

## ACLE PRESENTATION – SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACT

**Presenter:** Shane Jurecky (Director of Staff, Pacific Lutheran College), 18 years' experience as a Christian Studies Teacher

**Conference Sub-Theme:** How do we understand learning in school as learning the wisdom of God in the broadest sense of 'wisdom'?

**Title:** "Why do I have to do Christian Studies?" Engaging with questions from non-religious students.

**Audience:** Year 8-12 Christian Studies Teachers

**Method of delivery:** Paper Presentation (lecture style with group participation and interaction)

**Description:**

In our Middle and Senior Christian Studies classrooms we find ourselves encountering an increasingly vocal minority of assertive, non-religious students who confidently wish to challenge aspects of our lessons. Given that we often only have a limited amount of time with students, how do we avoid these students "hijacking" our lessons with "red herrings"? The questions these students can ask have the potential to not only impact on the wider, passive majority, but can also leave the teacher facing periods of awkward, "crickets in the background", silence, or worse, responding in ways which serves to "fuel" further interrogation.

So how can teachers respond to this unique aspect faced in Christian Studies?

During the presentation we will look at:

- sharing with each other commonly asked questions students ask in Christian Studies lessons
- strategies in dealing with assertive, non-religious questions
- categories of regularly asked questions and potential responses
- resources to support students actively engaging with their personal questions