

Final Report for Professional Development Grant

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## **B. Restatement of problem/creative work**

In March 2018 I presented at the ACPA (American College Personnel Association) annual convention in Houston, TX, for a program entitled, *Faith in transition: Challenges in student spiritual development*.

## **C. Brief review of creative work**

This presentation shared information regarding a research study that was conducted via a QuestionPro survey that was distributed to student affairs professionals and certain Facebook groups that were framed within certain religious or former religious identities. I worked with a graduate student on this project, and IRB approval was secured prior to the project.

## **D. Summary of findings, outcomes, or experiences had**

In this conference presentation our main aim was to describe how students and former students describe changes in religious/spirituality identity as a result of attending college. For many, attending college was the first time they were exposed to others who held different beliefs. Many of these students experienced a sense of “shattered faith syndrome” when they met people who seemed more ethical and “Christian” than people from back home who claimed Christian values but did not exactly live out these values. Many students became less religious and more spiritual in college and beyond. We shared several Pew Research study reports that depicted US regional differences in religious and political beliefs. We also discussed the current literature on spirituality, which often involves students’ learning from those who are different, having international experiences, having a more global worldview, and feeling interconnected to others.

## **E. Conclusions and recommendations**

The session was well-attended and generated a lively discussion. This is certainly a hot topic among college student identity. One member of the audience approached us afterwards in

full excitement to share some of her work on the topic. As we continue to comb through the survey data, we will develop a manuscript to submit for publication.