

COLLOQUY

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Quo Vadis: The Outlook for Today's Graduates



The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

Of economics, enrollment, and employment

Last spring, *Colloquy* examined the impact of a down economy on schools, and this issue takes a look at its impact on students who graduated last spring. The stories are related. One way in which schools are hoping to address financial stress is through increased enrollment, and we hope for increases to reverse the trend of decreases for the past three years. Enrollment in a professional school, however, should be closely related to positions available for graduates. A slow economy typically means that it will take longer for congregations, non-profit agencies, and other employers to absorb a new class of graduates. Most will find positions; it will just take longer. Schools, however, need to monitor the relationship of the number of persons enrolled to study for ministry positions and the number of positions available to them upon graduation.

As in the case of any trend that touches a wide range of theological schools, multiple factors are exerting influence in the current ministry job market. The generation of about-to-retire ministers is the first large group in many denominations that are retiring on what they have saved in individual retirement accounts and not on a pension determined by the church body. These persons have a complex individual decision to make as to when to stop depositing to their retirement accounts and begin withdrawing from them. A down economy is forcing people to stay on the depositing side of the equation a little longer. There are signs that congregational giving, while strong in the early part of this down economy, has declined slightly as its effects have lingered. The ongoing reconfiguration of Protestantism in North America is changing the kinds and number of ministerial positions that exist as well as the expected education and qualifications that are sought in candidates for those positions. These factors slow the ability of congregations, church-related, and parachurch agencies to absorb recent seminary graduates.

Down economies have slowed the number of ministerial positions before, but this time there is still another new factor in the mix. Previously, students typically found ways to hold on until church-related positions were available. However, this pattern may be under threat. Students are graduating from seminary with more debt than they have ever had, and that may force some of them to take whatever job is available when they must begin repaying student loans—whether that is a ministerial position or not. Persons who are forced to take nonministerial jobs may not be able to shift to ministry positions at a later date. The threat is not just that church-related employment may be delayed; it is that it may be deferred indefinitely.

The down economy is temporary. However slowly, economic recovery will come. The changes in the employment structure in North American religion, however, have themselves been changing, even apart from the economy, and those changes will not abate when the economy is fully recovered. Students will not graduate with less debt. Graduates will be facing even more varied patterns of ministry positions. More graduates will need to consider bivocational ministry in order to serve the churches most in need of pastoral leadership. And we must not mistake long-lasting substantive changes as simply temporary impositions of a down economy.

Communities of faith need the gifts, enthusiasm, and commitment of recent seminary graduates. As theological schools move into the future, they will need to take as active a role in helping gifted graduates find ministry positions as they do in finding talented prospective students to enroll in seminary degree programs.



Daniel O. Aleshire
ATS Executive Director



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FEATURE

- 2 • Quo vadis: The outlook for today's seminary graduates

THE ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

- 9 • Two ATS leaders named to diplomatic posts
- 10 • Twenty-four research projects receive Lilly Theological grants
- 11 • ATS establishes policy bank

DEPARTMENTS

- 12 • **STUDENT INFORMATION**
Placement by the numbers
By Helen Blier
- 16 • **PRESIDENTS AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICERS SOCIETY**
Maximizing the margin
By Chris Meinzer
- 20 • **CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS SOCIETY**
Curriculum review: Establishing a right perspective for ministry
By Michael Jinkins
- 23 • **STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATORS NETWORK**
Reaching for the stars: Four strategies for boosting enrollment
Advice from David Worley
- 26 • **TECHNOLOGY IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**
Technology integration in education: The faculty connection
By Jay Endicott
- 30 • **COMMISSION ON ACCREDITING**
It's not the course level; it's the degree program level
By Polly Stone
- 33 • Jeremiah McCarthy returns to teaching
- 34 • **DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**
Stewardship trends and their impact on your development strategy
By John R. Frank

COVER PHOTO: "Commencement 2009." © Princeton Theological Seminary/Joel Bock.

Quo vadis:



No one would have expected David Noble to leave seminary without a job. After all, the 35-year-old Noble is a Navy veteran who came to faith

in Christ as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy and moved his young family from California to Missouri to attend Covenant Theological Seminary, where he was a Francis Schaeffer Institute intern and graduated cum laude. Today Noble is one of the last three people remaining to be placed. He has applied for solo pastor, senior pastor, associate pastor, and assistant pastor positions and positions with parachurch organizations as well as offering himself up to "countless" presbyteries as a church planter. With a strong sense of calling to preach and to care for people, Noble is open to almost any pastoral opportunity and remains hopeful, saying, "I believe that God is calling me to something specific, which has not come to fruition yet. He is using this time to grow me in trusting Him rather than my own track record."

UPDATE: Noble accepted a position at Grace DC in Washington, DC, and begins January 2010.



Equally puzzling is the case of Rob Brown, a May graduate of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond in Virginia, a 4.0 student and

one of two winners of the distinguished W. Landon Miller Gold Medal Award given to the student(s) who attained the highest academic record of all graduating students. His mission work has taken him to the Bahamas, post-Katrina Mississippi, and India, where he served as the field coordinator for a partnership between the Virginia Baptists and the India Baptist Convention at the Precious Children's Home in Kottayam, Kerala. Yet Brown is the sole remaining BTSR graduate this year without a job. He suggests that the prevalence of dual-career couples in today's economy may account for part of the challenge, explaining that he and his fiancée "are not as immediately geographically flexible as may have been the norm years ago when it was more common for ministers' spouses not to work."



Ellen Dawson, who earned her MDiv from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in May, is still looking as well. Her circuitous path to ministry has

included a career in public relations, mission work in Guatemala, and a stint as an interim youth director. But her commitment is clear, as are her gifts: she earned the prestigious Paul T. Gerrard Prize in Homiletics and Pastoral Care at graduation, an award given by the faculty to the student who offers the most promise for pastoral ministry, and she comes equipped with the added advantage of musical talent. "The search is a bit daunting at times," says Dawson, "particularly since many congregations are not willing to consider first call candidates. Most churches are looking for a seasoned 'jack-of-all-trades.'" Nonetheless, she is confident and at peace with the protracted process. "What it comes down to," she says, "is the call and faithfully going forward, trusting that the Lord has a church for me."

The outlook for today's seminary graduates

Current job prospects for theological school graduates are defined by several trends:

- The **job openings available to graduates have been steadily declining** in number for the past four years.
- Increasing numbers of MDiv **graduates are undecided** about full-time positions expected after graduation.
- Those expecting **parish ministry positions have declined**.
- In response to the economic downturn, many retirement-age **pastors are choosing to postpone retirement**.
- The annual income required to service **educational debt may limit job options** for new graduates.
- **Placement and vocational counseling services consistently rank low** among measures of student satisfaction.

It seems that Noble, Brown, and Dawson—profiled to the left—are not alone. The latest data gathered through the ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ), administered by 148 member schools to more than 5,400 students, indicates that, in the aggregate, 49.6 percent of Master of Divinity graduates and 49.3 percent of non-MDiv graduates have been offered jobs, down from peaks in the 2004–05 and 2005–06 academic years of 55.3 percent for MDivs and 56.5 percent for all others. Looking at the statistics for individual schools, placement officers at some schools report employment of new graduates at rates that have dipped as low as 25 percent, and one has seen a 65 percent decline in job postings over the past two years.

Statistical realities

Clearly the economic struggles of the past eighteen months and declines in congregational health have played a pivotal role in defining options for job-seeking graduates. The sting originates at the congregational level, but for denominations that track placement, the collective numbers are even more painful. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2,137 pastors or candidates are vying for 627 positions, and—further complicating matters—many have restricted the types of calls they would accept. For example,

only 9.5 percent are willing to consider a church of 100 members or fewer, which represents the majority of PCUSA congregations. Only 7 percent are open to service in a rural area. And many are willing to serve in only one or two states. Among new graduates, 368 are seeking first calls from among a pool of only 174 churches that are open to first-call pastors.

In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the total number of active calls (those currently in pastoral positions) has declined by 14 percent since 1990, from 10,160 to 8,713. The total number of **new** congregational calls to all pastors—both first and subsequent calls—has seen an even greater decline since 1990, from 1,748 to 1,290, or 26 percent, interrupted only by a boost during the 1998–2001 period. According to Jonathan Strandjord, the denomination's director for theological education, these numbers reflect a trend toward longer pastorates, which is expected to reduce the opportunities for first calls or calls to newly ordained pastors, which have remained lower than average. (Even a slight uptick in first calls from 295 to 327 between 2007 and 2008 Strandjord attributes to an economic climate in which both candidates and congregations with vacancies have become open to possibilities they might have resisted previously.)

The placement issue is further complicated by the fact that many theological school gradu-



ates enter the job market with significant levels of debt. According to the latest Graduating Student Questionnaire aggregated results, 9.9 percent of 2009 graduates had come to theological school with a debt load of \$30,000 or more; by the time they graduated, 24.5 percent had incurred \$30,000 or more in new debt, and 14.1 percent had monthly payments of \$500 or more. In many cases, this debt load can limit the job options a graduate can consider, precluding opportunities that may fit well with a graduate's vocational call and interests but not with his or her personal budget.

Only in the Catholic Church does this issue take on a decidedly different outlook, where the demand exceeds the supply. According to *The Official Catholic Directory*, in 2009 about 22,000 priests are serving more than 22,000 parishes and missions and 68.1 million Catholics in the United States. (Another 19,500 priests are either retired or serving in administrative or teaching positions or other special ministries.) And according to CARA (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate), more than 18 percent of parishes in the United States have no resident priest pastor. Of the 3,400 parishes currently

doing without, only 517 have been entrusted by their bishops to a deacon, religious sister or brother, or other lay person, and in these situations a priest is always assigned as the official pastor and sacramental minister. Moreover, nearly 5,000 parish priests are serving more than one parish.¹ Seminary enrollments continue to remain below the levels needed to overcome this shortfall. Because of this deficit, the job outlook is very favorable for Catholic priests for the foreseeable future. In this context, finding a placement is not the issue. As Daniel Aleshire pointed out in an address to the ATS/MATS Conference for Roman Catholic Schools earlier this fall, "the primary difference between a diocesan seminary and a Protestant denominational seminary is that the educator (the bishop through the seminary) is the employer." In this context, rather, the issue is enlisting enough men who want to prepare themselves for ministry as Catholic priests to serve the ever-expanding Catholic population.

Postponing retirements and shrinking congregations

Denominations tracking retirement statistics affirm that the sluggish economy is also having its impact on the decisions of when retirement-age pastors choose to leave their positions. The ELCA's Strandjord reports that the denomination would ordinarily expect more than 300 retirements in 2009, if the pattern of most recent years persisted. But two opposing factors make this an uncertain projection. First, the current age distribution of active ordained pastors reflects a particular swell in the number of baby boomers—particularly those in the 52 to 62 age range—who would ordinarily be expected to boost the numbers of new retirements over the next ten to fifteen years, rising to perhaps as high as 480 in a single year, not to mention another 120 lost through death, resignation, and so forth. Working against that trend, the economic crisis could force many baby boomers to postpone retirements, as they did during the last major market downturn, when retirements dropped precipitously from 353 in 2001 to 254 in 2002 and 261 in 2003 before jumping back to 331 in 2004. The big challenge, according to Strandjord, is that the short-term picture of limited job prospects might discourage prospective students or graduates from pursuing pastoral ministry. "If this situation lasts very long, we will end up with 'pent-up demand' for retirement that, when the economy improves, could lead to very high retirement numbers indeed, possibly as high as 1,000 in a single year. The

challenge is to maintain a reserve of seminary-trained leaders ready to meet what could become a very sudden demand.”

Likewise in the United Methodist Church, according to Lovett Weems at Wesley Seminary in Washington, DC, 48 percent of clergy are aged 55 to 72, and if the average retirement age of recent years remained at 64, the anticipated peak in retirements would fall between 2011 and 2013. In fact, Weems says, “there have been more retirements of full-time, ordained clergy than there have been ordinations for a number of years, and that trend will continue.” But with the denomination’s new mandatory retirement age set at 72, many will likely respond to the economic crisis by extending their earning years. At the same time, the number of mainline churches with 125 or more congregants—the size requiring a full-time pastor—is declining. So not all those retirements, whenever they come, will yield new job openings.

Broadening student aspirations

This changing job landscape is not simply a matter of supply and demand. The expectations and vocational direction of students have broadened, as indicated by the Graduating Student Questionnaire statistics (see charts 20 and 21). Of the pool of 2009 graduates who completed the questionnaire, only 48.0 percent of MDiv graduates and 17.0 percent of non-MDiv graduates anticipated full-time parish ministry. At least 22.0 percent of MDiv graduates and 26.1 percent of non-MDiv graduates were undecided, but many others were setting their sights on different careers.² Hospital or other chaplaincy figured most prominently among the other careers favored by MDiv graduates, while the non-MDiv graduates were more evenly divided among a variety of pursuits, with particular interest in:

- ♦ social work (particularly popular among women);
- ♦ foreign missions;
- ♦ teaching at either the college/university, seminary, or secondary school level;
- ♦ church administration;
- ♦ hospital or other chaplaincy;
- ♦ pastoral counseling; and
- ♦ campus ministry.

This stands in marked contrast to the vocational goals of students thirty years ago. According to Daniel Aleshire, “While we don’t have the data from ATS schools back that far, the structure of degree programs during that era

reflected a greater focus on forms of congregational ministry than do today’s programs.”

And yet, it appears from a 2007 report by the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education that a larger percentage of graduates **ultimately** end up in parish ministry than might expect to at graduation. The report, *How are We Doing? The Effectiveness of Theological Schools as Measured by the Vocations and Views of Graduates*, summarizes the findings of the first-ever survey of graduates of theological and rabbinical schools in North America. While its study cohort was broader than just ATS member schools, its findings are nonetheless instructive.

CHART 20: Position Expected after Graduation for MDiv Students

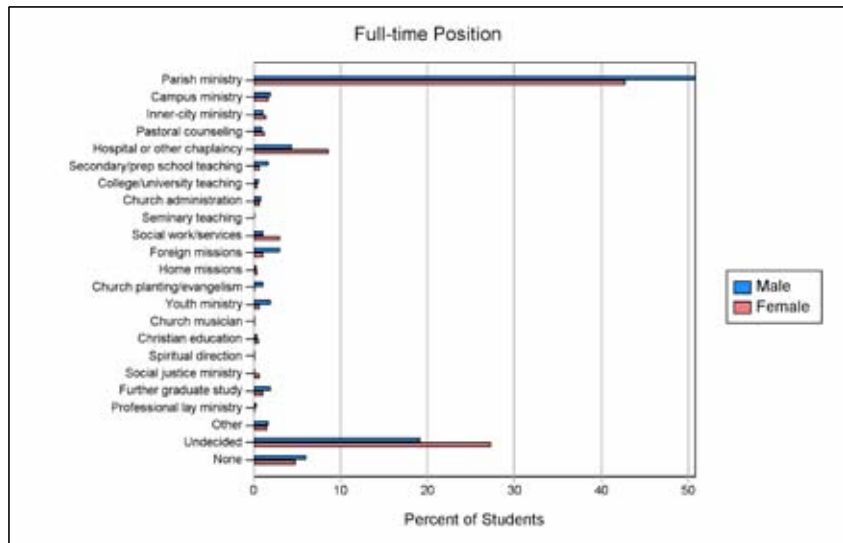
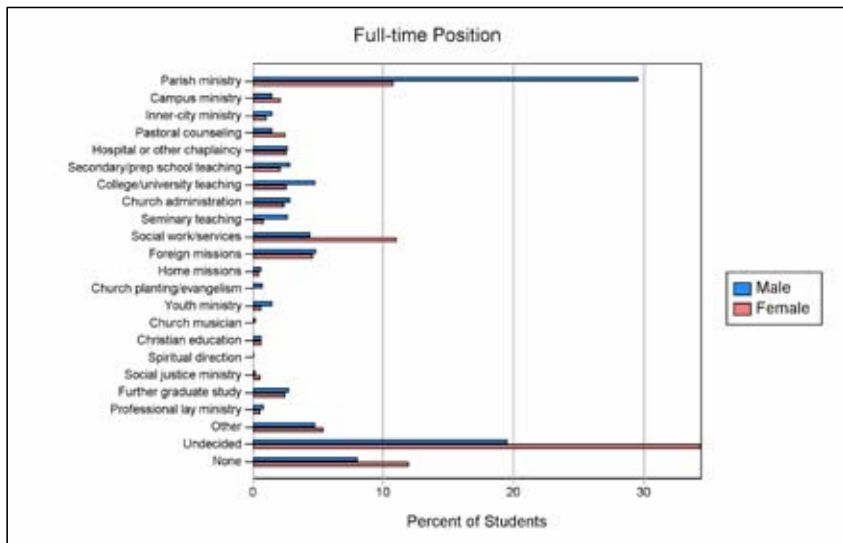


CHART 21: Position Expected after Graduation for All Other Students (Non MDiv)



Among them: “although two-thirds of graduates in MDiv programs say just before graduation that they are headed for the congregation, substantially more than that—almost three-quarters—end up there in their first position. . . . An additional 14 percent . . . choose some other form of ministry. Thus, in the aggregate, nearly 90 percent of graduates of MDiv and equivalent programs of seminaries and divinity and rabbinical schools go immediately into some form of professional religious service, and more of them go into what many regard as the normative forms of that service—parish ministry, congregational ministry, or the pulpit rabbinate.”³

Tentmaking and other nontraditional alternatives

Sagging economics and societal change are converging in some settings to support the notion of tentmaking as an alternative to full-time pastorates. According to Mick Boersma, director of field education and placement at Talbot School of Theology of Biola University in La Mirada, California, “a growing number of MDiv grads are serving as tentmakers, working in churches while pursuing outside business interests.” He adds that, “economics drives some of this, as well as a philosophy of ministry that sees such an arrangement as key to outreach and relating to the culture.”

Boersma explains that, to a certain extent, this phenomenon is driven by congregational response to the economy. “Churches are dealing with the economic downturn by seeking to fill full-time positions with part-time help. Some are just pulling the position from our Web site and waiting until their financial picture improves. As a result, we continue to have a robust number of part-time listings, but our full-time listings have decreased by around 35 percent in the past several months.”

Sagging economics and societal change are converging in some settings to support the notion of tentmaking as an alternative to full-time pastorates.

Likewise, Susan Fox, director of the supervised ministry and vocational planning office at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education (Union-PSCE) in Richmond, Virginia, advises that the school is “introducing students to the concept of ‘bi-vocational’ calls in recognition of the increasing

number of congregations that are unable to afford a full-time pastor.” At the same time, she has noticed a modest increase in the number of students who want to combine parish ministry with another vocation such as teaching.

This trend offers the potential for both dark clouds and silver linings, according to Boersma. He warns that some churches may be overloading existing staff with the responsibilities of once-advertised positions that have been pulled. On the other hand, “churches are seeing the need for lay people to get involved and depend less on paid staff. In a perfect world,” he adds, “we need both lay and paid service. Perhaps these hard times are giving us a chance to re-examine our priorities and approaches to serving our Lord Jesus.”

Following yet another alternate route, some students are opting for a postgraduation internship rather than a traditional first call. While internships are required by some denominational judicatories, many students are deciding on their own “that additional supervised parish experience will enhance their formation for ministry,” according to Union-PSCE’s Fox.

Proactive placement strategies

Given the statistics, it is not surprising that placement and vocational counseling services are among the lowest-ranking criteria by which student satisfaction is measured, ranking below only childcare and health and wellness. The most recent statistics, gleaned from the 2009 Graduating Student Questionnaire, indicate that, on average, students ranked placement services at 2.9 on a five-point scale, just below the “Neutral” rating.

Yet some schools are finding that innovative placement strategies can yield positive results, even in the face of dwindling demand. For almost three years, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond—along with partners Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Virginia Baptist Mission Board—has been working with a new, Internet-based reference and referral service. Called “Leader Connect” by some and “Minister Matching” by others, the service is offered at no cost and permits churches and candidates to enter in-depth profiles including personal, church, and theological information. Each partner assigns authorized administrators who manage the system, approving profiles, running searches using algorithms within the system to find matches, and forwarding resumes to churches when matches are identified. The ease and speed of response provides churches with

Profiles of Ministry: A valuable placement tool

The ATS Profiles of Ministry (POM) program assesses persons on characteristics judged most important for the beginning minister by laity and clergy throughout the churches of North America. The POM offers an efficient and highly reliable method tested over thirty-five years of extensive use with thousands of students. For less than \$100/student, schools can help students discern their vocations and then direct them toward appropriate field education and job placements.

Stage I is designed for students in their first year of seminary, while stage II focuses on graduating seminarians and has also proved useful for ministers, priests, and others who have served in ministry for some years. Using a casebook and interview format, the POM presents twenty-four cases, each posing a problem, issue, or circumstance in ministry and calling for a response. Stage II adds a field observation form that gathers input from those with whom the individual has worked.



Profiles of Ministry identifies approximately forty characteristics and the importance of each by denominational family. While it has components of sociological and psychological analysis, POM's distinctive feature is that it explores theological criteria for ministry. Examples of characteristics measured in the program are:

- ◆ Fidelity to tasks and persons
- ◆ Acknowledgment of limitations
- ◆ Christian spirituality
- ◆ Self-protecting behavior
- ◆ Competent preaching
- ◆ Denominational collegiality
- ◆ Active concern for the oppressed
- ◆ Pastoral service to all

For more information about POM, contact Helen Blier at blier@ats.edu or visit the Student Information Services page on the ATS Web site at <http://www.ats.edu/Resources/Student/Pages/default.aspx>.

candidate resumes to review, often within twenty-four hours of the completion of the online profile. The system is a "double blind" one, in that neither the candidate nor the church can enter it to view available positions/candidates. Yet it offers the opportunity to broaden any given search to a regional or national level by sharing a candidate or church profile with one or more of the other partner organizations and by allowing for the option of sharing the service with other denominations as well. According to Woody Jenkins, director of donor and church relations of BSTR, "I have numerous churches from a variety of denominations and candidates with varied church backgrounds who have chosen to use our service." With the help of the service, used by many of the students, BSTR's 2009 graduating class of twenty-nine MDiv and six DMin students has done well in the job market; all but one were employed or had secured advanced degree acceptance, employment, or appointment to training, military, or other vocational situations by the end of the summer.

Covenant Theological Seminary historically functioned "more or less like a broker," says Joel Hathaway, director of alumni and placement services, "facilitating the listing of available positions, and directing interested candidates to those positions." "However," he adds, "beginning in the fall of 2007, Ministry Placement became a service of the broader Alumni Relations Department. As such, current alumni . . . were invited into the process of job identification and graduate placement. These alumni have helped identify ministry opportunities, within their regional networks, that normally would not have been available to graduates of the seminary."

Adding vocational counseling to the mix, Hathaway goes on to explain, "each graduate is then put through an evaluative process whereby he or she is assessed on gifts, abilities, weaknesses, preferences, and distinctives. This information is shared (with permission from candidates) with churches and ministries seeking to fill available positions—functioning to more quickly, effectively, and accurately match candidates with positions."

With regard to churches, in particular, Covenant's Alumni Department has adopted a consultative role, offering counsel to search committees seeking to fill vacant ministry positions. As Hathaway points out, "most committees function on a part-time, unpaid basis. Many have never received any training for what they are being asked to do, in assessing an individual for a particular position." But the consultative role offers a win-win outcome for the churches and the graduates. "As a consultant," he said, "Covenant Seminary has been able to offer a more thorough assessment of employment opportunities. In turn, this . . . helps clarify the needs of churches and increase opportunities for ministry placement."

"The model of 'open posting' for ministry positions is becoming antiquated, to some extent," concludes Hathaway. "The identification and evaluation of candidates cannot take place through the exchange of resumes or a few long-distance phone calls. Because of the relational aspects of ministry, relationships are key to successful placement. Networking with individuals—who both believe in the mission of the seminary and are serving as practitioners in similar fields—increases opportunities for the successful employment of graduates, even in a difficult economic climate."

A current study is addressing employment challenges for African American women in particular, according to Martha Simmons, president and publisher of *The African American Pulpit* (TAAP) and creator and director of the online African American Lectionary (TAAL). Simmons attributes the challenges to a combination of denominational decisions and the sometimes sexist social mores long held by African American, Latino, and Asian religious and secular communities in America. In an effort to increase the number of well-paying jobs in ministry for women of color and to provide needed mentorship, she has begun a national effort to survey women of color and gather data that will lead to the development of four national employment and mentorship resource centers for women of color in ministry. The survey can be found at www.TheAfricanAmericanPulpit.com and is also being circulated to women in ministry groups around the country. The results will be tallied in spring 2010, at which time a consortium of women of color will meet to discuss the results and formulate solutions.

Implications for accreditation

The issue of graduate placement figures prominently in the Standards of Accreditation. General Institutional Standard 7, section 7.4, calls for "appropriate assistance to persons seeking employment relevant to their degrees," and it adds that "theological schools should monitor the placement of graduates in appropriate positions and review admissions policies in light of trends in placement." To that end, schools should attempt to gather data regarding placement and use that data to inform any revisions to their goals and programs.

In addition, for each degree within the Degree Program Standards, the final section of the standard ([Standard letter].5.2) deals with placement:

The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

The benefits of successful placement, however, transcend the requirements of accreditation. Tracking the placement of graduates is, to a large extent, a stewardship issue for the schools, especially those receiving considerable denominational or donor support. Placement tracking helps schools evaluate if their missions are being achieved. Knowing where graduates end up may have a significant impact on recruiting and marketing, not to mention the curriculum of degree programs. It is work worth doing, and worth doing well. ♦

ENDNOTES

1. Katarina Schuth, *Priestly Ministry in Multiple Parishes* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006).
2. A significant factor in the growing number of undecideds is the increasing percentage of MDiv students who are under 30 and the fact that younger students are more apt than older students to be undecided about their vocational goals.
3. Barbara G. Wheeler, Sharon L. Miller, and Daniel O. Aleshire, *How are We Doing? The Effectiveness of Theological Schools as Measured by the Vocations and Views of Graduates*, Auburn Studies, no. 13 (New York, NY: Auburn Theological Seminary, December 2007).

Two ATS leaders named to diplomatic posts

The U.S. Senate has confirmed two ATS leaders named to diplomatic posts by President Barack Obama. Michael Battle, president of the Interdenominational Theological Center, has been named the U.S. Representative to the African Union with the rank of Ambassador; the African Union is an Ethiopia-based organization that coordinates the political relationships of more than fifty African nations. Miguel H. Diaz, professor of theology at St. John's University School of Theology-Seminary in Collegeville, Minnesota, has been named the new U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, the ninth ambassador and the first Hispanic in the post since Washington and the Vatican established full diplomatic relations in 1984.



Michael A. Battle served as the seventh president of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, Georgia, a post he has held since 2003. He has been an administrator at several higher education institutions, including Chicago State University, Virginia State University, and Hampton University, where he served as pastor

to The Hampton University Memorial Church and as executive secretary/treasurer of the Hampton University Ministers' Conference, the nation's largest interdenominational conference among African American clergy. Battle served as a chaplain in the United States Army Reserve for twenty years, retiring in 1997 with military honors and the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

A vice president of the American Committee on Africa from 1994 to 1998, Battle was an election observer for the first South African free election in 1994 and also served as a liaison between the Hampton University Ministers' Conference and the South African Council of Churches.

He served as chair of The Robert W. Woodruff Library of The Atlanta University Center and as a member of the UNCF Institutional Board of Directors, the Atlanta Rotary Club, 100 Black Men of Atlanta, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Congressional Forum Steering Committee.

Battle holds a BA from Trinity College, an MDiv from Duke University, and a DMin from Howard University.

A valued colleague at ATS, he was elected to the board of directors in 2008 and has served on committees for the African American presidents and for the Vocation and Governance project funded by Lilly Endowment.

A past president of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the United States, the Cuban-born **Miguel H. Diaz** taught religious studies and theology at Barry University, the University of Dayton, and Notre Dame, and taught and served as academic dean at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, Florida, prior to joining St. John's, where he has taught both graduate and undergraduate students in the joint theology department at the College of Saint Benedict and St. John's University.



"Professor Miguel Diaz is a skilled Trinitarian theologian who is passionate as both a teacher and a scholar," according to Abbot John Klassen, OSB, of Saint John's Abbey. "He is a strong proponent of the necessity of the Church to become deeply and broadly multicultural, to recognize and appreciate the role that culture plays in a living faith."

MaryAnn Baenninger, president of the College of Saint Benedict, adds: "Miguel is a highly respected theologian and scholar, and an excellent teacher. Most importantly, he has a deep commitment to Catholic social justice and to inclusiveness in the Catholic Church. He truly lives a life of faith. He is the ideal candidate for this post."

Diaz is the coeditor of the book *From the Heart of Our People: Latino/a Explorations in Catholic Systematic Theology* and author of *On Being Human: U.S. Hispanic and Rahmerian Perspectives*, named "Best Book of the Year" by the Hispanic Theological Initiative at Princeton Theological Seminary. He holds a BA from St. Thomas University and a MA and PhD in Theology from the University of Notre Dame.

ATS is grateful for his service to the Commission on Accrediting, having served ATS both as an accrediting visitor and as a member of the task force on revision of the standards. ♦

Twenty-four research projects receive Lilly Theological Research Grants

The Association and Lilly Endowment have announced the recipients of the 2009–10 Lilly Theological Research Grants.

Faculty Fellowships

Joseph Patrick Chinnici, Professor of Church History, Franciscan School of Theology
Going Public, Becoming Global: American Catholicism and Social Change, 1945–1996

Emmanuel Yartekwei Lartey, Professor of Pastoral Theology, Care, and Counseling, Candler School of Theology of Emory University
Postcolonializing God: A Postcolonial African Pastoral Theology

Ian Christopher Levy, Associate Professor of Theology, Lexington Theological Seminary
Recovering the Medieval Paul: A Comprehensive Theological Vision for the Church

Eugen J. Pentiu, Associate Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology
The Old Testament in Eastern Orthodox Tradition

Todd David Whitmore, Associate Professor, University of Notre Dame Department of Theology
Crossing the Road: An Anthropological Theology of Risk and Hope

Seung Ai Yang, Associate Professor of New Testament, Chicago Theological Seminary
Crossing Boundaries, Building Community: Matthean Discipleship Discourse as a Map for 21st Century American Church and Society

Mitzi Jane Smith, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, Ashland Theological Seminary (Detroit)
Good Girls, Bad Girls, and Violence: The Construction of Virgins, Concubines, and Whores in Ancient Literature

Theological Scholars Grants

James K. Bruckner, Professor of Old Testament, North Park Theological Seminary
Human Health and Ancient Narrative: The Old Testament as a Shaping Resource for Health Care Vocations

Lois M. Farag, Assistant Professor of Early Church History, Luther Seminary
The Balance of the Heart: Desert Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century Christians

Cynthia Holder Rich, Associate Professor of Continuing Theological Education, Western Theological Seminary
Holistic Faith-based Care for Mental Illness: A Case Study from Madagascar

Tat-siong Benny Liew, Professor of New Testament, Pacific School of Religion
Changing Tools: Writing a Textbook for Teaching Asian American Biblical Interpretation from the Beginning

Michelle Sungshin Lim, Assistant Professor of Constructive Theology and Culture, New York Theological Seminary
Journey of Korean Christian Fore-Mothers Spiritual Formation from 1898 to 1945: Painting a Theology of Radical Hospitality

Robert Joseph Priest, Professor/Director, PhD Program in Intercultural Studies, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School of Trinity International University
Being There: Short-Term Missions and Human Need

Research Expense Grants

Thomas Cattoi, Assistant Professor Christology and Cultures, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University
Theodore the Studite: Ecumenical and Inter-religious Perspectives

Monica A. Coleman, Associate Professor of Constructive Theology and African American Religions, Claremont School of Theology
Spirit Possession in African Traditional Religions and Pentecostal Christianity

Online communication exclusively

To reduce printing and postage costs, ATS is now emailing all announcements, event registrations, and helpful information using Constant Contact email service.

Please be sure to open emails you receive from ATS so that you can stay informed.

If you think you should be receiving these emails but are not, please make sure we have your email address, and check with your IT department to ensure that Constant Contact emails are not being blocked or routed to a folder other than your Inbox.

Research grants

Pamela D. Couture, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, Saint Paul School of Theology

"Where's the Peace to Keep?" Peacemaking Practices of the Congolese of Kamina, Democratic Republic of Congo

Robert C. Fennell, Assistant Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology, Atlantic School of Theology

The Reformers and Regula Fidei: How the Rule of Faith Governed Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the European Reformations

Michael J. Kruger, Associate Professor, Reformed Theological Seminary

Authenticating Canon: Theological and Epistemological Approaches to Establishing the Boundaries of the New Testament Writings

Gerald L. Stevens, Professor of New Testament and Greek, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Investigating Holdings and Historical Artifacts of Selected Museums of Western Turkey for Their Pedagogical and Illustrative Value in the Classroom for New Testament Backgrounds

Wolfgang Vondey, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Regent University School of Divinity

Beyond Pentecostalism: The Task of Global Theology in the Twenty-First Century

Collaborative Research Grants (project leader listed first)

Duane R. Bidwell, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, Care, and Counseling, Phillips Theological Seminary; and

Donald L. Batisky, MD, The Ohio State University College of Medicine/Nationwide Children's Hospital

Children's Accounts of Hope in Chronic Illness

Wyndy Corbin Reuschling, Professor of Ethics and Theology, Ashland Theological Seminary;

Jeannine K. Brown, Bethel Seminary of Bethel University; and

Carla M. Dahl, Bethel University Graduate School

Becoming Whole and Holy Persons: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Teaching and Learning in Classrooms and Congregations

Harry O. Maier, Professor, Vancouver School of Theology; and

Robert A. Daum, University of British Columbia

Disturbing Images: Reading Civic Ideals in Early Judaism and Ancient Christianity against the Backdrop of Roman Imperial Iconography

Martha E. Stortz, Professor of Historical Theology and Ethics, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary; and

Lisa Fullam, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University

The Progress of Pilgrimage: Post-Modern Forms of an Ancient Practice ♦

ATS establishes policy bank

In an ongoing effort to support administration at ATS member schools, the Association is developing an online policy bank that will include samples of policies that schools may tailor and adopt. To that end, we would ask that you:

1. Identify topics for policies that you would find useful.
2. Submit policies that you have developed and would be willing to share with your peers at other schools. Please note that, if you would prefer not to have your school identified in a policy statement, any school-specific references could be eliminated before posting.

Among the policy topics that have been suggested for the ATS online policy bank to date are:

- ♦ Affiliations between schools
- ♦ Admissions background checks
- ♦ Transfer of credits
- ♦ Degree exchange
- ♦ Academic integrity
- ♦ Investment
- ♦ Audit
- ♦ Record retention and destruction
- ♦ Computer
- ♦ Data use
- ♦ Intellectual property
- ♦ Sexual harassment
- ♦ Conflict of interest for board and staff
- ♦ Fraud
- ♦ Misconduct
- ♦ Research on human subjects
- ♦ Social networking
- ♦ Personnel reviews for presidents and deans

Please contact Eliza Brown at brown@ats.edu to suggest additional topics or to submit a policy for inclusion in the policy bank.

CORRECTION

The spring 2009 issue listed Luce Fellow Mia M. Mochizuki at Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. Her correct school affiliation should have been listed as Santa Clara University and Graduate Theological Union.

Placement by the numbers

by Helen Blier

Placement: it's the age old question asked with new urgency. "What do you want to be when you grow up?" What sort of work do your students want to do, and where are those positions? It's a question that has become increasingly complex of late; most schools aren't able to assume a conventional parish ministry track for the majority of their students, and the current economic climate has done little to cultivate the flourishing of alternative opportunities. If, as Dan Aleshire suggested in his 2009 SPAN presentation, that *who to admit to seminary* is the "\$100,000 question," then *how that degree finds professional expression after students graduate* is the question's postscript.

Chances are that some investigation into the state of your school's placement and vocational counseling services is warranted. Schools already using the Student Information instruments (Entering Student, Graduating Student, and Alumni/ae questionnaires) have a wealth of diagnostic information at their fingertips. A careful reading of your school's results can help determine where your school can celebrate or improve its work in matching students with employment relevant to their degrees and congruent with their best hopes.

Tables Referenced from the ESQ, GSQ, and AQ

ESQ

Table 22: Expectation for Full-time Position after Graduation

GSQ

Table 16: Importance of Field Education/ Internship if Required

Table 17: Top Two Effects of Field Education/Internship if Required

Table 18: Level of Satisfaction with School's Services and Academic Resources

Table 20: Position Expected after Graduation for MDiv Students

Table 21: Position Expected after Graduation for All Other Students (Non-MDiv)

AQ

Table 14: Number of Positions Held in Religious and Non-Religious Organizations

Table 15: Current Employment Setting of Respondents Not Serving in a Congregation or Parish

Table 16: Current Position of Respondents Serving in a Congregation or Parish


Table 23: Importance of Areas of Study in Professional Work

Table 24: How Well Respondents' Theological Education Prepared Them for their Current Work

Table 27: Percentage of Respondents Who Would Encourage a Young Person to Consider Ministry or Religious Vocation

Table 28: Percentage of Respondents Who Would Choose to Attend the Same Seminary Again

Table 29: Percentage of Respondents Who Would Choose to Attend Seminary at All



Overall, interest in congregational ministry has been declining among entering students over the past decade. Nevertheless, it continues to be the single most popular professional path for students, and interest in it increases during students' time in seminary.

Tracking professional plans

Begin your inquiry by comparing the professional plans for your incoming students with those of your new graduates. First, check your school's data in table 22 of the Entering Student Questionnaire (ESQ) to see what students anticipate as their full-time work upon graduation. Do their intended plans as reported in the ESQ match the degree programs and outcomes intended by your school? Are their expectations and your curricula a good match? How many of them chose the option "undecided?"

Next, compare the ESQ results to those in tables 20 (MDiv students) and 21 (all other degree programs) of the Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ). Do you notice any significant shifts in their professional plans as compared to the ESQ results? Do they expect to do work for which your school has trained them? Pay particular attention to the number of students who selected "undecided"; how do these numbers compare to those in the ESQ? Finally, benchmark your school's results against the GSQ Total

School Profile posted annually on the ATS Web site. How do your scores compare against the sample of other ATS member schools? If your school also participates in a denominational report, how do your ratings measure against those of your peers?

Aggregate reports like the Total School or denominational profiles can help place your school's results in context. Overall, interest in congregational ministry has been declining among entering students over the past decade. Nevertheless, it continues to be the single most popular professional path for students, and interest in it increases during students' time in seminary.¹ In 2009, however, 20 percent of the respondents marked "undecided," and it has ranked as the second most popular choice for a decade.² While professional indecision can certainly be forgiven in new students, graduating undecided students—often burdened with debt—can be cause for great concern. Furthermore, the numbers of undecided and unplaced women as reported in the GSQ tend to be significantly higher than those for men.³

Rating vocational counseling and placement services

After reviewing your placement rates, turn to GSQ table 18. Question 20 of the survey asks students to rate the effectiveness of various school resources on a five-point Likert scale. What were the scores given to career/vocational counseling and placement services? How do they compare to the ratings given to other services, particularly those you know not to be strengths at your school? One recent workshop attendee ruefully noted as she read her school's results, "They rated child care more favorably than they did our vocational and placement services—and we don't even *have* child care!"

Inevitably, I hear protests from some schools; "But we are not responsible for placement; that's handled by the [judiciary, diocese, etc.]" While this is certainly the case for a number of denominational seminaries, the issue of placement is separate from the issue of vocational discernment. The former matches students with job openings, but the latter addresses the process of determining what sort of position would best match the student's passions and skills. What does your school do to help your students discern what kind of work and ministry context would be best suited for them? Or, stated in the terms of Standard 7, section 7.4, are you providing appropriate placement assistance and monitoring of your graduates' placement in light of current trends?

For many students, field education plays some part in facilitating this discernment. Review your results for GSQ tables 16 and 17; if your school follows the dominant trend, then students perceive field education to be a crucially important opportunity to clarify vocation and increase self-understanding. A well-regarded field education program can provide an effective foundation for supporting the work of vocational discernment among your students. How well are you leveraging your field education program and community connections for both discernment and postgraduation placement?

Factoring in the alumni/ae perspective

The Alumni/ae Questionnaire (AQ) can add to this portrait, providing you with a window into the longer-term impact of your placement practices. Designed for use with graduates who have been out of school for five to ten years, the AQ inquires into students' job histories and satisfaction with the skills and education they received. Turn to tables 15 and 16, which report on your graduates' current employment settings. Are they functioning in the roles for which they were trained?

Table 14 reports on the number of positions they have had since graduation. While movement from one position to another can indicate good vocational discernment, a very mobile population can be a helpful diagnostic. Pairing these results with tables 23 and 24 can give a sense of how professionally satisfied your graduates are with the preparation they received to do the work they do. Finally, consider AQ tables 27 through 29. Would they do it all over again if given the chance? And how likely would they be to recommend ministry and your seminary to prospective students?

Placement as stewardship

As described in the Commission Standards, the common purpose of MDiv and professional or specialized degree programs is to equip persons for "competent leadership" in their selected ministry context. At its best, seminary education provides an opportunity for students to reflect on, explore, and deepen the ways in which God is calling them to work in the world, a place where, in the words of Frederick Buechner, "your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Seminary education is both professional education and vocational clarification, a matter of ideals and pragmatics; the leadership for which your school educates your students needs a context in which to be exercised. The issue of placement, then, is one of stewardship; how will your students' capacities become of service to God's people? How can you support the meeting of your students' deep gladness and the world's deep hunger? ♦

ENDNOTES

1. In the 2003–04 ESQ, 28.4 percent of all degree respondents selected *parish ministry* as their intended full-time profession; in 2009–10, 19.7 percent of respondents did. In the 2001–02 GSQ, 54.5 percent of MDiv men and 51.3 percent of MDiv women selected *parish ministry* as their full-time work; in 2008–09, those numbers had declined to 50.8 percent of MDiv men and 42.7 percent of MDiv women. Nevertheless, among all students, approximately 30 percent of all respondents in the 2008–09 GSQ intended full-time parish ministry work after graduation, following a trend that the number of students interested in full-time parish ministry increases approximately 10 percent during their time in seminary.
2. Among nearly 5,300 respondents to question 20 in the 2009 GSQ, 1,044 marked *undecided*; of these undecided students, 51 percent were MDiv graduates.
3. In the 2008–09 GSQ, 19.3 percent of all male respondents chose *undecided*, compared to 30.9 percent of all female respondents.



Helen Blier is director, student information and organizational evaluation for The Association of Theological Schools.

Selected highlights of the spring Graduating Student Questionnaire

The 2008–09 group profile from last spring's Graduating Student Questionnaire included 5,413 responses from 148 schools. The following highlights should provide a helpful sketch of the overall findings.

Overall assessments of the seminary experience were positive:

- A list of sixteen statements explored graduates' satisfaction with their seminary experience. The three most frequent responses were *Faculty were supportive and understanding, I have been satisfied with my academic experience here, and If I had to do it over, I would still come here.*
- 77.9 percent of MDiv students rated their field education or internship experience *Important* or *Very important*. For these students, the two top effects of field education/internship were *Better idea of my strengths and weaknesses* and *Improved pastoral skills*.

Financial support and debt continue to be of concern among graduating seminarians:

- 62.2 percent of graduates brought no educational debt with them. 9.9 percent came with a debt load of \$30,000 or more.
- 43.0 percent of graduates incurred no new educational debt during seminary while 24.5 percent had a debt load of \$30,000 or more at the time of their graduation.
- 14.1 percent of graduates had a monthly payment for educational debt of \$500 or more.
- The three most important sources of income for graduates included *Scholarship/grant, Off-campus work, and Spouse's work.*

In thinking about future employment, fewer than half of all graduates anticipate full-time parish ministry:

- 48.6 percent of MDiv graduates anticipated full-time parish ministry. The next two areas were *Undecided* and *Hospital or other chaplaincy*.
- 22.9 percent of non-MDiv graduates anticipated full-time parish ministry. The next two areas were *Undecided* and *None*. ♦

The power of data

In the last three years, Nashotah House started offering two new degree programs: a Master of Arts in Ministry program delivered by hybrid distance education and a Doctor of Ministry degree program delivered through short intensive courses. Through these two new programs, Nashotah House has doubled its enrollment over the past three years. This rapid enrollment surge has forced our staff to consider new strategies for effectively serving the growing student body. As we reevaluate our services and plans, we have developed a greatly enhanced appreciation for the wealth of resources ATS offers. After one of our staff members attended the ESQ/GSQ Workshop last November, we understood just how many services ATS can provide regarding the data we had been collecting over the years. The ATS staff were very helpful in discussing how to prepare a report of our composite ESQ/GSQ data for our unique assessment purposes, and the price they quoted was extremely reasonable. Our experience with the ESQ/GSQ workshop has sparked more intentional investigation into the power of the data from ATS, especially as we prepare the report on our institutional self-study for a reaccreditation visit in the spring of 2010. One outcome from this review process is our understanding of how to use the ESQ/GSQ data as a tool for addressing the four themes in a self-study. We share these thoughts with the hopes that others might also be inspired by our experience with the ATS resources and workshops.

Robert S. Munday
Dean and President
Nashotah House

Maximizing the margin

by Chris Meinzer

The recent ATS chief financial officers meeting—*Maximizing the Margin for a Viable Future*—concentrated on maximizing an institution’s resources for the greatest benefit of its mission. Attention was given to all facets of resources, including human, financial, and physical plant, and participants considered their own margins as they reflected upon their professional and personal activities.¹

Institutions live between the tensions of mission and margin. By completely focusing on mission without contemplating resource margins, an institution may ultimately put the mission in peril as resources diminish. Alternatively, if margins are the only focus, then mission may be undermined as the institution’s work is relegated to dollars and cents. In simple but critical terms, theological schools must be mission-focused and margin-aware.

By completely focusing on mission without contemplating resource margins, an institution may ultimately put the mission in peril as resources diminish. Alternatively, if margins are the only focus, then mission may be undermined as the institution’s work is relegated to dollars and cents.

As schools seek to maximize their missions and margins, they would be wise to do so by considering the environment and broader industry within which they do their work, as a variety of factors impact an institution, its mission, and its resource margins. Some examples of these factors include, but are not limited to, current and potential students, faculty, and administration; current and potential donors; available financial resources and commitments; ecclesial

structures; and national and global economics. These external factors underscore the importance of seeking points of reference beyond the campus when analyzing resource margins and their use to fulfill the institution’s mission.

At the CFO conference, participants were provided with data within theological education that was intended to inform and also to inspire further questions. A president of an ATS member school at the conference said,

One of the significant benefits of affiliation with ATS is exposure to data about our industry. At the recent CFO conference, I was able to be tutored by comparative information from schools across North America. It is easy to allow conversations within our schools to remain “in-house” and insular; the data given by ATS opened us all to see our own information within a data-rich broad context.

Theological schools must be mission-focused and margin-aware and must do so while relating to many external factors, including the broader context of theological education.

The relationship between head count and full-time equivalent enrollments

One factor within theological education that is having an impact on margins is the change over time in the ratio between head count (HC) enrollment and full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment. Each year, member schools provide data on both the total number of students enrolled (HC enrollment) and the equivalent measure of full-time students that these enrollees represent (FTE enrollment). Both of these data points are important measures, and their relationship has an impact on both mission and margin.

Total enrollment

As represented in figure 1, total enrollment in ATS schools increased at a fairly steady rate from 1993 to 2006. Head count enrollment in member schools grew from about 63,000 to approximately 81,000 during that period, with average annual growth of about 2 percent. In 2007 and 2008, however, the trend reversed and HC enrollment in member schools declined from 81,000 to 78,000, or about 2 percent each year.

During these same years, FTE enrollment grew from about 43,000 in 1993 to slightly more than 50,000 in 2006 before declining to about 48,000 in 2008. The average annual increase in FTE enrollment from 1993 to 2006 was about 1 percent, while the average annual decline from 2007 to 2008 was about 3 percent. For the most part, ATS member schools have successfully increased the number of students coming to seminary; however, these students are taking fewer classes and steadily equating to a relatively smaller full-time equivalent. In figure 1, the gap between HC enrollment and FTE enrollment is widening.

Some of the growth shown in figure 1 is the result of new institutions joining ATS each biennium. The number of schools reporting enrollment grew from 216 in 1993 to 248 in 2008.

Average enrollment

Figure 2 depicts enrollment data across the industry as an average per institutional member. By comparison, this line chart shows the growth to be less significant.

From 1993 to 2008, the average HC enrollment in member schools has ranged from 290 to 330, and it has most recently been about 315. During this same period, average FTE has remained at about 200. ATS member schools are increasing their impact in terms of persons enrolled, but these persons are in class less than in the past.

Increases in HC enrollment over time is certainly good news and is a reflection of member schools' growth in terms of ability to educate persons for various ministries in fulfillment of their missions. At the same time, this HC enrollment growth stretches human, financial, and physical resource margins. It may create greater need in terms of faculty, student services, auxiliary enterprises, and academic and institutional support. This has an impact on all facets of an institution's resources. But, as the data indicate, even as HC enrollment increases, FTE enrollment is not growing at the same rate. As one measure of potential financial growth, FTE enrollment is an indication of a school's ability

FIGURE 1 Head count and FTE enrollment in all ATS schools, 1993–2008

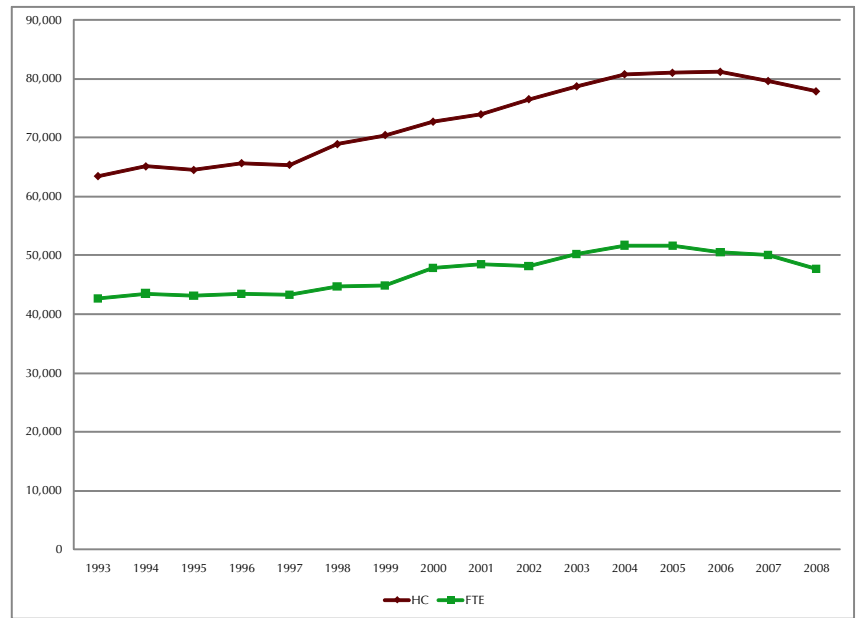
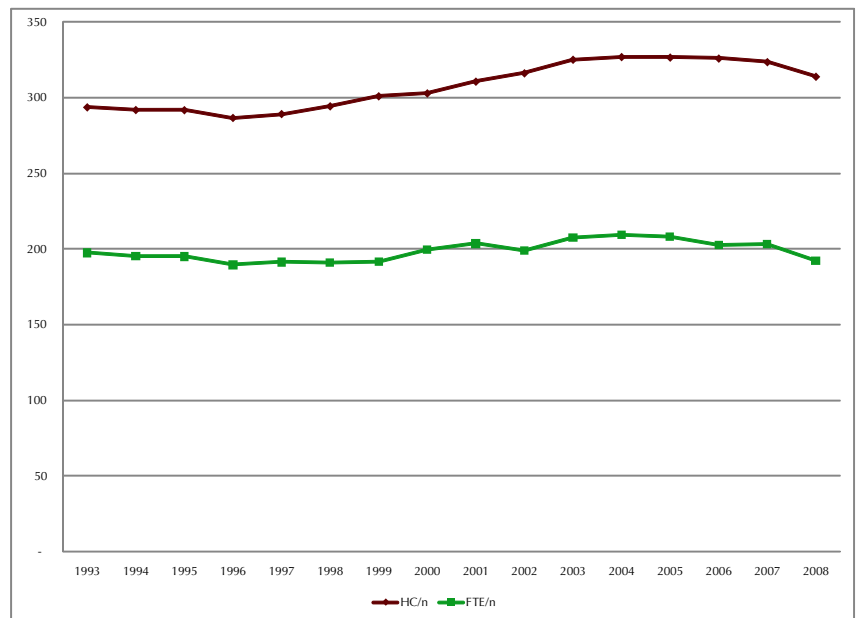


FIGURE 2 Average HC and FTE enrollment in ATS schools, 1993–2008



to generate revenue and thus add to resource margins. Therefore, the line chart provides some indication of the growing resource requirements of ATS schools in the face of leveling revenues.

Enrollment ratio

The relationship between HC enrollment to FTE enrollment also reveals an interesting industry trend as shown in figure 3. The ratio is calculated by dividing HC enrollment by

FTE enrollment. For example, if all students in member schools were full time, the ratio would be 1.0. Since 1993, the ratio has grown from 1.49 to 1.64 students enrolled to equal one full-time equivalent—another change over time that has implications for mission and margin. Simply stated, the higher the HC/FTE ratio, the fur-

Because HC enrollment growth is outstripping FTE enrollment growth, schools are having to serve more individuals with the same limited resources.

ther institutional resources must be stretched in service to individual students. Because HC enrollment growth is outstripping FTE enrollment growth, schools are having to serve more individuals with the same limited resources.

Enrollment stratifications

One final perspective on this enrollment data can be found by looking at some common stratifications shown in table 1 in which the enrollment data is categorized for all ATS member schools and also by ecclesial family and by country.

Enrollment by ecclesial family

In terms of ecclesial family, evangelical schools have seen the greatest growth in the HC/FTE ratio and therefore the greatest strain on resources. HC enrollment in evangelical institutions has increased from nearly 32,000 to approximately 48,000 in these fifteen years, representing a growth of 50 percent. During this same period, FTE enrollment has grown from slightly more than 20,000 to nearly 26,000, or 30 percent. In 1993, evangelical institutions required 1.57 students to equal one full-time equivalent; in 2008, they now require 1.84 enrolled students. Some of this enrollment growth is due to increases in the number of institutions, but most of the growth is real in terms of growth within institutions. When looking at mainline institutions, HC enrollment and FTE enrollment have declined over these fifteen years, with the number of institutions remaining fairly constant. Roman Catholic/Orthodox institutions have seen growth of nearly 6 percent in HC enrollment and 4 percent in FTE enrollment during the period, with little change in the number of institutions. In terms of the HC to FTE ratio, both mainline and Roman Catholic/Orthodox institutions have remained about the same.

Enrollment by country

From the perspective of country, the gap between HC and FTE enrollment is more pronounced for Canadian schools. ATS member schools in the United States have experienced growth of 23 percent and 12 percent in HC and FTE enrollment, respectively. For Canadian institutions, HC enrollment has increased by 16 percent while FTE enrollment has declined slightly. In both countries, the HC to FTE ratio has changed over time.

Regarding enrollment stratifications, the above data suggest that HC enrollments have grown over the last fifteen years but that those students are taking fewer classes. The ratios of HC to FTE enrollment have grown—and in some cases significantly—in all stratifications except for mainline schools. As institutions manage these growing numbers of students, they have likely done so while generating less resource margin from tuition revenue.

Managing enrollment with missions and margins in view

As a response to the current economic challenges, many ATS member schools have taken

FIGURE 3 Ratio of HC to FTE enrollment in all ATS schools, 1993–2008

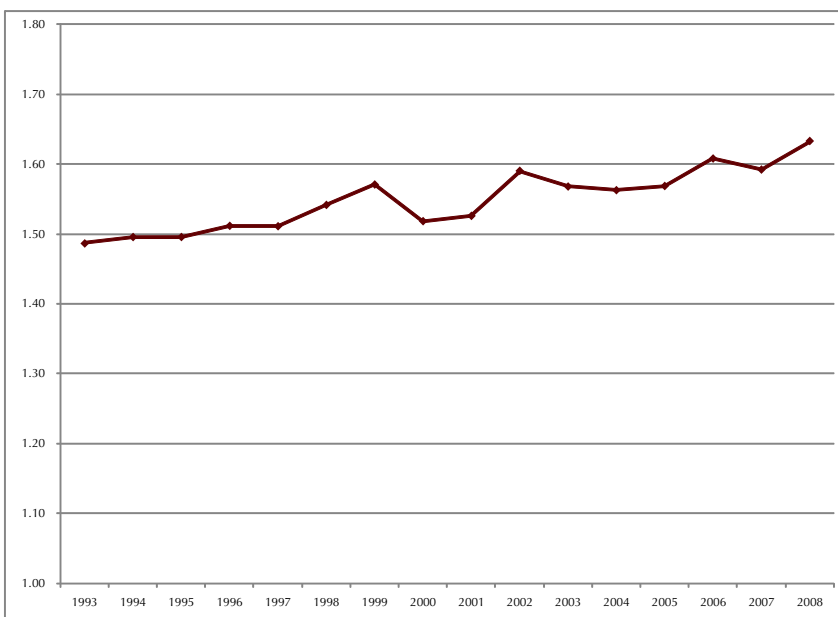


TABLE 1 Head count to full-time equivalent ratio, all students

	2001			2008		
	HC Enrollment	FTE Enrollment	HC/FTE	HC Enrollment	FTE Enrollment	HC/FTE
All ATS	73,945	48,454	1.53	77,861	47,518	1.64
Evangelical	40,695	25,558	1.59	47,697	25,973	1.84
Mainline	24,285	16,747	1.45	22,218	15,938	1.39
RC/Orthodox	8,945	6,149	1.45	7,946	5,607	1.42
United States	67,691	45,112	1.50	72,034	44,437	1.62
Canada	6,254	3,342	1.87	5,827	3,081	1.89

significant measures to reduce expenditures to compensate for a loss in revenues from market declines that directly impacted endowment earnings and indirectly influenced contributions. These steps were intended to manage margins to an acceptable level, to preserve and focus remaining resources to meet mission, and to bolster long-term financial viability. As schools continue to manage this new reality, it will be imperative that they do so with mission and resource margins in view.

This is not simply an issue of resource allocation. The increased number of part-time students may also increase the likelihood that some students may not finish their degrees. Schools should be mindful that these numbers may impact their missions.

More and more, ATS schools are finding value in including industry data as part of their strategic and financial planning. And although HC and FTE enrollment is just one data point impacting mission and margins, vast data and other factors can also be explored with ATS resources and peers. For example, the same ATS president whose comment appears earlier in this article also said after the recent CFO conference:

As a training and orientation process for all budget managers, I have scheduled a finance summit in which we will review the ATS data and place our own information alongside that data. We will also

use this information at our next board meeting to broaden their knowledge of financial realities among schools similar to ours in mission. It is imperative that we do our financial planning with contextual information in hand. ATS has become a crucial source of pertinent information for our strategic work on finance and planning.

It is crucial to continue to provide strong institutional and fiscal leadership so that both are mission-focused and margin-aware. ♦

ENDNOTE

1. For purposes of the conference and this article, “margin” is the resources that remain once effort is expended to accomplish a goal. In terms of finances, margin would be the surplus or deficit of revenues over expenses. In terms of human resources, margin would be the human capacity that remains when goals and mission are accomplished. In the world of theological education, margins tend to be quite thin.

Chris Meinzer is director, finance and administration for The Association of Theological Schools.



Curriculum review: Establishing a right perspective for ministry

by Michael Jenkins

So, a priest, a rabbi, and a minister walk into an emergency room ...

No joke. Everyday, somewhere, a priest, a rabbi, and a minister walk into an emergency room. Or they walk into a sanctuary to lead worship, climb into a pulpit to preach a sermon, visit a prison, start a new program for at-risk youth in their community, help design a day care center, sit down with the congregation's governing board to deal with a crisis, or negotiate a better price to put a new roof on the education building. And whenever a priest, a rabbi, or a minister arrives, we expect them to bring a particular body of knowledge, certain competencies and understandings, wisdom, and character.

Where ministry happens

Dorothy stands waiting at the doors of the emergency room as the ambulance turns the corner. Medical personnel rush a boy they only know by height, weight, and approximate age into the ER, then into surgery.

Dorothy knows Jim by name. In fact, she knows him by all his names: James Arthur Griggs, the name by which she baptized him. Jim, as he prefers to be called. Jimbo, when his father asks him to get a wrench from the tool chest in the garage. James, as his mother calls him when they are having a heart-to-heart. And Griggs, the name his basketball coach yells across the court when he misses a block.

Jim was struck by a car just after the annual CROP Walk when the church kids were milling around the finish line. Dorothy was already back at the church by the time the accident happened, helping the youth sponsors set up the afterwalk celebration. But Dorothy was the first person to arrive at the hospital. She was there as Jim disappeared behind the ER doors. She was there as Jim's parents rushed down the hall. She took them into a quiet room where they waited and prayed together.

Everyday, ministers do what Dorothy did. And they do countless other things just as difficult. As they perform their ministries, they are expected to do so with a depth of knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and spiritual insight that does not come naturally to anyone. It must be learned and cultivated.

From dining room to kitchen

Our responsibility as a theological seminary is to prepare future ministers to meet this challenge. Our responsibility is to provide an education that will enable ministers to bring the totality of life into theological focus. Our responsibility is to provide a context in which the skills and competencies essential to ministry can be gained, practiced, critiqued, and improved. Our responsibility is to provide a community in which students can be formed into the kind of ministers who can be what their congregations need them to be.

We often tell students that they do not attend seminary for themselves but for the generations of people whom they will serve in ministry. Those unseen generations sit silently beside students in every class they attend; in theology as they wrestle with the mystery of a God so big that this God resists confinement even in our best creeds; in church history as they discover that their experience of the church does not exhaust the wealth of the church's experience over twenty centuries; in biblical studies as they struggle to understand the meaning of the Word of God so they can bear witness faithfully and fruitfully.

It is sometimes a surprise to students that seminary is not primarily a place where they prepare to become a professional academic scholar, a specialist in biblical studies or systematic theology or pastoral counseling. Seminary is preparing them to be ministers who can bring to bear the best of biblical scholarship, theology,

We often tell students that they do not attend seminary for themselves but for the generations of people whom they will serve in ministry. Those unseen generations sit silently beside students in every class they attend.

and pastoral counseling, philosophical insight and historical understanding, and many other disciplines, on the concerns and celebrations of the congregations and communities in which they will serve.

It is also sometimes a surprise to students that the education they gain in seminary inevitably changes their relationship to Christian faith and to the life of the church. While this is not an easy experience to endure, it is necessary and good. Recently I joked with a group of new pastors that the transition from being a dedicated lay person to being a faithful and well prepared minister is a lot like the transition one might make from dining in your favorite restaurant to cooking in its kitchen.

Curriculum review as continuing education

If someone were to ask me what was the dominant concern in the mind of the faculty of Austin Seminary as they set out to do its first thorough curriculum review in more than thirty years, I would say that it was our own experience of ministers like Dorothy, who each day must approach the various and challenging practices of ministry and who need the best education, preparation, formation, and grounding in the faith they can get.

For us as a faculty, this meant that we had to think of ourselves not primarily as biblical scholars, or systematic theologians, or church historians, however important to the mission of the church these particular fields of scholarship are. Rather, it meant that we were compelled to think of ourselves as theological educators, teachers responsible for helping students set their sights on the horizon of the practice of ministry from the moment they enter seminary and to develop the capacity to integrate the astonishing array of knowledge from the perspective of ministry.

To help us think in this way, the faculty spent a year listening to one another as we

related our experiences of being called to the ministry of teaching. This witness bearing was followed by in-depth reflection on some of the best recent books on the subject of theological education, such as Jackson Carroll's, *God's Pottery: Pastoral Leadership and the Shaping of Congregations* and Greg Jones and Stephanie Paulsell's, *The Scope of Our Art: The Vocation of the Theological Teacher*. We approached curriculum review as a sort of continuing education for professors.

We also, and perhaps most significantly, went directly to the church to ask pastors, members of congregations, and community leaders what it is our future pastors will need to know and be able to do, and what sort of people our future pastors will need to be. Listening teams from the faculty went across the country taking the pulse of the church. Among the most interesting things we heard was that the church values leadership and character and it expects that its pastors will be biblically and theologically well educated. Lay people told us that they want pastors who are confident and humble, as ready to listen as to speak. Pastors told us that they are worried that too often people are arriving at seminary without an adequate grounding in the rudiments of Christian faith, with too little experience of living and leading in a congregation, and sometimes lacking the capacities for the kind of critical self-reflection that supports long-term personal growth.

One of the most interesting aspects of the curriculum review was prompted by a lively discussion in a faculty meeting around the question: What would it mean to construe theological education as the formation of virtues? The discussion was so vigorous and stimulating that the faculty wanted it to become the focus for our annual faculty retreat (August 2006). During the retreat, the faculty talked about the fundamental importance of personal character and integrity for the practice of ministry. They reflected on the classical tradition that has informed charac-



ter education for centuries. And they looked to the Christian faith to correct and critique that classical tradition, asking crucial questions such as, What is the relationship between pastoral formation and Christian sanctification? What is the relationship between the means of grace (study of the Bible, the sacraments, and prayer) and other practices of Christian faith to theological education? In the limited time that seminary actually has students (three years), how much education and formation can realistically occur? And how can we reclaim, renew, and reinvigorate the partnership with the larger church to improve the preparation of ministers?

Theological education for the practices of ministry

All of these concerns shaped the faculty's conversations. These concerns shaped the vision statement our faculty adopted to guide us as we revised the curriculum, and they shaped the learning outcomes we developed. And in the end, all of these concerns shaped the revised curriculum of Austin Seminary. The revised curriculum takes seriously the fact that biblical knowledge, theological understanding, and historical perspective are essential to the practices of ministry. The revised curriculum also takes seriously the fact that no one can prepare adequately for leadership of a community of faith unless one has lived and reflected critically on one's life in community. The formative aspects of seminary are not optional but are essential to the highest quality of preparation for ministry. Three years is barely the minimum time in which a theological education can be begun and the basic habits of integration can be initiated;

but these educational and formative tasks are essential if we hope for ministry to be practiced with sensitivity, understanding, integrity, and competence. There is also an obligation facing us today to help provide a grounding in the Christian faith that we once simply assumed every student arrived at our doors already possessing. Austin Seminary's new curriculum reflects a commitment to these values, a dedication to fulfill our mission for the sake of the church.

If there is one idea above all others that has been reinforced for me during this process of curriculum review, it is this: Basically, a seminary's indispensable curriculum is the life of learning shared among students and faculty. Students learn in seminary by being together, thinking together, worshipping, praying, and singing together, eating together, laughing and weeping together, by living together, just across the corridor or around the corner from one another. The ultimate subject matter of theology is the God whose very being is the living communion of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And there is simply no better way to encounter the deep reality of this God and for learning to translate the meaning of this encounter in the congregations our students will eventually lead, than by living and learning in a community that reflects this living God. Any theology of theological education begins here, or it does not have much to say about the practices of ministry.

So, a priest, a rabbi, and a minister walk into a hospital emergency room. Whether or not this is a joke largely depends on their preparation for ministry. ♦



Michael Jenkins is academic dean and professor of pastoral theology at Austin Seminary. His article first appeared in the Winter 2009 issue of Windows magazine, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, supplemented by five articles, each describing one step of the five-step process the seminary used to revise its curriculum.

Reaching for the stars: Four strategies for boosting enrollment

An interview with David Worley

David Worley, by his own admission, is not a rocket scientist. He and his enrollment team, however, have achieved stellar results in enrollment management over the past five years at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. Despite enrollment declines in theological education generally, at the end of the 2008–09 recruitment season, Iliff reported that inquiries were up 16 percent, campus visits up 79 percent, and applications up 46 percent over the prior year. In fact, the incoming class of September 2009 is the school's largest since 1996, and new master's degree students are up 36 percent over the prior year, making this the best year on record. In reflecting on the school's recent successes, Worley offers four strategies for boosting enrollment.

Iliff's program for enrollment management has shifted over the past two years from the routines of a passive admissions office to an actively engaged enrollment management strategy derived from "common sense built on market data," according to David Worley, who served in the admissions office for two years before becoming its director three years ago. More specifically, four new approaches have proven to make a difference:

1 Advocate for programs, delivery systems, and student programs that students need.

Theological schools tend to focus attention on the needs and interests of existing students. Worley suggests that they also try to learn from the people who **don't come** to their schools. The admissions office offers a unique perspective that tells administrators, "Here's what we're hearing from prospects about what they **don't like** about us." Each year, Iliff surveys students who expressed interest in the school but did not ultimately apply, inquiring as to what

elements—including financial aid, programs, schedule, and location—might have factored into their decisions. For several years, the enrollment team heard from prospects a consistent desire for online classes and programs. In response, the school has worked hard to implement online offerings. Additionally, it has tried to help students with very complicated schedules by implementing block scheduling and providing more student services online.

In addition, Worley advises schools to give serious consideration to students who wouldn't traditionally think about seminary but for whom theological education might, in fact, be a good fit. This approach offers a broader market pool

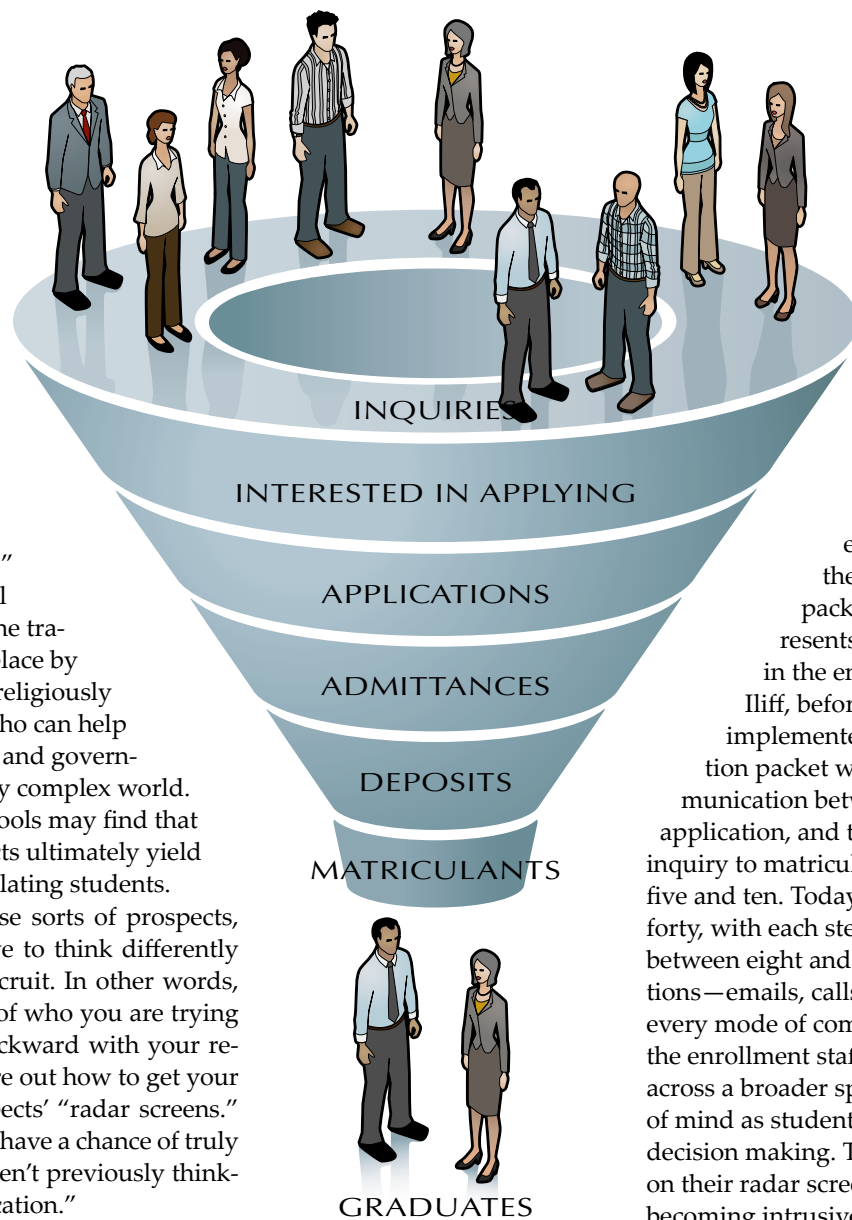
[T]heological schools can add value to the traditionally secular marketplace by producing culturally and religiously sophisticated graduates who can help organizations, businesses, and government navigate a religiously complex world.

of prospective students with interests in fields like sociology and social work, psychology and counseling, community development, corporate responsibility, diversity and human resources, and virtually any field tied to ethics. He suggests, for instance, that “some MDiv students could be just International Development students who are more aware of the cultural and religious traditions that influence almost any field.” In other words, theological schools can add value to the traditionally secular marketplace by producing culturally and religiously sophisticated graduates who can help organizations, businesses, and government navigate a religiously complex world. In casting a wider net, schools may find that larger numbers of prospects ultimately yield larger numbers of matriculating students.

In order to reach those sorts of prospects, Worley advises, “you have to think differently about where you go to recruit. In other words, you have to have an idea of who you are trying to appeal to and work backward with your recruitment strategy to figure out how to get your institution on these prospects’ “radar screens.” From there, he adds, “you have a chance of truly gaining students who weren’t previously thinking about theological education.”

2 Pay close attention to the data derived from the enrollment funnel.

Worley and his staff monitor the progress of individuals through a funnel that tracks them from initial inquiries through the application and admissions process and records the number who make it from one stage to the next. This sort of monitoring determined, for example, that the percentage of individuals who move from the initial inquiry to actually submitting an application had been dropping between 10 and 12 percent per year for the past five years. Armed with that data, the staff has been able to develop a plan to improve the retention rate through the admissions process. This year they were able to stop the decline and in fact improve the conversion rate by 27 percent over the prior year.



3 Use every mode of communication to keep the conversation active from inquiry through matriculation.

Iliff’s solution has been targeted communications—and lots of them—from the initial inquiry through matriculation and beyond. Most schools tend to spend a great deal of energy—and money—on their printed marketing packet, which generally represents one of the earliest steps in the enrollment courtship. At Iliff, before the new strategy was implemented, the school’s information packet was in fact the **only** communication between the inquiry and the application, and total communications from inquiry to matriculation numbered between five and ten. Today, that number is closer to forty, with each step in the process involving between eight and fourteen communications—emails, calls, and letters. By using every mode of communication available, the enrollment staff is able to reach students across a broader spectrum and remain top of mind as students progress through their decision making. The challenge is to stay on their radar screens consistently without becoming intrusive or bothersome.

Worley’s team has met this challenge with a strong reliance on technology. He explains, “Every admissions officer in our office has a daily to-do list of communications to perform. This list is generally produced by our database software based on our communications plan. The list gets relationally augmented by our senior admissions team and personalized for each individual student. This enables us to keep up with hundreds of students simultaneously. Getting to this point required an enormous amount of energy and time in learning our database system, and still today we have to continually stay well versed with our database platform.”

This approach also requires enrollment staff to “get personal” with interested students, but the effort pays off. According to Worley, for instance, no two visits to Iliff are exactly the same. Each is tailored to meet the particular interests of each individual visitor and introduce faculty and students who might resonate with those interests. The result: after the visit, Iliff typically moves up significantly on the student’s list of preferred schools, another indicator that enrollment staff monitors.

4 Articulate clearly what distinguishes your school from other ATS member schools.

Stepping back and looking at the entire ATS membership of schools, Worley advises to remember that graduate schools of theology represent a fairly small subgroup of graduate schools that will appeal to a commensurately narrow group of prospective students. Within that small subgroup, ATS schools must distinguish themselves from one another. It is not enough to boast, “We have a great . . . faculty” or “. . . library” or “. . . program.” Instead, schools need to be specific in articulating what is different about them and to articulate that difference with confidence and conviction. In the case of Iliff, the school boldly announces that it is (1) committed to social change, (2) serious about engaging diversity in all its forms, and (3) blessed with a great location in the scenic mountains of Colorado.

And since most schools serve a variety of student types, enrollment managers should also remember to speak to a range that includes both residents and commuters, both newly minted college graduates and second career students. Communications should articulate how the school and its programs fits within the lifestyle

[B]efore the new strategy was implemented . . . total communications from inquiry to matriculation numbered between five and ten. Today, that number is closer to forty . . .

interests of each student type by answering the question, “How is [school name] right for you?”

All of these strategies rely more on diligence than on dollars. Historically, initial inquiries have been generated by referrals by alumni/ae and friends, according to student surveys and personal statements. More recently, electronic research and communications have begun to challenge word-of-mouth as the primary entry point. Improvements to Web sites and using them to keep in touch with alumni/ae are therefore probably the best use of a school’s limited marketing and recruitment resources. ♦

David Worley is director of student services at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado.

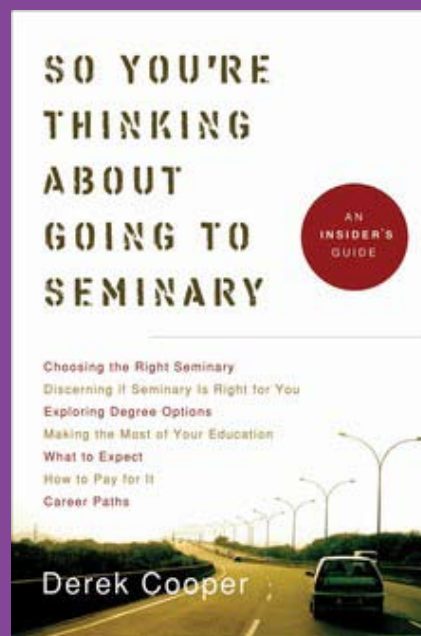


Editor’s Note: For more recruiting hints gleaned from the Entering Student Questionnaire, see the Spring 2009 issue of Colloquy, p. 26.

RESOURCE

- I think I want to go to seminary, but is seminary right for me?
- What is seminary like?
- How do I figure out which schools to apply to?

If you counsel someone who is asking these questions, this book may be able to help. Derek Cooper, visiting professor at Biblical Theological Seminary, answers the questions of those considering or just starting seminary—as well as questions they may not have considered.



Technology integration in education: The faculty connection

By Jay Endicott

The omnipresence of technology is difficult to miss. Classrooms are filled with iPods, BlackBerries, texts (the new kind), and Tweets. With the prevalence of interactive technologies such as social networking, instant messaging, and wikis, and learning management systems such as Blackboard, Moodle, and Angel, most students entering seminary have been exposed to innovative use of technology throughout early education, and they expect it at the graduate level.¹ Seminaries that seek to attract and engage students must meet the challenge of integrating these emerging technologies into the educational experience. Educause, a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology, recently ranked its top priorities regarding technology and education. One of those priorities was “encouraging faculty adoption and innovation in teaching and learning in IT.”² Successful technology adoption can attract more students, improve student retention of distance learning programs (as it has by 90 percent at Western Theological Seminary),³ transform community, and equip students for effective ministry roles in the twenty-first century. Since faculty implement technology in teaching

and learning, it is essential for seminaries to provide consistent and effective faculty development in order to achieve success in adoption of technology within theological education.

The challenge

As with any technology initiative, implementers should be cognizant of identifying message, method, and media.⁴ A few years ago, Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio, undertook a significant technology integration initiative and was intentional in first identifying two cultures: the external (where technology is pervasive in both general and higher education) and the internal (where institutional culture is impacted by the commitment, experience, and skills of faculty). A committee of faculty and administrators was formed to address technology issues in relation to students, faculty, and administration. Committee members began to envision how appropriate technologies could enhance the learning process based on the school’s institutional goals and message. During this process, they discovered two faculty fears: the fear of inexperience and the fear of insufficient institutional support.⁵ Such fears can be addressed.

Steps for faculty development in technology adoption

1. Provide effective support through educational technologists and/or a faculty mentoring program.
2. Encourage collaboration where faculty can share successful integration methodology.
3. Assess ongoing faculty instructional and technical needs.
4. Equip faculty by providing innovative instructional resourcing.



Since faculty implement technology in teaching and learning, it is essential for seminaries to provide consistent and effective faculty development in order to achieve success in adoption of technology within theological education.

Change brings uncertainty, and faculty must not only be assured they will be supported through the technology integration process, but they also need to understand how investing their personal time and effort in adopting technology will assist them in attaining their instructional goals.

To achieve successful integration and adoption, the institution needs to partner with faculty. Approaches may vary based on institutional size and available resources, but general steps can be taken that will prove helpful.

Effective support

When faced with an institutional technical initiative, faculty may find themselves handicapped without adequate resourcing. They might struggle to find time and energy to implement new technical tools to improve the educational experience.⁶ Many schools have conveyed their commitment to faculty development by creating a position or team that focuses primarily on faculty support and technology classroom integration. According to a recent survey by the Asso-

ciation of Research Libraries, 74 percent of their respondents were planning to provide support services exclusive for faculty and/or graduate assistants.⁷ Ashland has shown its commitment by hiring a director of technology resources whose primary role is to train and support faculty in blending technology and learning.⁸

In 2004, Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, merged its library and information technology department to form Information Services and gathered a blended team of specialists into an entity called Faculty Info Commons, designed to serve faculty from a central point of contact. Team members were cross-trained to answer “just-in-time” faculty questions and provide expertise by appointment. The creation of this team reduced confusion and eased anxiety among Asbury’s faculty. The Faculty Info Commons team also assisted Information Services in implementation of new technical initiatives and worked closely with faculty in technology adoption. Realizing a support team was in place to provide assistance, faculty responded positively.

While institutional resources during difficult economic times may limit staffing options, formal mentoring programs also prove helpful. Mentoring can be successfully applied where faculty partner to provide mutual support. For instance, an older faculty member might orient a younger colleague to an institution's history, culture, and mission while that younger colleague might, in turn, demonstrate successful technology integration into instructional methods.⁹ This requires commitment, trust, respect, and patience on the part of both mentor and "mentee."

Faculty collaboration

At Asbury, collaboration has occurred naturally in the Faculty Info Commons space. As faculty find answers to their technical questions, they may discuss a particular research issue or engage in an impromptu discussion about Facebook or wikis to enhance student collaboration in the online classroom.¹⁰ Faculty Info Commons also hosts faculty collaboration sessions where faculty bring their lunches, share technology practices, and discuss the impact upon the learning environment. During these sessions, the support team shares new technology initiatives on campus, demonstrates helpful technical tools, and highlights a faculty guest presenter. These sessions, which are recorded and made available in an online classroom, have received positive feedback.

External collaboration is also important for integration of technology and acquiring needed technical funding. The Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning for Theology and Religion has been helpful in this regard, offering grants, workshops, best practices, and online resources along with creating opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration where faculty can share experiences.¹¹ The Association of Theological Schools recognized this collaborative need and hosted a conference in the spring of 2008, inviting faculty, IT personnel, and educational technologists to share their own stories of technology integration within theological education. As a result of the conference, the attendees concluded that technology collaboration was indeed helpful and formed the Technology in Theological Education Group.¹² This group fosters intentional collaboration among member schools in addressing technology issues and recently hosted a Webinar featuring keynote speaker Gregory Bourgon, who has worked extensively with the Wabash Center. Attendees were encouraged to offer presentations in online formation practices, which can be accessed online.¹³

Needs assessment

Assessment of these initiatives by faculty has proven beneficial for their own development. Faculty input into any campus initiative is wise, and continual assessment is necessary to make adequate adjustments to technology initiatives.¹⁴ As part of its assessment process, Asbury used faculty interviews as well as objective feedback and discovered strong faculty dissatisfaction (nearly 90 percent) with an aging classroom system. The distributed fiber optic video/audio system was more than ten years old, and faculty were experiencing consistent problems and frustration. Without this assessment, there was no objective data to convince decision makers that it was time to overhaul classroom technology. This feedback confirmed what Information Services support had suspected—it was time to upgrade. While this endeavor was expensive, it recouped valuable instructional time, eased the frustration level of faculty and students, and saved technical support dollars.

Assessment by faculty also proved helpful in implementation of the Moodle learning management system (LMS). Information Services and the director of distributed learning identified three top LMS platforms and assessed faculty instructional needs. This process increased faculty confidence and encouraged early adoption of the Moodle platform as Information Services customized the Moodle interface based on faculty input and provided reassurance that instructional support opportunities would be available.

Innovative instructional resourcing

When a major technology initiative is implemented, it is important to offer group education sessions where concerns are identified and addressed, new technology is explained, and goals and benefits are highlighted. When Moodle was implemented at Asbury, faculty instructional sessions were offered regularly. Because faculty had been invited to participate in the decision-making process, knew a support team was in place, and received clear and consistent communication regarding these sessions, attendance was high. In the first year of implementation, the support team was able to educate 80 percent of the seminary's faculty regarding this new system.

Recently, Asbury's director of distance learning recognized that it would be more helpful for faculty to experience the online classroom from a student perspective. Faculty distance learning education was altered from a weeklong on-campus experience to a two-day on-campus visit

supplemented with a monthlong online session facilitated by the director of distributed learning. Faculty experienced online teaching methods that addressed varying learning styles and backgrounds. They found it beneficial to experience the online environment from a student perspective and seemed to appreciate this new model. Faculty also reported that addressing technological methods for online instruction can improve on-campus methodology and transform the way they teach overall.¹⁵

For a variety of reasons, faculty may be unable to attend such formal sessions or may find it difficult to retain new methodology over a period of time, especially if methodology implementation is delayed. It is beneficial, therefore, for both faculty and educational technologists to offer just-in-time support. Often, faculty who experienced group education spend extra time with Asbury's Faculty Info Commons team as they work on their courses, periodically asking questions of support staff. Faculty often stop by the support area or call during operating hours where a team member can remotely provide one-on-one assistance. Just-in-time self-paced tutorials and technical tools are also readily available on the seminary's portal, and they continue to be refined. These provide a helpful reference for faculty when support personnel are unavailable. Just-in-time resourcing paired with intentional group education provides an effective development and support model.

Another important part of this model is innovation. Innovation in methodology is not only essential to improve learning, but it also models effective implementation. For instance, harnessing the power of social networking or wikis for faculty support can provide faculty with an example of technology integration. If paired with certification programs, faculty confidence in technology adoption is enhanced. At Regent University School of Divinity in Virginia Beach, Virginia, a streamed video infomercial series with an *Entertainment Tonight* feel supports and informs faculty with news about upcoming events, new initiatives, and available resources, all accessed behind their portal.¹⁶ Such innovative instructional methods are more likely to lead to successful technology adoption.

Partnering for success

The responsibility of faculty development and adoption of technology in higher education should not fall solely on the faculty member. Institutional support is needed in addressing faculty development, with such steps as providing sup-

port staff, encouraging collaboration, implementing faculty assessment, and developing effective instruction/resourcing opportunities. Faculty members can be partnered with administration, educational technologists, and information technology personnel to successfully implement technology in teaching and learning. Educational technologists/mentors bridge the gap between administration/IT and faculty in fostering adoption, conveying needs, and providing support. They should be attentive to the challenges, trends, tools, and goals in order to fulfill their role in empowering faculty. When institutions make faculty development a priority, students and higher education itself are transformed. ♦

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Jay Endicott is director of Faculty Info Commons at Asbury Theological Seminary

Author's Note: Thank you to the TTEG members who helped edit this article.

It's not the course level; it's the degree program level: If I knew then what I know now . . . a dialogue

By Polly Stone

Like many of you, I entered the assessment world knowing very little. I was a graduate of my seminary, had worked there seven years, and knew a lot about many aspects of seminary education. But I had thought very little about the technical aspects of assessment of student learning.

When I was promoted to the newly developed position of director of institutional assessment, I was given a threefold task: find out everything there is to know about assessment, figure out what makes the most sense to Reformed Theological Seminary (RTS), and help implement it. I went to assessment conferences; I read books; I tried to learn the lingo; I tried to figure out the difference between a goal and an outcome. I learned a lot about undergraduate “gen ed” assessment but very little about theological school assessment. I can remember thinking, “would someone please just give me an example of what they are talking about, other than college algebra!?” After lots and lots of research, lots of trial and error (perhaps more error than not), several assessment workshops, many SACS and ATS events, and reading section 8 of the *Handbook of Accreditation* at least three times, I finally felt like it was gelling. My “aha” moment was realizing that assessment of student learning was *not* at the course level but at the degree program level. But more on that later. Now, some three years after my lightbulb experience, I think back on that “green” rookie and feel so sorry for her. She knew so very little then.

The following is an imaginary conversation with myself. The questions are being asked by “Rookie Polly” to the current Polly in 2010 and are based on the MDiv degree program.

Rookie Polly: *Once you began to get a handle on the assessment “monster,” how did you begin the process of assessing student learning?*

Current Polly: We started with the Commission’s Standards of Accreditation, Standard 1, section 1.2.2 evaluation process, applying this process specifically to the MDiv degree program.

So how was RTS doing, once you understood the process?

We discovered that RTS was pretty good at assessment: We looked at a lot of information and we used it! We were already doing about one-third of the assessment process. Another one-third, we were doing, but we were not writing it down. The final third, we were not doing at all. But the majority of what we were doing was at the course level.

I guess we need to start with the student learning outcomes (SLOs). We have them, don’t we? That’s a perceptive question. We certainly had SLOs at RTS, but there were tons of them, and they were not well organized. They were on paper, and they were being used “somewhat” to evaluate courses. Because they were hard to find, not many people knew about them, and we certainly were not using them for assessing the MDiv degree program.

So what did you do about it?

I’ll give you a brief summary about that SLO revamping process. I made a presentation to the faculty about the priority considerations in revamping our SLOs. The considerations included a need for the MDiv SLOs to dovetail with the four ATS content areas for the MDiv degree (Standard A, section A.3.1) and a desire to build on the structures we already had in place, including the mission of the institution, the MDiv curriculum, the stated purpose of the degree, and the multitude of SLOs already on paper. We wanted to identify the things that mattered most—what we wanted to accomplish. We divided our SLOs into three categories that fit along with our motto: a mind for truth, a heart for God, for servant leadership.

So did you place equal weight on each of the four MDiv content areas?

Not at all. Some traditions place more emphasis on Religious Heritage, and other traditions focus more heavily on Personal and Spiritual Formation. We placed greater emphasis on the areas that fit who we are. In addition, we did not arrange our SLOs according to the four areas, but we did make sure that all four areas were covered.

But everything you are trying to accomplish is so vast. How did you limit the SLOs?

Remember the SLOs do not have to cover every facet of our curriculum—they cannot say everything. The SLOs are for assessment purposes. As far as exact numbers, my recommendation is a minimum of four, a maximum of eight, but we ended up with ten. (No, I cannot control the professors!) I would love to have six!

So after you developed your new SLOs, the literature tells me to evaluate the SLOs based on indirect and direct measures. What does this mean?

Direct measures are performance-based measures. The best example of an artifact used as a direct measure is student work (research papers, comprehensive exams, capstone courses, thesis papers, performance on ordination exams, etc.) Indirect measures are perception-based measures. The best example of an artifact used as an indirect measure is survey data.

What kind of indirect measures did you use?

We had started using the ATS Entering Student Questionnaire (ESQ) and Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ) in 2006. We have found these inexpensive tools to be incredibly valuable to us in several ways. They have allowed us to track important internal data and to compare our data to other ATS schools as well. Interestingly enough, specific tables from the ESQ and GSQ directly relate to several of our SLOs. We have already put into motion a plan to begin using the new Alumni Questionnaire this academic year.

So what kind of direct measures did you use?

Well, we started by capturing artifacts that already existed rather than creating something new. For direct measures, we looked at student work already in place. We identified an artifact from each year in the curriculum: a required Greek Exegesis course research paper, a required theology course research paper, and a required Preaching Lab recording of a student sermon.

What did you do with this student work?

We decided to gather a “jury” of faculty members to evaluate the student work. For example, we took a representative sampling of five Greek Exegesis papers—no names, no grades. We then gathered three faculty members (a Bible, theology, and practical professors) and gave them a rubric. All in the same room with the same material, the professors read the papers, interacted and pooled their professional judgment (giving more weight and enhancing consistency), and took a snapshot of our MDiv students.

So what did your jury of professors decide about that particular exegesis course?

No, no, no. You are making my old mistake! Let’s go back to my “aha” moment. Assessment of student learning is not at the course level. You are not necessarily asking if each individual course is effective. Nor is assessment at the student level. You are not evaluating each student’s performance for the purpose of giving them feedback. Instead, assessment is at the degree program level. It takes the pulse of students within the degree program. You have to ask the question “are our MDiv students *in general* learning what we want them to learn?” What does this cross-section of course work tell us about our MDiv students? Are they meeting our expectations? Are they exceeding our expectations?

So how do you pull all this data together?

Once a year, a group of professors and deans get together to evaluate the data from all of our artifacts, to make conclusions, and to propose changes to be evaluated in next year’s assessment cycle.

Assessment of student learning is not at the course level . . . [but instead] at the degree program level.

What are some examples of revisions that you have made related to assessing student learning in the MDiv program?

- ♦ An RTS campus realized the problem of not having sequential Preaching Labs. This was embarrassing and affected the results of their assessment of the Preaching Lab. A minor curriculum change was made to require sequencing of labs. We will re-assess in 2010.
- ♦ An RTS campus noted that the ability to write an academic paper, including technical footnotes, was lacking in first-year students. This campus is considering a one-day writing seminar for first-year students. (One RTS campus had already implemented this seminar five years earlier.)
- ♦ Some of the professors were positively amazed with what was happening with some of the artifacts. This provided encouragement, pats on the back, and so forth. Finding out we are doing something well is *as important* as finding out we are *not* doing something well.

DIALOGUE continued on page 37

Board of Commissioners June meeting report

The ATS Board of Commissioners met at the ATS office June 8–10, 2009.

The Board considered reports from evaluation committees for the following schools:

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, TX
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Richmond, VA
Carolina Evangelical Divinity School, Greensboro, NC
Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Shawnee, KS
Chapman Seminary, Oakland City, IN
Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA
Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, Berkeley, CA
Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, CA
Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, MO
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, TX
Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA
Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, OK
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ
Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL
Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, TX
St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, CA
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, ON
Westminster Theological Seminary in California, Escondido, CA

The Board considered petitions for new or revised degree programs, changes in degree programs or nomenclature, and other petitions regarding course-offering sites, distance and extension programs, and removal of notations from the following schools:

Ambrose Seminary of Ambrose University College, Calgary, AB
American Baptist Seminary of the West, Berkeley, CA
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO
Biblical Theological Seminary, Hatfield, PA
Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL
Christian Witness Theological Seminary, Concord, CA
Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Rochester, NY
Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary, St. Catharines, ON

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN
Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO
Drew University Theological School, Madison, NJ
Erskine Theological Seminary, Due West, SC
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA
Harding University Graduate School of Religion, Memphis, TN
Howard University School of Divinity, Washington, DC
Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO
James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta, GA
Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington, KY
Logsdon Seminary of Logsdon School of Theology, Abilene, TX
Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN
McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
Mid-America Reformed Seminary, Dyer, IN
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO
Multnomah Biblical Seminary, Portland, OR
Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO
New York Theological Seminary, New York, NY
North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, TX
Palmer Theological Seminary, Wynnewood, PA
Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary, Alexandria, VA
Saint Meinrad School of Theology, St. Meinrad, IN
Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, PA
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, MI
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX
St. John's University School of Theology–Seminary, Collegeville, MN
Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA
United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, ON

The Board acted on reports received from the following member schools:

Alliance Theological Seminary, Nyack, NY
Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA
Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY
Associated Canadian Theological Schools (ACTS), Langley, BC
Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor, ME
Bethel Seminary of Bethel University, St. Paul, MN
Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI
Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Cochrane, AB
Catholic University of America School of Theology and Religious Studies, Washington, DC

Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, CA
Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA
Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Rochester, NY
Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO
General Theological Seminary, New York, NY
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, CA
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA
Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI
Haggard Graduate School of Theology, Azusa, CA
Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO
Immaculate Conception Seminary, South Orange, NJ
Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA
James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta, GA
Knox College, Toronto, ON
Logos Evangelical Seminary, El Monte, CA
Michigan Theological Seminary, Plymouth, MI
Mount Angel Seminary, Saint Benedict, OR
New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, NJ
Newman Theological College, Edmonton, AB
North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA
Phoenix Seminary, Phoenix, AZ
Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA
Regent University School of Divinity, Virginia Beach, VA
Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, PA
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Richmond, VA
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, SK
Talbot School of Theology, La Mirada, CA
University of Winnipeg Faculty of Theology, Winnipeg, MB
Washington Theological Union, Washington, DC
Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA
United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH

Petitions to the ATS Board of Commissioners must be received by **April 1** for consideration in its spring meeting and by **November 1** for consideration in its winter meeting.

Jeremiah McCarthy returns to teaching

It is with sincere regret and heartfelt admiration that ATS announces the departure of Monsignor Jeremiah McCarthy from the ATS staff to return to teaching and priestly formation. Effective August 24, McCarthy will assume the position of professor of moral theology and academic liaison officer at St. Patrick's Seminary and University in Menlo Park, California. He will continue to work with the Task Force for the Revision of the Standards of Accreditation through the 2012 Biennial Meeting.

McCarthy joined the ATS staff in 2002 as director, accreditation and institutional evaluation. Prior to that appointment, he was a member of the ATS Commission on Accrediting from 1994 to 2000, during which time he chaired numerous accreditation visits on behalf of the Association. His staff work at ATS has focused largely on administration of the accreditation work of the Association, and he has served as secretary to the Board of Commissioners. He has also provided staff support to accreditation visiting committees, conducted accreditation self-study workshops, and participated in a range of leadership education programs of ATS.

Citing McCarthy's many contributions over the past fourteen years as commissioner and staff member, Daniel Aleshire, ATS executive director, has noted, "The COA accrediting standards were written to hold schools accountable to common expectations but in ways that advance each school's individual mission and unique characteristics. Jerry McCarthy understands that purpose and has always interpreted the standards to schools and to the Board of Commissioners in that light. He understands that the standards are normative, but not determinative, and has guided teams to understand how to apply them fairly. This wisdom and sensitivity has proved to be an invaluable contribution to the work of the Commission, which now offers its warmest blessings as he resumes his first love in forming priests for the Church who have a moral vision of faith, life, and ministry."

Prior to ATS, McCarthy served St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California, for almost two decades in the roles of professor of moral theology, academic dean, and vice-rector, and he was rector/president for seven years.

Ordained in 1972, McCarthy earned BA and MA degrees from St. John's Seminary College in Camarillo as well as the PhD from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and

the Licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley. A frequent presenter on moral issues, he has published many articles and reviews, and coauthored a book with Judith Caron on medical ethics, *Medical Ethics: A Catholic Guide to Healthcare Decisions*. He has served as an ethics consultant for the California Catholic Conference and currently is a consultant to the executive committee of the National Catholic Educational Association's Seminary Department. ♦



Remember that Degree Program Standards require that schools measure the percent of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

Commission on Accrediting invites third-party comments

The following member schools are receiving comprehensive evaluation committee visits during the spring semester:

Alliance Theological Seminary
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry
Church of God Theological Seminary
Concordia Theological Seminary (IN)
Ecumenical Theological Seminary
Grace Theological Seminary
Nashotah House
Perkins School of Theology
Regent College
St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary
Seabury-Western Theological Seminary
Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Urshan Graduate School of Theology
Wake Forest University Divinity School

The ATS Commission on Accrediting invites any member school to submit third-party comments on any school scheduled to receive a visit. Comments should be addressed to the attention of the Commission on Accrediting and sent by mail, fax, or email to Susan Beckerdite, beckerdite@ats.edu as soon as possible. ♦

Stewardship trends and their impact on your development strategy

By John R. Frank

A time of change, a time of emerging, a time of trends: so many things to consider when we are trying to build relationships with our donors. In our world of development and relationships, we must always be watching trends, learning about people, and responding when appropriate. Our world is one of constant response to the world of our donors.

While working on my Doctor of Ministry degree with a specialization in Leadership in the Emerging Culture, I studied many books and research on church and culture trends. Many changes are taking place in our world about which we as development professionals must stay informed. This does not mean that we will *like* every one of these trends; however, we must be aware of the world in which our donors live.

In one of the first books I read in my doctoral program, *The Organic Church* by Neil Cole, the author shared how many pastors, after viewing the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, excitedly expected new people to be checking out their churches. Research showed that church attendance was not affected. The author came to this conclusion: The world is seeking the spirituality of this Jesus, but they do not believe they will find it/him in the religion of the church.

Stop and think of what this means for our local churches and our missions. On one hand, the good news is that people still seek God. The bad news is it may not be in the manner in which we always thought it might be. The conclusion is, as ministries, our main calling is to share the gospel and to connect God's people to God's work.

The following are some key trends I identified in my studies that have a direct impact on our development efforts in seminaries and in all types of ministries.

Trend 1: Changing definitions of stewardship

The Builder generation lived in a world where stewardship was taught in their churches and Sunday schools, using words such as *tithes* and *offerings*. The tithe was to be the first 10 percent of income to be given to the local church. Offerings were gifts given



beyond the tithe for special projects in the local church or to support parachurch ministries.

Unfortunately, the term *stewardship* today means the annual tithe talk, the annual church budget talk, or just how to get money for the church.

I wish to reintroduce the concept that stewardship is a lifestyle. I say *reintroduce* because my research found that many before me have written of this same perspective. Douglas John Hall in his great book, *The Steward*, also presents stewardship as a lifestyle and a part of our walk with Christ. A stewardship lifestyle looks comprehensively at stewardship including not only time, talent, and treasure but also relationships, knowledge, health, and the environment.

Another comparison of stewardship that is being written about is transformational stewardship versus transactional stewardship. Today many pastors entice giving by offering a great transaction to the person in the pew. "If you give today, we will paint the nursery." "If you give today, we will meet our budget." More and more donors want something in return. While that is not altogether wrong (i.e., wanting accountability in return for giving), it can lead givers and receivers down a potentially negative path.

Being transformed to be more like Jesus should be our desire as a Christian. Therefore, to be a transformational giver means you can give as part of your relationship with God, because you know it will please him. When we please him, we draw closer to and desire the things of God. When we desire the things of God, we are transformed.

It's about the journey.

This definition of stewardship as a lifestyle has more to do with our journey as stewards than it does with fundraising. God is more concerned with the journey of the steward than he is with our budgets or fundraising goals.

My career in ministry has been focused on development and leadership. I have served as a worship leader, nursery volunteer, and elder. But for the majority of my life, my gifts and talents have been used in the area of stewardship and development. In my twenty-eight years of working in ministry, I have never seen God run out of resources. I have seen God bless many organizations with donors and million-dollar gifts. He has not said, "Take it easy on the campaigns; I am running out of cattle on the hillside." But it seems we are obsessed with "our" goals. We see our front-line ministry is from God, but we have viewed the steward as a "resource."

There are many directions, discussions, and laws regarding the steward as a follower of Jesus. His Word directs us to excel in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7), and he instructs us to seek every opportunity to be generous (2 Cor. 9).

The world is seeking the spirituality of this Jesus, but they do not believe they will find it/him in the religion of the church.

Our 501(c)s are not in the Bible.

To my leadership friends in churches and parachurch ministries, I have a challenge for you: Your organizations are *not* in Scripture. What you *do* is. To feed the hungry, care for the widow and the orphan, share the good news, and so forth are clearly written in Scripture. But your organization, denomination, or local church structure is not defined in the Bible. Along with your front-line ministry, the steward on the other side of your organization is clearly defined in Scripture.

What we see in Scripture is that God is very concerned with how we live our lives. He is also concerned with how we, as stewards, invest ourselves in front-line ministry. We will be held accountable for our stewardship generosity as it relates to God's people and our care for them (Phil. 4:17). Conclusion: Our churches and ministries are conduits for stewards to exercise their stewardship priorities and callings.

Trend 2: The lack of stewardship education

Through my research of theological schools and also involvement with the development program (DIAP) of ATS, I did not find any schools that offered programs, courses, or even classes in stewardship as a ministry. If there were any classes touching on this subject, it was in a church business administration class. In this approach, it referred to only the financial aspect of church finances and the pastor.

What a disappointment it is that after all these years of CSA, CMA, and other organizations working on the topic, still no organization of higher learning has seen the need to offer a degree in this field.

So why as development officers should we be concerned with the lack of stewardship education? Each profession becomes a profession by acquiring a body of knowledge (a library) and then offering educational degrees in that profession. The profession of fundraising has been working on this for many years (www.afp.org).

How can we expect our donors and congregations to see stewardship as an integral part of our lives if our Christian community and society does not see any value in the profession? Our seminaries are not fostering any research nor offering any courses in stewardship. Our pastors have not received any seminary training in stewardship as a part of the Christian life. It's no wonder that churches where generosity is not taught implement the latest fundraising strategy as their model.

As Christian ministries, we must continually be searching for ways to educate our donors in stewardship and the life of a steward. There are many resources to guide us. We as development or stewardship professionals must be advancing our field to bring new and energetic young people into this great ministry of development. Only then will we become a profession that not only trains and equips stewards for kingdom work but also provides the necessary resources of prayer, volunteers, and finances to fund the work.

Trend 3: Builder-, Boomer-, Buster-, and Bridger-aged views of stewardship

As each generation moves through its time of biblical training, or lack thereof, the results in giving have been interesting and alarming. Allow me to share my observations of how each generation views stewardship.

Builders were taught to give tithes and offerings. The first 10 percent went to the local church, and any additional giving went to special projects in the local church or to support parachurch ministries. They were faithful and trusted leadership and very legalistic in terms and definitions.

Boomers gave to the local church more by example than pulpit teaching but grew weary of local and denominational mandates on giving. Stewardship then expanded to include parachurch organizations such as Focus on the Family, Youth for Christ, and local rescue missions. They could "see" their giving and it served them, (the start of a narcissistic focus).

Busters are weary of all manipulation in churches asking for money. Giving to a church is OK but so is giving to parachurch organizations. They also believe that social, medical, and educational nonprofits are part of God's work and need their financial support. Busters view the word stewardship as synonymous with fundraising.

Bridgers (Mosiacs-Barna) are still developing their view of stewardship, but indications

are the narcissistic, "me-first" attitude will continue, as will a backlash to being more concerned with others rather than just themselves. Stewardship of the environment will be very important to this emerging culture.

Now is the time to recapture biblical stewardship as transformational in the life of a Christian and to teach stewardship as a way of life rather than a way to get money from someone.

Trend 4: Boomer-aged pastors are in power

This is a time when Boomer-aged pastors have moved into senior pastor positions. Consequently, we must understand how they have or have not been trained in stewardship as compared to fundraising. We must also understand their models and input. Many pastors have shied away from the fundraising abuses of previous leaders and have taken much input from the "business world experts" who say the local church should operate more like a business. This reinforces the philosophy that the offering is a "revenue stream" and is a part of the budgeting process for the local church.

Trend 5: Emerging church is gaining influence

God is moving in his people. The next generation of churchgoers is making changes as fast as possible, such as throwing out tradition. They are skeptical and embrace ideas such as "walk your talk" and "teach the truth." While these changes are uncomfortable to some, it is important to begin including young emerging church leaders on boards and in leadership and connecting them to the current and previous generation of leaders.

Trend 6: Relationships are key

Relationships will be the litmus test for every ministry in the coming years. The emerging culture is asking us to "walk with me, do not just lecture at me." Relationships with our donors will be critical to any success even today.

Trend 7: Vision is still vital

People still respond to a call to vision. Vision is seeing the unseen. Vision is stepping out in faith. People still want to follow a leader as they step forward into the future. Donors still want to follow a vision for the ministries they support.

Trend 8: A strong and clear case is still vital

Stewards still care that where they give is a strong and focused ministry. The case for support answers the question, "Is this ministry worthy of a donor's support?" The accountability and clearly communicated mission and vision are key to a strong case for support. The wise steward will ask for one.

Trend 9: The relationship between the church and parachurch continues to be unstable

This trend has been impacting development for many years. While there are many situations for churches and parachurch ministries to work well together, the majority still see each other as competition or "taking donors" from one another.

Trend 10: Huge shift in leadership and followership

As the generations continue to age and change, their views of leadership vary greatly. The Builder, Boomer, and Buster leaders are very different in how they make decisions, practice team, and believe in synergy. The remarkable trend worth watching is in followership. It is amazing how obedient and faithful the Builder follower was compared to the skeptical and ambivalent Buster follower.

When we face our God

I believe when we face our God he will not say, "Let's see John and Susan. Let's count up the church offerings you gave." I think it will be more like, "I put you in one of the greatest times of history, in a country of great wealth, gave you an education, a wonderful spouse, children, jobs, money, talent, and a beautiful place to live. I gave you the Internet, global air travel, talented pastors, and good health. So what did you do with all of that to love my people and impact my Kingdom?" Let us put our ministry's emphasis where God's is, on the front-line ministry *and* the steward. ♦



John R. Frank, CFRE, DMin, and president of The Frank Group, presented this paper at the 2009 DIAP Conference in New Orleans.

DIALOGUE continued from page 31

- ♦ The GSQ showed that students' satisfaction with Field Education was significantly lower at one campus than at the others. When pressed, the campus agreed that Field Ed was not run well at many levels. Changes to Field Ed were made to make it more or less parallel the Field Ed being offered at other campuses. Within one year, student satisfaction increased by 20 percent. We continue to monitor this.
- ♦ RTS was keeping job placement stats, which are noted in Standard A, section A.5.2, but we did very little nuancing of the statistics. Basically we only asked, "is the student placed in ministry?" After beginning the assessment process, we decided to begin asking more specific questions related to job placement. These added questions provided us with answers, some of which we had previously anticipated. We had been suspicious that a significant number of our students were being placed in campus ministry positions. These new statistics proved our anecdotal evidence to be true. One campus has since added an emphasis in campus ministry.

Any final implications of your "aha" moment?

Again, my "aha" moment was seeing assessment of student learning at the degree program level, not the course level. Now I could clearly see that evaluating Bible knowledge is not always only done in a Bible course but may be done better while reading a systematic theology paper or watching a preaching video.

Anything else you want to tell me?

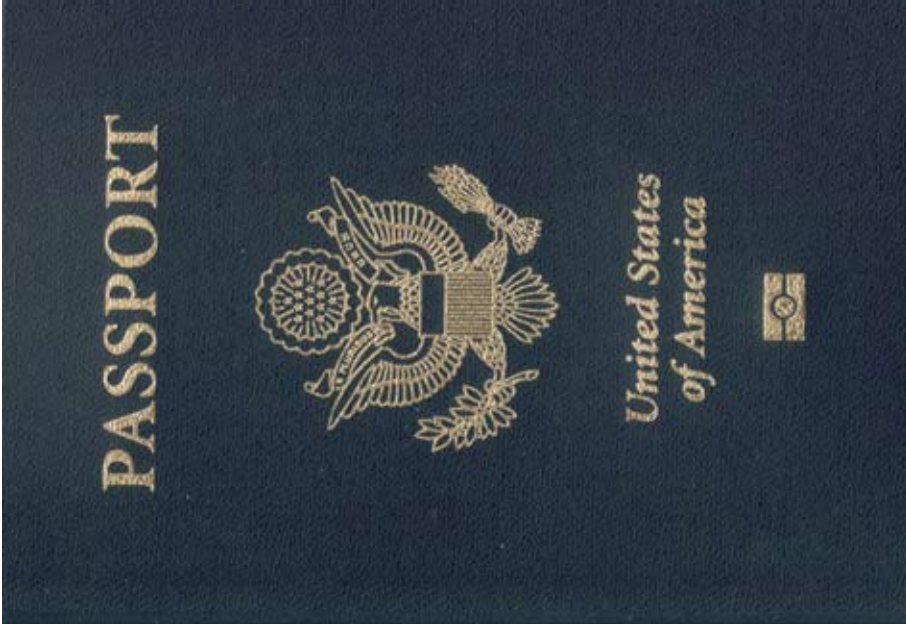
Yes. The learning process never ends. ♦



Polly Stone is director of institutional assessment at Reformed Theological Seminary.

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Those attending the Chief Academic Officers Seminar, June 22, and the Biennial Meeting, June 23–25, should ensure they have a current passport if their travel requires a border crossing between the United States and Canada.