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COLLOQUY

Leading change: What a CEO and CFO need from each other

G. Craig Williford

President

Denver Seminary

Craig Williford and Jack Heimbichner gave the opening address at the 2005 CFO Conference in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, in November. Denver Seminary is finishing a challenging turnaround effort that involved reversing declining enrollment, engaging a neglected donor base, rebuilding its endowment, eliminating deficit spending, and developing of and relocating to a new campus, among other transitions. A significant portion of their remarks appears here.

Jack Heimbichner

Vice President of Finance

Denver Seminary

Let us consider the biblical metaphor of *stewardship* to shed light on how the CFO and CEO can work together to lead change in the theological schools where we serve.

In Old Testament times, the concept of steward referred to when the master entrusted a slave to serve as the steward of the master's household. This slave would be responsible for overseeing and directing the full requirements of the household. This usually included management of the day-to-day needs of the home, formative education of the children (where we get the imagery of pedagogy), ensuring physical safety for all members of the household, leading the other slaves, and enhancing all of the master's resources—human, material, and financial. Or, stated more simply: to ensure that the master's wishes and directions are fulfilled.

In the New Testament, the imagery of the steward is used to remind followers of Christ that all the resources given to them are to be used wisely to advance the Gospel, serve the church, and further Christ's kingdom throughout the world. Like the Old Testament, the New Testament teachings also stress that the steward possesses nothing; rather, the steward serves at the will of Christ in an effort to fulfill God's desires for the church and the world.

In the midst of teaching how He wanted His disciples to live while awaiting His return to earth, Christ tells the parable of the talents. It is a story of a master who entrusts his property to three servants—one is given five talents, another two talents, and the last servant one talent. At the time of Christ, a talent was the equivalent of about twenty years of basic wages. So, five talents would be approximately one hundred years worth of wages, two talents forty years of wages and one talent twenty years of wages. These were significant resources entrusted to these servants.

After a long period of absence the master returns and wants to settle accounts with the servants over how they had managed the master's resources. One servant has increased the five talents into ten—200 years worth of wages. Another servant has doubled the two talents into four—80 years of wages. The third servant, apparently crippled by fear, has hidden the one talent in the ground. The master strongly praises the two servants who wisely multiplied his resources and says to them, "Come and share your master's happiness." The third servant is a little like the last place finishers on The Amazing Race or the outcast from Survivor. All his money and possessions were taken away, and he is cast into a life with no support or help from the master—left to fend for himself. In that communal society, the servant with one buried talent was truly now an outcast.

In this parable, Christ reminds us that one of our responsibilities as leaders is to wisely leverage all the resources given to our institutions to advance the purposes and values of God's kingdom. The house where we serve belongs to the Master and there will be a settling of accounts for how we have multiplied these resources to accomplish God's purposes.

Let me see if I can make this more applicable. Over the next twenty years (not adjusting for inflation and other factors), a conservative estimate would suggest that God may entrust Denver Seminary with approximately 250 to 300

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The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director

Nicodemus, Kansas, and the future of theological education

This summer, when I had time to read all of the Sunday *New York Times* that interested me, I ran across an article about Nicodemus, Kansas. Nicodemus was established in 1878 and became home to almost 600 former slaves from Kentucky. It was a proprietary venture and apparently was the nineteenth century equivalent of selling Florida swamplands. The handbills promoting the new town promised people accustomed to the lush Kentucky mountains and meadows anything but the barren prairie of Nicodemus. The population still grew to more than 700, and the town had a bank, hotel, and grocery. But the last half of the twentieth century was not kind to Nicodemus. The population stood at 22 by the end of the century; the average age of residents is 71; and First Baptist Church has closed its doors because the building is unsafe. Nicodemus was declared a national landmark, but the site superintendent told the *Times* reporter "there's a difference between having people living here and having the Park Service manage a ghost town." There are a few people moving back, but Nicodemus is still a small and lonely place in northwest Kansas. One jobless resident said, "All that's here is history." [1]

ATS schools are full of history—enough that many of them have written books about it. We cherish the history in our schools, but if history is "all that's [t]here," then we have problem, a big problem. Faithfulness in theological education is benefited more by imagination about what is next than sentiment about what has passed. History deserves deep respect, and if William Faulkner is right, the "past is never dead. It's not even past." However present the past may be, history does not fashion the future. The future emerges as both predictable and unanticipated elements come together. It is most often a product of small increments of change that accrue until, suddenly and profoundly, old boundaries are transcended, and new realities are invented. I have a hunch that we can best discern coming changes by careful attention to the obvious, and that theological schools will discover the future as they see unmet needs and make appropriate educational responses, and as they understand deep cultural shifts and fashion new patterns for their work. Theological schools are creatures of the church, and they will change as the church changes.

> *ATS schools are full of history—enough that many of them have written books about it. We cherish the history in our schools, but if history is "all that's [t]here," then we have a problem, a big problem.*

ATS schools are not going to get through the next decade without change, and if I'm reading the obvious correctly, the change across the next decade will be greater than the cumulative changes across the past decade. Seminaries are educational institutions that are built for long-term continuity. Endowments, tenured faculties, thousands of years of tradition as the subject matter—all these combine to make theological schools stably resistant to change. This stability has considerable strength, a strength that has contributed to the power of theological schools to sustain a long history and make it accessible to the present. In periods of rapid change, however, the strength can be an impediment to the service that is needed.

Will seminaries make the contribution that needs to be made in the context of transitions in the church? Will they be able to make the changes required by a culture that is increasingly nonreligious? Will they be able to meet the needs of racial/ethnic students and the rapidly growing racial/ethnic communities? Will they be able to make the transition from older educational patterns of accountability to the newer patterns that are developing? I think they will be able to make these transitions. And I think so because they are more committed to mission than to form, to the future than the past.

This past fall, a school bus drove into Nicodemus, Kansas, for the first time in a long time. A family with a child had moved in over the summer. It's probably not the beginning of a population boom, but it is part of the future. Theological schools have a future that is full of hope and possibility. ◆

ENDNOTES

1 Michael Wilson, "A Legacy of Freedom is Teetering with Age," *New York Times*, Sunday July 3, 2005.

Assessment in theological education: A pathway, not a pathless wilderness

On a recent accrediting visit, Richard Sherry, dean of faculty growth and assessment at Bethel Seminary of Bethel University, insightfully observed that the curriculum is not a process of accumulating, willy-nilly, an array of courses leading to the Holy Grail of a seminary degree. To view the curriculum in this way is to understand it not as a "pathway, but as a pathless wilderness." Sherry's wonderful phrase echoes the wisdom in ATS General Institutional Standard 4 that the seminary curriculum ". . . should be seen as a set of practices with a formative aim—the development of intellectual, spiritual, moral, and vocational or professional capacities—and careful attention must be given to the coherence and mutual enhancement of its various elements" (4.1.2). Rescuing the seminary curriculum from becoming a "pathless wilderness" requires a commitment to the practice of ongoing assessment—certainly not a surprising conclusion from a member of the accrediting staff who is secretary to the Board of Commissioners. However, I am intrigued by Sherry's structured sense of the curriculum as a "pathway" because of its implications for understanding ATS expectations about assessment in theological education.

I'm happy to report that the Character and Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation project, generously funded by Lilly Endowment, is nearing its conclusion and with hard-won payoffs for the benefit of the entire community of ATS member schools. The payoff comes in many different forms. Not only has the project generated a rich set of research results (published in several issues of *Theological Education*) but also in concrete strategies and tools to help member schools build skill and capacity in applying assessment to their distinctive learning contexts.

Among these tools are the newly developed Online Assessment Resources available on the ATS Web site (www.ats.edu > Projects > Character and Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation > Online Assessment Resources). This Web page provides an annotated description of what can be found at each of twenty-five Web sites pertaining to various aspects of assessment. The ATS accrediting staff will be developing a learning module on assessment for the benefit of busy deans, presidents, and faculty members that will be posted on this section of the Web site. In addition to the learning module, ATS will post examples of assessment plans, (with the permission, of course, of the schools), and other forms of Best Practices so that we can avoid the need to "reinvent the wheel" on good assessment strategies.

I'm also pleased with the work on the new section of the ATS *Handbook of Accreditation* ("The Assessment of Educational Effectiveness") being developed by John Harris, Orlean Bullard Beeson Professor of Education and director of special projects at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. This new section will be the official ATS commentary on assessment and evaluation, referencing both the theme of assessment and evaluation that is included in each of the ten General Institutional Standards as well as the individual Degree Program Standards, with a special focus on the assessment of the four goals of the Master of Divinity degree program. We hope to have a final version of this text ready for you by the end of the spring term 2006.

In addition to the published materials in *Theological Education* (Volume 39, numbers 1 and 2 and Volume 40, number 2), the Web site assessment links, and the forthcoming section of the *Handbook*, two additional books have been published with practical advice on assessment in theological education.

The first volume, Malcolm Warford, ed., *Practical Wisdom on Theological Teaching and Learning* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2004), reflects the report of the "Lexington Seminar: Theological Teaching for the Church's Ministries," a project supported by Lilly Endowment and sponsored by Lexington Theological Seminary.

The second volume, Victor J. Klimoski, Kevin J. O'Neil, and Katarina M. Schuth, *Educating Leaders for Ministry: Issues and Responses* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), reflects the report of the Keystone, Colorado, project for Catholic theological educators, sponsored by Lilly Endowment and the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province.

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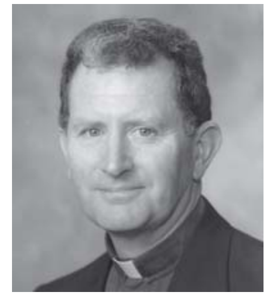

Jeremiah McCarthy

Director, Accreditation and Institutional Evaluation

Secretary to the Commission on Accrediting

Thirty-nine ATS member schools have participated in the Character and Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation project. Ten schools received additional input from consultants and have developed case studies on various aspects of assessment reflecting their distinctive contexts and learning communities. These case studies will be published in an issue of *Theological Education* next spring and will be available prior to the Biennial Meeting of the Association, June 24–26, 2006, in Chicago, Illinois. Workshops at the Biennial Meeting will focus on these case studies, so please mark the dates on your calendar. We look forward to seeing you there!

The future is calling

Daniel Aleshire

Executive Director

The Association
of Theological Schools

This article contains excerpts from a speech presented December 4 at the ATS Presidential Leadership Intensive held in Santa Fe, New Mexico. You can find the full-text version online at www.ats.edu/leadership_education/PapersAleshire.asp.

The future of theological schools will be shaped as they recognize unmet needs and make appropriate educational responses. It will be shaped as schools understand deep cultural shifts and fashion new patterns for their work. Theological schools are creatures of the church, and much of their future is entangled in the church's future.

Drug and alcohol dependency

A few years ago, the National Association of Children of Alcoholics approached ATS about helping theological schools better educate future pastors in skills needed for ministry with families that are struggling with the effects of drug or alcohol dependency. Work-group meetings of the National Association of Children of Alcoholics included several faculty members from ATS schools, along with representatives from the National Institutes of Health, and others engaged in addiction treatment or prevention. Our task was to identify core competencies for ministers working with families impacted by chemical dependency and to think about how these core competencies might be taught. The dependency specialists were hoping for a course, but the theological educators said that the best that could be hoped for was a small unit in a pastoral ministry course. The materials are ready now (www.nacoa.org/clergy.htm), and I wonder what it would mean in this culture if every MDiv graduate of an ATS school understood the symptoms of dependency and had the pastoral skills necessary to help individuals and families affected by alcohol and drug dependency. Jesus, who made water into wine and knew the value of human celebration, must weep with families that have been torn and wounded by addiction. Maybe theological schools could contribute to celebrations that do not wound.

Persons with disabilities

Ginny Thornburgh is a trustee at Princeton Theological Seminary and is vice president for the Religion and Disability Program of the National Organization on Disability. She has been pushing ATS for two years to become more directly involved in addressing disability issues in the seminary context. Periodic polls of Americans with disabilities indicate that one of the gaps they experience in levels of participation is religious involvement.[1] Ginny wants ATS to educate religious leaders with skill and sensitivity about disability issues, make theological schools more readily accessible to persons with disabilities, and for ATS to include persons with disabilities as one of the groups that we specifically target in overall expectations of inclusion. Ginny is right. I wonder what it would be like if everyone whom God has gifted for ministry had a chance for theological education and that congregations learned how to be accessible to all God's children. The Gospels taught that the Kingdom of God was near when the deaf could hear and the blind could see. Maybe theological schools could build a future in which the signs of the Kingdom are freshly present.

Domestic violence

I received an email a few weeks ago from Ron Clark, a college instructor and minister, who was concerned about domestic violence. He wrote, "In our abuse work we have continually struggled to inform pastors about helping victims and batterers (who are in abusive families) receive proper treatment. Typically all religious bodies indicate that their spiritual leaders are slow to respond and ill-equipped to help even victims." He was writing to see how ATS could address clergy education regarding domestic violence. One in four women in the United States will experience some form of intimate partner violence in her lifetime; 20 percent of all violent crime against women was committed by an intimate partner.[2] I wrote Ron Clark a rather bureaucratic response, suggesting how we could start the conversation, but I know that these kinds of conversations are hard to bring to maturity. Jesus, who welcomed children and stopped the stoning of the woman, must grieve that violence in families continues. Maybe an expanded educational vision could stop the stones and leave the children with more hugs and less harm.

World Religions

The Parliament of World Religions is one of many organizations attempting to address the changing landscape of religious affiliation. In the United States, one study estimates that as much as 75 percent of the U.S. population identify themselves as "Christian," and that the second largest identity group is "nonreligious," claimed by 13.2 percent of the population. The Christian group grew 5 percent between 1990 and 2000, and the nonreligious category grew 110 percent across the same decade. What does it mean for theological education that "nonreligious" is growing twenty times faster than Christianity? How do we make a compelling case for a religion that is so ubiquitous that people are inoculated to its radical claims and ordinary faithfulness? No developed country is more Christian than the United States, and like other Western nations, the primary competitor to Christianity is not other religions, it's "not-religious." How do Christians become better able to deal theologically and pastorally with differing religious presences? How do we declare the Good News in a culture where, in a relatively short period, it has become "news"?

Three Reactions

I have three reactions to these overtures that have come to ATS from outside. The first is to be protective of ATS schools. They are small, barely adequately resourced, and already working very hard. I want to protect them from even more work. The second is to be encouraged. In an era when we are worrying a great deal about the culture's perception of religion, these outside requests remind us that church remains a place where a significant percentage of people gather and where major human needs can be addressed. The third is to imagine a future when the people to whom Jesus gave particular attention get similar attention from the church.

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Imagine a future in which graduates are capable of competent pastoral responses to the range of problems tormenting society. Imagine a future in which schools have given serious thought to changing cultural contexts and have graduated students who know how to exercise leadership in this kind of world. Imagine the intellectual resources that theological schools could provide for changing religious and cultural contexts. Seminary presidents work in jobs where there is more to be done than can be done. They work at schools where there are more needs than resources, more vision of good things to do than capacity to do them, more voices calling than can be heard. What about the future?

Leadership is about getting an organization from one place to another. It is almost always about helping organizations accomplish more than they think they can, and to do it in ways that make for institutional wholeness and human thriving. For leaders, the future is calling. Calls don't always come at the most auspicious times; they don't always ask us to do the things we would most like to do. That is why they are *calls*; that is why leaders are *called*. I am deeply optimistic about the future of theological education. There is a future, and it is calling. ◆

ENDNOTES

1. www.nod.org.
2. From statistics gathered by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (www.ncadv.org/files/DV_Facts).

View other papers and presentations on the ATS Web site, www.ats.edu/leadership_education/papers_presentations.asp

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Each of these texts has essays on the assessment of theological education, and I commend them to you wholeheartedly.

Those of us committed to the vocation of theological education know how important it is to have evidence that we are doing well what has been entrusted to us by the churches we serve, no less than the preparation of wise pastors, ministers, and educators. Good assessment is a form of spiritual discernment, a practice of attending to multiple sources of information readily available to us, interpreting the data, asking what it means, making appropriate decisions, and continuing the conversation on an ongoing basis. Assessment works best when it is not a bureaucratic imposition but simply part of the ongoing, thoughtful work of a school and its faculty, administration, and staff, who care deeply about the effectiveness of their academic programs to deliver the stated outcomes of these programs. Assessment, in other words, helps all of us avoid a "pathless wilderness" in our seminary curricula and achieve, instead, effective "pathways" to good, theological education. ◆

Entering Student Questionnaire: a look at the 2005–06 profile of participants

The group profile from this fall's *Entering Student Questionnaire* included 7,283 responses from 131 schools. The following data highlight the overall findings.

- 21.1 percent of students have one or two dependents; 12.8 percent have three or more.
- Students come to seminary with a broad range of undergraduate degrees. In rank order, the top three most typical undergraduate degrees were social/behavioral sciences, humanities, and technical studies.
- Students are more likely to come to theological programs with advanced degrees than was true in the past. The total percentage of students entering with such degrees was 24.8, with a master's degree being cited most frequently.
- More than half of the students brought no *educational debt* with them; however, 21.3 percent had a debt load of $15,000 or more. Similarly, more than half of the students brought no *noneducational debt* with them; 12.5 percent carried a debt load of $15,000 or more.
- 56.1 percent of students ranked financial aid assistance as "significant" or higher.
- The typical full-time MDiv student plans to work more than 20 hours a week.
- Prior to coming to seminary, 50.7 percent of students had been elected or appointed to a leadership position in their local churches or other religious organizations.
- 60.5 percent of MDiv students first considered seminary before or during college.
- Based on location, 40.1 percent of students come from a suburban church followed by 32.1 percent coming from an urban church.
- Based on membership, 25.1 percent of students come from churches with a membership of 100–249 followed by churches with a membership of 1,000 or more (23.2 percent).
- From a list of fourteen choices, students indicated, in rank order, that they were most likely to have learned about the school from the following sources: friend, graduate, pastor.
- Email/Internet was the most likely used method when first contacting a school.
- The most important reasons for attending a school, in rank order, were: quality of the faculty, academic reputation of the school, and comfort with doctrinal position.
- The top five reasons for choosing an institution were, in rank order: theological perspective, academic reputation, denominational affiliation, faculty, and spirituality.

For information about participating in the Entering *and* Graduating Student Questionnaires, *contact Tisa Lewis, director of student information resources and organizational evaluation at lewis@ats.edu or 412-788-6505, Ext. 228.* ♦

Igoe joins accrediting staff

Nancy Igoe

Nancy Igoe joined the ATS staff in October 2005 as an accrediting assistant. In this position, she tracks all paperwork before and after accrediting visits, coordinates visit-team members, and organizes background materials needed for the team to evaluate schools and make recommendations. In addition, she maintains the visit calendar and provides general support to the accrediting staff.

Prior to coming to ATS, Igoe served as department administrator for Sports Medicine and Nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh and as an office assistant for the department of Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University.

She earned a BA in humanities and a BS in business administration from California University of Pennsylvania.

In her spare time, Igoe likes to read and enjoys the company of her pet cat. She resides in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania. ♦

Entering and *Graduating Student Questionnaires* eliminate guesswork

Each year ATS makes available important background information on students through the *Entering Student Questionnaire* and the *Graduating Student Questionnaire.* We currently are investigating the possibility of developing a Web application for these two instruments, along with an administrative interface, within the next year. This would allow students to complete these two questionnaires online. The administrator interface would enable the school coordinator to manage the students' participation in the program and to submit online the completed questionnaires to the ATS office where the results are tabulated.

The portrait of a class, presented in table form, enables a school to understand more clearly its student body and its characteristics and provides useful data for planning. Many of the tables in the reports are directly linked to ATS Standards of Accreditation. The data are useful, not only in assessing entering and graduating classes but also in preparing for and writing accreditation Self-Study reports. A set of approximately twenty-three tables is constructed for each participating school from data provided by entering or graduating students. In addition, a set of summary tables is prepared that portrays the pattern of responses to each of the questions from all participating schools for the year's entering and graduating classes. This year more than half of ATS schools used one or both instruments, with 137 using the *Graduating Student Questionnaire* and 131 using the *Entering Student Questionnaire.*

Academic deans, deans of students, directors of admission, and faculty find the *Entering Student Questionnaire* particularly helpful in their work. Information generated from the responses of their students enables them to understand the nature of the student population, who was important in their students' decision to enter seminary, the reasons students have for choosing a particular school, their plans for ministry, and their educational and noneducational debt as they begin graduate studies. It can also assist school officials in targeting populations from which they might draw future students.

Student responses to the *Graduating Student Questionnaire* are examined by deans, faculty members, and personnel in offices of planning and development. They will see clearly the impressions and levels of satisfaction students have of the education they have received, key features of the school's curriculum that students judge they have mastered, educational debt brought and incurred, what students considered important and not important among the school's services and academic resources, the differences the seminary experience has made, and the importance of associations formed during the years of graduate theological study. For instance, students are asked to indicate on a scale of one to five their level of satisfaction with their progress in skills that relate to their future work. In addition, students are asked what position they expect to have after graduation and what they expect to be doing five years later. Comparisons of a school's MDiv students and MA students regarding levels of perceived personal growth and skill in various areas may prove helpful in curriculum reviews. While similar questionnaires may get at some of these data, the advantage of this questionnaire is its usefulness in comparing responses of one school to those of other schools in the Association.

Workshops are conducted each year to discuss the implications of both entering and graduating student data, what has been learned over the years, the patterns of information that have emerged, and the relationship between the data and the ATS Standards of Accreditation. The next *Entering Student Questionnaire* workshop will be held March 13 in Pittsburgh at the ATS office. Details may be found at www.ats.edu > Resources > Student Information. ◆

Tisa Lewis

Director, Student Information Services and Organizational Evaluation

The Association of Theological Schools

Petition Deadline

Petitions to the ATS

Commission on Accrediting

must be received by April 1

for consideration in its spring meeting

and by November 1

for consideration in its winter meeting.

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million dollars in total revenue. Even more amazing than this sum of money are the gifted faculty, staff, and students entrusted to our care. If we assume that over twenty years Denver Seminary will average one thousand students per year, then by the year 2025 we will have the opportunity to equip approximately 20,000 leaders. Additionally, there are the questions concerning how best to serve our faculty and staff during these twenty years. So, when we arrive at the year 2025, if the Master asks us to give a report of all these valuable resources entrusted to us—how will we answer?

You may ask how this applies to the role of the CFO and the relationship between the CFO and CEO at our institutions. Allow me to make some quick observations:

- First, what a privilege we have been given! You and I are entrusted with the master's household—God's children, fellow servants, possessions and wishes: they are under our care. Even given all the challenges we face at our institutions, there is no higher calling—no more rewarding place of honor.

- Since it is God's household, we are called to fulfill God's wishes and desires. I find it so easy to slip into focusing upon what *I* judge the institution ought to be or do, or, to become beguiled with thoughts that I am indispensable to the organization I lead. It is challenging to remember that I am a humble servant of the Master with no guarantees that I will always be in the position of steward. So, during the time I serve as a president, I want to be faithful and productive for His pleasure and the sake of Denver Seminary.

- Notice that Christ chose a financial illustration to make His important point about stewardship. In some manner, there is a symbiotic relationship between how well we manage financial resources, the growth of future resources, and the fulfillment of our mission. I am not suggesting that more money automatically results in greater fulfillment of institutional mission, or that receiving the greatest amount of financial resources is always a sign of God's blessings. We all know this isn't always true. Foundations, insightful donors, and wise members of our general publics scrutinize the annual reports and probe for other signs of our wise financial management. In my short experience serving as a president, I find that donors generally will not pour more money into a situation where they judge previous gifts have not been used wisely to fulfill mission. If we as humans do this, could it be possible that God in His wisdom does too?

- There is always a need to integrate risk and security when managing financial resources. Remember, the servant with one talent adequately protected the talent but failed in multiplying the master's resources. During a recent finance committee meeting of another organization where I served on the board, the CFO proudly announced that he had placed all of the endowment into bank CDs. He was so proud that he had protected the institution from the downturn of the stock and bond market. Immediately, the committee members tried to explain to him how this move that seemed so wise and safe to the CFO actually placed the organization in greater danger. Choosing the safest path is not always synonymous with wise investment of the master's resources, just as choosing the path with the highest amount of risk is not always an act of faith. Selling our old campus and building a new campus was not "safe." Attempting to complete the relocation in the wisest possible manner to reduce as much of the risk as possible seemed the best course of action. I experienced many restless nights during the transition.

- The contribution of the CFO reaches far beyond just accurately keeping track of the money or actually understanding GAAP rules, investment policies and strategies, audits, and balance sheets. When CEOs or other leaders directly or indirectly attempt to relegate the CFO to the role of financial accounting, we endanger the future health of our institutions. The role of the CFO is to assist the CEO, other vice presidents, and the board in being wise stewards of all the institutional resources by leveraging these resources for successful completion of mission. Removing the CFO from a strategic voice of leadership in the whole institution played itself out in the mid-

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Seminaries doing a good job educating clergy

Those in faith communities rely on the diverse roles clergy members play in their lives. They call upon clergy in times of birth and death, marriage and divorce, and sickness among others. For this reason, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching commissioned a three-year study funded by Lilly Endowment and Atlantic Philanthropies that examined how well theological schools prepared their students for these real world situations.

The research team, led by Charles R. Foster, Carnegie scholar and emeritus professor of religion and education from Emory University, used surveys, classroom observations, focus groups, and interviews with faculty, students, and administrators to explore how seminaries integrate various aspects of clergy training into a coherent curriculum.

"The research team discovered that while a variety of clergy education traditions contributes to the diversity of classroom and outside-the-classroom teaching practices across the spectrum of Jewish and Christian seminaries, clergy educators share, for the most part, a set of intentions for student learning. These intentions include:

1. Developing in students the facility for interpreting texts, situations, and relationships.
2. Nurturing the dispositions and habits integral to the spiritual and vocational formation of clergy.
3. Heightening student consciousness of the content and agency of historical and contemporary contexts.
4. Cultivating student performance in clergy roles and ways of thinking.

"These intentions lead to distinctive pedagogies of interpretation, formation, contextualization, and performance. They are so persistent and cross so many boundaries, that when taken together, they may be considered what [Carnegie President Lee S.] Shulman calls a 'signature pedagogy' or teaching practice directed to developing in seminary students the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and habits they will need in their professional roles."[1]

The study also revealed responsibilities for which seminary graduates reported they were unequipped, including management, administration, and finance roles.

"Seminary educators described the influence of an increasingly diverse student community, expanding knowledge in the fields of their teaching, and changing expectations for the work of clergy on their decisions about what and how to teach. Most schools continue to struggle with the alignment of goals and teaching practices in the classroom with those in other educational settings in the seminary community and in field or clinical education."[2]

The results of this study are available in book form, Charles R. Foster and others, Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination *(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).* ◆

ENDNOTES

1. http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/news/sub.asp?key=51&subkey=833.
2. Ibid.

In the coming year, this ATS ad will invite prospective students to explore full-time study or continuing education at an ATS member institution. The ad will appear in *Christianity Today, The Christian Century,* and *America* magazines.

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1990s at Denver Seminary when the board and leadership became beguiled with the belief that money always follows passionate vision. Well, we had passionate vision and a wonderful, gifted leader, but inadequate stewardship of the ample resources that flowed during that period almost sabotaged our organizational future. When our passionate, gifted president was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor, none of the significant funds secured during those good times remained to buttress the seminary during the unforeseen difficult times. When Jack [Heimbichner, vice president of finance] raised the appropriate financial questions about spending the entire 2.8 million dollars of a matured estate in a manner that would encumber all future budgets, his faith was questioned. He was told, "Oh, you know those 'financial people': always thinking the worst and not able to operate by faith!" Please understand: I am not criticizing our seminary's past, but, instead, being descriptive of how this problem of compartmentalizing the CFO endangers an institution. Today our seminary leadership chooses to say it this way: "A passionate vision is most effective when fortified by wise stewardship of all resources."

- Finally, if I could give a gift to each of you who serve as CFOs, it would be for you to clearly and repeatedly hear the Master say to you, "come share in your Master's happiness." Your Master, Jesus Christ, has chosen you to steward the household; thanks for doing it so well. Your service is critical to the well-being and long term effectiveness of graduate-level theological education.

What does the CEO need from the CFO in order to lead change effectively as a team?

1. **Shared voice**: Recently during one of our chapel sevices, the worship team had difficulty because two of the members could not agree on what key the song would be sung in. It took a while before both finally settled on a common key. CFOs and CEOs must find a common key and speak in that same key, or the discord will destroy the organization.

2. **Shared space:** At times the CEO must be the primary leader when publicly addressing the financial matters of the organization. At other times, the CFO should be the public spokesperson. Sharing the communication of both good and bad news is also critically important. Annually we have to explain the latest changes in our health insurance. Unfortunately over the past five years this means fewer benefits with higher costs for both the seminary and the employees. We choose to make these announcements together so Jack is not always seen as the bearer of bad news. Another way we share space is in the sharing of ideas and opinions. At times Jack and I disagree over how to best approach a specific challenge. I must trust him in his area of expertise, and he helps by trusting my knowledge of all aspects of the seminary, not just the financial matters.

3. **Shared expectations:** Jack and I try to work diligently to understand each other's expectations. Together we annually identify what are the most important and strategic areas that deserve our time and energy. This includes both institution-wide initiatives and those initiatives specific to the finance department. Our entire leadership team works in cooperation with the board to determine annually the most important strategy initiatives for the year ahead.

4. **Shared information:** I need objective and thorough information from Jack. CEOs who make it known that they do not want to receive bad news place their institutions in extreme peril. We as CEOs must know the good, bad, and ugly and in full detail. Additionally, Jack can complete his best work if I provide all the information that he needs. Nothing is more frustrating and demoralizing than hearing important information from others who are outside the formal leadership group. Open and effective communication is a key to leading change.

5. **Loyalty and complete confidentiality:** nothing destroys the ability of the CFO and the CEO to lead change more than insecurity over whether you can trust the person with whom you serve. Trust takes intentional effort and time to earn but can quickly be diminished. Making a decision to trust and to consistently act in a trustworthy manner is at the heart of building and maintaining a trust-based relationship. Seeking, receiving, and granting forgiveness accompanied by appropriate repentance are the essential foundations to rebuilding trust once it has been broken.

What does a CFO need from the CEO/president in order to lead change?

1. How do we control the budget risk?
   a. Building a strategic reserve
   b. Strategic expense allocation and what it means to the budget

2. How do we manage the budget in relationship to cash flow?
   a. Budget variances in relationship to revenue streams
   b. Meeting operational expenses monthly

3. How do we allocate expenses with many separate competing needs?
   a. Essential vs. nonessential, vision and mission
   b. Personnel related to nonpersonnel

4. How can the president help with communicating financial information?
   a. Build a common language
   b. The development of key dashboard reports for the board of trustees

5. What is the role of the president in developing new programs?
   a. Help determine the break-even cost benefit analysis
   b. Determine if the new program matches the mission and vision of the school

6. How can the CEO and CFO provide financial accountability?
   a. To the board of trustees
   b. To the external community and to the internal community ◆

The CFO Steering Committee (standing L-R): Lee Merritt (Fuller Theological Seminary), Bill Myers (ATS), Anne Brown (United Theological Seminary), Paula Buley (Seton Hall University), John Gilmore (Princeton Theological Seminary), Chris Meinzer (ATS). (Seated L-R): Robert Landrebe (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary); Jack Heimbichner, Chair (Denver Seminary); Curtis Haynes, Vice Chair (Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia); Thomas Vanhimbergen (Saint Francis Seminary).

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The Mission
of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada is to promote the improvement and enhancement of theological schools to the benefit of communities of faith and the broader public.

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Events in January & February

Lilly Theological Research Grants Application Deadline
January 5, 2006 • Pittsburgh, PA

African American Presidents Meeting
January 9–10, 2006 • Indianapolis, IN

New Presidents Seminar
January 12–14, 2006 • Savannah, GA

PoM Interpretation Workshop, Stage II
February 16–17, 2006 • Savannah, GA

Development and Institutional Advancement Program (DIAP) Conference
February 16–18, 2006 • Savannah, GA

PoM Advanced Workshop
February 20–21, 2006 • Pittsburgh, PA

Lilly Conference on Theological Research
February 24–26, 2006 • Pittsburgh, PA

Biennial Meeting of the Association and the Commission

June 24–26, 2006
(Saturday–Monday)

Hyatt Regency McCormick Place

2233 S. Martin Luther King Drive
Chicago, Illinois

The Biennial Meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, June 24, and will conclude by noon Monday, June 26.

Registration materials will be mailed to the offices of the chief administrative and chief academic officers in March 2006. When registration materials are mailed, there will be a link on the ATS website to make hotel reservations online at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place for the ATS group rate of US$149 per night.

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