Dr. Catherine Cone

Professor of Biology, School of Natural and Social Sciences

Center For Excellence in Christian Scholarship

Dr. Catherine Cone describes herself as a third generation "Baptist preacher's kid," and so she states, "I think for me to be Baptist is genetic. I can't dance and have very little rhythmic abilities." One of Cone's favorite things to do as a young child was to catch whatever "critter" she could, show it to her mother, and then to watch her mother run away screaming over what she had just seen. Dr. Cone does reflect that her mother did finally decide to join in her hands-on style of studying these creatures and provided all sorts of jars with lids that had holes punched in the top to aide in the collecting. An agreement was between mother and daughter was established stating that all collected specimens had to be released by the next morning. It was only after she took a young rattlesnake to Sunday School with her that certain restrictions applied as to what she was allowed to catch and bring into the house. It was the Christmas of her twelfth year that brought the would be Dr. Cone a microscope and her brother received a chemistry set. She talked Craig (her brother) into trading his chemistry set for her baton (after all, it could be used as a sword!) and her future was set. "I wanted to look at human blood under the microscope and asked Mom for help. She pricked her finger and helped me make a slide. We studied her blood cells. I was hooked on microbiology and cell biology from that day forward. Many years later I learned that my mother was absolutely terrified of being stuck with needles and having her blood drawn. Now THAT is a mother's love!"

What brought you to ETBU?

God brought me to ETBU. I had been to several interviews and was rejected due to lack of experience. Praying and praying, I asked God to send me to the place where I could serve Him best. I opened the mailbox one day and there was a green sheet of paper folded in half and taped together. I opened it and inside was a job announcement for a biology professorship at East Texas Baptist University. I had never heard of ETBU so I called some friends to find out about the school. After a little research about the school I called the Vice President of Academic Affairs office and asked for application forms. I filled out the forms, interviewed and started my career at ETBU in Fall of 1995. There have been ups and downs, as with every job, yet God has always blessed me and I will continue to serve Him here until He says it is time to do something else.

What makes a student successful in your class?

A passion for biology and learning coupled with hard work.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned from your ETBU colleagues?

Patience and submission; I'm not very good at either.

What is the most valuable lesson you have learned from your ETBU students?

JOY! Life is exciting and full of adventure so go out and enjoy every minute.

How do you promote Christian Scholarship in your classroom?

I try to relate the study of biology, God's creation, to the wonder of God's power and intellect. God wants us to know Him fully which means spiritually and through the physical, observable universe that He created. I also involve the students in discussions about ethics, morals and application of our faith to every part of our lives.

Academic Credentials

M.A. in Biomedical Ethics (2007), Medical College of Wisconsin
Ph.D. in Microbiology (1993), Texas A&M University
M.S. in Biology (1984), Baylor University
B.S. in Biology/Chemistry (1980), Wayland Baptist University