

COLLOQUY

Recent data reflect a younger student body

The percentage of students in their twenties enrolled in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree program has increased over the past seven years from 37 percent in 1999 to 42 percent in the fall of 2005, according to recent enrollment data reported by ATS member schools.

Last fall, 42 percent of MDiv students were in their twenties, 25 percent in their thirties, 19 percent in their forties, and 14 percent were fifty or older. In 1999, 37 percent of MDiv students were in their twenties, 29 percent in their thirties, 22 percent in their forties, and 12 percent fifty or older. The schools report data on the age of students every odd-numbered year.

Schools that received Lilly Endowment grants to establish or sustain programs for high school students had larger percentages of students in their twenties (44 percent) than ATS schools that had not received these grants.

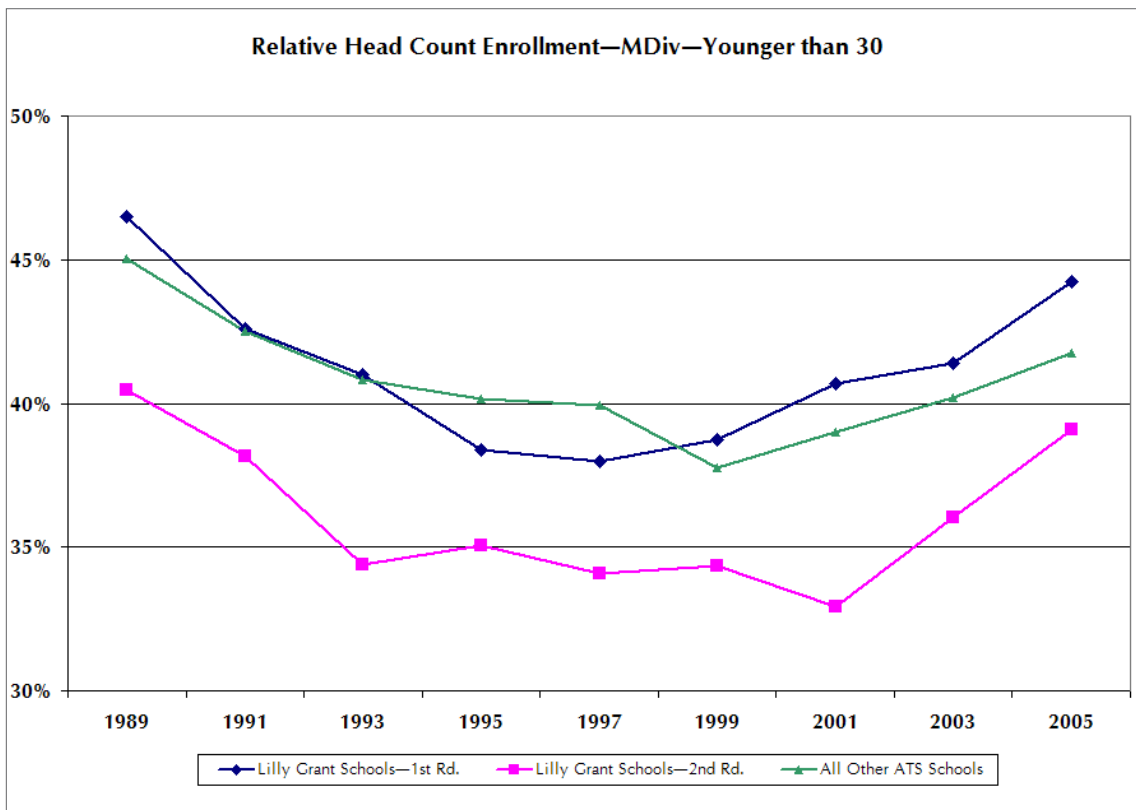
In 1998, Lilly Endowment initiated its Theological School Programs for High School Youth and awarded grants totaling \$27.3 million to thirty-three theological schools. The programs were to “(1) stimulate and foster an excitement about theological learning and inquiry and (2) identify and encourage talented Christian youth to consider vocations in the ministry.” In 2002, the Endowment awarded a second round of grants in the amount of \$25.3 million to an additional sixteen theological schools.

Why does the age of students matter? Older, second-career students have more life experience and longer work histories, but they have fewer years of potential service to the church and fewer years to gather the post-graduation expertise that many congregations require. There are also financial implications: estimates place the cost of educating an MDiv student at \$30,000 a year. The fewer years of service after the

degree raise the cost of the degree per year of service. The student, and ultimately the church, pays.

In fall 2005, 49 percent of students enrolled in a full degree program (70,474 students) in ATS member schools were enrolled in the MDiv degree program (34,505 students). Sixty-nine percent were men; 31 percent were women.

The full set of 2005 data tables may be accessed from the home page of the ATS Web site: www.ats.edu. ♦



Coming of tomorrows

It was a week on the road last month visiting theological schools. ATS staff members have many weeks like that, but this one continues to linger in my mind.

At the beginning of the week, I supported an accrediting visit to Mount Angel Seminary. The seminary is the apostolate of Mount Angel Abbey, a Benedictine monastery that has been on the same butte in Oregon since 1882—fewer than 25 years after Oregon was granted statehood. The view from the hilltop is part pastoral and altogether dramatic. The valley surrounding the butte is fertile farmland and, in the distance, rises to the mountains. Even in the Oregon rain, the outline of the mountains is vaguely visible. It is a place where ancient time has been pulled into the present. The patterns of Benedictine life saturate the hilltop—bells, chant, and prayer mark the passage of the day as much as the angle of the sun and far more than the clock on the wall. Seminarians live on the hilltop and attend class in clerical collars. They talked appreciatively with the ATS accrediting committee about their formation for diocesan priesthood in the midst of the rhythms of Benedictine life.



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and the faithfulness of another to take the future
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when the clock ran both ways, when centuries merged.*



After the accrediting visit, I made a staff visit to an institution that is applying for ATS membership. The eight-year-old school is temporarily located in a suburban business park and is in the process of renovating three floors of a downtown warehouse for its new facility. It is a school that fits an urban block more than its current setting. The school was founded by persons who hoped to create a new kind of institution: one built to prepare students for ministry in a post-modern, post-Christendom culture. It is a place where the future is being pulled into the present. The room used for a chapel has icons and couches, candles and an electronic keyboard. Most of the students discovered the school on its Web site. Dress is casual; no one wears a tie. Students talked effusively about the impact of the school in their lives. It taught them to understand themselves, come to terms with their faith, and take seriously culture that houses and influences persons and their religion.

Time does not stand still; a monastery has to be modern. Mount Angel is building a much needed academic center that likely is the “greenest” building of any school in the Association. The bells that signal the hours of prayer are run by an electronic clapper. But these are merely modern ways of doing an ancient thing—one of the oldest things in Christianity. Mount Angel is contemporary in an ageless way. The applicant school is altogether modern, maybe post-modern. It perceives a culture that is changing dramatically and the need for Christianity to pursue new intellectual paths. But there are icons on the walls, and when asked where the school located itself confessionally, one administrator suggested that the Nicene Creed would be a good place to start. This new school is modern in the most ancient of ways.

This was a week in which I traveled a millennium. It was a week in which I was moved by the faithfulness of one school bringing ancient patterns into the future and the faithfulness of another to take the future back to ancient affirmations. It was a week when the clock ran both ways, when centuries merged. It was a week in God’s time, and I was reminded, once again, that God’s time is not so much about the passing of days as the coming of tomorrows. ♦

Charles Willard to retire

Louis Charles Willard will retire from ATS in June, but anyone who knows him knows that he has far too much energy to retire fully. Charles Willard has had a remarkable career in theological education. He was finishing a PhD in Scripture at Yale University Divinity School, when (then president) James McCord recruited him to direct the Speer Library at Princeton Theological Seminary. He served Princeton as the James Lenox Librarian and lecturer in New Testament from 1968 to 1986. After nearly two decades at Princeton, he became librarian of the Andover-Harvard Library at Harvard University Divinity School (1986 to 1999).

Over a period of thirty years, he was a frequent accreditation visiting committee member for ATS and several regional accrediting agencies. He served on the Commission on Accrediting (now Board of Commissioners) in the 1990s, and as ATS staff, was secretary to the Commission from 2000 to 2005.

He was appointed director, accreditation and institutional evaluation in 1999. "The invitation to work at ATS was irresistible, not only because of the remarkable staff with whom I would be associated but also because of the possibility of

engaging on a full-time basis what had been such a meaningful and rewarding part of my academic and professional life, once or twice a year, for the previous thirty-one years. Both of these anticipations came to fruition, though of course in their own way and not at all as I had imagined," Willard said.

Willard is retiring from full-time work at ATS, after seven years of exceptional service. He will continue as adjunct staff to Commission accreditation for the near term and will also continue working with the ATS project on Technology and Educational Practices. Willard has been instrumental in enhancing the administrative use of technology in the ATS office and in refining the ATS institutional database and its capabilities in support of accreditation and institutional improvement.

Executive Director Daniel Aleshire said, "Charles has worked as creatively as he has tirelessly in each of his three roles in theological education. His ATS involvement predates his joining the ATS staff by decades. The Association and Commission have benefited enormously from his talent, prodigious work, and gracious spirit." ♦



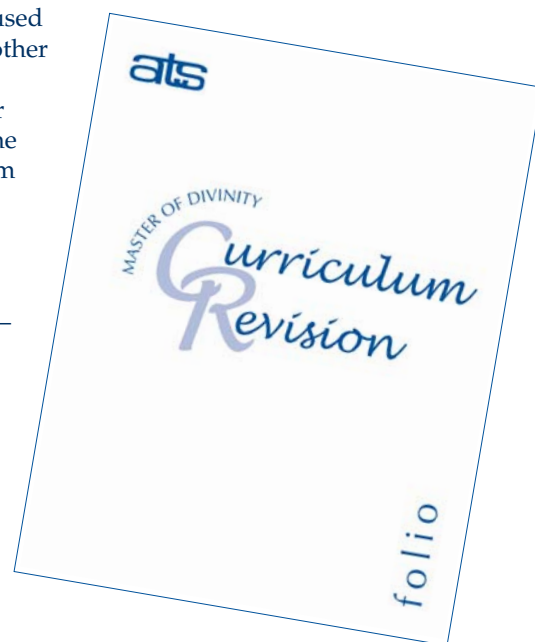
Louis Charles Willard
Director, Accreditation
and Institutional
Evaluation
ATS

A new ATS resource—a folio on Master of Divinity Curriculum Revision—has been mailed to the office of all chief academic officers in the Association. It may also be downloaded and printed from the Resources section of the ATS Web site: www.ats.edu. Developed by William Myers, ATS director of leadership education, the folio material was assembled from presentations, cases, interviews, and discussions at the 2003 ATS Consultation on MDiv Curriculum.

Ten cases, written by ATS faculty and administrators, describe the experiences of schools engaged in curricular reform. Five essays address issues including academic program assessment, transformative leadership, spiritual formation, and curriculum metaphors and practices. Interviews focus on each goal of the MDiv curriculum, and several common terms are explored in another section.

The folio is intended to be used to evoke discussion, share other schools' experiences, and provide helpful material for committees charged with the responsibility for curriculum revision.

A second consultation on curriculum revision will be held in Pittsburgh, March 2–4, 2007. Schools engaged in or contemplating revision of the Master of Divinity curricula are encouraged to send two representatives to the consultation. ♦



Conversation with the Commissioners prior to Biennial Meeting



Jeremiah J. McCarthy
Secretary to the Board
of Commissioners
ATS Commission
on Accrediting

The Board of Commissioners of the Commission on Accrediting will host an open forum discussion at the Biennial Meeting of the Association and the Commission on Saturday, June 24, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The purpose of the open forum is to provide an opportunity for advice and counsel from the member schools on the following issues identified by the Board of Commissioners and accrediting staff. There is one action that will come before the meeting of the Commission for a vote at this Biennial Meeting—a proposed change to the location requirement in Degree Standard L, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Theology (PhD/ThD). In addition to discussion of this item, the Commissioners will receive comments to guide their further deliberations regarding duration requirements for two-year master's degree programs and the challenge of providing theological education for students lacking a baccalaureate degree.

Discussion item: Proposed amendment to the location requirement for Degree Standard L, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Theology (PhD/ThD). This item will be brought to the member schools of the Commission on Accrediting for a vote at the 1:30 p.m. Business Session of the Commission on Sunday, June 25.

The Board of Commissioners has been considering the advisability of a slight modification to the location requirement for the doctoral degree standard. The modification is to change section L.3.2.0 that now reads: "Courses, seminars, and colloquia for research doctoral degrees shall be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree," to read: "Courses, seminars, and colloquia for research doctoral degrees shall normally be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree."

The board is proposing this change for several reasons. As the educational scope of PhD/ThD degrees offered by ATS schools continues to expand and some subjects may be studied more effectively at locations other than the main campus of the school offering the degree, the board has concluded that minimal flexibility in this section of the standard will facilitate its decision-making regarding PhD/ThD programs.

In addition to the proposed change, the board has adopted the following interpretive guidelines that it will employ in its decision-making:

Nontraditional formats for the PhD degree should be evaluated based on evidence provided by the schools that these new formats are achieving the goals and objectives of the PhD standard. These new delivery mechanisms must comply in all ways with the qualities and values upheld in the degree standard. The burden of proof lies with the schools to ensure that there is no diminution in quality or excellence in the doctoral degree program. Evaluation teams and the Board of Commissioners should ensure that careful outcomes assessment is occurring in all doctoral degree programs.

The board is proposing this modification based on consultation with member schools and its own assessment with the assistance of the accrediting staff.

The board recognizes that the deeply held commitment to the integrity and rigor of the doctoral standard by the member schools must be maintained in the context of this discussion. Any amendment to the standard should be undertaken only in a way that provides additional strength, capacity, and value to the degree program.

Discussion item: Policy on duration requirements for two-year master's programs.

Based on its reviews of comprehensive and focused visits, the board and staff to the Commission have determined that it would be useful to provide member schools with more specific guidance about how to interpret the duration requirement specified in the degree program standards for two-year master's programs.

For example, the duration section for Degree Standard C (Master of Arts *in* [specialized ministry]) states: "The range of disciplines to be studied, appropriate contextual and supervised field education opportunities, and the formational goals of the program require the equivalent of two years of full-time academic work." (C.3.3.0)

The board is proposing a policy that at a *minimum* one academic year (two semesters) be understood as consisting of no fewer than 24 semester hours. Thus, a two-year master's program would consist of at least 48 semester hours; a school may require more than 48 semester hours.

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Marsha Foster Boyd named president of ETS

On July 15, 2006, **Marsha Foster Boyd** will become the third president of Ecumenical Theological Seminary (ETS) in Detroit, Michigan. She is the second African-American woman to serve as president of an ATS member school and the first to head a predominately white institution.

She joined the ATS staff in 1999 as director, accreditation and leadership education. She has traveled widely across the ATS member schools as a member of the accrediting staff while serving as primary staff to the Chief Academic Officers Society, the Women in Leadership in Theological Education program, and the Committee on Race and Ethnicity.

During her tenure at ATS, Boyd provided staff leadership for the formation of the Chief Academic Officers Society (CAOS), which meets annually for professional development through peer education and maintains a listserv for

networking, support, and information exchange. She also worked with the advisory committee of the Women in Leadership program to develop annual retreats for senior women administrators and annual seminars for women to enhance their leadership skills and develop relationships with other women leaders in theological education. Through her work with the Committee on Race and Ethnicity, Boyd developed and implemented six years of programming for racial/ethnic constituents in theological education.

“In addition to her administrative skills, Marsha brought a remarkable gift for welcome and hospitality to each of the groups to which she related on both a personal and professional level,” said Daniel Aleshire, ATS executive director. “She has been an effective mentor and a true friend to hundreds of faculty and administrators within the Association.” ♦



Marsha Foster Boyd
Director, Accreditation
and Leadership Education
ATS

Conversation with the Commissioners

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The board recognizes that schools are facing challenges to respond to the needs of churches and students for programs of shorter length for a variety of reasons—the need to equip students serving in ministerial positions, cost of education, difficulty in attending a residential program, competition from regionally accredited programs in cognate fields that are frequently 30–36 hours in length—to name but a few.

The board is committed to ensuring that each program, regardless of its duration, should be rigorously and regularly assessed with respect to its quality, integrity, and educational effectiveness. The board is mindful that the quality of professional theological education is of paramount importance to the member schools and this value guides its consideration of this policy.

The foregoing is an interpretive policy to guide the board and the accrediting staff in their interactions with member schools and not a change in the degree program standards.

Discussion Item: Providing theological education for nonbaccalaureate students.

The Board of Commissioners is aware of longstanding pressures on Canadian and U.S. schools to provide theological education for significant numbers of students who lack a baccalaureate degree. The present standards provide limited exceptions for admitting such students, up to 10 percent in specified programs and up to 20 percent in individual courses. These exceptions continue to be useful and helpful. The scope of accreditation granted to the Commission on Accrediting by the U.S. Department of Education is restricted to the provision of graduate theological education. Expanding the scope of accreditation to include baccalaureate programs is a feasible option for the board to consider. The board would welcome further reflection from the membership with respect to the following question: Within the existing framework of the accrediting standards, and mindful of the scope of accreditation granted to the Commission on Accrediting, how can theological education be provided to candidates who lack a baccalaureate degree? ♦

From the 2006 DIAP Conference: Communicating the Vision



Sharon Miller

Associate Director

Center for the Study
of Theological Education,
Auburn Theological
Seminary

Several informative presentations were given at the 2006 DIAP Conference in Savannah, Georgia. Highlights from two of them appear here.

Recent Findings on Development Practices in Theological Schools by Sharon Miller

Early findings from the Auburn Seminary research on development and advancement practices in theological schools were presented at the 2006 DIAP Conference. Surveys had been sent to the chief development officers at all ATS-accredited schools and responses were received from seventy-eight schools.

- ◆ Thirty-one percent of the development officers are graduates of the school where they are working and 29 percent are ordained or licensed. They have worked in development/advancement for an average of eleven years and at their current institution for five-and-a-half years.
- ◆ Previous occupations included: marketing or sales (17 percent), clergy (14.5 percent), education (13 percent), and finance (10.5 percent). Other occupations included a politician, a farmer, a police officer, and a blood donor recruiter.
- ◆ Twenty-five percent of the schools have only one managerial-level person working in development and advancement. More than half of the schools have just two persons in managerial positions. Forty percent of schools have one, or less than one, full-time support staff person working in the office.
- ◆ All schools use multiple means of communication with their constituencies and donors and the size of mailing lists range from 500 to 150,000.
- ◆ One of the surprising findings from this research is that the size of a school's mailing list is not related to the size of the school. There are small schools with VERY large mailing lists and large schools with more modest-sized mailing lists.
- ◆ The time and effort it takes to publish a newsletter, magazine, or appeal letter is the same, no matter how many persons will be receiving the newsletter. Small and medium size schools are often working just as hard as large schools to get their message out.
- ◆ A second surprise finding is that the size of a school's mailing list, although it correlates with the level of individual giving, is not a predictor of overall success in fundraising.

More findings from the Auburn research will be forthcoming in a report to be published later this year.

Called to Ask: Our Role in Communicating the Vision by Rebekah Burch Basinger

After speaking with several hundred fundraisers, consultants, board members, pastors, and others who care about or are involved in seeking funds for ministries, Rebekah Burch Basinger and Thomas Jeavons, during a Lilly Endowment funded study, identified six principles that seem to be essential to fundraising as a ministry: (1) confidence in God's abundance, (2) a holistic perspective on Kingdom work—the no-competition clause, (3) clarity about core theological beliefs, (4) giving donors opportunities to participate, (5) integrated organizational planning, and (6) spiritually mature leadership.

Basinger focused on the sixth point—the importance of spiritually mature leadership—and what it means for development officers to describe themselves as having been called to ask.

"How do we shape our work as ministry, even if others around us don't necessarily think of what we do in that way?" she asked, "or worse, if we are given messages that this is a silly or wrong-headed way to talk about the work we do?"

Basinger proposed four ways in which being called to ask should show up in a development officer's work.

1. A sense of being called should help keep the focus on God at work in giver's hearts.

In her role as director of stewardship services for her church denomination, Basinger told of how she found herself becoming increasingly uptight as she waited to see if congregations were going to meet their commitments to the general church budget.

"It took every ounce of faith and self-control that I could muster not to go running through the building, spreading worry and anxiety to the rest of the staff," she said. "In the end, the congregations came through—exceeding the

goal by about \$1,500—a very tiny margin, but enough to meet budget—and in the world of denominational giving, a triumph.

“Worry saps us of creative energy and takes our eyes off of the real goal of our work—growing generous hearts.”

2. Confidence in the call should inspire the confidence of others that a development officer is up to the job and that the school’s goals will be met.

Basinger told of how the dean of her denomination’s educational initiative came to her with a request for \$1,500 to fund scholarships for an online program for lay leaders. “She plopped down in my office with that look on her face. You know the one—that I need money and I think you can help look.”

“We fundraisers have knowledge and skills that are needed to get the resources necessary to carry out the mission of the organizations with which we work,” Basinger said. “And most of our coworkers are aware of this. Think of how often someone has said to you, ‘I wouldn’t want your job, but I’m glad you’re willing to do it.’ And that’s OK, because they probably wouldn’t be very good at the job anyway. There is a different call. Our call is to help make their work possible, and to do so joyfully.”

3. A development officer’s call should bring out the best in others—be that other staff, the president, board members, and donors.

When Basinger was a vice president for advancement at a church-related college, she described her work with the president as akin to that of the director of a play—she got everything ready for the performance, including rehearsing the president in his role, and then pushed him out onto the stage as the star of the production.

“I was the behind-the-scenes person,” she said. “The one enabling him to be successful in work that didn’t come naturally to him and which he really wanted to believe was someone else’s job—specifically mine.”

As the president experienced success and saw the genuine joy that friends of the college found in their giving, Basinger said it became a little

easier for him. And although the “crowning gift of his presidency” came after she had left the college, she was “delighted and humbled” that he called to tell her about it in advance of the public announcement and to reminiscence about how the seeds of that gift had been planted during the time that they had worked together.

4. The confidence that development officers are called to ask should show up in their willingness to educate others. Their work should leave people smarter—more informed—about the REAL role and potential of fundraising efforts and what that means for their work.

Recent studies have revealed that persons of faith are no longer learning about giving in their churches, that pastors are reluctant to preach on stewardship topics, and that the tithe has nearly become extinct. By default, Basinger said, the majority of churchgoers today are being introduced to the whys and hows of giving not by their pastors but via fundraising appeals from the myriad religious organizations that dot the North American charitable landscape.

“This situation presents both challenges and opportunities for those of us in this room,” she said. “The way seminaries go about raising money IS a very powerful form of stewardship education and we ARE stewardship educators, whether the work is thought of as such or not.”

Basinger commended seminaries that teach stewardship and other kinds of organizational management courses. “As more of this sort of thing happens, we can anticipate that the sad stories about the state of stewardship preaching in our churches will begin to change,” she said.

Although roadblocks are inevitable, she reminded the development officers that “all of us in this room have been called by our most precious Friend to take up the challenge of a most incredible, exciting, and important work. And when that Friend calls, how can we say anything but yes.” ♦



Rebekah Burch Basinger
Board Member
In Trust

2007 DIAP Conference

February 15–17

Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort
Lake Buena Vista, Florida

Who are our future students?



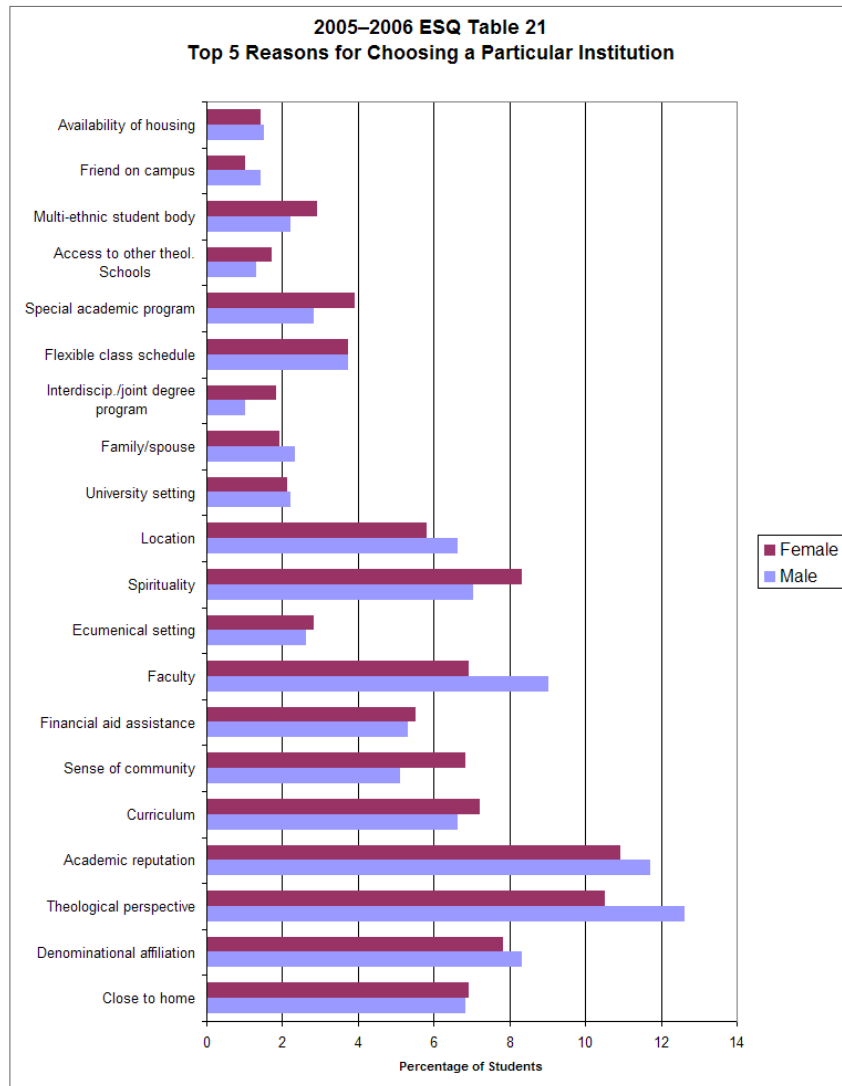
Tisa Lewis

Director, Student Information Services and Organizational Evaluation

ATS

Every decade or so, ideological interest among college students shifts, and this movement likely has an effect on the 251 schools in The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. As pointed out by Arthur Chickering¹ and many others, the pendulum has been swinging in the last ten to fifteen years from a student focus on narcissism, self-interest, and materialism to one of more interest in spirituality and meaning². This increased interest among college students was the heart of a recent study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute in the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA called "Spirituality in Higher Education: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose."³

Surveying 112,232 entering first-year students at 236 diverse public and private U.S. colleges and universities in 2004, the study purposed to better understand today's college students so that administrators, staff, and faculty members can nurture the spiritual and religious development of the students they serve. As stated in the study's executive summary, one of the concerns is that colleges and universities have increasingly paid less attention to the "inner development" of students. If these schools decide that indeed spirituality, values, beliefs, emotional intelligence, and identity formation deserve more focus, what effect will this have on students and their vocational choices? How will these findings affect the way our 251 schools market to, recruit, and educate their students?



According to an August 4, 2005, *Chronicle of Higher Education* ad for the UCLA study, students "are searching for deeper meaning in their lives, looking for ways to cultivate their inner selves, seeking to be compassionate and charitable, and determining what they think and feel about the many issues confronting their society." They report very high levels of interest in spiritual and religious matters. This may reflect the broader public's attention to spirituality and religion as evidence in the tremendous success of such books and films as Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*, Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*, C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*, and even Anne Rice's *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*.

Crossing all religious and denominational lines, the collective interest shows no signs of waning in the near future.

This interest in spirituality is shown among the entering class at ATS institutions as well. As seen in *Entering Student Questionnaire* (ESQ) Table 21, women rank *Spirituality* third after *Theological Perspective* and *Academic Reputation* in a list of twenty possible reasons for choosing a particular institution. Men rank it fifth.

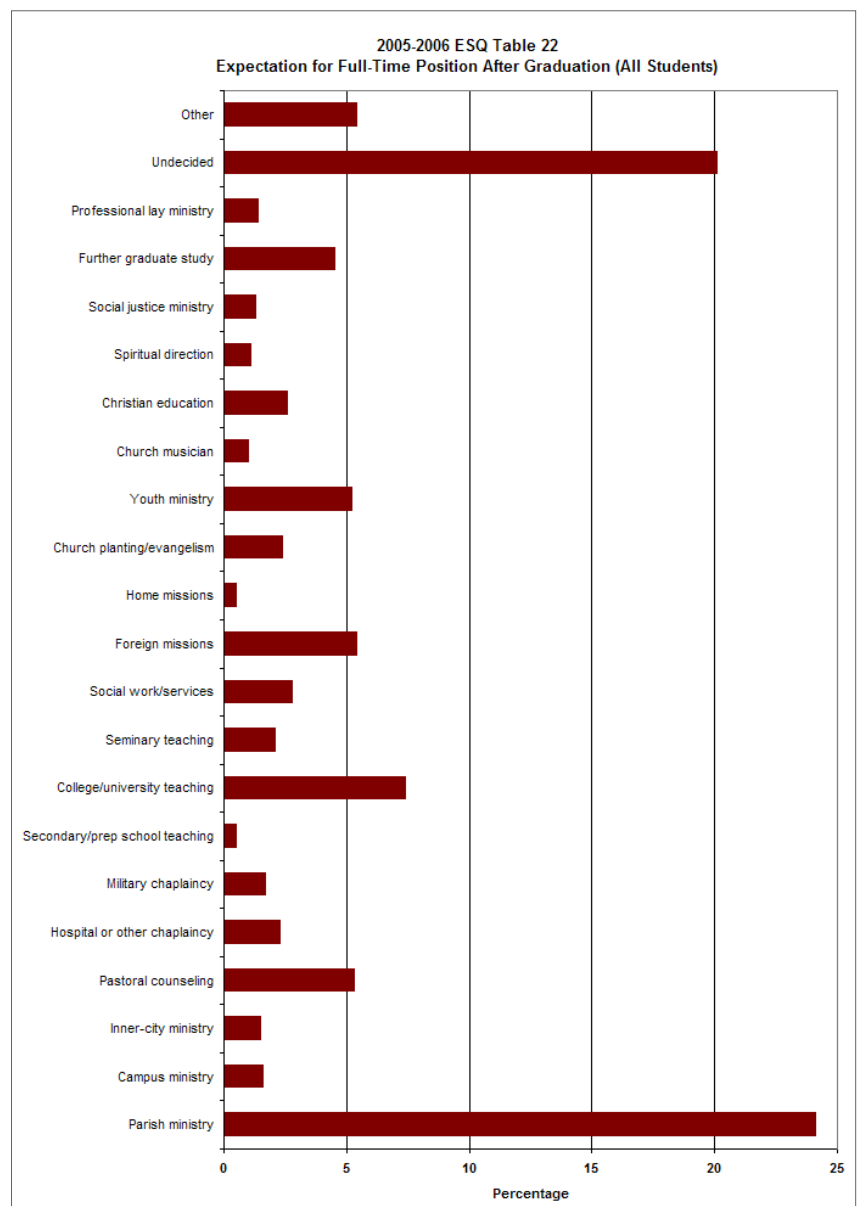
How they define spirituality may or may not correspond to the participants in the UCLA study for whom spirituality included items involving “believing in the sacredness of life, seeking out opportunities to grow spiritually, and believing that we are all spiritual beings.” As the students surveyed by UCLA begin to enter our schools, will we be equipped to handle their religious struggles and spiritual quests?

The UCLA study indicates, “Students with the highest scores on *Religious Struggle* and *Spiritual Quest* also tend to experience lower levels of psychological health than those who are not struggling or questing, and more often seek counseling during college.” If these students then enter our theological schools, will they continue to request this assistance? According to the UCLA study, perhaps their lifestyle choices may provide answers as to why they may have more psychological distress. Often these students surrender their own desires for the sake of the common good, exercising care, compassion, and charitable involvement. Feelings of depression may set in when the weight of the world becomes too much to bear. However, these feelings of being overwhelmed are often balanced by the meaningful payoffs of fulfillment and peace. One surprising finding in the UCLA study is that these issues cross political party lines in a way that we have not previously seen.

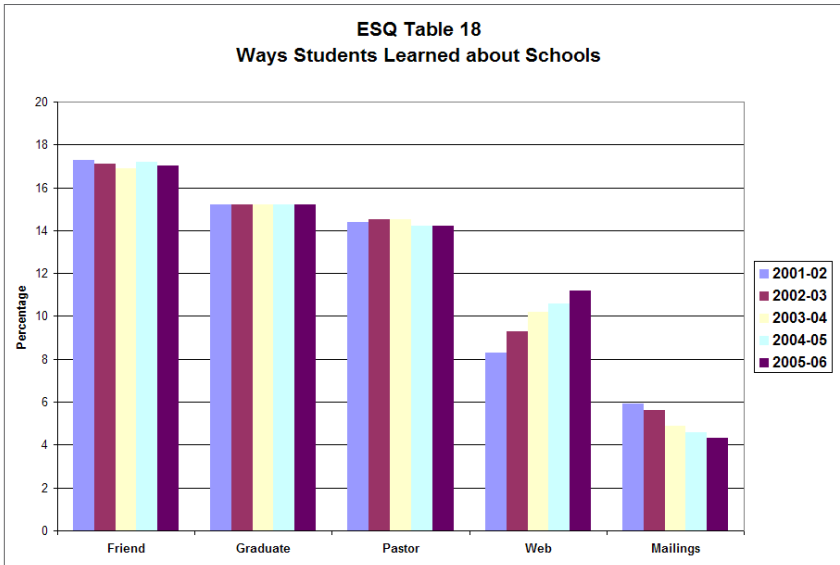
One might assume that among the participants in the UCLA study, the relationship between political orientation toward social issues and religious expression would follow traditional national patterns. As expected, self-described conservatives outnumbered liberals by more than three to one on high degrees of *Religious Engagement*. Liberals outnumbered conservatives by two to one with high levels of *Ethic of Caring* and by three to one on *Ecumenical Worldview*.

Little difference between conservatives and liberals was shown on high degrees of *Charitable Involvement* and *Compassionate Self-Concept*. While obvious and expected differences were seen between those with high and low levels of religious engagement regarding abortion, sexual activity, and same-sex marriage, unexpected findings between the same two groups on political and social issues were exhibited

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Who are our future students?



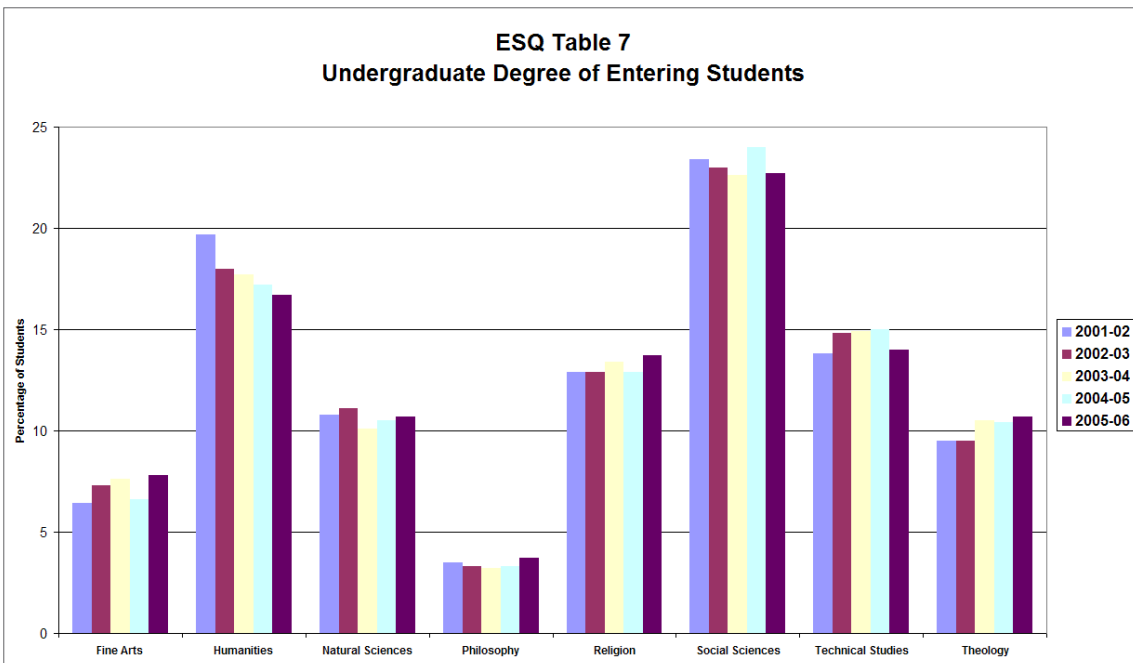
question produced only a six percentage-point difference between the two groups, nonetheless, the result may be surprising in that those high in religious engagement were more likely than those low in religious engagement (36 percent versus 30 percent) to agree that the death penalty should be abolished. Clearly, these differences or the lack thereof do not consistently mimic the current national trends regarding the relationship between religious engagement and attitudes toward social and political issues.

With eighty-two percent of those surveyed in the UCLA study having participated in volunteer services while in high school, what effect will this have on field placements and internship requirements? What difference will this make in the types of positions those students seek and fill upon graduation from ATS schools?

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elsewhere. For example, little difference between the attitudes of these two groups was expressed on issues of handgun control, affirmative action, racial discrimination, the role of women in the home/family, criminal rights, and the death penalty. While the abolition of the death penalty

When asked their "Expectation of Full-Time Position after Graduation," why are so many entering students at ATS schools *Undecided*? This is the second largest response with more than twenty percent, second only to parish ministry with 24.1 percent (see ESQ Table 22). Why are they attending? What are they seeking? Are they trying to decide between two choices, hence *undecided*, or do they not have any firm intentions upon entering?



What does this say about "calling"? What call have these undecided students received, and what nurture and assistance should be offered in decision-making? Graduating students report low satisfaction with services in this area, ranking *Career and Vocational Counseling* twentieth out of twenty-three items on the 2004-2005 *Graduating Student Questionnaire* with a score of 3.1 out of a possible high score of 5. Are our schools devoting enough time to professional

identity formation, and, if not, what might be done to enhance career and vocational counseling services?

Not surprisingly, college students seeking a theological education are relying more and more on the Internet to explore prospective schools and their degree programs. Without compromising a school's mission, perhaps the admissions office could capture the attention of these students by highlighting comparable issues that are deemed important by the students in the UCLA study. For example, if a school is able to offer individual assistance with vocational counseling, professional identity formation, and "meaning making," perhaps this could be emphasized on the home page. Given this increasing influence that Web sites have on prospective students (see ESQ Table 18), schools might highlight on their home pages their values, beliefs, and opportunities for spiritual formation.

At first glance it appears from ESQ Table 7 on *Undergraduate Degree of Entering Students* that the *Social Sciences* outnumber all other categories. However, if *Religion* and *Theology* were combined, that would be the largest category with 24.4 percent of entering students in 2005–06 as compared with the *Social Sciences'* 22.7 percent. These figures have remained relatively stable for the last five years with a gradual decrease in the humanities and a slight increase in fine arts, Religion, and Theology. For example, the combined category of students completing the *ATS Entering Student Questionnaire* with undergraduate degrees in religion and theology has risen by 2 percent since 2001–02. (Note that the list of participating schools changes slightly from year to year.) Will we continue to see this rise, given the UCLA study's findings? If so, what will this mean for ATS institutions? Should admissions offices put more resources into targeting religion and theology majors, or should the emphasis shift to the social sciences?

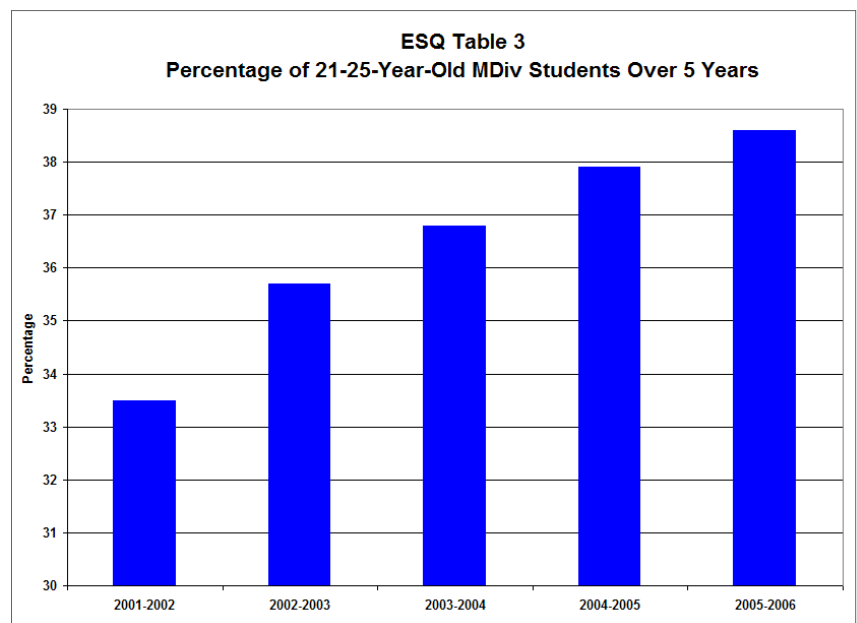
While this article obviously poses many more questions than it answers, perhaps those involved in marketing, admissions, student services, and curricular decisions may begin to look at how their approaches might change with a different pool of prospective students. The age 21–25 category made up 38.4 percent of the MDiv entering class of those completing the

2005–2006 *ATS Entering Student Questionnaire*. As shown in ESQ Table 3, this number has increased steadily during the past five years. If this trend continues and if these students' interest in spirituality and religious matters remains high, how will we adjust to their interests and needs?

Will ATS students, particularly Protestant students, ask that more emphasis be placed on spiritual formation? Should we assist them more in their quest for meaning and purpose? If Arthur Chickering is correct and if the trend shown in the UCLA study continues, ATS schools may need to adjust marketing strategies to capture the interest of these young students and offer ways to perpetuate and satisfy that interest. Parishes and congregations will seek informed priests and ministers to help them sift through the plethora of film and print media capitalizing on the interest in spirituality and religious matters, and ATS schools should be heartened that the pendulum is swinging toward this search for meaning and purpose. ♦

ENDNOTES

1. Arthur Chickering, Jon C. Dalton, and Liesa Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), 2006.
2. "An Interview with Arthur Chickering," *Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (June 2004), <http://spirituality.ucla.edu/newsletter/past/Volume%201/2/3.html>.
3. www.spirituality.ucla.edu.



Lilly conference speakers share ideas of how to improve scholarly research



Efrain Agosto

Professor of New Testament
Hartford Seminary

Several distinguished speakers addressed the 2006 recipients of Lilly Theological Research Grants who had gathered at the Renaissance Pittsburgh Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to discuss their research projects and to share ideas on how to improve theological research skills. The speakers' presentations focused on grant seeking, writing for multiple audiences, connecting research to communities of faith, and relating theological research to the aims and purposes of theological education. Highlights from two of these presentations appear here. The articles in their entirety will be published in the fall 2006 Theological Education journal.

Efrain Agosto of Hartford Seminary used the text from 1 Corinthians 12 to illustrate the need for various gifts of research within the academy in order to satisfy the multiple audiences that ATS member schools serve, such as colleagues, students, religious bodies, and communities of faith.

He disagrees with a recent article by Michael V. Fox that claims "faith-based study is a different realm of intellectual activity that can dip into Bible scholarship for its own purposes but cannot contribute to it." Fox differentiates between scholars who hold a personal faith but exercise a "secular" academic scholarship with its search for truth based on evidence. He believes religious faith should only be introduced "in distinctly religious forums" but not in the terms of the academy.¹

Agosto argues that faith-based scholarship, understood as scholarship motivated by faith to find evidence for faith rather than just scholarship that rests on evidence, often is misconstrued as theological scholarship by those in the academy.

"This happens in particular because we in theological scholarship are concerned for and engaged with our publics in a variety of ways," Agosto said, "including people of faith out in the realm of normative practice, and not just with our cohorts in the academic guild.

"For, in addition to being scholars of academic disciplines, the vocation of theological scholarship is to enhance the intellectual life of the church, especially the religious leaders of the church. Such scholarship, within a broadly defined public arena that takes theology—talk about God—seriously, is not scholarship on the prowl to prove faith but rather scholarship that concerns itself with God and the things of God."

Agosto shared his reasons for pursuing a research study on leadership in the Synoptic Gospels and Paul's letters in his recently published book, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*.

The motivations for this study are twofold. First, as a Puerto Rican raised in New York City, I know persons, especially in the storefront Pentecostal churches of my youth, who lacked access to traditional opportunities for training and leadership. Nonetheless, they exercised significant leadership roles within the Latino Christian church, as well as other community institutions of the city. After seminary, I began to work in the theological education of such individuals and I also pursued graduate studies in New Testament. I became intrigued by the question: Is there a biblical perspective relative to the issue of access to and opportunity for leadership? Thus in my graduate studies and beyond I have explored the question of who became a leader in the churches founded by the Apostle Paul and what was the social status of those leaders with respect to the strict, hierarchical social structure of Greco-Roman society. I hoped to make a biblical-theological contribution to the work of urban theological education, including the preparation of Latino and Latina church leaders in our communities. I strongly believe that such a motivation and line of inquiry contributes to leadership issues in churches of all races and denominations.²

"Now are these motivations as described in my book faith-based and therefore invalid?" Agosto asked. "Or did my experience in a faith-based situation growing up in New York City and then in [a theological educational setting serving the communities of Boston] motivate an honest, scholarly research inquiry in Paul and the Gospels?"

"I think the latter . . . demonstrates an honest, scholarly inquiry and also the publics that motivated it and may benefit from it," he said.

Carl R. Holladay of the Candler School of Theology of Emory University explained the road from conception of a research project to the execution of one is long and winding. Claiming that a research project is theological

does not make it so, he said, and that the true test comes as the project moves from dream to reality. He suggested ways in which the grant recipients could ensure the projects they proposed are carried out as an explicitly theological project by asking four sets of questions.

1. How does it illumine our understanding and experience of God's presence and action in the world?

Citing David Kelsey, Holladay said God cannot be studied directly as if text on a page or indirectly under the conditions of controlled manipulation in a laboratory. Therefore, it is more accurate to say that what distinguishes a theological school is that it is a community that studies those matters that are believed to lead to true understanding of God.³ He rephrased Kelsey's last sentence by asking: In what way(s) does the project actually *engage the mystery of God*?

"Whether we revisit the centuries-long debate over the respective domains of religion and theology and how they relate to each other or whether we engage classic construals of religion or theology," Holladay said, "either way, if we pass our research project through the sieve of a robustly conceived theory of religion or a magisterial theological vision that is foreign to us, not only does this intellectual journey expand our theological horizons but it also has the potential for enriching our research projects, perhaps in surprising ways."

2. To what extent does the project reenact, even trigger, the dynamic interaction between faith and understanding? Does it involve us, as scholars, and our reader(s) in a deeper process of transcendent self-understanding? Does working on the project reflect the dynamics of theological self-understanding? How does the research project function as an act of faith?

According to Holladay, no one saw more clearly than Rudolf Bultmann the need to clarify precisely what theological reflection actually entails. Bultmann recognized how easily systematized formulations of theological statements taken from the New Testament (e.g., from the writings of Paul) could be equated with, or even substitute for, the underlying

power of Paul's Gospel. No matter how carefully a theologian reports Paul's theological sentiments, Bultmann insists that one must distinguish between kerygmatic and theological statements.

"In the former, we hear the pristine Word of God echo in our ears as the Gospel works its magic on our hearts," Holladay said. "These kerygmatic statements may be brief and formulaic or somewhat elaborated, but they must be distinguished from those, usually longer, theological statements that explicate or amplify the kerygma. . . ."

"Research projects that are predicated on such construals of faith, that respect the distinction between primal faith language (i.e., kerygmatic language) and second-order theological language and that participate in, if not reenact, the hermeneutical process through which believers experience new levels of understanding through their encounter with the Christian Gospel, justly deserve the label 'theological.'"

3. How does the proposal address, inform, or challenge ecclesial consciousness or ecclesial identity?

"By *ecclesial consciousness* and *ecclesial identity* I do I do not mean *church* in a narrow sense," he said, "especially in the sense in which it is used when it is paired with *academy*. The sharp distinction often made between church and academy is a false polarity. If we ask whether a research project is geared primarily toward the church or the academy, we usually mean: is it primarily targeted toward people who relate to churches in some way—ministers, seminary students, or parishioners. Or, is it directed primarily toward people related to colleges and universities, usually, professors and students in such institutions, or to the persons comprising the scholarly guilds organized around academic disciplines?"

◆ First, in what sense does *church* inform the project? Or, to use the language of ATS, How does it inform the life of the church? Is its primary focus congregational, denominational, or broadly universal or catholic in scope? While these senses of church are not mutually exclu-



Carl R. Holladay

C. H. Candler Professor
of New Testament

Candler School of Theology
of Emory University

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2006 Chief Financial Officers Conference

The fourth annual meeting of the ATS Chief Financial Officers will be held November 16–18 in Phoenix, Arizona. In this beautiful setting, CFOs will be considering hot topics relevant to their work.

The program includes plenary sessions with distinguished speakers considering the economy and its impact on theological education, the relationship between the CFO and the academic dean, the CFO's role in the institutional assessment and accreditation process, and the strategic context of theological schools.

Participants will also have an opportunity to select from eight different workshops, including topics on legal issues, risk management, internal controls, banking relationships, financial survival planning, and Sarbanes-Oxley and seminary governance. Although these topics are designed by CFOs for CFOs, this conference

would also be valuable for chief administrators who are interested in enhancing their fiscal acumen. The steering committee is excited about the quality of the speakers for both the plenary sessions and workshops.

The last three conferences have been attended by 80–100 chief financial officers, presidents, and vice presidents for administration. By attending, CFOs will learn from conference speakers as well as colleagues throughout the conference. The role of the chief financial officer continues to be essential to the future viability of theological education. CFOs can make an investment in their continuing professional education while investing themselves in theological education.

Registration is online only through the ATS Web site at www.ats.edu/leadership_education/financial/06CFOBrochure-Fillable.pdf. ♦

LILLY CONFERENCE continued from page 13

sive, the theological implications of a project may differ widely, depending upon the view of church that informs it.

♦ Second, ecclesial consciousness cannot be seriously addressed apart from the increasing religious pluralism that characterizes twenty-first century life.

♦ Third, how does ecclesial consciousness foster public citizenship? The role of the church, understood in its broadest sense, within the public sphere warrants intentional theological research. Scholarly interest in public theology has flourished in recent decades, primarily in response to the sense that theology can, and must, address social and political issues that dominate the public sphere.

4. How does the project shape, inform, or challenge specific Christian practices?

"Whether we think of this criterion as practical or ethical," Holladay said, "it clearly intends us to ask whether our project will actually have an impact on what people *do*, not just what they think or even what they believe but how they behave."

He asked if it would inform the way individuals form communities and if those communities would be heterogeneous or homogeneous and whether the behavior of those communities would be socially constructive or destructive. Holladay expanded the reach to the institutional structuring that arises from those communities—institutions with clearly established legal frameworks such as for-profit and not-for-profit corporations. Then, he said, one has to consider how the project impacts institutional behavior—business, educational, judicial, legislative, or civic practices.

"Research projects that consciously attend to the normative dimensions of human life and ask hard questions about the relationship between beliefs and behaviors and that explore the complex interrelationships between what people think and what they do," Holladay said, "may rightly be called theological in the best sense." ♦

ENDNOTES

1. Michael V. Fox, "Bible Scholarship and Faith-Based Study: My View" *SBL Forum 2006*, <http://www.sbl-site.org/Article.aspx?ArticleId=490>.
2. Efrain Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2005), 2.
3. David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What's Theological About A Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 31.

2006–07 Lilly Theological Research Grant recipients

The Association of Theological Schools has announced the recipients of the Lilly Theological Research Grants for 2006–07.

Supported by a grant from Lilly Endowment, the ATS Lilly Theological Research Grants program is designed to encourage high level research across the theological disciplines by scholars at all stages in their careers. A total of twenty-five grants were awarded among three categories.

Faculty Fellowships

Recipients of the Faculty Fellowships (grants of \$30,000 each during a sabbatical or other leave) include:

Gary A. Anderson, University of Notre Dame Department of Theology, *From Israel's Burden to Israel's Debt: Metaphors of Sin in Ancient Judaism and Christianity*

Ellen F. Davis, Duke University Divinity School, *Remembering the Land: Reading the Bible through Agrarian Eyes*

Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Drew University Theological School, *Justicia: A Praxis of Care and Tenderness—A Mujerista Approach*

Laura S. Nasrallah, Harvard University Divinity School, *Geography and Early Christianity: Space and the Roman Empire*

Mark Valeri, Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, *"Heavenly Merchandize": Religion and the Market in Early New England*

Theological Scholars Grants

Recipients of the Theological Scholars Grants (grants up to \$12,000 each for research apart from formal research leave) include:

Lewis O. Ayres, Candler School of Theology of Emory University, *The Giver of Life: Rethinking the Rise of Classical Christian Pneumatologies 350–400*

Lloyd A. Harsch, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, *Out of Many Fellowships, One Family of Faith: The Collection and Digitization of Baptist Confessions of Faith*

Peter G. Heltzel, New York Theological Seminary, *American Evangelical Politics, 1996–2006: A Theological Genealogy*

Ruthanna B. Hooke, Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia, *Real Presence: Preaching as an Embodied Event*

Sheri L. Klouda, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, *Building a Biblical Theology for Today: The Theology of Intertextuality*

Dora R. Mbuwayesango, Hood Theological Seminary, *Sexuality in Priestly Theology in the Hebrew Bible*

Judith H. Newman, Emmanuel College of Victoria University, *A Commentary on Early Jewish Prayer Texts in Greek*

Rady Roldan-Figueroa, George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University, *Paul among the Exiles: Readings of Paul by Sixteenth-Century Spanish Evangelicals*

Barbara R. Rossing, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, *For the Healing of the World: A Biblical Theology of Ecology and Empire*

Timothy Tseng, American Baptist Seminary of the West, *Persistent Witness: A Documentary History of Asian Protestants in the North American Diaspora*

Research Expense Grants

Recipients of the Research Expense Grants (grants up to \$5,000 for those engaged in research projects) include:

Peter C. Bouteneff, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, *The Genesis of Creation: The Early Christian Reception of the Biblical Creation Narratives*

Stephen G. Delamarter, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, *Imaging Ethiopian Manuscripts*

Sarah S. Henrich, Luther Seminary, *Visual and Literary Interpretations of the New Testament in Fourth and Fifth Century Northeastern Italy*

Cynthia Holder Rich, Western Theological Seminary, *The Theology, Ministry and Impact of the Fifohazana Movement of Madagascar: A Critical Analysis*

Fang-Lan Hsieh, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, *A Survey of Chinese Hymnody*

Jonathan H. Kim, Talbot School of Theology of Biola University, *Attrition of Asian American Pastors: A Case Study Analysis*

Pui-lan Kwok, Episcopal Divinity School and **Seung Ai Yang**, St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity University of St. Thomas, *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women's Theology*

Alexander Rentel, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, *The Development of the Orthodox Prothesis Rite. Part I: The Diataxis Tradition*

Anthony W. Ruff, St. John's University School of Theology–Seminary, *Resources in Gregorian Chant and History of Liturgical Music*

Julia M. Speller, Chicago Theological Seminary, *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: African Americans, Racial Justice and White Denominations* ♦



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EVENTS IN MAY & JUNE

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS SOCIETY (CAOS) SEMINAR
June 23–24, 2006

**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

Conversation with the Commissioners ~ 10:30 a.m. (See page 4.)

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

Registration materials have been mailed to the offices of the chief administrative and chief academic officers.
You can also register for the meeting and make hotel reservations via the ATS Web site:

www.ats.edu/meetings_events/2006BiennialMeeting.asp

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