Alumni

GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Joseph Griffin (MACT ’12 & DMin ‘14)

Current title: Senior Associate Dean, Academic Affairs and Teaching Professor at Northeastern University

Family: Wife: Melissa, Children: Evangelle, Malachi, Micaiah

Favorite professor: Dr. Gill & Dr. Grams

Favorite class: Greek Interpretation and Translation courses

A favorite memory: Spending time with my doctoral cohort during the intensives in Boston, Seattle, and NYC.

Would you tell us about your role there at Northeastern?

I began at Northeastern as a part-time faculty member teaching in the Master of Science in Project Management in 2011. I joined the full-time faculty in 2012, and I have had a number of different opportunities over the years: Program Director, Associate Dean, Associate Vice President, and now serving as the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, where I oversee the academic programs and faculty in the College of Professional Studies. It is a dynamic environment, and I have been very fortunate in so many ways.

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

I began the MA in Christian Thought at the Charlotte campus part-time with the primary goal of learning Greek, as I wanted to understand the Bible more deeply. This opened the door for me, ultimately, to begin the Doctor of Ministry program with David Gill, which coincided with me joining the part-time, and then full-time faculty at Northeastern University. Had I not started down that providential path at Gordon-Conwell in 2006 with the MA in Christian Thought, I would not have been considered for the full-time role at Northeastern. During my time at Northeastern, I have always served on the college’s faculty, and I have taken on a variety of administrative roles, leading to my current role as Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Each role has been an opportunity to serve and learn. It is not a path that I would have designed, as I did not know it existed, but it is one I have found fulfilling in so many ways.

What do you love about the work you do?

Early in my DMin program, I was able to spend some time with a fellow student Bill Peel, who is an incredibly wise individual. He helped me think through how to find joy in any job through a fairly simple exercise. Through it, I discovered that if I could find the puzzle, the problem-solving opportunity, in a role, then I would find joy. Each role I have

taken at Northeastern has presented me with increasingly complex puzzles and challenges, and this is what I enjoy about the work the most.

What are the particular challenges you encounter in serving as a Senior Associate Dean in general, and in your specific role and context?

There have been a range of challenges. I think early on it was simply the range of the role, as there isn't a clear training program for such a role. As one moves from being a faculty member teaching classes, to overseeing a specific program, to being a department chair, and then to additional roles, you simply collect experiences and knowledge along the way that culminate in having the knowledge, and, hopefully, the wisdom to do a role well. Thankfully, I have had excellent mentors who have been willing to help. Developing a default response of asking questions rather than jumping to solutions has been the most significant help, as you often only hear some of the information, and you need to keep asking to come to a full picture of many situations.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your work in higher education?

Gordon-Conwell helped me specifically in a couple of classes I took as part of my MA degree with Dr. Steve Klipowicz that had a specific focus on learning theory and elements of instructional design. It really provided a great introduction to a formal area of study I had no knowledge regarding. More broadly, the virtues that embodied an education and ethic of Gordon-Conwell have served me well. Although I often struggle to emulate those virtues as well as I would like, I clearly see the benefit in both my personal and professional life to living out the fruit of the Spirit in my life.

Do you have any publications or links to share?

- Residential Construction Management: Managing According to the Project Lifecycle (J. Ross Publishing, 2010)
- Romero-Torres, Griffin, Sankaran, Project Management in Practice: Case Studies (Edward Elgar, 2025)
- "Project Planning in Practice: A Few Words of Wisdom from the Field," AMA Handbook of Project Management (Harper Collins, 2018)