



Focus on the Future

Guest Predictions: Dr. Charles Petitt

Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions a set of questions that affect us all.

Dr. Charles Petitt President of Piedmont International University (PIU)

Dr. Charles Petitt was born in Abingdon, Virginia and is a graduate from Easley Christian School. Dr. Petitt graduated from Baptist University of America in 1985 with a Bachelor of Theology.

In 2002 Charles Petitt was inaugurated as the fifth President of Piedmont Baptist College and Graduate School. In the 2010-2011 academic year, PBC enjoyed the largest enrollment in its 66-year history. On January 1, 2012, the enhanced College and Graduate School acquired the University status and is now Piedmont International University.

Dr. Petitt is a gifted speaker, who has preached in numerous universities, colleges and schools, as well as hundreds of churches across America and on five continents.

Dr. Petitt's wife, Dawn, has ministered alongside Dr. Petitt all of their married life. They have two daughters and reside in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?

A: Technological advances have empowered significant innovations in the delivery of quality higher education at more reasonable prices to greater numbers of diverse students than ever before. Taking education to where all the students are is far more efficient and affordable than bringing all the students to where the education is. Delivery systems with built in agility and flexibility will better serve a variety of students and produce far better outcomes.

Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?

A: I am actually more troubled by the slowness of many in the higher education arena to embrace the changes the emerging technologies have enabled. Departments of Education and accrediting bodies sometimes seem stuck in the past and almost paralyzed by all the emerging online and hybrid options. Too many policies are dated and continue to stifle innovation that would both improve educational outcomes and reverse the runaway cost of higher education.

Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?

A: Piedmont International University has developed a global enrollment strategy including a plan to recruit key students from every nation on earth into Master's and PhD programs for advanced theological and ministry training. We will utilize our cutting edge online delivery system

and build a strategic endowment to provide major scholarships for high capacity students who will have a lasting impact on their nation.

Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?

A: How can we continue to provide excellence in higher education while continuing to innovate and cut costs for those pursuing graduate and undergraduate degrees? How can we sharply advance our endowments for the benefit of all students during a challenging economy?

Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?

A: There is an integrity crisis in leadership with part of the fault resulting from the separation of ethical training from education. Piedmont International University is determined to saturate every degree program with values training and do everything within our power to produce graduates with strong moral foundations.