

TWU professors named to prestigious Oxford seminar



Two Trinity Western University professors have been named to the Scholarship and Christianity in Oxford's (SCIO) Bridging the Two Cultures of Science and Humanities seminars. Dennis Venema, Ph.D., and Myron A. Penner, Ph.D., are among 25 scholars from around the world who will take part.

The project, which aims to develop interdisciplinary skills and understanding central to science and religion, will take place within the unique setting of Oxford. Theologians, historians, philosophers, and social and natural scientists will explore established and emerging science and religion issues.

"Many Christians from conservative backgrounds are afraid of science—more specifically, of coming to a point where their long-held beliefs are challenged," said Penner, an Associate Professor of Philosophy who was recently named Dean of TWU's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. "My particular focus within the Bridging Two Cultures project is focused on helping overcome religion-based fear of scientific method in general, and evolution in particular."

Not only does the grant provide an opportunity for Penner and Venema to be part of this group of scholars, but it also provides funding for them to develop a Science & Religion Club on campus to help students and other faculty members engage in scholarly dialogue.

Venema, a Professor of Biology who has served at TWU for the past 10 years, is no stranger to the tension between faith and science. A Senior Fellow with the BioLogos Foundation, he had to reconcile his own beliefs as a Christian with his chosen field. "There aren't very many Christian geneticists out there," Venema said. "But if we truly believe all truth belongs to God, then we don't have to be afraid of anything scientific."

The SCIO supports scholarship from Christian universities and colleges around the world. The 25 scholars were chosen from among over 70 applicants. TWU is the only university that received grants for two of its professors. "That speaks to the quality of Trinity Western," Venema said, "that two professors from this institution would be chosen to participate."

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- Author: Wendy Delamont Lees