

COLLOQUY

Understanding our institutional contexts: Challenges and strategies

Fifty-two women attended the October Women in Leadership seminar titled Understanding Our Institutional Contexts: Challenges and Strategies. Funded by Lilly Endowment, the fall seminar hoped women leaders in ATS member schools would achieve: (1) greater understanding about their work in theological education, (2) informed perspectives about the unique issues women in theological education encounter, and (3) increased satisfaction in their work.



Participants of the October Women in Leadership Seminar held in Pittsburgh.

Boyoung Lee (Pacific School of Religion) framed the time with three worship services. She explicated the text about the separation of the sheep and goats, the text about Mary and Martha, and the text about the resurrected Jesus on the Road to Emmaus. In all, she surprised the group with twists of interpretation that brought a fresh Word to participants. As one evaluation survey respondent put it, "her way of seeing the new and lifting it up was incredible."

Dorcas Gordon (Knox College) offered a plenary presentation comparing the church to an iceberg: a formidable presence teaming with life but mostly invisible if just viewed from the surface. She used Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's seven interpretive principles to explore how they might offer insights that lead to greater inclusion, dignity, and justice in the church.

The majority of the seminar time engaged participants in small groups, mentoring, and workshops. Participants were asked in advance to prepare a one-page case study, or vignette, portraying a gender-related dilemma of their work life in their own context. At the seminar they engaged in small group reflection on the vignette guided by an experienced facilitator. In addition, participants engaged in a mentoring conversation with a faculty member or theological school administrator to gain some wisdom, a vision, and encouragement for leadership in their particular context.

Two workshops were presented on the topic: Finding the Balance: Health and Wholeness. **Anabel Proffitt** (Lancaster Theological Seminary) led one for faculty that offered poetry as a strategy for renewal. **Esther Diaz-Bolet** (Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) offered the other for administrators that illustrated through experience the distress felt when one's environment is in disarray as opposed to the sense of renewal one can experience when one attends to personal care.

Joan Martin (Episcopal Divinity School) concluded the event with a plenary address reviewing how women in theological education are "back to where we started," yet also, in some ways, in a different place. She referred to the "culture of denial," the tendency to ignore difference, and the way difference can be co-opted. She described "system beating" as the "horizontal violence" that hurts the one who tries to achieve change. How one defines inclusion, diversity, and participation is the key for moving to a different location.

Peer networking, mentoring, small groups, and worship are valued aspects of these seminars, according to the seminar evaluations. As one representative survey respondent summarized, "I go home renewed in my sense of who I am and the essential contribution I make as a woman leader in my institution." ♦

In praise of faculty

It's the same, year in and year out. More than half of the ATS member schools participate in the *Graduating Student Questionnaire*, and while responses to some questions vary, graduating students respond to one question almost exactly the same, year after year. When asked to identify what was the most influential aspect of their theological education, the first choice is always the "faculty." Students can choose among fifteen responses to this question, and other aspects of theological education are influential. But faculty always tops the list as the most influential, and it is named by twice the percentage of students as the second most frequently chosen influencer, year after year (www.ats.edu/Resources/student/GSQ2005-06Profile.pdf).



I am writing in praise of the more than 3,500 persons who form the full-time teaching staffs of ATS member schools. They are the persons who have the greatest impact on the students who attend ATS schools. They are the people who write the books and conduct the adult education classes in the churches. They are the people who write articles for scholarly journals and articles for denominational magazines. They are the people who make classes formative for students, who are evangelists for faith's need to



Give me a course with someone who knows the text and tradition, intimately and well, critically and passionately, and I'll show you some students who, years after the course, can tell you how not only what the outcomes of the course were but also how those outcomes have guided them and sustained them in the ensuing years.



seek understanding and for students' needs to bring intellectual substance to their believing. Faculty can make a classroom as lively as they can make a committee meeting boring! I've sat in classes from time to time at ATS schools and watched faculty members teach in ways that students learn, and I've talked with students who have told me how their soul was stirred as they learned.

Faculties, especially full-time faculties, constitute the largest single expense item in many ATS schools. In higher education, in general, there is a tendency to limit the number of full-time faculty members and build educational programs using part-time faculty. Large for-profit higher education institutions often use part-time faculty as their primary teaching staff. Adjunct and part-time professors make important contributions to ATS schools. They know their stuff, enjoy the opportunity to teach, and work attentively with students. But I worry about what happens when a part-time faculty replaces full-time faculty as the center of the school's teaching staff. I think something powerfully formative about theological education can be lost. A recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* article summarized the conclusion of a study by Daniel Jacoby "that community colleges with the largest proportion of part-time instructors have the worst student-graduation rates." In theological education, too few full-time faculty members may not affect the graduation rate as much as the formation rate.

As the march in higher education continues down the road of outcomes and more outcomes, I want to take the unpopular position that inputs still matter. Give me a course with someone who knows the text and tradition, intimately and well, critically and passionately, and I'll show you some students who, years after the course, can tell you how not only what the outcomes of the course were but also how those outcomes have guided them and sustained them in the ensuing years. ♦

This article is the second in a series on the benefit of the traditional resources in theological schools.

Association names members to Task Force on Disability and Seminary Education

The Association has appointed a seven-member task force to develop a policy statement that will give counsel and guidance to member schools on issues of disability and theological education. "A number of ATS member schools have held conferences to share best practices on practical, pedagogical, and theological issues related to disability; some have incorporated educational attention to disability within the core curriculum; some schools have highly developed systems for accommodating students with special needs; others find themselves ill-prepared when a student with a disability enrolls and needs special services. This effort to develop a policy statement is intended to assist schools with the range of issues related to people with disabilities; to encourage seminaries to be welcoming communities for staff, faculty, students, and visitors with disabilities; and to equip future religious leaders to minister to and with persons with disabilities," said **Nancy Merrill**, ATS director, communications and external relations, who is providing primary staff support to the task force.

Thomas Graves, president of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, will chair the task force. Task force members are **Robert Anderson**, president of the Center for Religion and Disability; **Bruce Birch**, academic dean of Wesley Theological Seminary; **Antoinette (Toni) Daniels**, director of learning and leadership at the Episcopal Church Foundation (formerly at The General Theological Seminary); **Nancy Eiesland**, associate professor of sociology of religion at Candler School of Theology; **Winston Gooden**, dean of the school of psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary; and consultant **Ginny Thornburgh**, vice president and director of the Religion and Disability Program of the National Organization on Disability and a trustee of Princeton Theological Seminary.

The task force will hold its first meeting in February. It will present a draft of the policy statement to the ATS Board of Directors and the Board of Commissioners in December/January 2007/08. It will then be circulated to member schools prior to being acted upon at the 2008 Biennial Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. ♦

Research commences on women in theological education

Research has begun in the re-analysis of data collected by the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education. The data, collected as part of two major studies of faculty in ATS schools in the early 1990s and in the early 2000s, will be re-examined to identify differences that are a function of gender (all women compared to all men) and racial/ethnic identity (racial/ethnic women and white women). This re-analysis will seek to identify what all women faculty and racial/ethnic women have said in these two major studies about their work in theological education. This current research is made possible by a grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.

Barbara Brown Zikmund is project director and principal researcher. She is the former president of Hartford Seminary, a former ATS president, and a highly regarded researcher in theological education.

In addition to the re-analysis of the Auburn Center data, the research includes the following activities:

1. The principal researcher is analyzing the responses of all women students in the ATS *Entering and Graduating Student Questionnaire* data. These data have been summarized on an annual basis but never analyzed to develop a baseline of information on women students.
2. ATS is also working with Auburn Center to develop a codicil for women respondents to its already projected April 2007 survey of senior administrators.
3. Finally, ATS is conducting structured phone interviews with fifty senior women administrators in ATS schools, including members of the

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ESQ and GSQ go live

In early November, ATS unveiled the new online version of its *Graduating Student Questionnaire* (GSQ). The online GSQ is part of an overall updating of the student information database and includes an online *Entering Student Questionnaire* (ESQ) slated for release on January 1, 2007.

ATS member schools choosing to use the ESQ and GSQ will find a number of improvements resulting from the changes. The online versions increase student and institutional access to the instruments and streamline the administration and submission of the questionnaires. As a result, it will be considerably easier for schools with extension sites to avail themselves of these important data-gathering tools.

The only technological requirement for both students and school coordinators is Internet access through Windows Explorer or Firefox browsers. In addition to the electronic version's advantages over the paper questionnaire, current pricing for the online ESQ and the GSQ provides added incentive for schools to consider switching.

The change in database also means that ATS is able to offer new and improved data re-

porting methods for the ESQ and GSQ. These new reports—available in both hard copy and electronic formats—will include both the tabular data to which users have become accustomed along with visually enhanced reporting through the use of bar graphs and pie charts.

Helen Blier, coordinator of student information resources, said, "With this step forward, we look forward to introducing schools not currently using the ESQ and GSQ to consider trying the online versions and to see the value these data-gathering instruments have for their schools. We hope that the new and easy-to-read reports will facilitate the ability of our schools to use these data constructively in their self-studies and ongoing assessment and evaluation. The electronic reports will also help the data circulate more easily within the administration, staff, and faculty—a significant improvement, since the numbers represented are important indicators of the institution's well-being."

For more information on the online questionnaires and new reporting methods, contact Helen Blier at blier@ats.edu or 412-788-6505, Ext. 248. ♦

Sixth Annual CAOS Conference

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Chief Academic Officers Society

March 22–24, 2007
Thursday–Saturday

Preconference Sessions

Thursday, March 22, Noon–3:30 p.m.

New Deans Lunch

Noon–2:30 p.m.

"Ferverino"

Bruce C. Birch, Academic Dean, Wesley Theological Seminary

Question and Answer Session

Group Discussions, facilitated by CAOS Steering Committee members

CAOS Listserv Demonstration

3:00–3:30 p.m.

Richard D. Weis, Dean of the Seminary
United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities

Keynote Speakers

Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director
The Association of Theological Schools

Lucinda Huffaker, Director
Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning

Daisy Machado
Academic Vice President/Academic Dean
Lexington Theological Seminary

Lovett H. Weems Jr.
Professor of Church Leadership
Wesley Theological Seminary

Barbara Wheeler, President
Auburn Theological Seminary

Teaching with technology

www.ats.edu > Projects > Technology and Educational Practices

Biblical studies, church history, and preaching were the topics of three two-part online workshops sponsored by the ATS project on Technology and Educational Practices. Approximately 150 faculty members participated in the workshops via telephone and the Internet in spring, summer, and fall of 2006. A prerequisite to each workshop was the viewing of a narrated Flash or PowerPoint presentation prior to the live, interactive workshop using Breeze Web-based audiovisual presentation software.

One of the goals of the Technology and Educational Practices project is to identify the range and varieties of learning that has accrued in ATS member schools—both those that received Lilly Endowment technology grants and a selection of schools that did not. The workshops provided the opportunity for theological educators to share teaching practices using technology, to discuss with peers pedagogical challenges and effective solutions, and to receive step-by-step tutorial help to integrate technology into their own courses.

“Practicing How We Preach: Preparing Modern Preachers through the Use of Appropriate Technologies” was presented by **Sebastian Mahfood** (Kenrick-Glennon Seminary) and Deb Organ and **Linda Carrillo** (The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity). The second workshop focused on “Church History and the Visual Generation,” offered by **George Kalantzis** (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary). **Richard Nysse** (Luther Seminary) presented a workshop on “Biblical Studies: Creating Online Communities of Interpretation.” A summary of Nysse’s workshop is available at <http://breeze.ats.edu/scripturesummary>.

A month-long online conference for presidents and deans occurred in October 2006. The six presentations are archived for viewing on the ATS Web site at Projects > Technology and Educational Practices > Online Summative Conference for Presidents and Deans. The keynote presentation was a conversation about how new technologies have influenced theological teaching and learning. Participants were **Michael Battle** (Interdenominational Theological Center), **Charles Bouchard** (Aquinas Institute of Theology), **Richard Mouw** (Fuller Theological Seminary), **Robin Steinke** (Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg), and **Daniel Aleshire** (ATS executive director).

Five “salons” were offered as part of the conference. They included (1) “What Difference Does It Make? Digital Technology in the Theological Classroom” by **Mary Hess** (Luther Seminary); (2) “Theological Reflection, Theology, and Technology: When Baby Boomer Theologians Teach” by **Edward Foley** (Catholic Theological Union); (3) “Technology: A New Tool or a New Way of Doing Theological Education” by **Steve Delamarter** (George Fox Evangelical Seminary); and (4) “Planning for Innovation: A Framework for Reflective Practice” by **Victor Klimoski** (Saint John’s University School of Theology-Seminary). The fifth “salon” was a closing conversation among the presenters with **Daniel Aleshire**.

The project has also generated a series of “field notes” on practical experiences of member school faculty in integrating technology into their teaching. Seventeen to date, the notes are available on the ATS Web site, along with a blog for the exchange of opinions, ideas, and resources for technology and educational practices. ♦

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Boards of Trustees. These interviews are being conducted by members of the Women in Leadership Advisory Committee trained by the principal researcher.

The next phase of the project will involve several consultation activities with ATS member schools. ATS staff will contract with as many as ten persons to serve as consultants to member schools. The consultations will focus on reporting the findings of the research and collaborating with schools on strategies to enhance the work of women as well as the workplace climate.

ATS anticipates that, together, these activities will provide baseline information on women in theological education that will be helpful benchmarks and reference for the future and will inform recommendations to ATS schools regarding (a) support and enhancement of the work of women in theological education and (b) institutional practices and issues that impact the work of women in theological education. ♦

Reading the Qur'an in light of a Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition

Gabriel Said Reynolds (University of Notre Dame), a 2006–07 recipient of the Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology award, describes his project and shares photos he took while in Lebanon and Israel doing his research. An excerpt of his progress report appears here.



Tantur as seen from Bethlehem. Notice the Israeli wall at the edge of the town.



Rosh Hashanah



Gabriel Said Reynolds in front of a holy site.

I spent the month of September at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute, a research center on a site between Bethlehem and Jerusalem originally settled by the Knights of St. John during the Crusades (see the tree covered hill in Tantur photo). There I was able to pursue research on the midrashic and Talmudic literature that is central to my project, with the help of a number of scholars at the Hebrew University. My hope for the Luce manuscript is to develop a solution to the current impasse in Qur'anic studies. On one hand, early Western scholars generally described the Qur'an as a patchwork of texts that Muhammad borrowed from Biblical literature, in reaction to his pagan environment. On the other hand, since World War II the question of Qur'anic origins has been largely avoided, as both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have chosen to ignore the Qur'an's relationship with the Bible, focusing instead on Muslim exegesis.

In the Luce project, I propose that the Qur'an might be fruitfully read as a homily on biblical literature. It is not a text that is simply borrowed from the Bible. It is a text that uses biblical literature as a reference work as it develops new religious messages. Therefore students of the Bible should study the Qur'an as a text fully within the Biblical tradition. So too students of the Qur'an should study the Bible as they seek to understand the Qur'an. ♦

Descriptions of research being done by other 2006–07 recipients of the Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology award can be found in the March/April 2006 issue of Colloquy (vol. 14, no. 4) on the ATS Web site under Resources > Publications.

Grants Deadlines

Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology
December 1, 2006

Lilly Theological Research Grants
January 5, 2007

New report issued on Latino/a seminarians

In November, the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame issued the report "Equipped to Serve: Latino/a Seminarians and the Future of Religious Leadership in the Latino/a Community" as part of its Research Reports series.

The executive summary of the report states, "This report presents a portrait of the next generation of Latino/a religious leaders and examines how effectively their theological education is preparing them to lead and serve Latino/a communities throughout the United States. Through analysis of quantitative survey data and indepth focus group interviews, we identify the priorities and values that Latino/a seminarians will bring to their work as congregational and community leaders. We also analyze what institutional and curricular characteristics are most critical for preparing these future leaders to respond to the spiritual and material needs of Latinos/as in the United States.

"Our findings reveal that the majority of Latino/a seminarians pursue ministerial training and theological education out of a desire to be better equipped to serve their communities. Most come to seminary as experienced church and community leaders who are eager to gain further organizational skills and theological knowledge that they can take back and apply to the reality of Latinos/as in this country. The majority supports churches taking an active role in society, especially by advocating on behalf of poor and low-income people.

"Though most seminarians consider their education well worth the effort and sacrifice, our findings indicate that theological institutions can do more to create a welcoming and effective learning environment for Latinos/as.

In particular, seminaries and theological schools need to make sure that Latino/a perspectives and voices are incorporated into their classrooms and institutional cultures, to teach students how to apply and translate their studies to a Latino/a context, and to offer more classes addressing the social and cultural issues that confront the communities these future religious leaders will serve."

Of students in ATS member schools who reported their race/ethnicity in fall 2005 (and excluding "Visa" students), 4.2 percent of students were Hispanic, 7.6 percent were Asian, 13.1 percent were Black, 0.4 percent were Native American, and 74.4 percent were White.

The full "Equipped to Serve" report is available in PDF format at http://www.nd.edu/%7Elatino/research/pubs/Equipped_to_Serve.pdf

Authors are Milagros Peña (University of Florida), Edwin I. Hernández (University of Notre Dame), Caroline Sotelo-Turner (Arizona State University), Danielle Dirks (University of Florida), and Kari Jo Verhulst (University of Notre Dame).



Benjamin Valentin (Andover Newton Theological Seminary) and **Anthony B. Pinn** (Rice University) respond to questions from participants at the October Black and Hispanic Dialogue II held in Pittsburgh, PA. The two wrote and edited part of the book, *The Ties that Bind*, which was used at the first Black and Hispanic Dialogue in October 2002. They currently are editing part of a new book, *Why Creating Ourselves? Thoughts on the State of Theological Dialogue*.

Daniel O. Aleshire
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Ext. 229 | aleshire@ats.edu

Helen M. Blier
COORDINATOR OF STUDENT
INFORMATION RESOURCES
Ext. 248 | hblier@ats.edu

Tisa Lewis
DIRECTOR, ACCREDITATION AND
INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION
Ext. 228 | tlewis@ats.edu

Carol E. Lytch
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Ext. 238 | lytch@ats.edu

Jeremiah J. McCarthy
DIRECTOR, ACCREDITATION AND
INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION
Ext. 249 | mccarthy@ats.edu

Chris A. Meinzer
DIRECTOR, FINANCE
AND ADMINISTRATION
Ext. 232 | meinzer@ats.edu

Nancy Merrill
DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS
AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS
Ext. 234 | merrill@ats.edu

William C. Miller
DIRECTOR, ACCREDITATION AND
INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION
Ext. 247 | miller@ats.edu

William R. Myers
DIRECTOR,
LEADERSHIP EDUCATION
Ext. 252 | myers@ats.edu

Chris Olsztyn
MANAGER OF TECHNOLOGY
Ext. 233 | olsztyn@ats.edu

ATS OFFICE
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275
Phone: 412-788-6505
Fax: 412-788-6510
Web site: www.ats.edu

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.

EDITORS
Nancy Merrill
DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS
AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS
Ext. 234 | merrill@ats.edu

Linda D. Trostle
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR
Ext. 246 | trostle@ats.edu

EVENTS IN DECEMBER & JANUARY

Henry Luce III Fellows in Theology Application Deadline

December 1, 2006 • Submit to ATS office in Pittsburgh, PA

Presidential Leadership Intensive Week

December 3–8, 2006 • Santa Fe, NM

Graduating Student Questionnaire Workshop

December 4, 2006 • Pittsburgh, PA

Lilly Theological Research Grants Application Deadline

January 5, 2007 • Submit to ATS office in Pittsburgh, PA

New Presidents Seminar

January 11–13, 2007 • Savannah, GA

Back issues of *Colloquy*
are online
at www.ats.edu > Resources >
Publications > *Colloquy*

Petition Deadline

Petitions to the ATS Board of Commissioners must be received by **April 1** for consideration in its spring meeting and by **November 1** for consideration in its winter meeting.



Celebrating God's Work through DIAP

Disney Coronado Springs Hotel
Lake Buena Vista, Florida
February 15–17, 2007
Thursday–Saturday

Preconference Sessions

Thursday, February 15, 1:30–4:30 p.m.

Raising Up Stewards to be Rich toward God!
Gary Hoag, Vice President of Advancement
Denver Seminary

New Development Officer Workshop: Putting It All Together
Richard Dubose, Vice President for Development and Seminary Relations
Columbia Theological Seminary

Keynote Speakers

David Harkins, Originating Committee Member and Development Officer
Eden Theological Seminary (retired)

Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director
The Association of Theological Schools

Ann Svennungsen, President
The Fund for Theological Education

Quentin Schultze, Arthur H. DeKruyter
Chair in Faith and Communication
Calvin College

Gary Moore,
Counsel to Ethical and Spiritual Investors



The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1103
Phone: 412-788-6505 • Fax: 412-788-6510 • Web site: www.ats.edu

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