



observers of the election of Barack Obama challenge this conclusion. In his victory speech, Obama paid tribute to the involvement and self-sacrifice of the young people who formed the bulk of his supporting workers and contrasted it to “the myth of their generation’s apathy”.<sup>4</sup> Obama engaged these young people because he related to them in ways that met their need to be connected, communicative, collaborative, experiential, social, relational, and participative.

The socialisation of Net Generation students has created students who learn using “deeper learning” principles.<sup>5</sup> Deeper learning could also be described as intentional learning or integrative learning. It is promoted through self-conscious reflection on learning or metacognition. It occurs when learning is social and active, collaborative and reflective, when students have ownership of the learning process and receive prompt and ongoing feedback. This kind of learning is team-based and uses inquiry-based approaches to constructing knowledge. It develops reciprocity and cooperation among students. Furthermore, modern society, especially the Net Generation, is moving in this direction. Workplaces are becoming increasingly collaborative – a survey of CEOs revealed that by 2010, 60 per cent of a worker’s output will depend on collaborating with others.<sup>6</sup>

Management by culture (process-centred versus product-centred work models) is replacing more traditional management models that rely on professional ethics or exerting tight bureaucratic control (like many of our churches today). In this model, sometimes called management by values, the primary focus is on developing, maintaining, and ensuring that the workplaces have healthy and productive values. The workplace is designed to ensure that the culture is strong so that workers are self-managing and intrinsically motivated to serve.<sup>7</sup> Obama’s “workplace” met these characteristics. Pastors<sup>8</sup> and Christian leaders who understand deeper/intentional/integrative learning will tend to lead their churches and organisations in ways that are consistent with management by culture and allow for greater connection with the workplaces of their members.



These attributes are being recognised by a new wave of theorists writing about youth ministry that emphasises relationality, spirituality, spiritual formation in a context where youth are not being ministered “to” but in a sense are engaged in ministry “with”.<sup>9</sup>

Curriculum for the Net Generation must consider these factors. The paper, *Curricula Designed to Meet 21st-Century Expectations*,<sup>10</sup> quotes a report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities arguing that future curricula must educate students to become intentional learners who are purposeful and self-directed in multiple ways:

*Becoming such an intentional learner means developing self-awareness about the reason for study, the learning process itself, and how education is used. Intentional learners are integrative thinkers who can see connections in seemingly disparate information and draw on a wide range of knowledge to make decisions. They adapt the skills learned in one situation to new problems encountered in another—in a classroom, the workplace, their communities, and their personal lives. As a result, intentional learners*



***The Professional Development Day on 10 September will now focus on Issues in Higher Education. The 25 October Professional Development Day will address assessment issues as advised in the last newsletter. Professor Royce Sadler will lead us in the design and construction of sound questions and other assessment topics. The report of the 2009 Biblical Studies Moderation Panel alerted us to the importance of addressing these issues.***



*succeed even when instability is the only constant.*

*The intentional learner is empowered through intellectual and practical skills; informed by knowledge and ways of knowing; and responsible for personal actions and civic values... Mastery of a range of abilities and capacities empowers intentional learners as they maneuver in and shape a world in flux.... Intentional learners possess a core of knowledge, both broad and deep, derived from many fields... Through discussion, critical analysis, and introspection, intentional learners come to understand their roles in society and accept active participation.*

Intentional or integrative learning involves “bringing the parts together to make something complete in order to unify or unite. Integration is related to ‘wholeness and comes from the base word, whole, meaning completeness, not divided, containing all its elements or parts; that which is not broken, damaged or injured, in sound health’. However, in much of our Australian theological education, the curriculum is cut into slices and it is up to students to bring the slices together to make a whole.”<sup>11</sup>

Recent research by Sherlock (2009) supports Paver’s understanding of integration and but does not wholly share his concern about fragmentation in Australian theological education.<sup>12</sup> It indicates that theological education is more like education for medicine or law than the arts. Traditional theology degrees require a prescribed body of knowledge to be mastered. They concentrate on content rather than process. Although there are exceptions even in medical education, this pedagogy is often associated with the transfer of information from expert to novice with few opportunities for integration, reflection or self-criticism. It has the danger of creating passive learners rather than intentional learners.

Traditional Australian theological education may have reinforced (and in some cases may still be reinforcing) an intellectualist pedagogy with the consequent danger that pastors employ an intellectualist pedagogy in their churches. However, Sherlock states that colleges increasingly emphasise integrated, holistic and transformative learning. He suggests that the increasing emphasis on integration across the sector stems from the rise of degrees in ministry that emphasise interaction between theology and ministry. He suggests that some Australian theological students are like Kelsey’s “learned pastors”<sup>13</sup>; they have mastered a body of information and are also capable of participating in a tradition of enactments *in a reflective and self-critical way*. They have had a more holistic experience that allows them to master a body of information through intentional learning.

These issues are being given serious consideration within theological education in Australia. The SCD has played a leading role in obtaining a large grant from the Australian Learning and Teaching Council to investigate transformative learning in the Australian theological education curriculum.<sup>14</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Diana Oblinger and James Oblinger, ‘Is It Age or IT: First Steps toward Understanding the Net Generation’, *Educating the Net Generation*, edited by Diana Oblinger and James Oblinger (Boulder, Colo.: EDUCAUSE e-book, 2005).
2. Philip Hughes, *Putting Life Together* (Melbourne, Vic: Fairfield Press, 2007), 23, 43, 81. Michael Christopher Mason, Andrew Tintin Singleton and Ruth Webber, *The Spirit of Generation Y: Young People’s Spirituality in a Changing Australia*, (Mulgrave, Vic.: John Garratt, 2007).
3. Hughes, *Putting Life Together*, 82.
4. Barack Obama, The Full Text of Barack Obama’s Victory Speech, Wednesday, 5 November 2008 2008, *The Independent*, Available: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/the-full-text-of-barack-obamas-victory-speech-993008.html>, 20 November 2008.
5. Chris Johnson and Cyprien Lomas, ‘Design of the Learning Space: Learning and Design Principles’, *Educause Review* July/August (2005).
6. United States Public Buildings Service, *Workplace Matters* (Washington, DC: GSA, U.S. General Services Administration, 2006).
7. M. Schneider, ‘Performance Management by Culture in the National Labor Relations Boards Division of Judges & the German Labor Courts of Appeal’, in *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 14 (2004). Kirk Snyder, Obama’s Victory, Gen Y, and the New Rules for Communication, November 11, 2008, Huffington Post, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kirk-snyder/obamas-victory-gen-y-and\\_b\\_142769.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kirk-snyder/obamas-victory-gen-y-and_b_142769.html), 20 Nov 2008.
8. “Pastor” is used in its broadest sense of “shepherd” implying a range of roles that includes priests, ministers, deacons, and youth leaders.
9. Barbara Keely, ‘Five Resources for Nurturing the Spiritual Lives of Children, Youth, and Adults’, in *Religious Education*, 101/3 (2006).
10. Alma R. Clayton-Pedersen with Nancy O’Neill, ‘Curricula Designed to Meet 21st-Century Expectations’, in *Educating the Net Generation*, edited by Diana Oblinger and James Oblinger (Boulder, Colo.: EDUCAUSE e-book, 2005).
11. John E. Paver, *Theological Reflection and Education for Ministry*, (Aldershot, Hants ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 33.
12. Charles Sherlock, *Uncovering Theology: The Depth, Reach and Utility of Australian Theological Education* (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2009).
13. David H. Kelsey, ‘A Theological Curriculum About & Against the Church’, *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*, J.C. Hough Jr & B.G. Wheeler(eds), *Studies in Religious & Theological Scholarship* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988), 48
14. <http://www.altc.edu.au/project-incorporating-student-experience-transformative-learning-mcd-2010>