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Championing Christ in the Technical Workplace

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Abstract

Liberty University's goal of “*training champions for Christ*” is a high and lofty goal. Liberty has put in place classes and assignments throughout a student's time at Liberty that are aimed towards training them to be champions for Christ. However, many students who graduate from Liberty University are left lonely and unsure of how to go forth championing for Christ. This thesis will provide the motivation and encouragement for students to not only be champions for Christ but actually champion Christ, specifically in the technical workplace. In addition, this thesis evaluates Liberty's practices and will provide changes or additions that could be made to better train champions for Christ. Ultimately, Christ has called His followers to live on mission. A saved person is a sent person, and this thesis elaborates and instructs what that means for a recent graduate of Liberty University in the technical workplace.

Championing Christ in the Technical Workplace

Liberty University's tagline, "Training Champions for Christ", is its rallying call for Christians who want to live on mission for Christ. This mission is engrained into every student's mind throughout their tenure at Liberty through everything from website splash pages to decals spanning the width of Montview Student Union. Even with so much branding and vision casting, many students leave graduation asking the question, "Now that I have been trained to be a Champion for Christ, how do I champion Christ in the context of my workplace?" Liberty University's School of Engineering trains Champions for Christ well, but it could do more, and it is incumbent upon the students to fill in the gaps and distinguish themselves as true Champions for Christ in the technical workplace.

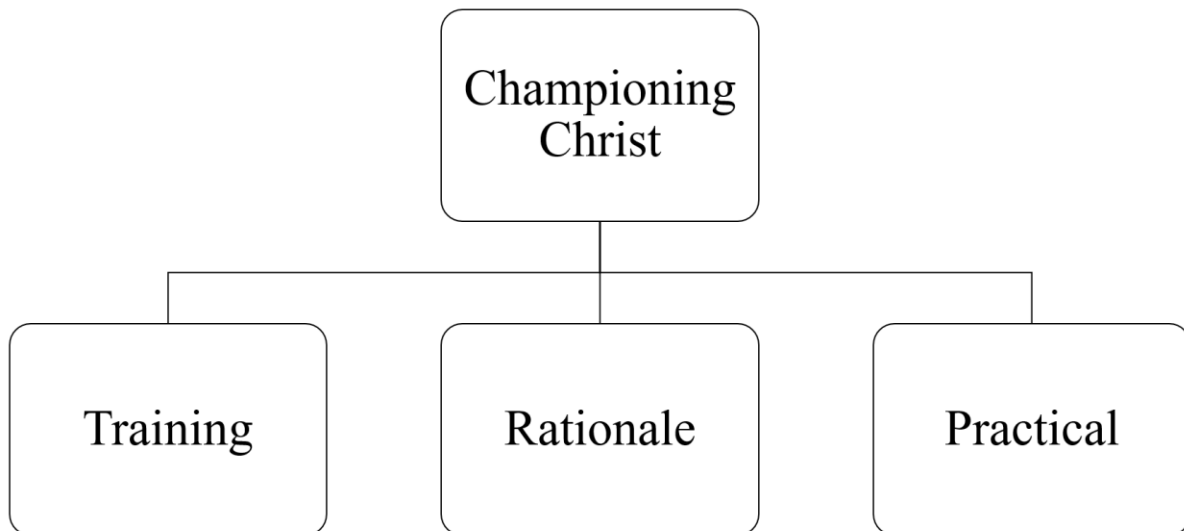


Figure 1. Diagram illustrating the topics used to expound upon Liberty's training

Training Success

The past few years have been a period of marked transformation for the School of Engineering at Liberty University. In 2017, the degree completion plans for all engineering students were overhauled, adding new classes and dropping others. Two years ago, the school

moved computational sciences to the School of Business and added a degree program in Civil Engineering. In 2018, Dr. Mark Horstemeyer was hired as the new Dean of Engineering, which has underscored the magnitude of overhaul the School has undergone. With all this change and improvement, the School of Engineering is rebranding itself and defining its role as it exists to train Champions for Christ.

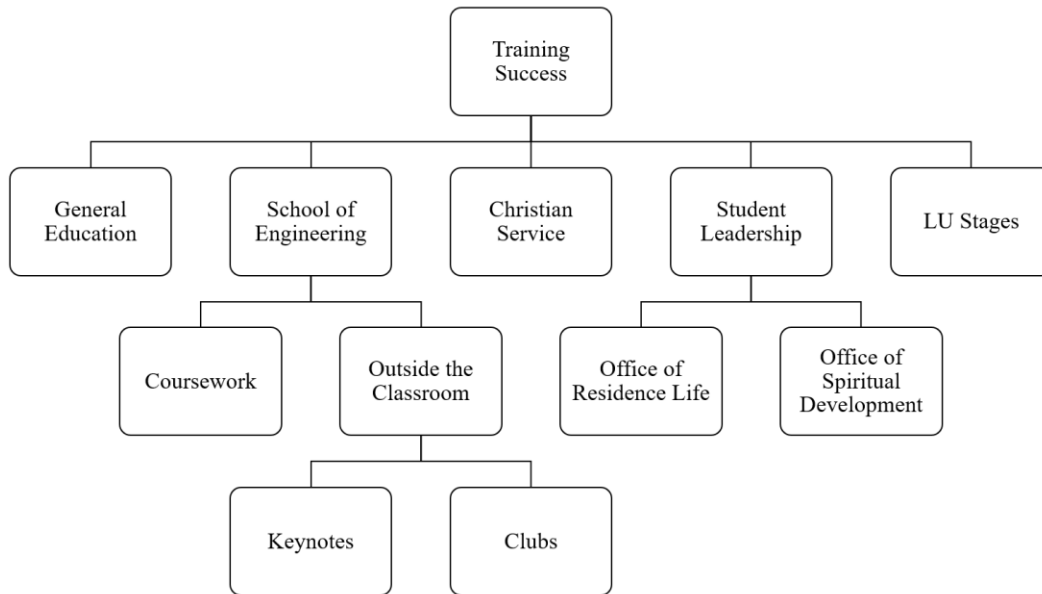


Figure 2. Diagram illustrating Liberty University’s areas of training success.

Coursework

Freshman engineering students in the School of Engineering at Liberty University become very familiar with introductory classes in the first year. These classes introduce basic engineering principles and problem-solving techniques. In addition, these first-year courses begin the discussion of ethics in the technical workplace. Outside of the department, Liberty University as an institution requires students to take various Biblical Worldview, Evangelism, Theology, and Bible Survey courses. These courses create the foundation for each student’s Christian academic experience.

General Education

Outside the School of Engineering, Liberty requires every student to take two surveys of theology, a biblical worldview survey, New and Old Testament surveys, and an introductory course in evangelism. These courses are the primary tool by which Liberty accomplishes its tagline, “Training Champions for Christ.” Giving students an overview understanding of the narrative of the Bible, Liberty University is equipping students to traverse the books of the Bible and understand the narrative. From there, Liberty gives students an overview of theology and various beliefs therein. This is accomplished practically through Biblical Worldview classes, scientifically through Creation Studies: History of Life, and academically through the two theology survey classes. These courses help students create a pattern of biblical thinking and cultural understanding through a biblical lens. In addition, students have the information to approach whatever lies ahead for them, whether studies or occupation, with biblical background. This is excellent training for Liberty students to be Christians in the workplace.

Finally, Liberty’s sole class in “championing Christ” is its EVAN 101 class. This introduction to evangelism class provides the applications and training for students who want to truly champion Christ outside of the academic setting. The class begins by defining the purpose of evangelism and the importance therein. Walking through the book *Evangelism Is...* by Dave Earley and David Wheeler (2010), Liberty students are required to apply their Bible knowledge acquired through the other general education religion courses in class and outside of class as they are taught how biblical knowledge impacts daily life.

In addition to lectures and homework assignments, students are tasked with two real life evangelism projects in this class. Servant Evangelism and Witnessing Reports are the two most practical projects required of students at Liberty in the discipline of championing Christ. First,

each student is required to complete two servant evangelism reports. These reports require the student to serve someone in the community, who is not a Christian, and then move towards sharing the gospel with them as a result of the service. This is a project that stretches a lot of students to go outside of their comfort zone and do something they normally would not. For example, helping shoppers at the nearby Walmart bring their groceries to their car, paying for the person's meal behind you at a restaurant, etc. These projects emphasize the necessity to go outside of one's comfort zone to share the gospel and champion Christ. Second, students are required to complete one witnessing report. This report requires students to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with someone in their life. For many students, who are first-year students, this is a quick call to one of their high school friends who is not a believer; for others it involves a little more work. The course teaches students several gospel sharing techniques such as the "Romans Road," and the project requires that the students apply one of these techniques and prove gospel literacy through the process of bearing witness of one's own experience as it pertains to the gospel. These two projects are the most practical training Liberty University offers students in championing Christ. However, these projects are also generally completed by the end of a student's first or second year.

These general education courses provide some basic apologetic arguments for biblical authority and prepare students to grapple with faith questions. They are the basis for a student's training to champion Christ and are essential to Liberty's mission to train Champions for Christ. It is on these courses that Liberty University bases its claim that it is "Training Champions for Christ."

Christian Service

Liberty's footprint in the community is much bigger than just academic training. Liberty has several programs devoted to ministering to people outside the school. LU Serve and LU Send are two offices that mobilize students to get off campus and put their Christian learnings to the test.

LU Serve

Locally, Liberty has several events throughout the year that empower students to help the Lynchburg community. The largest of which is entitled Serve Lynchburg. This is the largest single day service event in the city of Lynchburg, organized by the LU Serve office. LU Serve partners with businesses and organizations in the community and divides around two-thousand students into teams (see <https://www.liberty.edu/news/index.cfm?PID=18495&MID=327396>). Each team is given a team leader and a location to serve. When a team arrives at a location it is given instructions by the host, either the business/ organization owner, or a community leader who has helped organizing the Serve Lynchburg site with LU Serve. These sites allow students to serve through everything from picking up litter to cleaning toilets and mopping floors. Professor Larry Presley has described this day as "Scripture coming alive" (<https://www.liberty.edu/news/index.cfm?PID=18495&MID=327396>).

LU Serve is great opportunity for students to champion Christ in their community. It helps students realize the importance of service with sharing the gospel as well as gives them real world experience working alongside other Christians intent on one purpose.

LU Send

Where LU Serve sends students locally, LU Send sends students across the country and often internationally. A big part of LU Send's ministry is LU Send Now, which gives students

the opportunity to volunteer for impromptu disaster relief and aid missions across the globe.

Whether its hurricane relief or help in communities experiencing hardship, LU Send mobilizes students to help those who are truly in need and in a moment of crisis.

Both LU Serve and LU Send are great tools Liberty University uses to train Champions for Christ. Giving students the impetus to get off campus and enter the secular world once again in service facilitates excellent application of the Christian principles taught in class and through Liberty culture.

School of Engineering

The School of Engineering at Liberty University holds the same value of “Training Champions for Christ” as the University as a whole. Inasmuch, it requires classes to have some faith integration component. This begins freshman year and is expected to continue through graduation. Championing Christ in the technical workplace is not simply a matter of being a good employee and teammate but applying biblical principles to decision making and seeking opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Creationeering”

Through this period of improving and refining, Dean Horstemeyer has brought the term and vision of “creationeering” to Liberty as its headline for engineering development and research. “Creationeering” as defined by the School of Engineering webpage is “where these two domains [creating and engineering] meet and society benefits from the results” (see

<https://www.liberty.edu/engineering/>).

The focus on creating new things finds its foundation in the belief that God was the first engineer as the creator of everything. The “creationeering” process combines God’s creation process and engineering’s testing and analysis.

As the dean of the school, Dr. Horstemeyer emphasizes the direction the program is heading by prioritizing faith as a basis for engineering and science as a proof for the creator (Horstemeyer, LU Convocation, 2019). Horstemeyer has purposed the School of Engineering as “raising the next generation of intellectuals, Training Champions for Christ, to redeem and restore this culture” (see <https://www.liberty.edu/engineering/>).

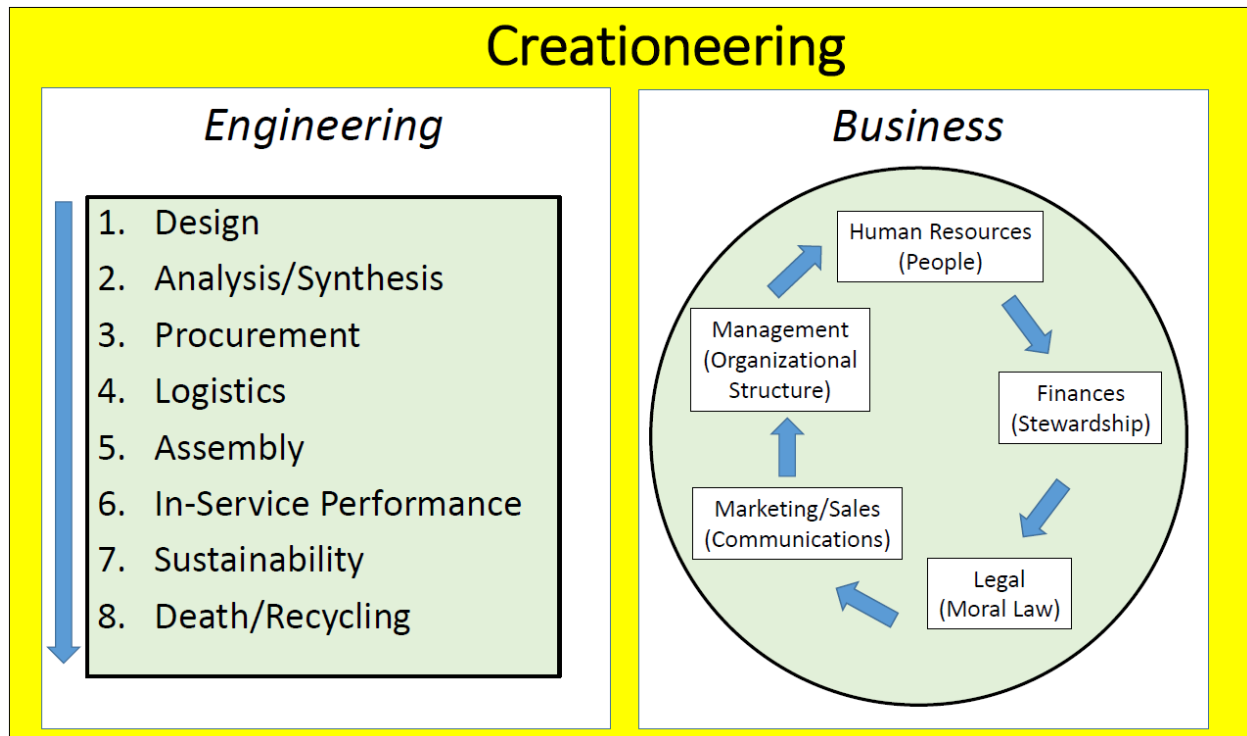


Figure 3. Diagram illustrating the “creationeering” process. From the keynote “Creationeering,” by Mark Horstemeyer 2019, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.

Ethics

Within the School of Engineering, a student’s first experience with biblical principles will be when taking the introductory engineering courses. Requiring students to study engineering ethics and analyze them, the foundation for why ethics matter is their grounding in Scripture. In addition, students walk through ethics case studies and must decide what the best path forward is in several ethical dilemmas. This process stretches students and draws them outside the typical academic setting into a more practical one. It emphasizes the difficulty in the

decision-making process in real life and forces students to decide how to apply Biblical principles in the real technical workplace.

Faith Integration Paper

In addition to the introduction of ethics, most School of Engineering classes require students to complete some sort of faith integration paper or assignment. These papers are designed to stretch the student beyond the course material and subject matter and into the “creationeering” vision. God as the first-ever engineer set the universe in motion and has sustained it ever since (Genesis 1:1, English Standard Version). Setting the laws of physics in place has allowed us to discover them and use them to engineer systems and products. As Liberty engineering students learn about the systems that God has created and engineered, they are able to reflect their studies back to Scripture. This is important because it returns the focus back to the Creator. It is much easier to champion something when that something is of penultimate value. Realizing that all glory is due to the Creator is essential in “Training Champions for Christ” because it rightly attributes the value of creation to Christ. Faith integration papers are an excellent tool of the School of Engineering to fulfill their vision. Whether it’s glorifying God through the subject matter or applying biblical principles to a student’s future role in the technical workplace, these projects keep the thread of Christ in every course.

Engineers on Mission

As Christian engineers, many Liberty students are focusing on using engineering in other countries as a means to missions. Engineering on the Christian mission field is a priceless tool in helping indigenous peoples by meeting their technological needs. Many tribal groups across the globe don’t have access to clean drinking water, so missionaries will engineer wells and water

collection devices to collect water and then filter it into drinkable water. Improving the health of an entire region and creating space for relationships and conversations are essential to successful missions.

The School of Engineering has a great emphasis on engineers on mission. There is a club by that title that helps connect engineering student with training and mission organizations in the hopes of training future missionary engineers. Missions is an excellent example of championing Christ. The engineers on mission keynotes and club involvement exemplify what it means to champion Christ especially across the globe in other cultures.

Outside the Classroom

At college, most of a student's spiritual formation happens outside the petri dish of the classroom. Liberty University has three departments specifically tasked with shepherding and "Training Champions for Christ." These departments impact students through sermons, guest speakers, and mentorship in the residence halls.

LU Stages

Throughout students' tenure as a residential student at Liberty, they are required to attend convocation. Convocation is a twice weekly event, that used to occur three times a week, on Wednesday and Friday. It is a time for the entire student body to come together and host a guest. Guests range from Stephen Curry to President Donald Trump. Speaking on topics from domestic violence to following Christ with political speakers sprinkled in, convocation gives a platform to competing opinions and contributes greatly to Liberty students' spiritual formation.

Across the four years a student attends Liberty University, they will sit under the teaching of a plethora of speakers and ideologies. Creating deep on-campus discussion and often leading to healthy debates about theology, convocation helps to train Champions for Christ. Where

Liberty is largely a spiritual bubble, convocation is the biggest window for outside influences to awaken students to the extra-Christian implications of their worldviews. LU Stages hosts and organizes convocation and is an integral part in helping Liberty train Champions for Christ.

Office of Spiritual Development

Most community for residential students at Liberty University occurs on the residence hall. Unlike other colleges, students who live on campus generally know close to everyone on their halls. This is largely due to the residence hall leadership and the role they play in discipling students as well as creating community through events and intentional interactions. The Office of Spiritual development is home to the LU Shepherds Office. The LU Shepherds Office hires students on each floor to lead small groups of about 8 students every Wednesday night. These small groups, called community groups, review the teaching delivered by the campus pastor or guest during the weekly campus community Bible study. Every student on a residence hall is assigned a community group and that group keeps the same roster throughout the year.

Community group leaders learn to disciple their peers during these groups and through one on one meetings throughout the week. In addition, the LU Shepherds office hires two students per hall to act as Resident Shepherds. Resident Shepherds are part of the leadership team Big Four and hold lead groups for the community group leaders. Community group leaders are trained through peer mentorship and discipleship as well as through Community Group Leader (CGL) connect, a class the LU Shepherds office requires community group leaders to take.

Resident Shepherds disciple the community group leaders and work alongside the Resident Assistants on the hall to create community for the residence hall. LU Shepherds disciple Resident Shepherds similarly to how a Resident Shepherd (RS) would shepherd a CGL. LU Shepherds are employees of Liberty and work in the LU Shepherds office.

Through the efforts of the Office of Spiritual Development, students have the opportunity to go deeper than the weekly convocation through the sermon during Campus Community. From Campus Community, students break from the rows of seats and come back to the residence hall where they form circles during community groups. Shepherded and disciplined by their CGLs and RSs, students are trained to be Champions for Christ very practically through openness and real-life experiences of bonding with fellow Christians on the hall. In addition, if students enter one of these residence hall leadership roles, they learn at a different level how to champion Christ and lead in a Christ like manner. The Office of Spiritual Development is one of the most practical tool Liberty uses to train Champions for Christ outside of the classroom, through friendships and true discipleship on the students' dorms.

Office of Residence Life

Partnering closely with the Office of Spiritual Development is the Office of Residence Life. The Office of Residence Life hires students on each hall to serve as Resident Assistants (RA). RAs complement the Resident Shepherds as the other two members of the Big Four on each hall. Serving in a much more administrative capacity than RSs, RAs have many responsibilities that are essential to the university, such as roster verification and move-in/ move-out.

Four times a semester, RAs host a required Hall Meeting on their hall to disseminate essential university information. Many RAs hold optional Hall Meetings on the other weeks of the semester to review basic announcements and build community on the hall. This is a great time for RAs to give a devotion and encourage students before they break into their community groups.

In addition to their administrative responsibilities, RAs are tasked with checking in on students in crisis. This means that whenever the university is made aware of something happening in a student's life, whether it's a death in the family or suicidal thoughts, the Office of Residence Life alerts their RAs of this information and the RAs have the opportunity to check in on the student. Students who are in crisis often trust RAs as their sole confidants, because RAs can minister in a more personal way than even Community Group Leaders in the lives of students. The opportunity to step into a student's life when they are in need of friendship and often mentorship is priceless. It is no wonder Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17, English Standard Version). RAs have the privilege to bridge the gap and make real change in the lives of their students because of their position.

In order to become an RA, students begin the application process in the fall semester. After completing a paper application, they are called into an interview with their dorm's Resident Director (RD). From these initial interviews, the first cuts are made. After this, applications are invited to RA Experience Weekend, where they spend much of the weeknights shadowing RAs across campus and reading through the RA Handbook. During the weekend, the applicants are grouped together under a host RD (an RD from another dorm on campus) and they are tested in a number of challenges. The group moves from room to room performing in each challenge. Rooms range from a game room, where the applicants are tasked with working together to complete a game or challenge, to a confrontation room, where each applicant is given a scenario where they have to confront a student for breaking the Liberty Way and they act it out. This application process reveals a lot about each applicant and really pushes the applicants to reveal who the best RAs will be.

The Office of Residence Life not only hires RAs who help to train and mentor students on the residence halls, but also trains their RAs to champion Christ. RAs attend RA group each week where their RD teaches them and guides them. In addition, RAs meet one on one with RDs on a biweekly basis. Finally, RAs attend RA connect, a class where the Office of Residence Life teaches them life skills and leadership tactics and prepares them to champion Christ even beyond Liberty. All of this training and mentorship is put into action weekly when RAs help lead their Resident Hall Leadership Meetings where they help plan events for the hall and work with the sister dorms to create community and facilitate the students on their hall having the best college experience they can provide. Many RAs take this opportunity above and beyond their basic responsibilities and even mobilize their hall to do ministry in community. The RA position and the training of the Office of Residence Life is an integral part of Liberty's mission of "Training Champions for Christ."

Overall, Liberty is using its resources to train Champions for Christ in the classroom and outside the academic buildings. Students leave Liberty having been given many opportunities to be trained above and beyond what is required of the average student at Liberty. There are leadership opportunities and places to sit under mentorship that can greatly benefit a student. From basic theology to worldview applications, general education classes ensure students have the knowledge to champion Christ. Students have the knowledge, but do they have the training to apply that knowledge?

Training Shortcomings

The average Liberty student will graduate having taken the required general education courses, interacted with their student leadership, attended a community group, convocation, and campus community. From the classroom to the residence hall, students are immersed in training

opportunities and Christian teaching. However, only a handful of students take advantage of all the opportunities, leaving most students not plugged into leadership or hall ministry and breezing through the religion courses. In addition, many classes in the School of Engineering do not have any faith integration component. With Liberty University's tagline of "Training Champions for Christ," and an abundance of training opportunities for students, there is still more the School of Engineering could do to train with excellence rather than mediocrity.

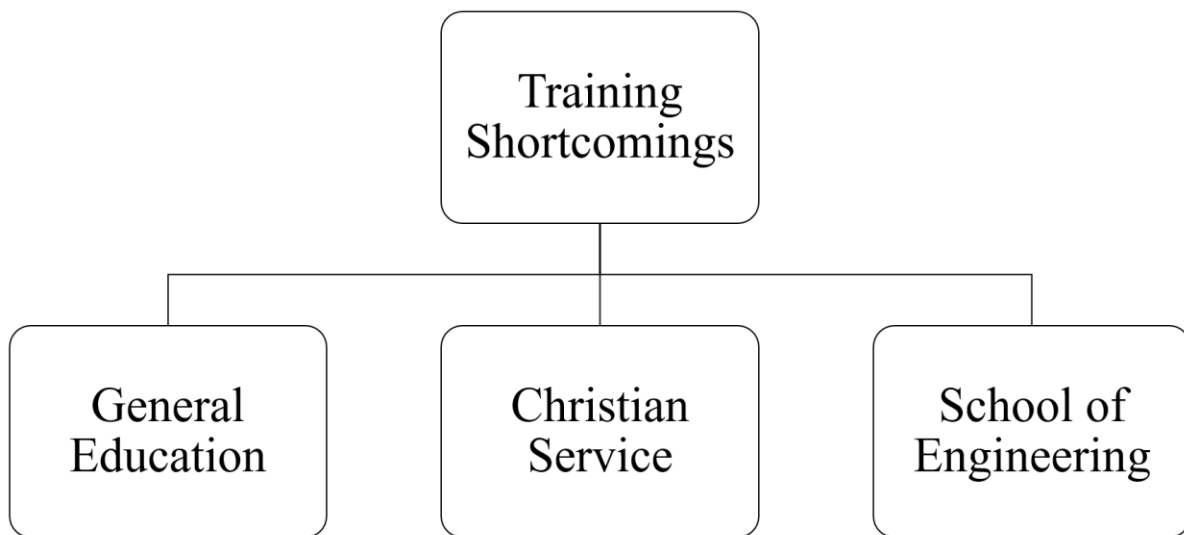


Figure 4. Diagram illustrating Liberty University's areas of training shortcomings.

Coursework

The School of Engineering at Liberty University complements the general education classes with some faith integration assignments, but these assignments nearly disappear as the classes progress. Engineering students receive most of their classroom training to champion Christ in the first two years of their tenure at Liberty. It is very easy for students to lose sight of their Christian training and focus only on their education as it pertains to their professional career as their education continues.

Christian Service

One of the most practical applications of a student's training to champion Christ is through Christian service. Every semester, students scramble to find a CSER opportunity. CSER is usually completed hastily and without much thought behind the significance of the work being done. Other students research CSER and work with an organization that they really want to support and help succeed. Students benefit more from CSER and so do the people they are serving when the student is invested. Much of the benefit of CSER is lost because of the lack of planning and brevity of partnership. CSER becomes in large part superficial.

School of Engineering

Beyond the classroom, the School of Engineering has many opportunities to impact students and extend training. Through School of Engineering convocations and guest speakers who are champions of the faith, students can hear from professionals in their field testimonials about how to champion Christ, practically, in the technical workplace. In addition, is a School of Engineering club, Engineers on Mission, devoted to mobilizing engineering majors to champion Christ on mission. These convocations and that one club are excellent tools for "Training Champions for Christ."

Liberty School of Engineering has hosted great speakers for their convocations. For instance, Dr. Stuart Burgess came and spoke on being the only Christian at [his university]. This message was impactful for many engineering students, because Dr. Burgess champions Christ daily where he works in academia. Speakers like Dr. Burgess should be regular guests at the School of Engineering and attendance should be even more, because as students are learning the concepts of engineering these lessons help students learn the concepts of being an engineer.

Liberty ascribes to the holistic model of training. Essential to holistic training is the ability to sit under the teaching of experts and true Champions for Christ.

“Training Champions for Christ,” is not something that happens by accident. At many universities, clubs are required to have some sort of philanthropy aspect. In the School of Engineering at Liberty, there is a club entitled “Engineers on Mission.” This club is by no means the largest club in the school, but it may be the most important in fulfilling Liberty’s vision. In addition to outside testimonials, club involvement and student mobilization would contribute to a student’s holistic development as well. Many clubs in the School of Engineering would fit in just as well at a secular school as at Liberty. This means that these clubs are not intentionally “Training Champions for Christ.”

Verdict

As the School of Engineering develops and evolves under new leadership, there is a potential for new programs and class requirements. The hope is that with the new vision of “creationeering” the school would continue as they have been and even become better at “Training Champions for Christ.” Most classes have dropped their faith integration requirement after student’s sophomore year, and as students move off campus, this means that the direct classroom training to be a Champion for Christ essentially ends sophomore year.

In order to be trained to champion Christ in a practical way, students must go above and beyond what is required by the School of Engineering. Championing Christ is much more than a couple of classes and assignments, it is truly a lifestyle. For the School of Engineering or students, this means that training must go above and beyond what is currently offered. Whether it is taught in the classroom or displayed through keynotes, championing Christ and the training

therein must be practical with experiences taking place outside the petri dish of the academic buildings.

The Christian Life

Following Christ is not something that can be switched on or shifted into gear and expected to function perfectly. No, following Christ is a lifelong journey that must be fully in the forefront of a Christian's life. This is the defining characteristic of a Christian: that he is bearing fruit and being pruned to grow and bear more fruit. This is not a simple journey or a straightforward walk. Jesus promised His followers that, "Then [the nations] will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake" (Matthew 24:9, ESV). It is essential to note that the journey of a Liberty Student toward championing Christ in the workplace is certainly the road less travelled and a certainly more complex and risky way of living. Nevertheless, this is what Christians are called to as disciple makers. Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20, ESV).

In the workplace, this championing position is not promised to win friends. In fact, Christ promises the opposite: "because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19, ESV). This defies all of man's wisdom and requires an indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, this is the calling of Christ. In fact, Christ calls us to give up everything we hold dear and to live having been sent by Christ.

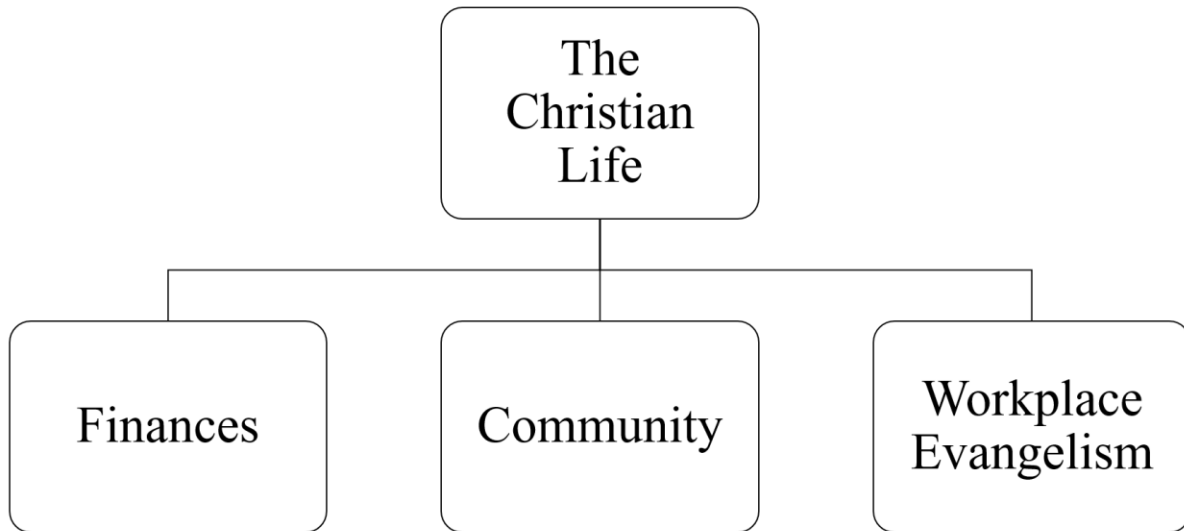


Figure 5. Diagram illustrating the areas where a Christian should be trained.

The Calling of Christ

Jesus demands the utmost devotion and sacrifice for God. Jesus says, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26, ESV). He knows the hearts of man and He knows that man cannot serve two masters; so, looking at the story of the rich young ruler it is evident the kind of sacrifice Christ demands: “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me” (Mark 10:21, ESV). Although not everyone has the same attachment to possessions that the rich young ruler had, Christ followers are called to leave behind their former desires and treasures in the world. Paul writes, “thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed” (Romans 6:15-23). Christ followers are to throw off all worldly shackles and remove all idolatry to wholly give God the throne of their life. The calling of Christ is not one of comfort and prosperity, but of devotion and abiding.

The Calling of Liberty University

Liberty University's vision of "Training Champions for Christ" could mean many things. From the standpoint of academia and Liberty as a launching point of careers and training ground for future employees and employers, Liberty strives to be the best in every category. From athletics to academics, Liberty gives attention to the finest details in everything. Jerry Falwell Sr. once said, "if it was Christian, it ought to be better" (see <https://www.liberty.edu/news/index.cfm?PID=26726>). This quote has quickly become the rallying cry for departments across the board at Liberty.

Championing the idea that Liberty should be the best in every category, students should be better prepared than ever before to be successful in the technical workplace. It is the call of Liberty to its students that they should strive to be the best employees and workers in their companies. The feedback from organizations has been "we love Liberty students" for years. Championing Christ in the technical workplace means never losing sight that "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" (Colossians 3:23, ESV). Liberty calls its students to champion Christ in excellence.

Jesus Christ: The Ultimate Gift

It is important to have a firm grasp of the "why" behind championing Christ. Liberty and Scripture alike call students to champion Christ, but why is it important that someone lives out this high calling. The truth is: giving up everything is the least a Christian can do for Christ.

Consider someone being taken out to a very expensive restaurant by the richest man in the world. Upon ordering, the wealthy man offers to pay for the guest's food. Upon hearing this, the guest would be amiss to not thank him, despite it being a drop in the bucket financially for him. After the wealthy man orders, the guest now has a decision to make regarding his meal.

He can either order the most extravagant dishes and truly take advantage of the rich man's offer, or he can express his true gratitude by considering what he orders. To take the rich man's gift for granted would be to ruin a relationship and selfishly enjoy a big meal. Having the ability to buy the entire restaurant does not mean that is the appropriate response. Paul writes in Romans, "what shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:1-2, ESV). God has offered complete salvation to the world through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His son, Jesus, who lived a perfect life and died in the place of the sinner, taking all of mankind's sin upon himself and returning His perfect righteousness to whoever accepts the gift. This complete salvation is not something to be taken for granted. No, Christ followers have a Father who is abounding in grace, but to stretch his offer would be to look a gift horse in the mouth and spit in the face of His eternal generosity.

Championing Christ is the appropriate response to such a marvelous gift. Every aspect of life and all affection should be given back to Christ, because that is all a man could offer. Jesus gave up His life for the sake of each and every man and the only appropriate response is to offer one's life in return. Championing Christ is the Christian life.

Championing Christ can be done many ways, and the extent of how one champions Christ can extend into all aspects of life. From finances to the community a Christ follower engages in, Christ-centeredness should be present holistically. Learning to champion Christ is not a four-year venture, but a lifelong sanctification process.

Finances

The Bible contains over two thousand verses regarding finances and money (Park). By far the most discussed topic in Scripture, it is evident that this is a very important part of a

Christian's life. Many refer to a man's finances as the window into his heart, because where his wallet lies there his heart lies as well. In fact, Paul wrote in his first letter to Timothy, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils" (1 Timothy 6:10, ESV), which highlights the radical importance of money and the consequences of a lack of intentionality with it.

In Scripture, followers of God have been returning God's blessing back to Him since Abram as described in Genesis: "Abram gave him a tenth of everything" (Gen. 14:20, ESV). This tradition of returning one tenth of what someone has earned is continued throughout Scripture and even required by God in the Law of Moses: "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year" (Deut. 14:22, ESV). God is the originator and sustainer of every blessing in the life of a Christian. Therefore, tithing is not giving to God what He does not have, but just acknowledging through action what is already His. This principle underscores the importance of prayer in every financial decision and thankfulness after every financial victory.

The author of Proverbs writes, "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine" (Prov 3:9-10, ESV). This isn't a tool to manipulate God, but a reminder that God gives and takes away. He is worthy of everything a Christian owns; this perspective is essential in championing Christ. Championing Christ is wholehearted. Luke writes in his record of the Acts of the Apostles about the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. These two had sold a plot of land and kept some of the portion of the money earned back, having claimed to have given all of it to the church. Luke describes this action as a lie not to men, but to God. Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and money" (Matt 6:24). The Holy Spirit strikes both

Ananias and Sapphira down as they are found as liars. Money is not trivial subject. Misuse and obsession with money is equated to rebellion from God.

In addition, co-workers and friends will be aware of how a Christian spends their money. Often skeptical of church and how Christians handle money, using the capital God gives His followers for the good of others, selflessly not accruing material wealth or vain possessions is penultimate in showing nonbelievers what the Christian heart looks like. Living a life of giving is a powerful evangelistic tool as a display of God's overflow. Just as we love because He first loved us, we also give because He first gave to us.

Community

Liberty University students are typically handed friendships and community in dorm style living and peer mentorship. Once students graduate and are no longer in the academic setting, they are forced to relearn how to engage and seek out community. It is important to know where to seek community as both nurturing and edifying Christian community and community whose purpose is to expand the Kingdom of God.

For many students at Liberty, they grew up in a solid household led by Christian parents and founded in the truth of the gospel. These students have an excellent opportunity when they graduate to connect even deeper with their families as they are living on mission, championing Christ in the technical workplace. Parents are often great sources of wisdom especially in tough situations or in ministry. However, many students at Liberty were not given a Christ-centered family. These students have a mission field already built into their lives in their family. With any background or dysfunction, it is important that students never forget their families. Through either community, wisdom, or an opportunity to share Christ, God has ordained every family in its makeup and dynamics.

As Liberty alumni move into the professional workplace, get married, and have children, they begin a new family unit in addition to their own family. The way a Christian treats his nuclear family is evidence of how he truly loves in his heart. It is important to keep family first above other commitments. Supporting one's spouse and children is a beautiful representation of how Christ loves the Church and His followers. A healthy Christ-centered marriage is a picture of the gospel. Christians should never book themselves or pull themselves away from their family except for limited times of growth or mission. Modeling one's family after the family of God is essential to truly living as an ambassador of champion of Christ.

Christians are called to be in community with other believers. The writer of Hebrews instructs Christians to "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Heb. 10:25, ESV). It is the Christ follower's duty to seek out other Christians and meet with them for the sake of encouragement. Peter Scazzero (2015) describes a Christians role in the church as "leadership in the kingdom of god is from the bottom up, not a grasping, controlling, or lording over others. It is leading out of failure and pain" (p. 114). The Christian life is not supposed to be alone, but connected to other believers in the Church, which is the bride of Christ. The collective of all Christians are adopted into God's families as sons and daughters. It's these brothers and sisters that sharpen each other and champion Christ more effectively together.

Before Christ's crucifixion, He left the disciples with the Last Supper (Matt. 26:17-30, ESV). He taught them communion. This breaking of bread is now practiced all over the world in Christian circles as the holy sacrament of communion. Community is required for communion, because it is breaking bread together. In addition, it is an action that joins all believers everywhere together in communion and remembrance of what Christ has done for

them. This same principle of communion should mark a Christian's life. Christ called his disciples before ascending to be with the Father to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19, ESV). Disciple making is not just a matter of telling them the gospel of Jesus and then leaving. Now, disciple making requires extended community. As a Champion for Christ, students should seek this disciple making community and the opportunity to be poured into in a local church.

Seeking community at a church will help Champions for Christ transition from living on dorm halls of likeminded people into the unstructured social life of a working adult. Making time for small group and church will ensure the discipleship process and growth continues after graduation. In addition, Champions for Christ can use this community as a touch point for people outside the Kingdom of God.

Champions for Christ are called to "be [Jesus'] witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8, ESV). This evangelistic commission begins in one's town of residence before it extends outwards. Meals are a fantastic time to meet with nonbelievers and believers alike. Inviting neighbors over for dinner throughout the week and having deep Christ-centered discussion is a fantastic avenue for community and disciple-making. How can Christians be so willing to travel across the ocean to evangelize the nations, when they won't even cross the street? David Platt (2010) explains this passivity: "Christians choose to spend their lives fulfilling the American dream instead of giving their lives to proclaiming the kingdom of God, literally billions in need of the gospel remain in the dark" (p. 7).

Workplace Evangelism

Once a stable lifestyle has been established, a Champion for Christ should be looking to leverage everything in His life for the Kingdom of God. From finances to leisure, championing

Christ is a full-time commitment. This includes time spent at work and around co-workers who are just as likely to need Christ as anyone else in a Christian's life.

The first and most visible aspect of workplace evangelism is one's composure and effectiveness in the workplace. In cultures where a monochronic time scale is valued, like America, it is essential to work at the same time the company does. That means that Christians should be prompt and on time for work. In addition, going the extra mile and showing up early or staying late will create opportunities for one-on-one conversations that could lead to the gospel. Paul explains that "It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose" (Gal. 4:18, ESV). Christians should not only be above reproach but also above and beyond expectations. In detailed work, especially when engineering systems and testing edge cases and troubleshooting, Christians shouldn't just produce a product, but pay special attention to the smallest of details to create and engineer the best product possible. All these expectations should be exceeded in an ethical way. Christians should be the most ethical engineers in the industry.

Creating a strong witness and reputation in one's company is all in an effort to steward the vocation, which is God's ordained payed avenue to share Christ with the world. As champions for Christ excel in the workplace, it is essential to walk in step with the Holy Spirit and be aware of opportunities to have gospel-centered conversations. Using the contents of biblical worldview, evangelism, and other ministry opportunities, every Liberty student should be equipped for these conversations. One thing to be aware of, is the ethics of creating relationships with subordinates. Inviting co-workers to talk outside of work and go to church is fantastic, as long as it does not get in the way of the function of the workplace and influence one's impartiality. Learning to navigate these situations will take time, but in time championing

Christ in the technical workplace will become an everyday and easy venture, making work a little more fun and a lot more rewarding.

Liberty's Role

Liberty's School of Engineering does a lot towards "Training Champions for Christ," but it could do more. Students receive adequate entry level training through general education classes, hall ministry, among other opportunities. This ensures that every Liberty alumnus has a foundation for a biblical worldview. However, a champion does not stop after learning the fundamentals of a subject and Liberty should not slow in its training as a student moves up the years.

General Education

Teaching student's the basics of the Christian faith is simple but giving students the opportunity to apply this knowledge is the harder and more rewarding task in "Training Champions for Christ." Leveraging CSER or another already implemented student requirement would allow the University to require students to go above and beyond just logging hours for credit. In addition, if Liberty partnered with businesses and organizations in the technical line of study, engineering students could gain experience and connections while serving at an engineering firm. This would train students to champion Christ in the technical workplace as a Christian servant at a technical workplace.

After logging hours, students are already required to complete a questionnaire to describe the skills they learned and the impact of the CSER. If this questionnaire were made more robust and required students to attach a story or testimony from their time serving that illustrated how they championed Christ, students would have to seek out these opportunities.

Many other options exist for enhancing the academic requirement of general education courses at Liberty to better train Champions for Christ; however, CSER is a simple and practical way to train champions outside of the “Liberty bubble.” The point remains, that Liberty should look hard at expanding the general education requirements in some area, because students shouldn’t have the excuse of only having taken Biblical Worldview for one semester, where training is much more than just a one semester venture. For example, this doesn’t have to be coursework, but some extracurricular requirement, like an internship at a mission organization that uses engineering to reach the lost, would be sufficient just to ensure students are actively being trained all four years at Liberty.

Specific Education

The Liberty University School of Engineering is well equipped to train Champions for Christ. Small class sizes, very friendly and personable professors, and extracurricular opportunities are examples of tools the School of Engineering has that better equip professors to disciple students. As students build relationships with each other and grow through the years together, student mentorship and professor mentorship are natural next steps in these relationships. As professors teach classes it would be important to maintain faith integration projects, discussions, or papers in course requirements. For example, in upper-level engineering courses, students should be able to connect the design and methodology to Scripture and God’s character. This will ensure students submit themselves to the Creator as they create and equip them to have gospel conversations regarding their work. In addition, workshops and guest speakers with a spiritual and Christ-focused theme are the most impactful on students.

Some students voluntarily engage in extracurricular clubs and workshops where professors are able to pour into them on a more personal level. However, lower-level classes

have a kind of devotion to start the class. This devotion and faith integration is missing in the upper level courses. Part of “Training Champions for Christ” is helping students realize the presence of Christ and God’s role in creation and engineering. Professors should continue this training through every semester a student attends Liberty University. Professor mentorship and deeper conversation is only possible if professors lower themselves and create a space for students to come to the asking spiritual life questions. Through faith integration projects, Christ-centered workshops, and mentorship, the LUSE could better train Champions for Christ.

Student’s Role

Liberty University provides many services and has several departments devoted to the training and equipping of students to champion Christ. As a residential student, students are surrounded by student leadership and opportunities to be a part of the discipleship process. Championing Christ begins with the heart and there is only so much Liberty can do to change the heart of a man.

Because of this, if students would like to be truly trained to be a Champion for Christ, they must humble themselves and go the extra mile. Seeking out opportunities to grow and be discipled, students should be active in their hall ministry whether as a leader or a just a hall mate. In addition, students should devote themselves to the local church and get plugged in outside of their hall to be poured into from older and wiser generations. It is quite feasible to graduate from Liberty motivated and equipped to champion Christ in the technical workplace, however students should seek out opportunities to do just that during their time at Liberty through internships, service opportunities, and even just the mindset and understanding of what Christ is doing in the subjects they are studying.

Students are responsible for their own growth. Immersing themselves in the Christian community of Liberty University, students will be presented opportunities to grow and be trained and even to train others. The success of Liberty's training lies in the buy-in of the student body and the willingness of individual students to champion Christ themselves.

Final Encouragement

Liberty University's tagline, "Training Champions for Christ," illustrates the heart of the university and the reasoning behind their drive for excellence. The School of Engineering is tasked with "Training Champions for Christ" in the technical workplace. As students grow and learn through their time at Liberty how to be a successful and problem-solving engineer, they are learning how to be champions in the technical workplace. How do they live as Champions for Christ in the technical workplace? Simply by championing Christ wherever they works. Liberty offers many programs and opportunities for students to be trained in championing Christ, but it could do more.

As students become acclimated to the culture of Liberty, it is incumbent on each individual to seek out these opportunities of training. They are present on campus and holistic training is quite feasible across the four years an undergraduate degree normally occupies. Taking the extra steps at college and seeking this training will change the life and course of a student's professional path. Training to champion Christ is available at Liberty, although it takes some extra effort, and it is well worth the extra effort and devotion to be equipped to enter the workforce as a follower of Christ. Buying into Liberty's tagline "Training Champions for Christ" and taking everything Liberty has to offer will make college much more rewarding and impactful and will give students the tools required to truly champion Christ in the technical workplace.

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Appendix

Correspondence for The Approval of The Use and Publishing of Figure 3: Creationeering

By Dr. Mark Horstemeyer

From: Horstemeyer, Mark (School of Engineering and Computational Sciences)

Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 12:29 PM

To: Potts, Barbara (JFL Research & Customer Services); Nutter, Jim (English); Habbick, Jonathan

Subject: RE: MS #2022 - Senior Honors Theses

I agree that the image can be used for whatever reason in whatever setting.

Dr. Mark F. Horstemeyer

School of Engineering Dean

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