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OVERVIEW: The dramatic surge in online higher education since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has now become a settled reality. However, colleges and universities are still grappling with the challenges of integrating online learning into their institutional strategies. Significant work remains to be undertaken to establish successful online programs, assess and enhance the online learning experience, develop and support online faculty, innovate with learning technologies, and lead digital transformation. Join leaders in biblical higher education and beyond who are optimizing their institutions' online education ecosystems for the evolving landscape.

OPTIMIZING ONLINE EDUCATION: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN THE EVOLVING HIGHER ED LANDSCAPE

DAY 1 TUESDAY | APRIL 22

9:00 – 9:15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS — PHILIP DEARBORN, PRESIDENT | ABHE

9:15 – 10:00 **SESSION 1: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE ONLINE PROGRAM TO “FUTURE-PROOF” YOUR CHRISTIAN COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY**

PRESENTER: RON MILLER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ONLINE LEARNING | SOUTHWEST BAPTIST UNIVERSITY (MO)

OVERVIEW: Christian higher education faces severe headwinds in the coming years, with enrollment declines, college closures, price pressures, shifting market factors related to workforce demands, changing opinions on the value of higher education in general, and the decrease in the number of self-identified Christians, not to mention the much-discussed “demographic cliff.” Many Christian institutions are turning to online education to mitigate these headwinds.

- ▶ Detail the challenges confronting Christian higher education today
- ▶ Describe the opportunities available to small Christian colleges and universities through online education
- ▶ Identify the key requirements for a sustainable online program

10:00 – 10:30 Q & A DISCUSSION

10:30 – 10:45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

10:45 – 11:30 **SESSION 2: VIRTUAL LEARNING 2.0: INNOVATION NOT REQUIRED; REWIRING REQUIRED**

PRESENTER: JUDY YI, DEAN OF ONLINE EDUCATION | DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY (TX)

OVERVIEW: The technology industry is already pushing the boundaries of innovation; so, we don't have to! Instead, educators can “rewire” proven teaching and learning practices into emerging learning technologies, enhancing functionality and efficiency. This, in turn, empowers educators with greater flexibility to design and implement new initiatives.

- ▶ Understand the current state of the technology industry and its impact on education
- ▶ Analyze the connection between emerging technologies and established teaching and learning methods
- ▶ Explore how to harness technological advancements for educational innovation

11:30 – 12:00 Q & A DISCUSSION

12:00 – 12:15 A WORD FROM OUR GOLD SPONSOR — CAMPUS — ERIC CURRIE

12:15 – 1:00 LUNCH — CATERED AT THE ABHE DINING ROOM

1:00 – 1:45 **SESSION 3: FUELING FACULTY EXCELLENCE: DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSMENT, & IMPACT**

PRESENTER: DALE HALE, ONLINE LEARNING SPECIALIST | STRATEGIC ASSURANCE CONSULTING (TN)

OVERVIEW: Faculty development is the foundation of institutional excellence, yet it is often undervalued or overlooked. This session will explore strategies for fostering a culture of continuous growth, effectively assessing development, and incentivizing meaningful engagement. Participants will gain practical insights into how faculty development directly impacts student success, institutional reputation, and professional fulfillment—along with the risks of neglecting it.

- ▶ A clear understanding of why faculty development matters
- ▶ Practical strategies for encouraging and supporting development
- ▶ Effective ways to assess faculty development
- ▶ Ideas for incentivizing and rewarding growth
- ▶ A wake-up call on the consequences of neglecting development



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ONLINE EDUCATION CONFERENCE
APRIL 22-23, 2025

DAY 1 CONT'D

1:45 — 2:15 Q & A DISCUSSION

2:15 — 2:30 REFRESHMENT BREAK

2:30 — 3:15 SESSION 4: ENHANCING THE ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

PRESENTER: ERIC BRANDT, ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR ONLINE EDUCATION | LANCASTER BIBLE COLLEGE (PA)

OVERVIEW: As online learning continues to evolve, the focus for institutions of higher education has shifted from simply establishing an online presence to delivering a high-quality academic experience. In an increasingly competitive landscape, particularly within Christian higher education, institutions that excel are those committed to instructional excellence and student engagement. This session explores how one institution is optimizing the online learning experience by:

- ▶ Identifying key dimensions of the online academic ecosystem
- ▶ Conducting student journey mapping to diagnose challenges and pain points
- ▶ Implementing an industry-standard course rubric to enhance instructional quality

3:15 — 3:45 Q & A DISCUSSION

3:45 — 4:00 WRAP-UP

5:00 DINNER OFF-SITE

DAY 2 WEDNESDAY | APRIL 23

9:00 — 9:15 INSIGHTS FROM THE WORD — PHILIP DEARBORN

9:15 — 10:00 SESSION 5: LEADING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

PRESENTER: RICK UPCHURCH, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ELEARNING & EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION | BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY (MS)

OVERVIEW: Higher education has been reshaped by three waves of disruption: 1976-2020 — Adult Degree Completion programs, Competency Based Education (CBE), Personal Computers, dial-up internet); 1989 — present (online learning, CBE, broadband internet, mobile learning, Learning Management Software); and 2022 — present (Generative AI). This presentation will examine how and why Institutions must strategically navigate these changes, adapting to societal shifts and leverage new technologies like AI to enhance learning and ensure sustainability.

- ▶ Critically analyze the three waves of digital disruption in higher education, identifying key technological and pedagogical shifts from 1976 to present.
- ▶ Develop a strategic framework for implementing AI technologies in educational settings, including practical assessment and integration methodologies
- ▶ Explore actionable ways to leverage AI in education, including ethical considerations.

10:00 — 10:30 Q & A DISCUSSION

10:30 — 10:45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

10:45 — 11:30 SESSION 6: ONLINE EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE — SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

OVERVIEW: Discuss the most pressing academic issues you are facing with both the panel of presenters and attendee affinity groups. Create a draft of your *Personal Action Plan* based on the most significant and urgent issues you should address following the conference.

11:30 — 12:00 Q & A DISCUSSION AND WRAP-UP

12:00 — 1:00 CLOSING LUNCH



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