

## Student Survey on Commission Report Results - March 2010

This survey was distributed to 546 college students. There were 171 respondents to the survey.

Did you participate in an interview with the commissioners?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	11%	18
No	89%	151
If you answered yes, do you feel that your opinion was fairly represented in the Synod Commission's Report?		18
<i>answered question</i>		<b>169</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>2</b>

Of the 18 respondents participating in an interview with the Commissioners, 28% feel that their opinion was fairly represented and 67% do not feel their stated opinion was fairly represented in the Synod Commission's Report.

Comments received:
Not really, but they didn't necessarily address all of the issues discussed in the interview.
yes i do
I do, however, I still feel like there is some information that they are hiding.
Yes it was. They were faithful to the problems here at the institution.
No, I love Erskine for all that it is. The teachers make the classroom a very open place where one is able to express their opinion without threat of being criticized.
No I do not
No I do not
No.
No, I feel as though the moderator and other members of the board simply skirted around answering the questions and did not effectively produce clear and concise decisions and goals for Erskine College.
NO!!!!
No, me views and perspective has changed greatly since my arrival almost three years ago. Moreover, I believe my relationship with God has grown.
Yes I do. This survey is obviously an attempt to provide evidence contrary to the Synod's decision which I find despicable.

No
I was at Synod. I told them the best that I could.
No, I believe that the synod commission had already made up their minds before stepping foot into that conference room. They used selective hearing to hear what they wanted and ignore what they did not wish to hear. The majority of what was discussed in my meeting was positive and none of that was reflected in the report.
I do not. I spoke specifically how the business department effectively integrates faith and learning into our curriculum by learning how to best manage and be good stewards of God's resources, etc. and I feel that they didn't think that was a good enough integration of faith into learning because there was no mention in the report or at the Synod meeting of how some departments were doing an excellent job integrating faith and learning, which I think the Business Department (among others) are.
Yes
No

**Commission Statement: "To date, there has been no effective training on the integration of faith and learning."**

<b>Are you satisfied with the way Erskine College professors integrate faith and learning in the classroom?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	87%	147
No	14%	23
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>170</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>1</b>

<b>Did you tell the commissioners that you were satisfied with the integration of faith and learning in the classroom? *Results are only for the 18 respondents participating in an interview with the Commissioners.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	72%	13
No	11%	2
Not applicable	17%	3
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>18</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>0</b>

**Commission Statement: "The so-called "culture of intimidation," found by Second Presbytery's Committee on the Minister and His Work several years ago, is still present on the campus."**

Do you believe there is a culture of intimidation on the Erskine College campus?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22%	38
No	78%	132
If you answered yes, who is causing this intimidation?		36
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>170</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>1</b>

36 written comments were received. Of the 36 comments:

36% referenced faculty or professors.

22% referenced the ARP Church, Synod or the Commission.

22% referenced administration or staff members.

14% referenced students.

Comments received:
I would say that its more of a "holier-than-thou" complex than intimidation. mostly held by, not to stereotype, some of the bible department
I believe that the culture of intimidation is due to the ARP commission/synod actions. I feel that professors are unable to express their thoughts and feelings on current issues regarding the direction of Erskine College without fear of losing their jobs.
crenshaw
I don't believe that one person is causing the intimidation, but I'm also not sure that this intimidation is solely limited to those who the church feels are challenging faith. A college learning environment should challenge students, so it is also intimidating when there are students in classes who wait for the professor to "slip up" on doctrinal issues.
i would say that there is not nessisaril a culture of intimidation so much as factors that intimidate, and i would say that Dr. Crenshaw is one of those factors

intimidation is not being carried out toward APR members or Christians, rather, I feel threatened by the students and faculty that feel that they should spoon feed us our faith and criticize other students, faculty and staff that refuse to be indoctrinated. I am offended that they would even suggest that they are being intimidated.

The ARP's. I feel like I am pressured to be ARP, or at least presbyterian. I am not at all either of those.

Christians who believe that their doctrine is superior to all others and will not accept differing beliefs.

Faculty, staff, administration, other students, and alumni.

I feel that there is a degree of intimidation on several of the vice presidents, such as Mr. Haselden, Mr. Hendricks, and Mr. O'Cain. I feel as if they are not interested in transparency about Erskine's major decision, but I rather feel as if they possess a "get out of my way" and "don't ask questions" mentality.

Student Body

Professors who do not want you to express contradictory views

The Administration.

None of the accused professors have been intimidating, unless simple questions can be considered intimidating. The people complaining are the ones who don't want their ideas challenged. The only intimidation comes from people like Randy Estep and Dr. Bond (but he left)

The narrow-minded individuals who feel threatened themselves and attempt to scare others into agreeing with them.

I'm not sure. For some reason, I feel like some professors are sometimes hesitant to share their opinions - on BOTH sides of any issue. I spend a lot of my time in both the Bible and the Science departments, and my faith has been strengthened by both.

I think that the people that are intimidated are intimidated because they are challenged by some professors to think and may have to defend their faith. They are intimidated by the professors that think different differently and do not believe the exact thing thing. I do not think the professors or staff on campus are doing anything to intimidate students, I think students get scared when they cannot defend their faith or way of thinking.

People expect u to be a strong believer and if your not you are alienated. Being here is supposed to be an opportunity to grow in faith and I have not been given that privilege.

I'm not sure. Pressure to conform starts with the professors. Professors of different denominations are sometimes not even considered for their position. Sometimes I feel judged by certain students. The Mirror sometimes has ultra-conservative articles that seem to condemn different lifestyles that students might lead (ex: democratic or homosexual). So, I don't think its strong enough to be intimidation, but it's omnipresent enough to be too much to fight against sometimes.

Only if you count the intimidation from the Synod and Commission

Faculty members who are on power and ego trips.

Within the student body I feel as if you cannot truly speak your mind. Students with ARP/Reformed backgrounds speak loudly and seem to run the school, though generally not in large organizations. There is a constant need to remind those of us who are not ARP that this is an ARP school, and it often leads us to feel excluded and intimidated.

Some professors and even some students.

Many staff, faculty, administrators and students.

I have only been at Erskine a semester and a half and I have already been berated for siding with our schools mission statement. Not only this, but the administration sided with the professor even though me, the student/customer was the one being victimized. Furthermore, Erskine does not at all encourage students to flourish spiritually. The only "Christ centered environments" are those that are ALSO present at all colleges (RUF, FCA etc..)
they try to force it onto students unnecessarily,
Those affiliated with the ARP denomination.
Christians
The same people who got the Committee to come here in the first place.
I have seen with my own eyes certain faculty and administration who have intellectually bullied and emotionally abused students.
I feel that students, faculty, and staff have been and are being intimidated by the Synod and the Commission and its undue presence and influence on Erskine's campus.
the hypocrites that say they are Christians but judge everyone at the college. ERSKINEITES
Now! I never felt intimidated until the Commissioners visited and I went to the Synod meeting. Then and only then did I feel inferior and intimidated.
I believe there is an ideological battle going on between those who want to remain faithful to the ARP Church and to the authority of Scripture and those who want the college to take a more broad, inclusive, mainstream--even secular--approach to education. I have heard multiple first-hand accounts of proponents of the latter approach practicing intimidation tactics against proponents of the former approach.
There was no culture of intimidation prior to the Commission and actions of the ARP Synod. They are intimidating us into doing what they want.
Administration and Faculty members

<b>Do you feel intimidated?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	15%	25
No	85%	146
If you answered yes, by whom do you feel intimidated?		25
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>171</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>0</b>

25 written comments were received. Of the 25 comments:

44% referenced the ARP Church, Synod, or the Commission.

32% referenced students.

28% referenced faculty or professors.

28% referenced administration or staff.

**Comments received:**

At times I do. I am ARP, and I often feel like because of this whole situations the ARP students have gotten a bad reputation. I also feel at times that other ARP students are intimidating me as well, if I say something that they believe isn't in line with ARP theology they criticize me.

please refer to statement above

Some students and a few faculty.

zealot christians

Faculty, administration, staff, other students, and alumni

Other Students

the ARP church and them basically saying that they make the decisions and we don't matter.

The Administration.

Students that started this.

I answered no, but I want to say that it's getting that way. Especially since I heard that the Q&A today was very vague and evasive. Not to mention the synod just firing those on the board of trustees almost flippantly. It's like when the higher powers do raise their heads, there is no fighting back or actual consideration for everyone else.

Dr. Crenshaw, Dr. Edwards, and Dr. Esperanza

ARP students (see above)

I feel intimidated by the Commission. They are taking out and going about it the wrong way.

Some professors

Many staff, faculty, administrators and students.

I don't feel intimidated personally, but I have seen first hand students shy away from admitting that they are Christians in Dr. Crenshaw's class.

Synod, the Commission, and Erskine's Chaplain Paul Patrick

fellow students and staff of erskine

Yes, my fellow students that are of the ARP denomination impress upon me to change my current opinion on the synode.

I am not exactly comfortable about going to my professors when I need help.

The ARP population to conform or get out. This IS NOT how Jesus performed His ministry.... There should be more teachers like Crenshaw who challenge people to think for themselves. DO NOT RESTRICT OUR ABILITY TO THINK.

By the commission and the synod

The church. Synod. Commission.

The ARP Synad

Administration, I feel that I have been repressed from expressing certain non-violent, critical feelings that I have concerning the school and the way it's run.

**Do you think other students on our campus feel intimidated?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	38%	65
No	62%	105
If you answered yes, by whom do you think these students feel intimidated?		59
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>170</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>1</b>

59 written comments were received. Of the 59 comments:

37% referenced faculty, professors, or advisors.

15% referenced students.

14% referenced the ARP Church, Synod, or the Commission.

14% referenced administration or staff.

Comments received:
same as above
I think some people feel intimidated, but for the most part, it is unfounded. I am a Christian, and I hope that I am strong enough in my faith to not feel intimidated by others who belong to a different denomination or have a different worldview than I. A certain professor's teaching style may intimidate students simply because they've never had to think about why they believe what they believe. But, this is only one professor out of many and not a problem with Erskine College fulfilling its mission as a whole.
Some obviously felt intimidated by teachers, namely Dr. Crenshaw, but I think it's because a lot of students do not want their beliefs questioned.
i think its just cause they aren't prepared for life
Some of the very vocally religious (specifically ARP) students who may not be entirely open to other denominations or seem to look down on people with other beliefs.
Dr. Crenshaw
the students on campus that feel most intimidated are those students who have been reprimanded or publicly put down by others for their convictions... these are not the conservative students but the liberal students
Faculty and fellow students
by other people on campus or by their advisors
I have heard of students saying that they were intimidated by a certain professor, but I do not personally agree that they should have felt intimidated when I heard their story. I like the fact that professors challenge students to think critically and openly.
by the christians.
Faculty, staff, administration, other students, and alumni

Not that I know of.
same as mentioned above
By the very small portion of ultra-conservative students who have spread these ridiculous claims about Erskine not living up to what it should be
some student feel that those professors and other students who are outspoken on the matter will bash them if they speak up and so they are quiet. they are only afraid because they have no back up for what they say.
The Administration.
There will always be somebody that feels intimidated, but I do not think any professors have intimidated students not to speak. The professors who have been accused are the same professors who promote speaking out.
Only a few that I feel are not mature enough to be in college
They are afraid of their peers and people of power.
By student members of the ARP denomination.
They feel intimidated by those that ask questions and those that make them have to stand for what they believe. Students are intimidated by people that are confident and more knowledgeable.
Because they were so sheltered growing up that they do not know how to handle a real life situation in which they must stand up for what they believe in.
Some students are intimidated by Dr. Crenshaw, but in my personal experience those who are intimidated by Dr. Crenshaw are either insecure in their own beliefs or are dogmatic in their ideas--two extreme and generally undesirable approaches. Those who are insecure or uncertain of their beliefs will not be coddled outside of Erskine, and should not expect to be so at Erskine. From what I've personally witnesses, those who dogmatically label faculty as "intimidating" professors come from other departments with little history of personal interaction with the accused. As a double major and student of "intimidating" professors in two departments, I can say that several individuals who take offense to faculty don't have comprehensive views of those professors.
Other students.
By the self righteous students who want to present themselves as Christians, but whom almost the majority of the campus knows do exactly what they chastise other students for. *hypocrisy)
Not so much whom but more of a sense of uncertainty.
Professors who consistently mock students' beliefs and penalize students for opposing these professors' views.
ARP Students (see above)
I also know that other students feel intimidated by the Commission.
Professors
peers only
By their peers.
some teachers
Many staff, faculty, administrators and students.

If I was a student at Erskine who did not have previous, GENUINE experiences in environments where faith is actually incorporated into learning, I would no doubt be discouraged to lead a Christian lifestyle. The problem is not that the teachers are openly challenging the Christian faith (although some are) the problem is that they are lukewarm and do not at all encourage students spiritual growth(as the mission statement says) Of course however the minority of students are the ones who are intimidated because the minority of students are the ones who actually care about this problem.

I feel like students at Erskine feel like they must think in one way in order to be accepted on campus which doesn't always give the best environment for Higher Education. We must learn to be free thinkers based on our own opinions.

Other students would say they feel intimidated, but I do not think it is actual intimidation. I believe that teachers are trying to get students to think critically and also have students justify their beliefs and why they believe such things. When the teacher asks questions trying to get students to think, ignorant students do not know how to respond because they are not firm in what they believe. I think their feelings are hurt because, since they don't have firm enough beliefs, they don't know how to respond to such questions and comments. Their feelings are hurt and they misinterpret that as intimidation.

Dr. Krenshaw, Dr. Kuykendall, and Dr. Evans

By certain professors who voice their opinions clearly and challenge students to think openly. Students who are intimidated are probably either shy, unsure of what they believe, or very firm in their beliefs. The professors, however, are not necessarily at fault for the discomfort of the students.

The question is not by whom but by what. The students who feel intimidated are feeling that way because they are unstable in their faith and don't like to be challenged in what they believe. In order to grow one must be tested on what one believes and why one believes it. If someone does not like that because it makes them feel intimidated then it really isn't a very strong faith they cling to is it?

the same people that I do and also the people they get in for convo

If they do then they need to stop being so sensitive and realize not everyone will share their opinion and that someone disagreeing with you is not someone trying to penalize you.

As an SLA, I have heard several freshmen students comment on their relations with certain ARP members. They feel as though they are being judged as a person based on their beliefs.

by Christians who don't act very "Christian", who judge them

Alot of students feel belittled by the 'Erskinites', and that they are not welcome here unless they fit a preferably ARP mold.

I have seen with my own eyes certain faculty and administration who have intellectually bullied and emotionally abused students.

By the ARP population.

professors who challenge what they believe. I think that it is very important to face that kind of challenge now while here at Erskine where there are plenty of people to talk to that are extremely knowledgeable about christianity, the bible, as well as science. In this way students can make their own beliefs rather than standing on the beliefs of their parents and their church that, up to now, has not faced any challenge. The students who are not used to being challenged in their faith are the ones that will feel intimidated, and these are the ones that need to face this challenge the most in order to be prepared to defend themselves outside of college.

By the commission and the synod, their report has scared students, causing panic on our campus and wide unrest.

One person in general that I have been told on many occasions is Dr. Crenshaw. But i will saw this: i do not say this to attack the man or his credentials. I have never had a course with him, nor have I spoken with him. I have simply been told my fellow students that he intimidates them.
I think that students who are completely set in thier ways and don't even want to contemplate other views on certain subjects, will feel intimidated. Because they won't open up to the possibility that they may be wrong.
By their own thoughts, themselves, and the real-world. Life is a scary thing, but we need to focus on developing upstanding Christian persons who can faithfully contribute to society using their God-given abilities, but it is a process of learning and development to learn how to do that and that's intimidating to some students.
By certain professors, most notably Dr. Crenshaw. Also by some administrators who are not pleased with the Synod's actions.
I think students are being challenged, which is what a college should do, and those they do not want to be challenged but rather told what they want to hear are passing it off as "intimidating."
The ARP Synad
I think some are intimidated by the administration and people like Dr. Crenshaw, but I don't think they are valid fears.
There is a select group of students who feel intimidated because they do not like to have their faith challenged and are fearful of others with strong opinions and differing ideas on Christianity.
Administration and Faculty

<b>Did you tell the commissioners that a culture of intimidation exists on our campus?</b>		
<b>*Results are only for the 18 respondents participating in an interview with the Commissioners.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	22%	4
No	72%	13
Not applicable	6%	1
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>18</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>0</b>

**Commission Statement: "There is an atmosphere in some quarters of Erskine College and Seminary that is inimical to faithful implementation of the mission."**

<b>Do you think there is an atmosphere in some quarters of Erskine College and Seminary that is inimical (hostile) to faithful implementation of the mission?</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	21%	36
No	79%	134
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>170</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>1</b>

<b>Did you tell the commissioners that there is an atmosphere in some quarters of Erskine College and Seminary that is inimical (hostile) to faithful implementation of the mission? *Results are only for the 18 respondents participating in an interview with the Commissioners.</b>		
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	17%	3
No	78%	14
Not applicable	6%	1
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>18</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>0</b>

<b>If you answered yes to either of the previous two questions, please describe this hostile atmosphere.</b>	
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
	21
<b><i>answered question</i></b>	<b>21</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>	<b>150</b>

21 written comments were received. Of the 21 comments:

33% referenced faculty or professors.

19% referenced administration, staff, or Board.

10% referenced the ARP Church or the Commission.

<b>Comments received:</b>
crenshaw's classes
I mean it's obviously there. This whole situation has just made matters worse. No college is going to be perfect and everyone isn't going to be on the same page as far as faith goes. As humans we naturally seem to make things harder for those who don't think the same way we do. This whole ordeal has made a rift, I believe though, of the reformed and non-reformed students.
i do not believe that there is a good integration of biblical truth and learning
Though I have not personally experienced hostile atmosphere on campus in the classroom, I am aware of its going on and the effects on people and their faith here at Erskine. There are some professors who play Devil, instead of Devil's Advocate and it is not in keeping with what the college should be upholding. Other professors I have taken classes from in the past have been very opinionated about their faith in the classroom, but I have never felt pressured to lose my faith altogether. However, I feel as if the school is not making any attempts other than the Barn to help me grow in my faith. If anything I have experienced a dry spell in my faith while being at Erskine. Sadly, this is something that is common for many people I know.
The Board did not provide the proper oversight of the administration, faculty, and staff to be faithful to the mission. This is not a Christ-centered institution right now! Sure there is Biblical things in parts of the campus, but that is not the point. The gospel is to be the center of everything including learning.
I believe that most faculty and administration members are reluctant to put forth a significant effort to integrate faith and learning more effectively.
Of course there is an atmosphere that is somewhat hostile to Christianity just like there will be anywhere else in the world. However, this population is very small and I have thoroughly enjoyed Erskine's Christian community.
Some professors are either opposed to integrating faith and learning or do not feel that this is important outside of the Bible department. They do not teach you how to glorify God in everything you do (I Corinthians 10:31).
Aramark. Way too much money wasted for so little returned.
Many individuals are very opinionated and express their opinions as if they are trying to force them on others. This is not an effective way to be.
ARP think there way or no way
Students are criticized and belittled both in and out of the classrooms. Discipline and instruction are not based on Biblical or Christian standards. Erskine has sunk into a post-modern ocean and seeks to drown everyone else in it. If students try to speak out in their own voices, they are immediately pounded down, made to feel worthless, and are not supported nor encouraged spiritually. It's time the faculty members who do not claim Christ as the one and only Truth be gone from this place.

The hostile atmosphere is summed up by this survey. To me this seems like an attempt to disprove the commissioners investigation, thus going against what they stand for, thus being hostile. Another way this is shown is in the numerous emails sent to the student body regarding this issue. Not only does the administration not represent a united front, but emails are being sent resulting in an uproar around campus causing misinformation to be spread among people who do not care enough to find out the truth. I think the lack of faith in God's perfect plan and the distrust in the Synod's decision is the perfect example of the hostility on the Erskine campus, just to name one.

I personally am not ARP presbyterian and I feel like sometimes student who are ARP members look down on you and I feel like the commission is doing everything in their power to make it an even more judgmental and unchristian atmosphere.

Yes. The hostile areas are among those who don't want you to think critically and question what they teach. I thought this survey was for the college. Why is the seminary being brought into this when the predominant number of students have no contact whatsoever with the Seminary?  Another thing though, if students answered no, to the question of whether they voiced their opinion to the commissioners about what was going on then they probably have good reason for that. In my personal case I was very busy with classes and other work which prevented me from going and voicing my opinion.

People are forced to act like Christians here - and that makes them hostile towards actually accepting Christ's love.

If I'm seen as 'not Christian enough' then I'm looked down on or looked at as simply an amusement and nothing I say matters.

I have had professors who not only have failed to integrate faith in learning, but actually told me that in order to learn I needed to set aside my faith and try to see the world objectively. The board and administration who hired faculty who do not hold high standards of scripture or Christianity at all have severely hurt my education. I also believe that most administration, faculty, and students do not know OR understand the mission. That shows itself in the brutal outbursts that are currently preventing this school from finding unity in this difficult time.

The atmosphere is hostile because of how things work here at Erskine. Erskine's striving towards the merging of faith and education is undermined by those who do not seem to care about such things. For example, it seems that people involved in a sport are not held up to the same standard as those who are not involved. And that goes for the coaching staff as well as the players. Campus wide we should be striving together for a merging of faith and education, rather than two groups of people attempting to meet two different goals.

I have witnessed firsthand Dr. Crenshaw bullying people. At the Q & A with the Commission members, he got into a shouting match with Dr. deWitt and called the commission members liars. He also admitted to telling a student, "You're a liar for Jesus, aren't you?...Enjoy hell...When do you graduate?...Not soon enough." I have heard again and again about his attacks on students' faith in the classroom under the guise of "critical thinking." "Asking questions," as he calls it, is one thing, but verbal abuse and intimidation are another thing entirely. Dr. Crenshaw seeks to erode any aspects of a student's faith that do not accord with his idea of "critical thinking." Also, an administrator is reported to have told a professor that he or she could interpret the mission statement any way he or she wanted.

Extreme unprofessionalism with regards to criticism that the school has received. This has been done in a very un-Christian manner, very unloving and not nurturing to a Christian environment, something I came to the school for in the first place.