



Sowing Seeds for Success

Executive Summary

Criswell College's Quality Enhancement Plan, *Sowing Seeds for Success*, is a three-credit course that all undergraduate students take within their first two semesters. This course, The Roots of a Christian Scholar (CRIS 100), introduces students to knowledge and skills that are intended to make their transition to education at Criswell College a more seamless experience and thus contribute to their success.

The course introduces students to skills and knowledge related to academic success generally. It also introduces students to skills and knowledge related to the unique aspects of being a student Criswell College, which has as its mission "to provide ministerial and professional higher education for men and women preparing to serve as Christian leaders throughout society, while maintaining an institutional commitment to biblical inerrancy."

In alignment and support of the Student Learning Outcomes for *Sowing Seeds for Success*, the course objectives are that:

1. Students will identify academic success strategies in order to overcome roadblocks to their collegiate success.
2. Students will recognize various ways in which Christian theology is drawn from Scripture and will articulate the central Christian doctrines.

The course is co-taught by ranked faculty who choose resources and conduct learning activities to address student academic success and theological development. To encourage college-culture induction through relationship-building and participation in curricular and extracurricular activities important for student success, the course convenes twice a week and is scheduled adjacent to other courses and activities typically required for first-year students.

Sowing Seeds for Success arose from and is woven into the college's ongoing planning and assessment processes. As a part of its 2016–21 strategic plan, Criswell College crafted a Common Student Experience (CSE)—a sequence of curricular and co-curricular activities, both rigorous and supportive, to ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop the college's core values and graduate as leaders who are Ambassadors, Cultivators, Peacemakers, Problem Solvers, and Professionals. The full implementation of this CSE is the first initiative within the college's current strategic plan, which has as its first goal to provide a more engaging and supportive experience for our students. As the first of five courses within the CSE, CRIS 100 is thus an integral element to the college's strategic plan.

Sowing Seeds for Success is assessed through multiple measures. Pretests, posttests, and essays written in the course directly assess the development of theological knowledge and awareness of various strategies that support academic success at the collegiate level. Focus groups at the end of each semester facilitated by the QEP Chair give students in the course the opportunity to discuss perceived effectiveness of course elements. These assessment tools provide the data necessary to track and adjust the course's effectiveness.

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