

Educational Models and Practices in Theological Education

Graduate Professional Educators Study Group Report

The **Graduate Professional Educators Study Group** met in April and October of 2018 to discuss matters of graduate education in the professions, examining how graduate professional education might inform graduate theological education.

Graduate Professional Educators Study Group (October 2018 meeting)

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Executive Summary

Traditionally, professions have served the public good. In a society that is changing, what role do the professions still hold? How might insights about graduate professional education inform graduate theological education?

The goal of the second meeting was to focus on strategies and the future of the disciplines: to explore particular strategies employed to address challenges and embrace opportunities, and to explore the future prospects of education in the professions. Prior to meeting, the group read selections of Carnegie publications on “Educating for the Professions.”

Guiding questions were:

- The Carnegie studies of the professions a few years ago identified “signature pedagogies” for different professions. What are the “signature pedagogies” in your discipline? Have they changed? If so, how?
- How have educational models and practices in your discipline adapted to new realities? For example: admission requirements, course delivery methods, degree duration, schedule and calendar modifications, alternative tuition/fee structures, educational partnerships, development of programs to serve particular constituencies.
- Has the faculty role changed? Pedagogy? Assessment? Status (e.g., tenure)?
- Have accrediting agencies and standards of accreditation changed over time?
- From what you have heard and learned through this project, what recommendations do you have about theological education?

Discussion focused on:

- **Signature pedagogies.** While core courses are taught in classroom lectures, onsite experience is gaining an increasingly important role in shaping graduate students as professionals. Clinicals, bedside rounds, legal residencies, adult learning strategies, and experiential learning are crucial to graduate professional education.
- **Professional identity.** Graduate professional programs are forming the professional identities of their students, not only in skill, but also in character, with modeling, reflective writing, peer feedback, and learning environments playing an increasingly important role.
- **Adapting to change.** Revenue is driving changes in enrollment and tuition. Title II funds [for teacher training], international enrollment, and out-of-state enrollment are all part of the funding model for graduate programs.
- **Faculty.** Adjuncts, often practitioners in the field, play a crucial role in educating students in the professions. Ideally, professional programs have a mix of research and applied faculty, with parallel professional tracks. Universities privilege research, yet applied learning is essential to graduate professional education. The clinical, experiential role has risen in importance in professional curricula. Schools need professional pathways for their clinical faculty.

- **Accreditation.** Accreditation provides data and narratives that faculty can use as vehicles for institutional change. However, accreditation should be flexible enough to allow graduate schools to innovate and respond to changing student needs and emerging markets, so that schools can experiment, within reason, as long as the product is still excellent.
- **The common good.** Society has changed with the democratization of knowledge. Given everything that has changed, what role do the professions continue to play in society, in holding the social fabric together?
- **A case study: the opioid crisis.** Colleagues looked together at the opioid crisis, discussing how each of their professions is responding to it. Law is focused less on criminal justice and more on treatment. In education and social work, teaching time is spent on addiction and abuse at the individual, family, and societal levels. Medicine is changing how pain management is taught.
- **Reflections on next steps moving forward.** How might the professions convene, and contribute to, conversations about the common good in public discourse? We need to gather a diverse group of people as part of any discourse on the common good, bringing people together in a community to discuss values we all share, regardless of differences. An ecumenical organization, like ATS, which convenes diverse voices to pursue shared goals, may have the capacity to bring people together in conversations that address the common good.
- **Recommendations for theological education.** Theological degree programs would benefit from early field education that integrates theory and practice from the outset. Theological education is well-positioned to be a thought leader about the public good, provisionally and aspirationally, partnering with the professions to consider how the professions can work toward the public good.

Signature pedagogies

What are the signature pedagogies in your disciplines? Have they changed? If so, how?

Law: In their first year, students are reading and reciting cases. They are being broken down by a process that releases them from their biases and reliance on making intuitive judgements. It is a painful process, learning that you cannot rely on your personal judgement, that you have to explain your decisions to others, and that intuition doesn't always get you to the right decision. We have changed how we structure the classroom situation socially. Fifty years ago, law school was more hierarchical, shaming, and male. We have modified the Socratic method over the years, but we also realize it has features that are core to the process. It is still a classroom-based process, often with one lecturer to 150 students. In law school, we have to take incoming students and form them into people who can go through the law program.

There was a discussion of reducing the number of years in law school, but employers do not approve of it. Now, we are working with employers to create legal residencies that introduce students to unique aspects of the law. The residency is a training experience, with lower compensation, so employers are happy with it, and new ideas are emerging. We get to

introduce students to the more practical issues, and students get to have a supervised experience.

Education: Traditionally, graduate education tended to follow K-12 models; however, our approaches have improved in the past 30 years, focused more on adult learning principles. The number of students who want a teaching certificate has decreased, while requirements for teaching certificates continue to increase. We are seeing the effect of alternative entry points into education. The master's degree is an expensive credential, and the pressures of accreditation and licensure demands are considerable. Education is expensive, and price influences who enters teaching and how long they stay. Teaching is not a highly profitable field, and, as an institution, we have to be aware of this reality.

Social Work: In Social Work, the signature pedagogy is field education. For our master's degree, we require 1,050 hours of practicum field work, which begins immediately. In the first week of school, you walk into your field education, as prescribed by our accreditation standards. Students are clumsy at first, but with a cadre of supervisors, it is a good model. Our field education is overseen by clinical, non-tenured faculty who have significant experience in the field.

Medicine: Bedside rounds are the signature pedagogy for physicians in the hospital, with patient presentation, including giving an update on status, discussing the underlying science, and coming up with an assessment and a plan. Medical students tend to be on the outside of the circle, and as they progress in expertise, they move toward the center. We are using the framework that the team is increasingly inter-professional, including nursing and pharmacy. Now, students are gaining some authentic experience from the start. You get into the clinics within the first month of medical school, and by the second year, you are in clinical training. In bedside rounds, there is some imparting of deportment and role modeling, demonstrating expectations of how to behave. However, the vast majority of medicine is now practiced in outpatient settings.

Health humanities: There is a modest clinical introduction in the first year of health humanities. We are moving toward a systems approach to focus on organs, reducing the amount of pure science. Pure science is reduced in the first year and moved to later in the curriculum. In medical school, there is an increase in simulation with computer models and mannequins. There is one part of the simulation students prepare for, and another part that is a surprise. We are not looking just at medical problems, but at context, with a shift toward more active learning. Lecture time is getting somewhat reduced and is moving toward problem-based learning and team-based learning, with a modest move toward ethics and psychology. In the Transformation of Medical Education paradigm, students enroll out of high school, reducing their education from 8 years to 6-7 years, and getting into medical school faster.

Theology: Early field education is a growing trend in theological schools, and many incoming students are already in active ministry. The clinical-academic tension takes place in theological schools too. Environment is part of the formation. In theology, 50% of graduates are serving in communities of faith, but 50% are serving in other environments, including ministries apart

from congregations, nonprofits, community organizations, and in other professions informed by their theological studies.

Professional Identity

How do your disciplines define “profession”? What makes a particular field a profession?

A profession could be defined as a “specialized knowledge for the good of society and self-regulation.” Graduate schools are integral to the professions, but they do not define them. We cannot require professional education. Someone else requires it and then turns to us to provide it. When a group is professional, they are held to a higher standard, and it is easier to understand their behavior, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and where the boundaries are. A profession is the gatekeeper to a certain body of information. The gatekeeping aspect of the professions has changed with market forces.

Part of the definition of the professions is that we all have internal and external accountability. Licensing and codes of ethics are part of the definition. Are there professions that are not licensed? There is usually a code of conduct or a code of ethics in the professions, as with law enforcement. Does confidentiality define the professions? In poker, or politics, lying may be acceptable, but it is a huge violation if a doctor, pastor, lawyer, or therapist is dishonest. The professions are supposed to serve. In not revealing a confession, for example, a pastor may have to make a sacrifice, even go to jail. If confidentiality is not upheld, people have nowhere to turn in crisis.

Many have pushed back on the term “professionalized” clergy. There is a problem with professionalizing what clergy do. At one time, there were three professions: clergy, law, and medicine. There is a certain baggage that comes along with professionalization, an external, moderating set of principles superimposed as a clerical paradigm, and yet, to be respectable in society, clergy sense the need to professionalize. Internally, there was a move to becoming more professional in theology, reflected in the nomenclature of degrees. However, now we are moving away from professional language toward vocational and formational language. In theology, people outside the clergy accord it recognition, so it is regulated not just by the professional members, but by society. Clergy identity is recognized externally, not solely by the profession.

What, in the professions, should not change, whatever else changes?

The professions have a self-awareness of their responsibility to the public. The knowledge and skills part can be negotiated. The one thing we would not want to give up is character and passion. In a recent ATS meeting, three key leaders in theological education were asked to address: “in the midst of all that’s changing, what must not be lost?” All spoke of human qualities: preparing people of mercy, who are caring, who hope in a time of fear and conflict. Faith, hope, and love, essentially. It was striking that they did not talk about the educational practices, credit hours, faculty structures, and skills, but rather matters of character.

How does the word *formation* strike you and your colleagues?

Law: There are habits of mind that lawyers value, certain standards that lawyers in their public roles must adhere to. As a Jesuit school, character is aligned with the law, but for others, possibly not. How long have we tolerated horrific faculty members because they contribute great journal articles? We still want to encourage technical excellence at the highest level.

Students have figured out that law is still hierarchical, and that they need to earn A grades in their first-year courses to land a \$200,000 per year job. The market still tells students they must do very well in the first year, despite what we as law schools emphasize internally. However, C students often are extraordinary lawyers. They will say, while giving a major gift to the school, “just so you know, I did not do very well in law school, but here is a million dollar gift.”

For first-year law students, we bring in the Character and Fitness committee of Massachusetts, and they tell students, “these are the things that come up in the bar; assess yourself.” Issues can be overcome if you’re honest about them. We are teaching students to be honest and forthright, and that as a professional, they have to model certain behavior. The bar and accreditation give us a helpful trigger for formation. In law, we have to make a character and fitness assessment, and we can tell the bar examiners that a particular student is an unpleasant person. A student with issues will have had interactions with law school administrators. Based on our judgement, our input may prevent someone from taking the bar.

Education: We bristle somewhat at the word “character.” Character is not typically seen as an outcome. However, there is a growing interest in character from accreditation. The old model of separating character from skills is not as pervasive anymore. The challenge is that as a scientist, my professional identity is dominated by who I am as a scientist, and how I can engage as a scientist, rather than how I can be empathetic. We are rewarded for the more practical. We are still doing skill training, yet, technical excellence cannot be so narrowly defined; it is multifaceted. How do you measure formation? We sit on this interesting space of social science, and the humanities or sciences. How can we avoid graduating a straight-A student who is a jerk? Data are helpful to assess a student’s fit empirically. Data give us another way to make a decision about a student’s more complete formation.

Social Work: We can teach knowledge and skills, but disposition and character may be harder to teach. Schools have sometimes been sued for dismissing students over character issues.

Medicine: In a network of seven schools that we are part of, there are three C’s of focus: caring, confidence, and competence. Ethics and practices are part of the caring focus. A workgroup came up with a definition of character, asking, “is character something immutable, something you’re born with?” We are trying to capture some of the situational aspects of medicine. Can you be a good doctor without good character? Thirty percent of respondents to a recent survey felt you could, and this result is shocking. Character has to be integrated. If a surgeon is excellent but has a horrible bedside manner and says unhelpful things post-surgery, this is a problem. The assumption that character and competence cannot coexist is false. It is not okay to be a jerk because you are a good surgeon. Some excellent surgeons have been fired because they

were nasty. There was a resident who recently was dismissed from medical school for berating an Uber driver.

We are moving away from the compartmentalization of knowing first and doing second. In the professionalism movement of 1990s and 2000s, you built a stronger person, and that was the answer. Now, we are increasingly aware that the environment is important to support students. In medicine, 10-15% of students are PhD students doing straight research programs. The others, who will be doing clinical work, are not being fully prepared by medical schools. We can get an expectation of character from our accreditation agencies, and we have dismissed students based on character issues. Step one of medical school exams focuses on basic sciences, and it remains one of the basic screenings for medical school acceptance. Because of its objectivity, given the number of applications, it provides an easy comparison. Yet, in the long run, it does not ultimately align with holistic performance.

Health humanities: Student journals reflect burnout, a decline in empathy, and a broken healthcare system. The recommended answer for student stress is always “yoga,” but yoga is not the answer, because it is an *individual* solution to a *systemic* problem. In family medicine, a student was conducting a foot exam for diabetes. The attending physician told him, “do not worry about the foot exam, we cannot bill for that.” This advice was the opposite of formation. It is hard to control for this problem: we have 1,300 faculty and such a high faculty turnover rate. Someone gets mad and leaves for another school.

Law: We have had a tendency to privilege intellectual formation, to cultivate the habits of mind, certain ways of thinking, intellectual ways of being, that mark a successful lawyer. However, we have come to understand that a broader sense of formation is important, for a richer notion of formation. More humanistic skills are driving success in the profession: how to cultivate clients, adjust to the economy, and build a business. Every profession tends to elevate skill as the primary marker, but breaking that paradigm apart, in the context of a professional school, is critical to seeing other ways of being en route to success. We sense that students come to our school because of its reputation for a communitarian, humanistic ethos. Our students are known for being nice to each other. We are known for our alumni network, for a core set of values we try to emphasize, and for graduates who say they enjoyed law school and who maintain relationships after law school. We are looking at other ways of signaling intelligence, of being valued as leaders. Employers say our graduates have a fuller package. We do not want to fully acknowledge this truth, but it is there. Is the person who makes our law review different now? Law schools have recognized that grades are not the only indicator of success. Grades are still important, but we have seen a more diverse picture emerge in the past 10-20 years.

Education: Integrating is a challenge, because it requires integration with the faculty. There are challenges in terms of the stranglehold we academics have on *content*, on including as much material in a course as possible. The dominance of lecture in the sciences is difficult to undermine. Most studies will show that students are better prepared academically by peer learning, teamwork, and application. The educational community has to be released from discrete departments and solely content-focused knowledge, and formative education has to engage new realities. A standalone institution can teach self-reflection in a substantive way, encouraging students to think about “what am I good at, what brings me joy, and what does the

world want me to do?" In the mid-1980s, some universities engaged an interdisciplinary model as a way to bring the sciences into the center of the conversation, but this model has not really affected the science curriculum. In biology and chemistry, we see some melding across the disciplines. Part of what we do is model ways of thinking; we model good research and good teaching. However, professors, as knowledge brokers, are focused on their fields. We are not trained to think in any other way.

Social Work: In our formation, the principle organizing value is social justice, and we look at everything through that lens: curriculum, equity, inclusion, access, gender, socioeconomics, and race. We have a tension between evidence-based practice and practical wisdom. How can we emphasize both? We stress professional humility as part of our value system, the idea that we can always learn new things and grow, yet there are structural and systemic barriers to this kind of growth and learning. Funding is driven by evidence-based outcomes, promotion, and tenure. The wisdom drive is invaluable, but it is in tension with "what can we show?"

Medicine: A greater emphasis on the humanities in our curriculum began in the 1960s, and this emphasis became more esteemed in the 1990s. Emphasizing the humanities still is not mainstream, and we fight for the mentality of students. The real business of medicine is patient care, as part of professional identity, and the integration of all the various streams together: policy, quality, safety, and patient care.

Health humanities: In medical ethics, the core terms are moral imagination, empathy, compassion, and self-reflection. We want doctors who embody these characteristics. Rita Charon, a general internist and literary scholar at Columbia University, wrote *Narrative Medicine*, and since the 1970s, we have been teaching with reflective writing about meaningful patient interactions, e.g., "write about a time you have been a healer. Write about a time when you have been the cause of harm." We integrate reflective writing into the classroom. In an hour, we do reflective writing right then and there, and we process the writing with students in a separate hour. Students write about an encounter in family medicine from the patient's point of view, and the facilitator chooses three or four of the best reflections and reads them to the class. Other strategies include reading pictographs on mental illness, cancer, or heart attacks. If a department uses these approaches intentionally, it helps medical students. A particularly troubling medical case will involve nurses, residents, and doctors in a panel to go over the case, with a chaplain leading the discussion. Clinicians are committed to this kind of work, to bringing up hard issues on clinical rounds, and then, within the required medical education, discussing the cases. In our institution, there is a movement toward the inter-professional, and because medicine is on board with this idea, it gets more traction, and social-work faculty have an equal voice on committees.

Theology: The kind of wisdom we are trying to nurture in the professions does not disregard tradition; it sees things in a different way, as guided by experience. In the film *Sully*, at the hearings of the National Transportation Safety Board, the pilot and co-pilot were asked whether they followed the emergency procedures checklist. The answer was, no, that it was ignored and decisions were made on the basis of wisdom and experience from decades of flying. Computer simulations initially contradicted the pilots, but ultimately, they were proved accurate in their assessment of the situation.

This wisdom is of the kind in which character is learned indirectly, in terms of disposition and habits that are practiced, involving intentional work that has reached the point of instinctive reaction, of wisdom. The only place some students deal with such intentional formation is athletics, where they are willing to do anything to play football, for example, so they engage certain practices, over and over. The desert monks taught the same thing. This wisdom involves connatural knowing, existence education, a way to be, that is not content simply to know. We engage in direct communication, but indirect communication is equally important. I can pass on knowledge as an artifact. I cannot pass a “way to be” as an artifact; it has to be passed from one person to another. With learning outcomes, we are asked to educate our students. The director of Gallup was asked the “primary variable for student retention,” and he said, if a student could find one person in the institution who cared, retention increased. Formation asks teachers to be human. Those of us in faith-based institutions, which are mission driven, have permission to do the things we are talking about. In some fields, however, integration is still a constant challenge. Scientists might think self-assessment is only for the humanities, and that we cannot give up an hour of our curriculum to it.

When it comes to funding, metrics often are treated as a good unto themselves, and this reality is addressed in *The Tyranny of Metrics* by Jerry Muller. In some cases, if we were to ask an educator, “how do you know this particular approach is good?” the answer would be, “because I’ve been alive for 50 years.” We could conduct a study to show an outcome of the approach, but with the same money, we could just implement the approach. Program evaluation can be heavy-handed, creating an oppressive dynamic, or it can be about learning: “we thought it was great, then we figured out x, y, z didn’t work, but if we hadn’t tried, we wouldn’t have known.” How do we keep humanity and learning in the professions? This question forms a significant component of our work. We need institutions, yet we also need to manage them and keep them human.

Adaptations in Education Models and Practices

How have your educational models and practices adapted to new realities?

Revenue generation drives much of how our educational models and practices adapt and change. Graduate programs might admit fewer students and fund them at a higher level. It might be more helpful, revenue-wise, to give seats in courses to other colleges and schools, for cost-sharing, than to new students. State schools increase their out-of-state enrollment, because they can increase tuition significantly. In schools with many Visa internationals, who are really motivated, these students are part of the funding model. Title II monies also generate revenue. Some public universities function, in many ways, like a private school. In Texas, for example, state schools receive 3-4% from the state, while some private institutions receive more funding.

Medicine: Our tuition is not enough to pay for everything we need to do. Faculty have productivity pressure to support themselves, and some medical schools are competing for faculty. I had a conversation last week with the vice-chair to name a course director of record for orthopedics, and the vice-chair said, “we do not have time to do this, unless you compensate us at a higher level.” We have students who want to take a course in orthopedic surgery and

cannot, and it is not even a matter of funding; there simply is not time. It is impossible to extricate this issue from the healthcare finance system of which doctors are a part.

Theology: We accept that the business model for a theological education does not work, and we go from there. Finances are a huge challenge. Schools need financial expertise, and the president needs to be a fundraiser. The median headcount for ATS member schools is around 145. They are small, complex institutions, requiring faculty to cover all the disciplines and administration. Denominational support has declined dramatically and varies by ecclesial tradition. If 25-35% of a theological school is funded by a denomination, that is pretty good. We have loosely affiliated schools, and denominations are suffering. In independent evangelical denominations, the valuation of theological education varies. About 40% of our institutions are embedded, and 60% are standalone. The culture of an embedded school is very different from that of a standalone seminary. Some Lutheran and Jesuit seminaries have moved into Lutheran and Jesuit colleges. We have to balance return on investment vs. return on mission. Online education and partnerships are key and can help keep costs down.

What changes have you made to your enrollment practices?

Law: Our schools must demonstrate standards for admitting students, through standardized tests, that they are capable of doing law school work. When schools begin scrambling for admissions, they accept the GRE instead of the LSAT. The ABA said that no other test but the LSAT had been validated, so it began giving exceptions to the top schools. There is a proposal now, which is more general, that schools have to demonstrate that a test is “predictive for student success.” Over time, market pressures to attract more students put pressure on accreditation exceptions and led to an eventual revision of the standards.

Social Work: We have waived the GRE requirement, as it is not predictive of performance in social work school, and most of the top 25 schools in the U.S. do not require it. We have professors teaching both master’s and PhD students in the same course. It stretches the instructor to teach a broader group of students.

Theology: Theological schools are allowed to admit as many as 15% non-baccalaureate-degree-holding students. Most of our member schools would admit these students. There is push among some member schools to expand that allowance. Much of this push has to do with access, especially in Spanish-speaking communities. For people who are already in ministry, we need to assess the learning they already have.

Has the demographic profile of your students changed dramatically?

Education: There is a correlative relationship between selectivity and minority enrollment.

Social work: Social work is more diverse in student population than the other disciplines. Our enrollment is about 30% minority. Diversity follows funding.

Health Humanities: Just to get to medical school, you have to be so privileged. We have so few underrepresented minorities.

Medicine: Deliberate recruiting has led to an increased enrollment from socioeconomically disadvantaged students. We have a pipeline program with Berea College, with all economically disadvantaged students.

Theology: We have become more ethnically diverse. Also, in Catholic schools, many lay women now earn PhDs, and we have a lot of great women faculty. As there are fewer and fewer priests it is lay people, including women, who are doing significant pastoral work.

Faculty

Are your faculty trained like they were 15 years ago, in terms of the requirements you put in a job ad?

Law: We have the same ad, but the people coming in are totally different. It is getting harder to get into the academy. It is still viewed as a highly desirable job. It pays well, and it is high status. People are adding credentials in the hopes of being captured. You get top grades, you may go out into a very high status job, then you go back and get a PhD, then clerk for a federal judge. You used to do one of these things; now you might do all of them. We still get really bright, highly motivated people who want to teach.

Education: With incoming faculty, technology is a given, so software and online tools are easy for them. Incoming assistant professors have a sense that their profession is not all of their identity. They think of their lives as a whole. They have a very different understanding of life, profession, and home.

Has the relationship between professional practice and academic hiring changed?

Law: The coin of the realm in the academy is, "did you clerk for a federal circuit judge?" but we cannot use this criterion as a universal proxy for excellence. There is another faculty hiring profile. It is necessary to hire faculty who can do different things well. The signature pedagogies in the first year are populated by full-time faculty teaching the required courses. However, cyber security, for example, is taught by adjuncts, and they may become tenure track faculty one day. In specialized areas, we want someone teaching it who does it all the time. We have 55 full-time faculty and 80 adjuncts. We can use the adjunct as a way of giving a resume credential to a practitioner for a modest sum of \$5,000. Adjuncting is a way we engage the profession, and it keeps us in touch with people at the top of the profession. We need their skills, and they need our credentials. People complain about the cost of education, but employers are not willing to pay for training. Over the years, the clinical and experiential role in the law curriculum has risen in importance. We need to create tenure tracks for clinical faculty to have a professional pathway, a reasonable track, and some sort of sabbatical.

Education: I spent a lot of time orienting my faculty search committees that we are not simply replicating the norm. If we are going to diversify the faculty, we have to look beyond the norm. Faculty respond well to orientation. Show faculty five CVs and ask, how would you identify

these potential faculty? In applied psychology, accreditation requires licensed professionals involved in clinical education. Now, there is a complement of adjuncts to provide field experience and licensure that researchers cannot provide, because they have not practiced for 20 years.

Adjuncts have limited engagement with student life, and this minimal engagement is a real concern. With the “adjunctification” of faculty who are not full-time, duties fall on the fewer full-time faculty who are left. When you think about the time it takes to do formational things, it falls on fewer people, who are doing fairly labor-intensive work.

Social Work: There is a hierarchy. Schools hire faculty in a research field, and they can also teach the applied courses. However, the hierarchical reality of field education, in a research university, is the bifurcation of research and practice faculty. Clinical faculty do a lot of the heavy lifting, yet they are underpaid and underappreciated, creating a tension. Our signature pedagogy is field education, but the research university does not really value it. We are trying to help tenure committees understand that we could not deliver on our mission without clinical faculty. The coin of the realm in the university is research, yet we are charged with teaching clinical. Change to this status quo involves cultural aspects that need attention, such as the re-education of the executive committee, which makes recommendations to the Dean. Tenure always involves a complicated conversation. A research university is vast, with people plugging in from many diverse perspectives, and we have to re-educate people on why clinical experience is valuable and what lasting impact a clinician is having.

We require full-time faculty to teach one course, with the hope that they can “buy out” of teaching other courses, and the adjuncts parachute in to teach. Research pays for things we need, so we pay faculty not to teach. We also have to keep a watch on interdisciplinarity; we hired five new faculty last spring, and four had to have social work degrees.

Medicine: Faculty tracks vary so much from school to school. We have three position tracks: tenure, clinician educators, and pure clinicians, who sometimes refer to themselves as blue collar workers. There is a lot of teaching with clinical, yet, in a research university, research determines your value. Promotion and raises may not be aligned. The sense is that frontline faculty do feel like second class citizens. Certain awards are available only in the tenure track. Sabbatical is not usually available to clinical faculty. Funding determines this reality. People who want to be educators are getting education degrees. We have had maybe six medical students who have completed teaching certificates with Peabody College. The extra credential is an area of expertise.

Health Humanities: Jumping straight from college to a PhD program, with no practical experience, is a problem.

Theology: For a long time, scholars in theological institutions were not seen as scholars. In the push to legitimize theology, the pendulum may have swung a little too far. For many schools advertising for a faculty position, a Harvard PhD means more than pastoral experience. A strong ethos in seminaries is the value on research. Dr. Daniel Aleshire, retired Executive Director of ATS, used to say, “is ATS about the church or the academy? I am telling you, ATS is at least 51% about the church.” That is where he weighed in on it. Yet, the valuing of the academy is really high in ATS circles. There are faculty who have not held a pastoral role.

Faculty are self-perpetuating, and they hire themselves; the MDiv is desirable but not necessary. Yet, theological education comes down to mission. You do not need 10 quarterbacks; build a team of faculty.

There is some experimentation with mentoring and competency-based models, which are best learned with a mentor onsite, in a version of the apprenticeship model. These new models are part of a broader trend toward contextualization, to get the education happening where the ministry is happening. ATS has member schools, motivated by financial realities, that have relocated to or otherwise connected to congregations. There is a lot of energy around the apprenticeship model, arguing for a more decentralized seminary experience, of apprenticing with pastors while taking courses. In the past, seminaries mostly prepared people for pastoral ministry, but much has changed. In the midst of all this change, what is a seminary? You get the intellectual foundation, but shadowing another pastor is probably the best way to train. The economic piece of training is hard to work out.

Accreditation

Have your agencies and standards of accreditation changed over time?

Law: The American Bar Association (ABA) is revising accreditation standards. Law schools began pushing back on the accretion of standards, exceptions, and expenses. We are paring down the standards, and we are becoming more data-driven and outcomes-focused. We have moved to a 10-year accreditation cycle. Law schools do not have to draft self-studies anymore. Now, law schools are required only to report on a general questionnaire, instead of having a team evaluation visit. Accreditation is focused on whether schools meet objective standards, and any visiting evaluation team is looking for confirmation that the data submitted is correct. Bar passage has been dropping, so now, we are assessing learning outcomes. Recently, 95% of law schools were approved as meeting accreditation standards. A small number of schools have outcome-related issues. Online submission flags our data automatically, so we can identify problems. The Association of American Law Schools (AALS) is always a partner on the accreditation team and does the values-driven work to make sure certain academic values are being met. The Associate Dean for Administration runs data collection, as provided by the individual areas of the institution. Accreditation ensures that law schools are meeting certain objectives, that students can pass the bar. Accreditors are protecting students, as market regulators, ensuring that schools are delivering on what they promise.

In an institutional crisis, accreditation is slow at responding. Who are our accreditation standards designed to serve? Do we want our institutions to be adaptive? In some cases, our hands are tied, with no way to make quick movements without approval from ossified, over-staffed institutions. If exceptions are made, other schools complain, “why do they get to do this, and we do not?” When exceptions start to swallow up the rules, what is the rule trying to accomplish? How specific should our standards be? They should allow for flexibility: not too rigid, but not too loose, not a free-for-all. We are educating people to pass the bar and become lawyers. Strategic planning could fulfill some of the self-reflection aspects of accreditation.

Education: In teaching, we spend an inordinate amount of time on accreditation from several different accrediting bodies, and there is always an accreditation process going on. Every semester, we are doing an accreditation. The university provides us with some data, but a faculty member has to take charge of it. There is significant redundancy in our departmental reviews, which are outcomes-based and metrics-focused. It takes a lot of work to get good data from the university. We took it upon ourselves to gather the data useful to us, and data-gathering requires a lot of work. We have several masters: national, regional, and state, determining the work we have to do in assessment, and taking away from the central mission of what we are asking faculty to do. We have a full-time person who does accreditation and assessment.

We created external accountability to show the public we are legitimate, but accreditation agencies are not nimble, and our institutions cannot pivot or innovate in our credit structure. We are integrated into the social fabric, and everyone in the social fabric feels they have a stake in what we do. We get intoxicated by metrics that do not allow for nuance or flexibility. Accreditation is more focused on compliance, and we say “grab your stuff” for data reporting to the accreditors. Accreditation is overwhelming, resource-intensive, and frustrating. We have 12-15 speciality accreditations. Some are very positive and helpful, while others inflict pain. We are driven by legislation and the state Board of Education, which intentionally put on burdensome restrictions. Self-reflection takes place more in our university review process. We have an increased interest in outcomes beyond placement, which gets at graduate satisfaction.

Social Work: The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) provides for accreditation, and our accreditation is handled by the university, which is under-resourced. We report data ongoing, with ongoing assessment, so we do not have to build new scaffolding for it every time we are evaluated. Culturally, we have come to believe there is value to ongoing assessment. One of my goals has been to minimize the work of faculty, while making sure the work they do is really important. We have a competency-based curriculum, which is not overly prescriptive in general. Still, accreditation can be fairly granular in terms of what is asked for. CSWE-accredited schools are pretty uniform. There are ongoing attempts to provide more innovation. We have two faculty who spearhead the 8-year accreditation, and they receive course-release compensation. We put a lot of resources into the scaffolding for accreditation, and this approach has worked well. Accreditation is a lot of work. Faculty are siloed due to research and other requirements, focusing them on more narrow reporting. The size and ethos of a school makes a difference. Smaller programs are not as resource rich, and they say accreditation is a tremendous burden. To the extent you can minimize the work on faculty, yet ask them for appropriate input, the easier accreditation is.

Medicine: Accreditation drives postgraduate education. In medicine, we have three accrediting bodies. All three are undergoing a revision of standards. We are already preparing for our 2021 accreditation visit, and it is really onerous, covering institution, governance, faculty affairs, infrastructure, finances, curriculum, student affairs, career counseling, admissions, student wellness, and student life. A database is included as part of our self-study, which totals 300-400 pages, and then the self-study is condensed into an institutional self-study report of 35 pages. Accreditation has become higher-stakes recently, with higher-level probations recently related to governance, curriculum, and learning environments. Accreditation holds medical schools to

very high standards. All U.S. medical schools provide good education because of accreditation, which is inordinately painful.

Our database does not let us demonstrate innovation; it is structured around a classic model. There is not a way of showing in the database what we are doing with our curriculum, and we are unable to innovate easily, because we do not know how accreditors are going to respond to innovations. How do we demonstrate to visiting teams what we are doing and its effectiveness?

There is a lot of narrative, which is a good way to get at some things we want to show. Some things are hard to measure, yet are still really important. Faculty might say, "It is not our fault that we humiliated students," but because of accreditation, we can reply, "yes, but we are going to get cited."

Theology: The default for accreditation in theology has been the freestanding school, and embedded schools adapt to the standalone paradigm. Adjustment has become a major part of the accreditation ethos. Schools are allowed to craft petitions for an exception or experiment. The role of narrative is still important as one way of representing the depth of an institution. All the things we have been talking about are true: we can become intoxicated by metrics, yet education is also about character. The self-study is a forced occasion for serious reflection: are we living up to our mission? It is good for us to do that narrative thinking. Our standards balance compliance, meeting certain minimums, with aspiration, how we can become the best school we can be. We hope to retain this balance as we redevelop our standards.

Case Study in the Professions: The opioid crisis

What changes are you observing, in your graduate programs, related to the opioid crisis?

Law: We are now thinking about these problems less in the criminal justice space and more in the treatment space. We have long argued that criminal justice is a bad response to the drug problem. We are advising state legislatures and police departments about legal reforms they might want to consider to bring drug abuse issues out of the legal system and into treatment.

Education: The crisis has changed our curriculum, especially in mental health counseling. Our faculty now include case studies, new readings, or new activities in the curriculum covering how to approach children's learning, family concerns, and school training. At the higher education level, we are starting to see an increase in opioid use among students, and we are changing how we train administrators to deal with opioid use.

Social Work: In response to the opioid crisis, more of our teaching time is spent in the curriculum on responding to opioid addiction and abuse, at the individual, family, and societal levels.

Medicine: In looking at how we teach pain management, the data are pretty conclusive that 85% of opioid addicts began with medication, sometimes with someone else's prescription. We are gaining a new understanding about pain pathways and treatment. Continuing education of physicians is challenging. We have a captive audience in our medical students, but current practice habits are more challenging. We are focusing on the neurobiology of addiction, how to

treat neonatal abstinence syndrome, with babies born addicted, who are going back into home environments, to ensure they are safe. The opioid crisis is creating a huge burden on the entire healthcare system. An addicted anesthesiologist might save a little bit of medication back, and one anesthesiologist shocked me by being addicted to Fentanyl. You take the first dose, and you know you're addicted. A root cause is a disruption of community life in small Appalachian towns, which were heavily reliant on manufacturing, creating a predisposing factor in the Ohio River valley, where jobs were dependent on the coal industry. Changes in society have had a socioeconomic impact on families, and there is a sense about the need to get back to community life.

Health Humanities: We are focusing on the appropriate management of pain. We gave medical students five scenarios, asking, "would you prescribe opioids or not?" It was a good exercise. We are still somewhat divorced from the larger context and the bigger problems leading to opioid abuse. Medicine is being reactive, at the end. Sometimes physicians get addicted themselves, taking pills from patients. The undergrad college is educating faculty and staff about the opioid crisis in the health services area. The opioid crisis has spurred conversations about spirituality in medicine, the insights in neuroscience, and how religion and spirituality play a role.

Have you been in cross-disciplinary conversations about the opioid crisis?

Education: We have the advantage of being able to cross fields in public health. It is an ecology of a social problem; it is the social condition that gets people to opioid addiction. We have our own researchers on the topic, and we are optimistic about working together across disciplines, yet, sometimes we run up against disciplinary barriers.

Medicine: In Tennessee, the governor really took on the opioid crisis this year and assembled an inter-professional panel to create a standard curriculum across disciplines. The panel worked with the legislature to come up with laws about how physicians prescribe, and these laws were enacted in July. However, the new laws had an unintended result. If you give a half-filled prescription, you cannot get paid, so primary care doctors are sending patients to a pain clinic, and they are getting pushed out to the street. We have to be thinking 2-3 steps down the road when we are working across disciplines to create policy.

Theology: Is there a way to encourage students to network with other professions: social workers and medical professionals? In pastoral care, there is a whole family system out there. The opioid crisis reveals, once again, just how interconnected the professions have to be. It is a pretty significant point drilled into seminarians to refer out addiction treatment. There are aspects of addiction that pastoral care cannot handle. Kathleen Norris wrote *Acedia & Me*. She recognizes, in dealing with her own husband's addiction, that it is a spiritual issue, and it is also a clinical depression issue. Which is which, and how do the roles come together? This interaction is significant to pastoral care.

Professions for the common good

How are the professions important to the social fabric?

There is a fundamental public good that professionals hold for the rest of us. We now have the democratization of knowledge, available to everyone, where professionals are translating their expertise for the public. Yet, there is a combination of skill and ethics that define the professional, so that you can rely on a professional, because of the profession. Some will fail, but generally, the profession is reliable.

Currently, we have a suspicion of expertise, yet professions are integral to the social fabric. As Chris Rock commented, people have said that most police officers are good, and that there are just a few bad apples, but what about airplane pilots? What happens if there are a few bad apples among airplane pilots? What does it take for a cohesive fabric not to be ripped apart? Levels of trust have been diminished.

The social fabric question includes financial realities. When we think about the public good, cost is part of the analysis. Practical economic factors come into play. People with the resources are willing to pay a premium for the professional expertise we all want. The engagement of a professional is also relational. The currency is *trust*. Now, unfortunately, often the relationship is not as important as the convenience, that I can find what I need immediately; it is more transactional.

In higher education, we need to look at the cost of professional education and the return on investment. In Social Work, graduates have to take a second job to pay loans for tuition, even for an endowed state school. Lawyers have an investment in doing things a certain way, for monetary reasons, but these ways have to change. There is a need to push certain legal work down into the public sector, where the compensation is less, but that is where the need is.

In *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (2006), pastoral imagination is an organizing theme throughout. The idea of educating the imagination is fascinating. Moral imagination relates to empathy, to putting yourself in the place of the patient, for example. Moral imagination is central and core to ethics. Theological students are now inundated with information: perhaps overfed but undernourished. There was a time when the value of theological education was accepted, but now, there is a precipitous decline in that appreciation. Yet, the fundamental character of what is needed from clergy is essentially unchanged.

What would a conversation about the public good look like, and how could we facilitate it?

In New England, we still have town meetings, places where people can still get into the same physical space and hash out problems and issues. Something happens when the rabbi, pastor, and priest come to express concerns about an issue; it forces people out of their houses. Going to a meeting, or voting, are counter-cultural now. What can the professions do to repair what we all feel is broken? What are our responsibilities in this situation? If you think of a garden, the roots and soil are interconnected. You take for granted that growth happens, until it doesn't. If

we connect, the ecology starts figuring out how to heal itself. The institutions who support the professions are themselves a lot more fragile. Do we lean into these new realities, as a transition? Do we adapt, or do we resist?

How might we convene a conversation about the common good more broadly, with multiple perspectives?

Conversation about the common good still happens. There are pockets of people who have these kinds of conversations about their communities. A conversation about the common good works in a space where people feel they have an investment and a motivation to see things work. Shared community translates across viewpoints, from farmers to suburbanites. There was a time when the common good was obvious to people across the social spectrum. Our students know we have a role to play in society as professionals, but how to actualize it is challenging, because the world is sending them a very different message: “no one values your expertise.” There is a transitional problem once people emerge into their professional lives. Who are we, and what is our role in society?

What seems to have been lost over the decades is why people go into the professions. You become a doctor, lawyer, or teacher based on deep beliefs. What is the common good that each profession upholds? It is vocationally fruitful to ask again, why did we get into these fields? There is a vacuum right now of moral leadership. Is it a vacuum the professions can fill? Not that we ourselves are the paragons of virtue, but rather, we are saying, we want to be part of the conversation. It is the power of convening at work here.

We need a diverse group of people as part of any conversation about the common good. On our own, we are going to make presumptions that are inaccurate, and our tone deafness has gotten us where we are. One problem is the rural-urban divide. How do we expand the conversation? Some of our issues are regional. At the national level, we lose the local flavor. Scale becomes an issue.

Conversation about the public good is so needed, yet we often do not have the capacity for it. We are so political. The Aspen Institute probably has these conversations, but anyone I can think of would likely be dismissed by one side or another: “they are liberal,” or “they are conservative.”

First-person narrative is a way to bridge the divide: bring people together, and have them tell one another’s stories. How did you come to believe what you do? People discover commonalities, and you can build from that trust. For example, a Muslim woman shares the story of a working class African-American kid. They live in the same neighborhood, and each tells the other’s story. This is when the moment of connection is reached: I have told your story. The idea is that we are not dismissive of one another’s experience. So often, there is dismissiveness on both sides. Maybe it is the next phase of the Carnegie work on the professions; they might have the credibility to convene this conversation among the professions. It is the cultural equivalent of ecumenism.

There was a joint statement, by Cornel West and Robert George, about civil discourse. They disagree with each other on many issues, but they made an eloquent statement expressing strong agreement on the necessity of civil conversation. Who are two people like that who

might resonate more broadly, with disagreement, yet with a shared desire to promote the common good? Who can we look up to who can help us to be aspirational about ourselves? Maybe there needs to be a hero in the room. There are some public intellectuals, such as David Brooks, Arthur Kaplan, Atul Gowande, and Rita Charon. Heroes are not always the experts. The kindling is in the fire pit; maybe we just need a match.

For conversations to take place, there is a certain level of intimacy needed, such as in a town hall. If the professions are a leverage point, because there is a built-in accountability for the common good, what would it take to make this room 100 people? Who are the stakeholders? It may matter less who convenes the conversation than who is invited. We need missing voices, in a very different conversation than what is possible solely with academics. Sometimes, we are part of the problem, and not part of the solution.

Extremes are dominating the discourse. In politics, it was previously the case that once I assume an office, I govern for all, regardless of difference. We find it hard to model that mentality anymore, when we lose that kind of cultural capital. In the professions, you are not choosing candidates; you are modeling. The model has toppled, and now, we have to build it all back.

Leith Anderson, president of the National Association of Evangelicals, recently said: "If I come out for Trump, I can have all the money I want. If I come out against Trump, I can have all the money I want. If I facilitate the membership of the organization, no one will give me a dime." A charitable foundation can be neutral, holding a space authentically for people who need to be in conversation with each other and figure things out. This is the hallmark of foundation work, with ATS and others. Where are the points of leverage, where we could make an investment, or learn something, or start a conversation that leads to something?

Crisis brings communities together, in the energy borne out of pain and suffering. In the wake of recent hurricanes, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush came out with joint statements. Contributing to the public good, for all, becomes the major emphasis of public conversations.

From what you have heard and learned through this project, what recommendations do you have for theological education?

Law: Theological schools could position themselves to be a voice of reason in a culture that has lost its way, with deep theological thinking to root basic values, in cooperation with other institutions. We are in a moment right now where certain basic values are disappearing, and regarding the unspoken sociocultural capital, we have spent it, and we are going into deficit. We cannot assume anymore that people agree on certain ways of being in society, in ways that allow it to function. Basic assumptions about behavior are gone. A deeper crisis is going on in society, and if ever there were a time in our lifetimes, now is the time for thinking through how our institutions can work together, in a healthy way, with stronger ones helping the weaker ones, to have the greatest impact. We cannot be the sole curators of our lives, without input from anyone else. We are reframing our role in community in a way that does not focus solely on the self. People understand their mutual connections, their need for one another.

Education: It would be good to hear, from theological education, how we could construct a definition of communal good, the elements of it: social safety net, education, healthcare, to find a ground zero. How do local organizations form the concept of communal good? We have concepts and ideas, but the boots on the ground, everyday life, is where communal good is lived. There are many people who sacrifice because they have to sacrifice. Moments of communal good have tended to happen when there is an external negative force, like war, or the Great Depression.

Social Work: In terms of the public good, one of the challenges is finding consensus about what it involves. Theological education is well-positioned to be a thought leader about the public good, provisionally and aspirationally, about how we go about getting there, in roles as public intellectuals. We used to value this role in society. For all of us, is there a role, vis-a-vis our professions, to figure out what is a public good. Theological education would benefit from early field work, so that people are interacting, from the very beginning, with the public good.

Medicine: Can we find agreement on what community looks like? Can we come to some reasonable view of what community is? Theological schools can help us answer this question. What would we, as a community, be willing to give, to sacrifice, for the communal good?

Theology: ATS has been called today's most effective ecumenical organization. Every political and theological position is represented around the table. How might the Association work to be a place to get people together to talk in a civil way about essential issues that are not being discussed very effectively anywhere else?

The common good includes health, housing, and the body politic. There are examples of really forward-looking places of worship. How can we affirm and encourage more of this approach? Some are led by neighborhood heroes who say to government, do not talk anymore, do something. Should we engage our places of worship? At many points in our history, churches, synagogues, and mosques have proved to be pivotal places.

ATS convening a conversation with several schools with different views across issues would be quite rich. There is a diversity in ATS, more so than in many other professions. We are trying to achieve a balance between setting high standards and maintaining flexibility in our approaches. In conversations about tough issues, in almost any city, ATS schools represent a wide spectrum. What if various denominations hosted a conversation about a pertinent issue and modeled how that kind of conversation can take place, showing that such a conversation can be fruitful and civil?