Alumni

GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Bruce Fawcett (MDiv ’91)

Current title: President and Vice Chancellor, Professor of Leadership and Religious Studies at Crandall University (New Brunswick, Canada)

Family: Wife: Penny, Children: 2 grown children

Favorite professor: Dr. Doug Stuart & Dr. Scott Hafemann

Favorite class: Interpreting the New Testament

A favorite memory: I served as President of the Student Association and President Cooley was kind to me, inviting me to attend some formative events including a joint dinner for the Boards of Gordon-Conwell and Asbury Seminary at the Hunt Club and a lunch on campus with Board Chair Billy Graham.

Please tell us more about your role as President at Crandall.

The 2024-2025 academic year is my thirteenth year serving as President of my undergraduate *alma mater*. My role, in conjunction with a very able senior team and under the direction of the Board of Governors, is to oversee all aspects of the university including strategic planning, budgeting, fundraising, spiritual life and student transformation, government and denominational relationships, faculty hiring, etc.

How did God weave together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

Gordon-Conwell gave me my first ongoing opportunity to teach (as a Greek Teaching Assistant), and provided a glimpse into how an institution of higher education operates—as the Student Association President, I attended faculty meetings and served on faculty search committees and other committees. These experiences, and others, at Gordon-Conwell stirred in my heart the sense that God’s plan for me in the future would include service in Christian higher education.

The rigorous academic preparation I received at Gordon-Conwell opened the door for me to enroll at Harvard University’s ThM program as the next step in my educational journey.

What are some things you love about serving as President at Crandall University?

As I prayed about leaving my role as an Academic Dean at a seminary to become President at Crandall, on five occasions and in very different ways God reminded me that “He is able to do abundantly more than all I could ask or imagine”. He has honored that promise and I have enjoyed seeing God at work through the years. We have eliminated all debt and facility maintenance, more than doubled our student enrollment

and employee base, opened a second teaching site, strengthened our student experience—especially the opportunities to grow spiritually, attracted students from seventy countries, and are increasing the size of our endowment.

What are the challenges of the President's role in general, and in your context specifically?

Much like being a pastor, a university President is expected to be a generalist. While each President has specific gifts and strengths, still the President is called upon to relate to and serve many constituencies and perform a multitude of very diverse functions. The role is physically, emotionally, and spiritually demanding. I serve several steps back from the front line, unlike when I served as a youth pastor or professor. My joy comes from securing the resources and opportunities for our faculty and staff to invest in our students and seeing the growth in students' lives through our employees' input.

Do you have any publications or links you would like to share?

In taking on this role I have had to set aside most opportunities for teaching and research. My PhD research at the University of Wales was in the field of empirical theology—practical theology informed by social scientific research—specifically how churches and denominations can better serve teenagers. I continue, along with my PhD supervisor and others, in a research project that has continued for twenty-five years, exploring the identity, beliefs, and values of Canadian Baptist youth and our research teams have contributed several dozen articles to a variety of academic journals over the years.