Candidate: Kimberly Pilieci
For the degree of: Doctor of Philosophy
Department: Educational Leadership, Research and Technology

Title: The Impact of Denominational Affiliation on Organizational Sense of Belonging and Commitment of Adjunct Faculty at Bible Colleges and Universities

Committee: Dr. Andrea Beach, Chair
Dr. Regina Garza Mitchell
Dr. Patricia Harris

Time/Place: Tuesday, October 25, 2016
10 a.m. to noon
2401 Sangren Hall

The majority of faculty in higher education, including secular and biblical institutions, are adjunct faculty. The literature suggests that adjunct faculty are less effective and satisfied, and have weaker organizational sense of belonging (OSB) and affective organizational commitment (AOC). Denominational affiliation (DA) and religious commitment (RC) might mitigate the adjunct faculty’s feelings regarding OSB and AOC, but no research has pursued this set of questions. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of denominational affiliation and religious commitment on organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment among the sample population, adjunct faculty at colleges and universities accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.
A web-based survey comprised of previously vetted instruments, Survey of Workplace Relations (OSB and AOC Subscales) and RC-10, was distributed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to answer the research questions: 1) What is the distribution of religious commitment, denominational affiliation, typology, teaching modality, academic division, race, years at institution and gender? 2) What is the level of religious commitment, organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment? 3) To what extent do RC, DA, and other commonly studied characteristics influence OSB and AOC? 4) What combination of variables best predicts OSB and AOC? 5) To what extent do OSB and AOC vary by institution?

Results indicate that adjunct faculty at Bible colleges and universities are a complex heterogeneous group of employees, yet they have a homogenously high level of religious commitment. They come to the profession with a variety of characteristics and they teach for varying reasons. Results suggest that their organizational sense of belonging and affective organizational commitment are strong and their individual denominational affiliation influences and predicts their organizational sense of belonging. Additionally, the findings suggest that OSB influences and predicts AOC. Teaching modality and reasons for being an adjunct instructor did not influence either OSB or AOC for this population. Adjunct faculty are as varied as the institutions that employ them, but for Bible colleges, denominational alignment may help adjunct faculty feel valued and valuable.