institutional models

in structuring adult programs. Some institutions outsource part of the work by using curricula developed by a third party or using an outside marketing firm. Some institutions centralize adult education to a specific department or college within the institution. Still others have a distributed model where adult education is administered within departments that serve the entire institution. The Center's work to date indicates that many schools are experimenting with various combinations of outsourcing, centralizing, and distributing their adult higher education.

Cynthia Tweedell, Executive Director of the Center, observes that institutions often begin with a department of adult education within a traditional college. To optimize rapid growth and development, institutions frequently place adult education in a separate, autonomous school or college. How can institutions maximize growth (and revenue) while maximizing the academic quality of adult programs? To get involved in this project, please contact [Cynthia.tweedell@indwes.edu](mailto:Cynthia.tweedell@indwes.edu)

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Cynthia Tweedell, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Jennifer Vermilion  
Administrative Assistant

### Research Agenda

- Learning outcomes assessment for adults
- Benchmarking
- Retention of adult students
- Spiritual transformation of adults
- Best practices in online learning
- Teaching diverse learners
- Alumni surveys

### Strategic Goals

- Sponsor at least one conference per year.
- Publish at least one monograph per year.
- Provide benchmarking data on adult education.
- Assist in student learning outcomes assessment
- Serve as a resource for research in adult programs.
- Coordinate projects at the request of institutions

## Annual Conference a Success!

Seventy-nine educators from thirty-one institutions participated in our Second Annual Conference in Florence, Kentucky on May 10-12, 2010. The preconference workshop on "Using Technology to Enhance Learning" (pictured at right) was particularly well received. Roger Parrott's keynote, "Planning Will Drain the Life From the Future of Christ-Centered Adult Education," stimulated much discussion.



Conference proceedings are available at <http://www.indwes.edu/CRAL/Resources/>

## Student Learning Outcomes Benchmarking Project

The Center is busy analyzing data from our Student Learning Outcomes project. Seven institutions sent us essays on a common writing prompt from their entering and graduating students. Faculty from those same institutions scored essays from another institution using a common rubric. We are now compiling reports for each institution showing the difference between entering and graduating students, and benchmarking them with the sample as a whole. To learn more about the project and how your institution can participate next year see: <http://www.indwes.edu/CRAL/Current-Research/>

## Retention/Spiritual Formation Benchmarking Project

Seven institutions have been participating in a combined retention and spiritual formation project over the past two years. They have sent an online survey to their entering and graduating adult students. The survey gathers demographic and assessment information. Beginning students are asked about their reasons for choosing the institution. Graduating students are asked to evaluate various aspects of the institution. Integrated into this survey is a spirituality inventory. Each summer institutions receive a report on their students: Who they are, why they come, their levels of satisfaction and spirituality. After two years, we analyze the characteristics of students who persisted to graduation. This helps us understand the types of students who drop. In addition we look at changes in the spirituality of students between entry and graduation. For more information on how your institution can participate see: <http://www.indwes.edu/CRAL/Current-Research/>.



### Steering Committee

Richard Ellis– John Brown University, AR  
Don Finn– Regent University, VA  
Steve Holtrop– Huntington University, IN  
Lori Jass– Bethel University, MN  
Audrey Kelleher– Belhaven University, MS  
Toni Pauls– Warner Pacific University, OR  
Shirley Roddy– Mid-America Christian Univ., OK  
George Howell– Indiana Wesleyan Univ., IN  
Anita Underwood– Nyack College, NY  
Mimi Barnard– CCCU  
Cynthia Tweedell– Center for Research

## New Book: *Best Practices in the Integration of Faith and Learning for Adult and Online Students*

Edited by Cheryl Torok Fleming and Cynthia Benn Tweedell

Practical teaching tips from over 20 institutions

On site, Online and Hybrid Techniques

\$15 single copy; \$12 for 10 or more

To order, contact [Jennifer.vermilion@indwes.edu](mailto:Jennifer.vermilion@indwes.edu)

## Center Activities

- Annual Conference (May 16-18, 2011 in Indianapolis)
  - Publications
  - Regular Teleconferences
- Student Learning Outcomes Benchmarking Project
  - Spiritual Formation Project
  - Moral Reasoning Project
  - Retention Project
- Gathering useful Information about CCCU Adult Programs
  - Bibliography on Adult Education

Consult our website for more information: [www.indwes.edu/cral](http://www.indwes.edu/cral)