

COLLOQUY

Recovery begins for New Orleans schools

Of six ATS member schools in the path of Hurricane Katrina, the two schools in New Orleans—New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Notre Dame Seminary—had to vacate their campuses, find alternate settings for their fall semester of classes, and begin to plan for recovery efforts.

Steve Lemke, provost of **New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**, provided this report of the hurricane's impact.



Student and staff housing (left) sustained extensive damage from the flood waters that filled DeMent Street (named after NOBTS's first president). Buildings to the right, including the chapel, sustained wind damage, resulting in water leaks through the roofs.

"The initial damage from hurricane Katrina itself was perhaps less than we had feared, given the category 5 strength of the storm, but the ensuing flood from the levee breaks swamped our campus for two weeks with contaminated water. Although most of our academic buildings survived with only modest wind and water damage (including the library, thankfully), all forty of our on-campus faculty residences and about half of our student apartments were flooded from between four feet to eight feet, essentially destroying all the earthly possessions of many in our seminary family. Almost all of these losses were uninsured because renter's insurance does not cover flooding. Many were advised by insurance agents not to purchase flood insurance because our campus is the highest point in Orleans Parish and had never flooded. If our campus flooded, the insurance

agents advised, it would only be a catastrophic event that destroyed the whole city. Unfortunately, that's just what happened—what is now being described as the worst natural disaster in American history.

"Despite this tragedy, however, we have gone forward with the fall semester. Our seventeen extension centers located throughout the Southeast have about 1,500 students enrolled, and they are going forward as scheduled. We also have Internet classes, weekend classes, and short-term intensive classes that will go on as scheduled (except they are now based at our largest extension center in Decatur, Georgia, where we have also set up our temporary administrative offices). Our faculty decided to go forward with the fall semester of New Orleans campus courses by offering students to transfer into any of these other options and by continuing the regularly scheduled courses as essentially directed study courses enhanced with threaded discussion and other Internet resources. Fortunately, the majority of our regular semester classes already utilized an Internet-assisted Blackboard component, with some already having videos of class lectures as a part of this Internet component, so this migration was not as traumatic as it otherwise would have been. Therefore, all of our on-campus students can complete this semester and keep on track toward graduation. Although a few of our students have transferred to other institutions that generously offered free tuition and lodging, we hope to keep the overwhelming number of students enrolled at NOBTS through these diverse delivery systems. Churches have offered us hundreds of temporary rent-free residences and have donated thousands of dollars for other aid to help address the most immediate needs of our seminary family and to allow our students to continue their theological training at NOBTS.

"Damage to our New Orleans campus is estimated at \$20 million. The seminary family salvaged what they could of their personal possessions, and the rebuilding of the campus is

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On levees and theological education

We watched as New Orleans flooded. The tragedy had more dimensions than can be mentioned—the loss of life, the loss of property, desperate people in make-shift urban shelters without timely assistance from government agencies. Television camera crews arrived in time to show us that the food, blankets, and transportation had not arrived. People died in sweltering hospitals despite the heroic efforts of health care professionals. The city was closed for weeks and by the time the water was finally pumped out, thousands of homes were damaged beyond repair.

It wasn't the storm, we learned, that caused the flood. The city had weathered the wind and rain with damage, but not devastation. It was the levee system. It could not hold back water raised by rain and driven by wind. Studies had shown that the levees might fail under these conditions, but the \$4–5 billion necessary to make the changes was spent on other construction projects in other states. There is no final estimate of how much it will cost to bring back New Orleans; estimates are running as high as \$200 billion. Whatever the cost, it will include the \$4–5 billion necessary to fix the levees. It was an overwhelmingly sad scene because it was a tragedy that did not have to happen. Had the levees been strengthened, there would have been no devastating flood.

In time, New Orleans will recover. New Orleans Baptist and Notre Dame seminaries, the two ATS schools that call it home, will, through loving work and commitment, return to their campuses, repair the damage, and continue their work. The business district will come alive again, and Mardi Gras will be celebrated in the French Quarter prior to the Lenten season. The future of the city's poorest, as well as the houses they rented, is less certain. Things will be different in the near future, if not years from now, and there is one primary reason: a levee did not do the only thing that a levee exists to do—to keep water away from dry land. It is not a spectacular purpose, and until the levee fails, one isn't aware of what it accomplishes every day that it does its job properly.

I have suggested on occasion that, perhaps, the best way to understand what theological schools do is for them to stop doing it. From time to

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time, the church has experimented with uninformed piety as its primary resource. It is a rich resource, but inadequate. Seminaries exist to tutor and toughen piety into capacity for disciplined service. From time to time, the church has experimented with faith that resisted thinking, and for a while, that can work. Faith can move mountains, after all. For the long term, however, faith needs understanding to sustain its work, and sometimes, to discern which mountains to move. Seminaries exist to help faith seek understanding. The church has always had advocates who argue that the God who calls will give the called the capacity necessary for the work to be done. No one who believes in the God of the Bible can dispute this possibility. But those who read the Bible will note that often the call to a task is accompanied by a time of preparation for the task. Jesus sojourned alone in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry; the disciples followed Jesus for three years before they undertook the tasks of apostolic leadership. Seminaries exist to educate people called to ministry in the deep tradition of the faith and the skills necessary to serve that faith in the present day.

If seminaries stopped functioning, there would be more ignorance, less understanding, less effective articulation of faith, and less skillful leadership of congregations and religious organizations. Over time, the loss of these assets would become increasingly conspicuous, and the church would build theological schools again. Repairing the damage and establishing new schools would cost dramatically more than sustaining and strengthening the ones that already exist. Theological schools are being pulled in many directions as cultural and “churchly” storms swirl around them. Like levees, they need to do the job they were invented to do—tutor pious persons, help faith seek understanding, introduce yet one more generation to the deep traditions of the faith, and educate future leaders in the skills necessary to serve the faith and lead the faithful. It is a task crucial to the well-being of the church and its witness, and when it is done well, it is amazingly undramatic—like a levee keeping water away from land.

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Pedagogy's role in the development of educational technology

By Louis Charles Willard

Pedagogy dominated the conversations at the second workshop on educational technology held in August. Supported by a grant from Lilly Endowment, the workshop sought to answer two questions: What things specifically can we learn from one another? and What things generally can we identify that would be good for everyone to know?

To that end, the project management team identified four goals for the workshop:

1. Explore the lessons learned by other seminaries and theological schools with respect to whether and how to adopt educational technology.
2. Consult on a model of strategic action for educational technology, using shared questions, institutional practices, and lessons learned.
3. Consider how the attention to and concern for technology ultimately impacts the actual work of the ministry and what this might imply for theological education.
4. Generate topics for future workshops related to technology that will be the most helpful to seminaries and theological schools.

The term *insight* understates the importance of the principle that has emerged from these conversations. The insight, or recognition, is that a reexamination—and in some cases, the original examination—of the appropriate pedagogy or pedagogies for the support of theological education is the key, initial step each institution must take as it undertakes to embrace educational technology at any level. Since the early decades of the nineteenth century, schools introducing new degree programs and formats have built them upon unarticulated pedagogical assumptions predicated on the industrial, mass production model.

The workshop interaction was of such an intensity that the participants “hung around” each other rather than the dinner table, talking with each other and with the presenters. Their work of identifying topics for future workshops (the fourth goal) will bear fruit over the next twelve to eighteen months, including elements of the third goal. The more tangible result flowed from attention to the evolving model for integrating educational technology (the second goal), drawing upon the consequences of the first goal.

Several assumptions emerged regarding integrating educational technology:

- The process takes longer than first imagined.
- Success correlates to the degree there is faculty ownership and commitment from administration at every phase.
- Institutions will recycle through earlier phases as new events arise or personnel changes.
- Anticipating assessment strategies should begin early in order to provide needed insight into effectiveness.
- It is possible for schools to be addressing issues in different phases, but completion of all issues in each phase is essential if a school is to successfully sustain its commitment to educational technology.

For a complete description of the “Strategic Plan for Integrating Educational Technology: A Developmental Model,” please see Victor Klimoski’s article in *Theological Education* volume 41, number 1 (forthcoming), a volume devoted entirely to educational technology issues. ♦

Louis Charles Willard, with Chris Meinzer, provides staff support to the ATS project on Technology and Educational Practices.



John Jewell, director of distance education and assistant professor of ministry and technology at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary presents “What Does All This Mean for Ministry? Exploring the Pastoral Applications of the New Media” at the August 2005 Technology and Educational Practices workshop held in Chicago.

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beginning immediately. We anticipate some classes and meetings may be taught on the New Orleans campus in spring 2006, and our projection is that the campus will be fully functional by August 2006.

“Beyond repairing the damage to the seminary, we are very concerned about being a vehicle of ministry to the city of New Orleans. Already our campus has hosted a number of police and National Guard units bringing security to the city. We have already offered two Social Work classes focused on ministering to the needs of those in crisis, especially women and children. We are already setting up a number of groups that will assist in providing food and other necessities, and we were already scheduled before the storm to be vitally engaged in hosting workers for the largest building project ever attempted by Habitat for Humanity. These projects are now more important than ever. We are also concerned about helping to rebuild the churches in Orleans Parish, almost every one of which was not only severely damaged by the flood but also had its membership decimated by being displaced by the flood. For example, the sanctuary of the largest Southern Baptist church in Louisiana, Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, located not far from the seminary, sustained extensive damage from the flood. This primarily African American congregation of more than 4,000 worshipers weekly has been evacuated to all parts of the country, and their housing and jobs will not be accessible for many months. We want to be a part of rebuilding these congregations.

You're invited to . . .

ATS Reception at the AAR/SBL Annual Meetings

Saturday, November 19, 2005

7–8:30 p.m.

**Loews Philadelphia Hotel
Commonwealth D room**

Administrators, faculty, and friends of ATS member schools are invited to attend the ATS reception at the AAR/SBL annual meetings in Philadelphia, PA. Please plan to join your colleagues and friends for refreshments and conversation.



Carey Hall, the women's dormitory at NOBTS, sustained extensive flooding on the first floor.

“We have been touched and humbled by the many gracious expressions of compassion and love that we have received from other ATS institutions, from churches, and from individuals. Several Southern Baptist seminaries presented us a sacrificial offering from their faculty and students, and another SBC seminary hosted our faculty for a much-needed faculty retreat. Columbia Theological Seminary, located across the street from our Decatur campus, has provided a number of helps to our displaced faculty and students. Many institutions have offered shelter, library resources, and other help to our displaced students. We have never been so conscious of being a part of the larger body of Christ with one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. We are extremely grateful for the many expressions of care and concern from the Christian community.”

Notre Dame Seminary resumed its fall semester on October 3 on the campus of Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College in St. Benedict, Louisiana. The Abbey and College offered its facilities and logistical support until Notre Dame Seminary is able to reestablish its facilities in New Orleans. Notre Dame is using office facilities, classroom space, housing, and learning resources of St. Joseph's. All Notre Dame's students, faculty, and staff were safely evacuated from the NDS campus, which sustained blown out windows, significant roof damage, loss of power, and flood waters covering the grounds and surrounding the seminary.

The two ATS schools in Jackson, Mississippi—**Reformed Theological Seminary** and **Wesley Biblical Seminary**—experienced wind damage and were without power for a week. ♦

Theological scholarship: bread for the hungry

More than thirty present and former Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology gathered in Pittsburgh at the end of September to discuss the current state of theological research. At this second Luce Consultation on Theological Scholarship, ATS Executive Director Daniel Aleshire introduced the conversation by sharing three concerns he has about theological scholarship.

The first concern, he said, is “theological research that ignores its connection to a larger community of concern—like the church. Not all scholarship is subject to broader communities, but theological research is. It informs religious beliefs by which people order their lives, make claims about what is good and what is evil, and contend for a vision of life together. Good theological research understands this connection, honors it, and resists the seduction of intellectual inquiry as an end to itself,” he said.

The second area of concern is “theological scholarship that is focused on issues that have little or no significance. My concern is not about the immediate relevance of research efforts but whether thoughtful Christianity has the research it needs at this time, in this culture, and to inform religion’s voice to a broader public.”

Aleshire also wondered if, even when theological scholarship is connected to the church and has identified important areas of study, the church and society will pay attention.

Working from a summary document of the 2003 Luce Consultation on Theological Scholarship (published in volume 40, number 2, of *Theological Education*), the participants spent the weekend working in small groups to consider major themes from the prior consultation, scholarship most needed by the church and in theological studies. Note takers in each group captured the weekend’s conversations, and ATS staff is now identifying the major themes that emerged.

Among them are:

- ♦ attention to the human, social, and ecclesial contexts in which one does theology,
- ♦ cultivating a formational theology to play a role in seminary teaching,
- ♦ multiple modes of religious knowing and imagination in religious life and faith,
- ♦ interreligious claims and practices,
- ♦ multiple aspects of culture: popular, political, theological, ecclesial, and global,
- ♦ interreligious claims and practices, and
- ♦ a call for conversion, change, and transformation.

Walter Brueggemann of Columbia Theological Seminary and a 1994–95 Luce Fellow offered a homily on Sunday morning. He spoke of theological scholarship and bread. “Our research is answer to the creator who gives bread to the eater and seed to the sower, to the savior whom we confess inhabits the bread in ways we cannot articulate. And then this. Bread is guarantee of life to the neediest, the least, the last, the most precarious, the ones without leverage or claim or resource. . . . It is the beggars and the lepers who surround our work and who stand at the edge of our study, monitoring us, calling our most erudite research and our most esoteric investigations to stay connected to *the holy gift* and to *the deep crisis*. This is research that will stand behind our teaching, that will equip a new generation of leaders and provide resources for a world that is beyond all of our old categories.” ♦

Francis Schüssler Fiorenza of Harvard University Divinity School (top) shares his ideas with the group while Walter Lowe of Candler School of Theology of Emory University (middle) listens intently. (Bottom) Carl Holladay of Candler and Gay Byron of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School chat during a break. Byron offered the opening prayer Saturday morning.





ATS was well represented at the September meeting of the Executive Committee of the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). Front row, from left: Msgr. Jeremiah McCarthy (ATS), Mark Latcovich, chair of the committee (Saint Mary Seminary and Graduate School of Theology), Archbishop J. Michael Miller (Secretary, Congregation for Catholic Education), Thomas Dragga (Borromeo Seminary), Richard Siepka (Christ the King Seminary). Back row, from left: Dennis Druggan (St. Lawrence Seminary), James Walsh (St. Dominic Parish), Melvin Blanchette (Theological College), Edward Burns (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops), and Bernard Stratman (Executive Director of the Seminary Department, NCEA).

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The New Orleans flood was not the only tragedy we have witnessed. A tsunami swept away lives and property around the Indian Ocean, hurricanes battered the Gulf Coast as well as New Orleans, and the earthquake in Pakistan and northern India has shattered lives, dismantled villages, and left scores of thousands exposed to the cold of winter. The earth groans as it awaits the redemption of all things. ATS schools, meanwhile, are busy teaching about the care of a wounded world, teaching about the redemption that can come to the human family, remembering past generations who called to God when the earth shook and flooded, and educating a new generation of pastors, teachers, counselors, community organizers, missionaries, administrators, and a host of others, for ecclesial leadership and work in the world. ♦



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Savannah, Georgia

DIAP Conference 2006
February 16–18, 2006

Registration materials forthcoming in November

Keynote Speakers

Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director
The Association of Theological Schools

John Kinney, Dean
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology

Sharon Miller, Associate Director
Center for the Study of Theological Education
Auburn Theological Seminary

Craig Dykstra, Vice President for Religion
Lilly Endowment Inc.

FOR
ADDITIONAL
FEE

Preconference Sessions

Thursday, February 16, 1:30–4:30 p.m.

*The Jawbone's Connected to the Hammer, Anvil, and Stirrup Bones:
Communication as the Connective Tissue of Theological Advancement*

Barbara A. Chaapel, Director of Communications/Publications
Princeton Theological Seminary

New Development Officer Workshop: ABCs of Faith-filled Fund Raising

Tim Kubatzky, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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Selected highlights from the 2005 Graduating Student Questionnaire

The 2004–05 group profile from this spring's *Graduating Student Questionnaire* included 5,777 responses from 137 schools. The following highlights should provide a helpful sketch of the overall findings.

Students were asked to measure their personal growth during seminary. The top three areas in which graduates felt they grew stronger were *self-knowledge, trust in God, and self-confidence*.

MDiv graduates were asked to indicate their satisfaction with progress in skills related to their future work. The top five areas were *ability to think theologically, ability to use and interpret Scripture, ability to relate social issues to faith, knowledge of their own religious tradition, and ability to conduct worship/liturgy*.

78.3 percent of MDiv students rated their field education or internship experience *important or very important*. For these students, the top two effects of field education/internship were *better idea of strengths/weaknesses and improved pastoral skills*.

The top three rated choices of how satisfied graduates have been with a variety of seminary services and academic resources were *quality of teaching, helpfulness of administrative/staff support, and accessibility of faculty*.

Graduates cited *faculty, biblical studies, and interaction with students* as the three most important influences on their educational experience.

A list of sixteen statements explored graduates' satisfaction with their seminary experience. The three most important were *I have been satisfied with my academic experience; If I had to do it over again, I would still come here; and Faculty were supportive and understanding*.

36 percent of MDiv students reported working *more than twenty hours per week*.

65.7 percent of graduates brought no educational debt with them; 15.7 percent, however, came with a debt load of \$15,000 or more.

48.9 percent of graduates incurred no new educational debt during seminary; 29.5 percent had a debt load of \$15,000 or more at the time of their graduation.

45.5 percent of graduates had no monthly payments for educational debt; 7 percent had a monthly payment greater than \$500.

The three most important sources of income for graduates in rank order were *scholarship/grant, off-campus work, and spouse's work*.

During the course of their studies, 15.7 percent of graduates took academic leave for a term or more; 27.8 percent of MDiv graduates began their program in 2001.

46 percent of MDiv graduates anticipated *full-time parish ministry*; the next two areas in rank order were *undecided* and *other*.

18.3 percent of nonMDiv graduates anticipated *full-time parish ministry*. The next two areas in rank order were *other* and *undecided*. ♦

Assessment resources now available on ATS website

The ATS website now provides links to Web-based assessment resources that may be helpful to member schools in the task of evaluating the effectiveness of their degree programs and institutional assessment practices.

These resources provide helpful hints, tools, and strategies to help busy faculty members, deans, and administrators fulfill the expectations of both the ATS Commission on Accrediting and the regional accrediting agencies that schools demonstrate a comprehensive program of ongoing evaluation of educational effectiveness.

Section 1.2.2 of Standard 1 (Purpose, Planning, and Evaluation) states, "Evaluation is a critical element in support of integrity in educational efforts, institutional renewal, and individual professional development."

You will find these resources at www.ats.edu > Projects > Character and Assessment of Learning for Religious Vocation > Online Assessment Resources. ♦

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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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IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

Graduating Student Questionnaire Workshop

November 11, 2005 • Pittsburgh, PA

PoM Interpretation Workshop, Stage I

November 17–18, 2005 • Pittsburgh, PA

Chief Financial Officers Conference

November 17–19, 2005 • Orlando, FL

ATS Reception at the AAR/SBL Annual Meeting

November 19, 2005 • Philadelphia, PA

Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology Deadline

December 1, 2005

Presidential Leadership Intensive Week

December 4–9, 2005 • Santa Fe, NM

**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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