

New CBTE Community of Practice to collaborate on learning, experience, and resources

BY RUTH MCGILLIVRAY

Practitioners and leaders in the field of competency-based theological education (CBTE) have formed a new peer-led CBTE Community of Practice (CoP) to support theological schools and faith-based organizations in the development and continuous improvement of programs applying CBTE principles and practices.



Why a CBTE community of practice?

In the last five years since the first CBTE conference was held by Northwest Seminary in Vancouver, British Columbia, hundreds of leaders in theological education have attended annual conferences and ATS workshops on CBTE. Educators have shared that they see logic in the CBTE philosophy and that the approach offers solutions to challenges commonly experienced in theological education like recognition of prior learning, accessibility, formation, field education, etc. However, program development and implementation remain daunting, as each school still has to forge individualized systems, processes, and practices.

As the number and variety of theological schools developing and operating CBTE programs grows, there has been an expressed desire from faculty and administrators for a forum to share learnings and resources and collaborate on projects of mutual benefit—as well as a willingness to participate in such a community.

Leadership

The new CBTE CoP is led by a team that plans and supports events, activities, and communications.

Its inaugural members are Ruth McGillivray (Northwest Seminary), Greg Henson (Kairos University), Nathan Hitchcock (Sevensided Consulting), Julie Lytle (Bexley Seabury), Susan Reese (Kairos University), and Stephen Graham (ATS). The role of this team is to plan and facilitate CBTE CoP gatherings, collect, curate, and assemble information and questions about CBTE, practice CBTE philosophy in their organizations, and coordinate communication with the broader community about CBTE through various mediums including the [CBTE website](#), newsletters, [Colloquy Online](#), and [Engage ATS](#).

The CBTE Community of Practice is open to anyone who wishes to participate. Information on the CoP, lead team, events, and resources can be found on the [CBTE website](#), where users can also sign up to receive news and updates. We also encourage ATS members to [join Engage ATS](#) (the Association's online community) and subscribe

to the CBTE community where CBTE CoP information will also be posted.

Upcoming Events

The CBTE CoP Lead Team is organizing two events in 2022 and 2023.

1 CBTE cohort at CBEN's CBExchange Conference in October 2022

We are not organizing a separate track of CBTE sessions as we have in past years.

Instead, we will participate in the CBEN program to learn from CBE pioneers, innovators, and experts in large-scale program delivery, technology, accreditation, and regulatory matters. We will also gather daily as a cohort to share insights for our discipline and use this time to collect ideas to begin planning a dedicated CBTE CoP gathering for Spring 2023. [Registration for CBExchange](#) is open until September 15—we encourage anyone interested in the broader movement of competency-based education in higher education to join us.

There are a small number of ATS scholarships still available to attend this event. Please email [Nikki Lanigan](mailto:Nikki.Lanigan) for more information if you are interested.



2 Dedicated CBTE CoP gathering in Spring 2023

We are planning a second gathering for theological educators who are exploring, developing, or offering CBTE programs so they can meet in person, hear from speakers, and share questions and insights. The purpose of the event is to create a space where peers in theological education can gather to discuss CBTE-related practices, challenges, and collaborations in a simple retreat setting. The date and location will be announced soon.

We are grateful for ATS support, participation, and sponsorship of these events and of the new CoP. We also remain grateful for the continued support of CBEN and the warm welcome they extend to CBTE practitioners and explorers at its annual CBExchange conference.

Your questions, feedback, and suggestions are welcome as we shape this new community of practice. Please contact the CBTE CoP Lead team members through the [CBTE website](#) or at cbte@nbseminary.ca



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