

2016 WACAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

# SEACHANGE

IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

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# You've Gotta Have Faith (Or Not!)

## Faith and Fit in College Admission

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# Our Purpose





# What to expect at a RAC vs. a non~RAC

- Academic success
- Development of the whole person
- Religious discussions
- Spirituality outside the classroom

# Good fit?

- Open-minded
- Service-oriented
- Collaborative
- Good character traits
- Curious about faith
- Attend a religiously affiliated high school?



*Successful at any college!*



# Who might not be a good fit?

- Rigid
- Inflexible
- Not open to questioning existentialism and faith
- Cynical
- Uninterested in their own spiritual growth



## Types of Religiously Affiliated Colleges



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graph TD; A[Types of Religiously Affiliated Colleges] --> B[Orthodox]; A --> C[Critical Mass]; A --> D[Intentionally Pluralist]; A --> E[Accidentally Pluralist];
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Orthodox

Critical  
Mass

Intentionally  
Pluralist

Accidentally  
Pluralist

from *Quality with Soul*  
by Robert Benne



# Orthodox

- “Most religious”
- Still run according to founding religion
- Statement of belief
- Theology courses required
- Religion in other courses
- Attendance at religious services may be required




# Critical Mass

- Not all members of the community are required to adhere to the religion of the school
  - “Critical mass” could be as high as 75%
- Some parts secular
- Open-ended requirements
- Religious services are popular
- Intentional integration of religious diversity



# Intentionally Pluralist

- More secular
  - Religious roots
  - Not just theology classes
  - Services are open
  - Diverse religious groups
  - Offices on campus for different faiths
- 

# Accidentally Pluralist

- No longer have any religious vision for how they are run.
- Rare traditions
- Chapel used for other events
- Religious in name or history only





# How do you know where a RAC falls on the spectrum?

- Not cut and dry
- Mission statement
- Organizations for students of other faiths
- Handout . . .

# Questions to ask RACs

- Do you have to be [insert religion here] to attend?
- Will I be required to take religious courses?
- Are other classes on campus (history, philosophy, literature, political science, business, etc.) also taught from a religious perspective?
- Will I be required to attend worship services?



# Questions to ask RACs (continued)

- Do I get a special scholarship if I'm graduating from a [insert religion] high school and I'm accepted to your [insert religion] college?
- Is the “religious preference” I list on my application something that the admission office will take into consideration?
- Do I get “bonus points” on my application for being [insert religion]? Or would it be better for me to *not* be [insert religion] to add to your diversity?

# Questions to ask RACs (continued)


- Are the dorms co-ed or single-sex? And are there rules about how late a boy/girl can be in your dorm room?
- How is your college approaching the LGBTQ community?



# LGBTQ Students

- Can and should consider religious institutions
- Can also be spiritual or religious, or be open to a religious education
- Institutions' policies and statements
- Title IX

# Questions to Ask for LGBTQ Students

- Statements of faith?
  - Are there LGBTQ-specific policies? Trans-specific policies?
  - Student housing protocols?
  - LGBTQ clubs on campus? Campus funded – yes or no?
  - Can students lose access for LGBTQ relationships?
  - School requested an IX waiver?
- 



# Be aware . . .

- GPA, rigor of courses, standardized test scores, etc.
- Extracurricular activities and achievements, essays, letters of recommendation
- There might be something extra . . .
  - Pastoral references
  - Faith-based supplemental questions

# Examples of Supplements

- Directly faith related:
  - Example: On the Common App, Westmont College asked the following supplemental question of those who applied for the Fall 2015 semester:
    - *“Westmont College exists to serve God’s kingdom by cultivating thoughtful scholars, grateful servants and faithful leaders for global engagement with the academy, church and the world. How do you see yourself contributing to and benefitting from a Christian liberal arts college with a unique mission? (250- 500 words)”*



# Examples of Supplements

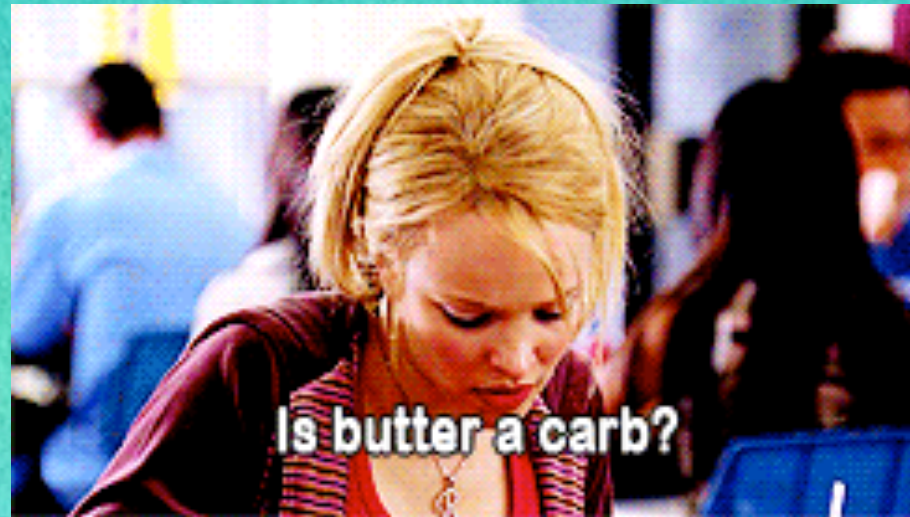
- Indirectly faith related:
- Example: On the Common App, Pepperdine University asked the following supplemental question of those who applied for the Fall 2015 semester:
  - *“As a Christian university, Pepperdine expresses its Christian principles through all aspects of academic life and administrative policy. The university affirms that truth, having nothing to fear from investigation, should be pursued relentlessly in every discipline. Students, faculty, and staff members of all faith traditions are welcome to become part of the Pepperdine University community. Please tell us a little bit about how faith has influenced your life. (50-300 words)”*

# Examples of Supplements

- Related to their religious founder/background:
- Example: On the Common App, University of Notre Dame gave their Fall 2015 applicants the following prompt as one of their four supplemental essay options:
  - *“Blessed Basil Moreau, the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, described education as ‘the art of helping young people to completeness.’ How are you incomplete? (Approx 150, no more than 200 words).*



# Questions?





# Special Thanks

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# Thank you!

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