

*proposal for*

## :: THE OZARK COMMONS OF MASTER CRAFTSMEN ::

### PREMISE ::

*To liberate our successful alumni working in the secular marketplace  
that they might teach current and former students new crafts.*

### RATIONALE ::

Ozark Christian College trains men and women for Christian service. Sometimes that looks like full-time vocational ministry. Other times it looks like literal service – the service industry, creative services, or even servicing airplane engines. The essence of an Ozark education is intransitive – it works through self-referential, internal growth that (when accelerated into maturity) develops into an others-focused lifestyle. Because of this, many of our alumni become adept autodidacts – they teach themselves their own crafts both during their stay in an Ozark dormitory or soon after graduation if curiosity takes its hold on their imaginations.

Additionally, those serving in bi-vocational capacities for cross-cultural outreach, part-time preachers, or lay leaders find having an extra workplace craft in their arsenal enables them to be lean, mean ministry machines regardless of what happens to the economy or job marketplace.

As a third and final note, Ozark could earn an incredible amount of additional revenue by offering non-ministry classes.

**But Ozark never plans to become a liberal arts college.** We're a *Bible College* offering intransitive degrees that help our alumni (1) teach themselves and (2) know who to love more than they love knowledge. So is it even possible for us to arm alumni and current students with better crafts focused on passive income?

## IMPLEMENTATION ::

We propose to assemble the Ozark alumni who have reached “master craftsman” status in their respective fields. Having assembled them, we propose to first create an online database of [skill-share](#) how-to videos. This database will, over time, grow to include an online community of Christians encouraging one another in their respective crafts.

We propose to build this massive database gradually (*read: over the course of decades*). The massive database will include both free and cheap learning for our alumni and students. This will begin with cheap and free videos (*half-price of Linda's or Skill Share's videos*) taught by master craftsmen, each accompanied by class materials and recommended reading. This will also eventually include open source schematics, walk-throughs, DIY kits for 3D printing, forums in which like-minded craftsman can discuss trouble areas with fellow alumni of both Ozark and sister colleges, and whatever other ideas surface from the community.

Primarily, this will encourage current students on internships and breaks to continue their learning in unorthodox – but practical – ways and, more importantly, it will facilitate that kind of diagonal learning environment. This will be supplemented during the school year by an alternative option for small groups: **guilds**. A godly mentor will still lead these guilds on Thursdays just as they would small groups, however those assembled would have a craft in common: songwriting, creative writing, architecture, redneck engineering, woodworking, etc. Once per month, the school will hold a “Guild Kin” meeting in which these guilds assemble as a united whole to worship together and enjoy the in-progress craftsmanship that the Holy Spirit has prompted in our School.

**In summary, this will bolster Ozark against fading into a mere liberal arts college like Harvard and other Bible Colleges before her by equipping Bible College students to pursue secondary crafts on their own time.**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES ::

1. **We never make content to first and foremost because we see topic neglected.** Our available content follows the relative presence *or absence* of a master craftsman working in the craft in question. In other words, we care about quality *not* quantity of our resources. We start with the “who” and let the “what” and “how” follow. If we do not have a quality graphic designer, we will not make a lecture or section devoted to graphic design.
2. **We define “master craftsman” as someone worthy to build the tabernacle.** The word comes from the Hebrew word *הַכֹּשֶׁבִּי* (*machashabab*) in Exodus 35:35:

*“He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them **skilled workers and designers.**”*

We understand “master craftsman” to be gender-inclusive. These are people who have been endowed by the Holy Spirit to do something unique that *isn't* considered part of the priesthood, but is considered as essential for creating a mobile place of worship. In today's terms, if a potential master craftsman is not working as a full-time professional in their given craft and respected by their pagan peers, they are unfit to lead this particular Ozark initiative and remain welcome to learn from any of our master craftsmen. Correspondingly, if a potential master craftsman has not been approved by the leadership team as a person of Christ-like integrity, they will be deemed unfit to lead this particular Ozark initiative, but remain welcome to learn from any of our master craftsmen.

A rough rubric for quality candidates follows:

- a. Alumni who make / have made a notable full-time wage in their given craft.
  - b. Alumni who have won notable secular awards in their given craft.
  - c. Alumni who have “changed the game” by creating new culture, technological breakthroughs, or other advances in their given craft.
  - d. Alumni who exemplify the Fruit of the Spirit, the qualifications of an elder, or other biblical touchstones that earmark a working, robust faith.
  - e. People who fit into the above categories *and* align with the vision of the school, but have graduated from a sister university or have undergone comparable biblical training.
3. **Nominees and auditionees will be elected to the broader team of master craftsmen by a consensus arising from a small leadership team** composed of ½ wise men of integrity (*elders*) and ½ current working master craftsmen who have excelled exceptionally in their given fields (*deacons/servants*).
  4. **Royalty revenue will be split** between those charged with (1) making and maintaining the web presence and content, (2) the school, (3) the presenter, (4) a trust fund providing full-ride scholarships for prospective students who already demonstrate incredible potential in their given craft. A suggested split would be 20 : 20 : 50 : 10 (*maintenance : school : presenter : scholarship*).
  5. **Though sponsored by Ozark Christian College, the Commons of Master Craftsmen will function as an independent arm of the school meaning, functionally, a separate web presence.** This is new sector of the school reserved for open-source learning and autodidacticism.
  6. **The content and web presence must be themselves designed and created by master craftsmen as defined above.** Believers who are professional cinematographers in the secular marketplace must shoot the videos. Professional coders in the secular marketplace must create the website. Professional audio technicians in the secular marketplace must mix the sound. The same goes for the design, the layout, the pitch, and the rest.

#### EXAMPLES ::

- The *Creative Writing* master craftsman should not be a preacher who wrote a book published by Zondervan and sold to his megachurch, but rather someone whose fiction has made it onto the New York Times bestseller list. **Example:** Ellie Ann Soderstrom.
- The *Music Composition* master craftsman should not be a worship leader who wrote some songs and posted them to CCLI, but rather someone who has licensed their music to international companies like Facebook and Redbull and has scored full-length films. **Example:** Tony Anderson.
- The *Fine Art* master craftsman should not be someone who facilitates a public arts-and-crafts parachurch organization or who has only painted during a worship service, but rather someone who has sold paintings or sculptures or other works of art for tens of thousands of dollars – enough to make a living *as a painter*. **Example:** Makoto Fujimura (not Alumni, but aligns with the school).
- The *Architecture* master craftsman should not be a mere home builder or someone who simply assembled a pre-fabbed house on a missions trip, but rather someone who studied architecture (formally or informally) and applied their knowledge to the creation of beautiful public spaces, large

homes with creative cores, or innovative commercial spaces. **Example:** Dave Mehrens.

- However the *Carpentry* master craftsman should have spent more time in building homes, in wielding hammers and nailguns. **Example:** Ryan Scheuermann
- The *Interior Design* master craftsman should be the guy that billionaires hire on a regular basis to design the interiors of the greatest living and working spaces in the country. **Example:** Mark A. Williams of Three Arch Design, Inc. (brother to Kyle Welch's father-in-law).

## CONCLUSION ::

Other examples abound, but with some thoughtful guiding principles and a practice of restraint in getting the first lectures and forums up, we can create a solid foundation upon which to encourage future autodidacticism in generations of Ambassadors to come.

Generations of Ambassadors we will subsequently unleash upon this world.



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