**Background**

Mobile devices provide information access all the time and everywhere. The manner in which we access data has become a fulcrum of our social, vocational, and educational ethos. The developing mediums by which information is engaged are establishing themselves as a pervasive part of our ecology. People expect to be able to perform life tasks—work, study, and play—all the time and everywhere. This reality is transforming education and a 21st century pedagogy is emerging which necessitates a research-informed approach to the integration of theory and praxis.

Education is undergoing a retooling. “Tablet” no longer conjures up nostalgic images of the Big Chief notebook distributed in many of our elementary schools; rather, tablet represents a portable device or tool that is no longer situated under our desk; it is situated in the social, vocational and educational habits of our daily lives. Mobile devices and their affordances are increasingly becoming a normative and expected tool of global culture. How we access content, learn, teach, and think about the interplay between these elements have profound implications for the present and future of education. In Washington, D.C., at the 2010 Wireless Education Technology Conference, Chairman Dr. Paul E. Jacobs stated, “The United States has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform education in a way that will truly prepare our students to compete in a global economy. Mobile technology has a critical role to play in this effort by equipping students and teachers with 24/7 access to learning communities and information.”

**Experimental group:** used iPad to access all course materials via BlackBoard course management system. N=53

**Control group:** used laptop to access all course related materials. N=49

**Findings/Implications**

Our data analysis shows that the students start the semester with their laptop as their first choice of device, their iPhone their next choice and then the iPad as their third choice of device for class and academic study. Data patterns indicate that use declines in all three devices as the semester progresses. Given that device use changes behavior we believe that “just giving the student a device does not ensure that the student actually uses that device”. Institutions must train the student through consistent, repetitive, and graded work that reinforces both content and technology skill.

**Future Research**

Abilene Christian University will be performing two usability studies to examine usability and adaptability functions of the iBook version of *Introducing the New Testament* by Mark Allan Powell. A faculty usability study and student usability study will be performed to determine three to five user function and adaptability issues or affordances associated with using the book in digital format.

**Publications**
