Special Biennial Issue

When accrediting standards aren't working

Sixteen years ago, when I was the associate director for accreditation, I approached then Executive Director James Waits about the need to undertake a major project on the ATS accrediting standards. When he asked why, I basically said that the standards "weren't working." He supported the request, and the Association undertook a four-year project to rethink the prior questions that underlie accrediting standards, examine the growing range of practices in ATS schools, and redevelop the standards so that they served their purpose.

Those standards, adopted in 1996, have been working well for the past decade. I think they are working well because the ratings that the Commission has received from visitors on accrediting committees, who rate how well the standards functioned in their visits, and institutional representatives, who rate how well they functioned in the self-studies, have been positive. On the basis of these ratings, I assume the standards are working, for the most part.

What is a standard doing when it is "working?" The institutional standards are working when they guide schools toward practices that strengthen them and hold schools accountable for practices that are crucial to their institutional well-being. The educational program standards are working when they identify and hold schools accountable to practices that are crucial for educational efforts that serve communities of faith, advance theological disciplines, and support the voice of religion in the broader public agenda.

When is an accrediting standard not working? Institutional standards aren't working when they require schools to do something that is irrelevant or unnecessary to institutional stability and viability or when they fail to require schools to do what is central to their well-being. Educational standards aren't working when they constrain schools from providing the kind of theological education that their missions and constituencies need them to provide, or when they require schools to do things that are not central to the educational quality of post-baccalaureate degrees, or when they do not require the kind of work that higher education conventions presume for post-baccalaureate degree programs.

Earlier this year, the Board of Commissioners voted to undertake an extensive effort to review and revise the Commission on Accrediting standards and procedures. This time, I think the standards and procedures are working, for the most part. ATS does not need to return to the prior questions the way that it did in 1996. However, since the current standards were adopted, educational practices have been changing, the constellation of persons working in compensated ministry positions continues to change, higher education has been changing, the accrediting practices of several regional agencies have been changing, and the expectations that constituents place on many theological schools have been changing. To negotiate the reality of these changes, the standards and procedures require review and, where appropriate, revision.

The Commission's standards and procedures review will begin this fall and continue through early spring 2012. Some recommendations will come to the 2010 Biennial Meeting and some to the 2012 Biennial. The process will provide multiple opportunities for input and review by member schools, and the hope is that the changes will keep the standards and procedures working well, well into the future.

In the end, the hope is that the standards will work to improve and enhance the work of theological schools as they move into the future.

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COLLOQUY

FEATURES: BIENNIAL MEETING

THE ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENTS

Biennial Meeting 2008:
A spirited gathering

In late June, 352 representatives of ATS and its member schools gathered at the 2008 Biennial Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, for two and a half days of decision making, learning, conversation, and fellowship. As always, the Biennial Meeting brought together a remarkable array of faith traditions represented by an equally remarkable array of individuals. The group included 299 registrants from 189 member schools; thirty-six representing affiliate organizations, consortia, and other guests; and sixteen ATS staff.

Plenaries and worship

The theme of the Biennial Meeting—*We Have This Treasure: The Promise of Learning for Religious Vocation*—and its likening of theological schools to earthen vessels was reflected in remarks by Craig Dykstra of Lilly Endowment; Trace Haythorn, Sharon Watson Fluker, and Melissa Wiginton of The Fund for Theological Education; Barbara Brittingham of the New England Association of Schools & Colleges; and ATS Executive Director Daniel O. Aleshire. Highlights of the plenaries are included in this issue of *Colloquy* and on the ATS website, www.ats.edu.

Barbara Day Miller (Candler School of Theology of Emory University) led morning worship, further developing the theme of earthen vessels, with participation by local theological students and brief reflections on 2 Corinthians 4:7 by Michael A. Battle, R. Alan Culpepper, Jan Love, and D. Cameron Murchison from Atlanta-area member schools.

Allison Shirreffs

Business sessions

Those present conducted business in two sessions on Saturday and Sunday. Red cards filled the air as members voted in new leaders, welcomed new members and affiliates, and enacted revisions to policies, procedures, and standards. Highlights of the business meeting included the following:

Elections
The membership elected the nominated slate of new officers for the Association: President, **John Kinney**, dean, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology of Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia; Vice President, **Richard Mouw**, president, Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California; Secretary, **Laura Mendenhall**, president, Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia; and Treasurer, **Mary McNamara**, executive vice president, Union Theological Seminary in New York.

New member schools and affiliates
The membership voted to admit Northwest Baptist Seminary in Tacoma, Washington, and St. Stephen's College in Edmonton, Alberta, as Associate Members of the Association and to grant Affiliate Status to the Hispanic Summer Program and the Latin American Leadership Development Program in Glendora, California. A motion to grant Affiliate Status to Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York, did not pass.

Policy statements
Based on a comprehensive review over the past two years of all ATS policy statements—many of which were adopted in the 1970s or 1980s and were out of date or no longer valid—the membership approved board-recommended action upon several policies:

- Adoption of a new policy statement on Disability and Theological Education.
- Retirement of the policy statements on Procedures for Self-Study and Resources for Counseling (1972), Institutional Responsibilities and Off-Campus Programs (1986), Evaluation of the Work of Faculty Members and Administrative Officers (1976), Statement of Preparation for Seminary Studies (1978), and Termination of Student Tenure (1974).
- Revision or replacement of the policy statements on Institutional Procedures: Faculty Resignations, Leaves, and Retirements

Allison Shirreffs

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. 2 Cor. 4:7 (ESV)

(1960); ATS Guidelines for Retrenchment (1976); Goals and Guidelines for Women in Theological Schools (1976); Student Financial Aid (1976); Ethical Guidelines for Seminaries and Seminary Clusters (1976); and Professional Ethics for Teachers (1966/72).

Task forces will be established to craft the policy statements voted for revision or replacement. The task forces will present their recommendations at the next Biennial Meeting in 2010.

Commission standards revision

Based upon the recommendation of the Commission on Accrediting, the membership voted to amend Degree Program Standard M, section M.1.0.4 to read as follows:

> When an institution admits students to post-baccalaureate courses who lack the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, the institution must ensure that the course has content, requirements, and student learning outcomes appropriate to post-baccalaureate education. When an institution permits undergraduate students to enroll in its post-baccalaure-

ate courses, the institution must differentiate course requirements and student learning outcomes for post-baccalaureate or undergraduate credit.

Commission procedures revision

Also based upon the recommendation of the Commission, the membership voted to amend the complaint procedures (Article XI) of the Procedures Related to Accreditation and Membership of the Commission. As required by the U.S. Department of Education, the amendment deletes the last line of Article XI: "The Board of Commissioners will not investigate a complaint while the complainant is engaged in a civil suit against a member school."

Gatherings and celebrations

Two receptions—one hosted by In Trust and one by The Atlanta Theological Association with the American Academy of Religion, The Fund for Theological Education, and the Society for Biblical Literature—offered opportunities for further fellowship and networking.

At the Saturday evening banquet, Joseph C. Hough, Jr., recently retired president of Union Theological Seminary (New York, NY) and former dean at Claremont School of Theology (Claremont, CA) and Vanderbilt University Divinity School (Nashville, TN), received the 2008 Distinguished Service Award.

Workshops

Ten different leadership development workshops, most conducted twice, offered opportunities to share best practices in the areas of fundraising, digital technology, spiritual formation, racial and ethnic diversity, disability policies, governance, assessment of graduate outcomes, and education programs for clergy.

Minutes of the Biennial Meeting are posted as *Bulletin* 48, Part 3, on the Publications page under Resources on the ATS website, www.ats.edu.◆

Photos by Allison Shirreffs

Joseph C. Hough Jr. receives Distinguished Service Award

Eliza Smith Brown

Joseph C. Hough, Jr., president emeritus of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, was presented the Distinguished Service Award at the ATS Biennial Meeting in June. Hough is the eleventh recipient of the award, which acknowledges individuals who have contributed in extraordinary ways to the improvement and enhancement of theological education.

Having served since 1999 as the fifteenth president of Union Theological Seminary and as William E. Dodge Professor of Social Ethics, Hough retired at the end of the 2007–08 academic year.

Under Hough's leadership, Union Seminary successfully completed a $39 million comprehensive campaign in 2004 and implemented a strategic plan that greatly enhanced the seminary's financial viability, invigorated its academic programs, and strengthened the historic ties with neighboring institutions. He played a major role in establishing the Henry Luce III Chair in Reformation Church History and the Ane Marie and Bent Emil Nielsen Chair in Late Antique and Byzantine Christian History—two important new endowed chairs in Union's Church History Field. He was also instrumental in securing full funding for two existing chairs: The Reinhold Niebuhr Chair in Social Ethics and The Paul Tillich Chair of Theology, World Religions, and Culture. Prior to his post at Union, Hough served as dean at Claremont School of Theology and dean at Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

Hough completed his undergraduate studies at Wake Forest and earned his Bachelor of Divinity, MA, and PhD degrees from Yale University. An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, he is the author, coauthor, or editor of several books including *Christian Identity and Theological Education*; *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education*; *Theology and the University*; and *Black Power and White Protestants*. He is frequently called on to speak to media and public gatherings as a strong voice for religious tolerance. ◆

Making haste slowly: Celebrating the future of theological schools

Allison Shirreffs

Daniel O. Aleshire is executive director of ATS. This text is an abridged version of his plenary address at the ATS/COA Biennial Meeting in June 2008. The full plenary may be downloaded in text or audio format from the ATS website, www .ats.edu > Resources > PapersPresentations > BiennialMeetings.

It is a phrase that struck me from Glenn Miller's history of Protestant theological education from 1870 to 1970. It wasn't a new phrase to him or to the century he was writing about. Making haste slowly—*festina lente*—is a principle that Augustus Caesar thought was important in leadership and a phrase that Benjamin Franklin included in *Poor Richard's Almanac*. I could tell you even more if I had taken time to go to all 229,000 websites that Google found in .20 seconds, but then I was in a hurry. I did go to one website advertising a workshop on "how to make haste slowly"—but it happened last year. I guess, sometimes, you have to make haste quickly.

Conrad Cherry titled his history of university divinity schools *Hurrying Toward Zion.* The dust cover has a marvelous picture of William Rainey Harper wearing his academic gown, walking a few steps ahead of John D. Rockefeller Jr. in his top hat and morning coat, on their way to a University of Chicago graduation—hurrying toward Zion.

Hurrying is the pace of seminary administration. Increasingly, the pace of faculty life has quickened as well. Information grows at a faster rate than it can be assimilated and interpreted. Theological research digs ever deeper into ever more specialized areas of inquiry, and just when we need the slow sweep of a grand narrative to provide perspective, postmodern criticism tells us to be suspicious of them. So, we hurry from one contextual narrative to the next, digging deeper and narrower.

In her recent book, *Grace Eventually*, Anne Lamott likened the rhythm of human life and the work of the Spirit to the rhythm of a ballroom dance:

slow step, slow step, then quick step, quick step. Maybe the rhythm of ballroom dancing could teach theological schools a thing or two as well. Theological schools are hurrying, and there seems to be no real alternative to the pace. Maybe our most faithful effort is to make sure that, as we hurry, we hurry toward *Zion*, and that, as we make haste, we *make haste slowly*. Maybe it is the rhythm that will help us avoid making haste too hastily or hurrying toward Zion but bypassing the Kingdom of God among us. Making haste slowly means honoring the work and contributions of theological schools as we move nimbly into a new and, no doubt, different future.

Hurrying toward Zion

It has been said that the church is necessary for the seminary, but the seminary is not necessary for the church. The future of the seminary depends on communities of faith. While schools must be in a hurry these days, their future depends on their hurrying toward *Zion*, hurrying in the direction of the church's greatest needs.

The church is in a hurry, too, and seems to be hurrying away from a past that it does not want to abandon toward a future that it does not fully understand. Mainline Protestantism has experienced consecutive decades of declining membership resulting, among other things, in a loss of its long-standing role as establishment Protestantism in North America. While evangelical Protestants surged in numbers and social influence in the last fifty years, some denominations are experiencing flattened growth or slight decline. The Roman Catholic Church has weathered the clergy sex abuse crisis but is living into the heaviness of the two-plus billion dollar cost of that failure, and the number of priestly vocations is not increasing. Congregations continue to change. More churchgoers are attending larger membership congregations, and a smaller percentage are attending smaller ones.

Given these and other changes, congregations are hungry for practical strategies, and denominations grope for effective responses to pressing problems. Theological schools are designed to ask hard questions of the long tradition at a time when churches want answers they can use in next week's service. The church needs theological schools to help it define the reason for its faith—but when congregations are trying to figure out how to last another year, they can underestimate their need for these

resources. If the church survives, but has forgotten the reason for the hope that lies within it, survival won't mean much. Theological schools, in turn, need to take seriously the faithful learning that occurs in congregations and parishes, often in rapid and unpredictable ways that stand in marked contrast to the measured, disciplined process of school learning.

Schools and churches need each other, but they dance to different rhythms. Schools are slow step, slow step, and in these days, the best of congregations tend to be quick-quick. They need each other, but with their different rhythms they end up stepping on each other's toes. In the present moment, however, the struggles that sometimes characterize the church/theological school relationship need to be put aside. This is a time when the schools, with all their flaws, need to reaffirm their need for the church, with all its flaws. This is the time when the incredible strength of good theological schools needs to join with the untapped capacity of the church and, in partnership, guide the Christian project in North America through a pregnant time. If last century had its share of slow steps, we now seem to be in the quick-quick part of the dance, and seminaries need to learn new steps. Much is changing in the church, and theological schools need to listen carefully, think creatively, and act engagingly.

Theological Schools and the Church project

Since 2004, a thoughtful task force has been at work on the Association's project on Theological Schools and the Church. The task force has commissioned papers, discussed issues with American and Canadian church historians, studied issues related to each of the three large ecclesial families of ATS schools, and listened to pastors and judicatory leaders discuss their own theological education, the work of ministry in their settings, and the issues that new pastors and church workers are facing. A central finding from all of these activities is change, and this change is occurring at quick-quick tempo.

Recommendations to schools

The task force is recommending, in a variety of ways, that theological schools listen carefully to pastors and lay leaders. Good pastors know more than they learned in theological schools, and seminaries need to listen as if they were students, take careful notes, and consider implications for the curriculum and degree requirements. The task force is calling for conversation and dialogue, to be sure, but its most urgent plea is for a close listening—like the close reading of a text—a disciplined, careful, intellectually engaged listening. After schools have listened carefully, they are in the best place to convene and sustain conversations among groups that sometimes talk *past* each other more than *with* each other: pastors, lay persons, judicatory officers, seminary faculty, denominational leaders, and members of pastoral search committees. People in all of these roles know part of the story, and it takes all of them together, in conversation over time, to get the full picture. Because a theological school is a *school,* it should use these conversations as an intellectual inquiry into how the church and the seminary have changed, are changing, and need to continue to change.

Recommendations to the Association

The task force is recommending that ATS, in its programs and faculty research grants, seek to elevate the scholarly significance of research that enhances pastoral practice and advances congregational mission. Research is needed to help pastors, denominations, and congregations resolve practical conundrums,

"The seminary where I taught before joining the ATS staff had a custom that faculty members presented a formal address after receiving tenure. When my turn came, I stood in cap and gown in front of a robed faculty and others and gave an address titled "Finding Eagles in the Turkey's Nest." I spoke as a practical theologian who had perceived that practical studies in theological schools were sometimes viewed as the turkey's nest, a place where the soaring eagles of biblical and theological studies would never roost. I went on to say that I had discovered eagles—theological insight and understanding—in the turkey's nest. I should have known from my study of the Revelation that animal imagery is prone to misinterpretation in theological settings. Some of my former colleagues never forgave me. I was arguing that as individual believers hold onto theological commitments and as communities of faith act out those commitments, theological construals are seen from another angle of vision, and their meaning can take on new depth and texture."

—Daniel Aleshire

but there is a tendency for theological schools to undervalue this kind of "practical" intellectual gift and effort—what Craig Dykstra has termed pastoral imagination.[1] The task force is not calling for a new definition of pastoral studies or a new way to teach it; it is recommending that the Association lend its energy to draw attention to what appears to be an understudied subject and, at times, an undervalued area of study. The efforts of the Association in this regard will greatly benefit from the work of one of theological education's best partners—Lilly Endowment—which is funding programs at a number of institutions to develop new models of PhD education in practical theology.

Recommendations to the Commission

The task force is recommending to the Commission that congregations and talented pastoral leaders should be brought into the seminary's inner academic circle. Most ATS schools willingly permit students to earn credits for Clinical Pastoral Education in a certified CPE program. Is there a way for congregations to be certified for similar patterns of education—not as field education sites but as teaching partners with the school? Could the quality of a school's interaction with its ecclesial constituents be the subject of a revised accrediting standard? Could the wall that accrediting standards tend to build between academic settings and practice settings be lowered or at least made more permeable?

"It is time for theological schools, these earthen vessels, to do some new things, and do them quickly. It is also time for schools to remember what they do well and commit themselves to doing it better."

Theological schools are not prone to act quickly. They know how to tackle a problem by impaneling a committee that works for an academic year on a background paper for discussion at the fall faculty retreat, the results of which will be used by another committee to develop strategies to present by the last faculty meeting of the year, which are then discussed and finally voted on in a somewhat revised formulation, usually with at least one faculty member abstaining from the vote for principle, then given to the dean to implement the next year, if the funding can be found. Slow step. Slow step. ATS works the same way. The task force's worry is that the changes in the church have moved the dance to quick-quick, and slow-step processes won't work. Yet as schools hurry toward Zion, they need to "make haste slowly." It is still haste, still faster than slow-step–slow-step, but it does not abandon the good that schools do best as they learn new ways to be good.

We have this treasure held in earthen vessels

Theological schools can be likened to earthen vessels. They are remarkably durable. Occasionally, an archeological excavation unearths an intact vessel. It can still hold water, thousands of years after it was formed. Theological schools, too, are built to last, and they are very durable. But, like earthen vessels, they are also fragile. Careless use can damage them. They require care and attention. Maybe most important for our day, unlike wineskins, earthen vessels can hold both new wine and old wine and can even hold water turning to wine. At a time when change is a dominant characteristic of religious life in North America, it is reassuring that a school that served in one way in an earlier era can serve in another way in another era.

It is time for theological schools, these earthen vessels, to do some new things, and do them quickly. It is also time for schools to remember what they do well and commit themselves to doing it better. Our schools face many demands, sometimes harsh criticism, and more than a few questions about their value. But they are important to communities of faith and the faith they affirm.

First, theological schools are an indispensable learning resource for religious vocation. Religious vocation requires ministers to negotiate the complex tasks of working with people, exercising leadership, struggling through conflict, making sense of human ambiguity, and getting the job done faithfully in ways that increase human healing, personal righteousness, and social justice. The learning that cultivates these qualities grows out of disciplined study of texts and traditions, critical reflection on experience, and personal engagement in community. It requires contexts that provide sustained, integrated, formational education—exactly the contexts that theological schools cultivate. The educational settings of theological schools maximize the potential for students to learn complex lessons well and, in learning those lessons, to be formed intellectually, spiritually, and morally.

Second, theological schools are called to teach the tradition. Jesus was a rabbi—"teacher"—and his ministry has been followed by faithful persons who are teachers of the church. Theological schools provide the ideal setting for the development of teachers and the exercise of their art. From leading worship to adult education classes, to writing for denominational and parachurch publications, to conferences and workshops—faculty members are teachers of the church, not just of the students in their classes. As centers of

teaching, theological schools provide a crucial resource for the work of communities of faith.

Third, theological schools are also centers of research, and when that research is done with intellectual sophistication *and* appropriate attention to the needs of communities of faith, it helps the church remember the past, evaluate the present, envision the future, and live faithfully in relationship to all three. Each era of Christian life must identify the truest understanding of the long tradition, the most intellectually faithful Christian witness, and the most honest engagement of the church with the culture. Theological schools provide an ideal setting for this kind of intellectual work. Theological research takes time, library resources, the stimulation and methodological correction of other researchers, the questions that students raise, and an informed understanding of a wide range of issues. As centers of faithful and rigorous inquiry, schools support the efforts of faith communities to locate the underpinnings of their beliefs in the intellectual idiom of their time and culture.

Finally, theological schools generate more than the sum of learning, teaching, and research. When learning for religious vocation, teaching ministers and church members, and theological research are done in close connection with one another, over time, in communities of common interest, the result is fundamentally different than if these activities were done separately. Each is enhanced when performed in the context of the others, and a theological school provides a singular context that brings them together in expectation and practice and promise.

Theological schools are worth the money. The education they provide is worth the effort. The

Photos by Eliza Smith Brown

contribution they make to communities of faith is worth the investment. In a time when new seminary students know less of the Christian tradition than previous generations, when North American culture is less aware of the Christian story than it has ever been, and when the work of ministry has become more complex and less predictable than ever before, the educational response cannot be to lower expectations. In an era like this one, theological learning needs to be enhanced, and the work of theological schools becomes even more important. Communities of faith need pastors, ministers, priests, and theologically educated lay leaders who have learned the lessons our schools teach.

Dancing toward the future . . . with hope

Our present moment seems to be a discontinuous point in history. Most often, the present flows with some degree of predictability from the past. Slow step, slow step. Sometimes, however, the path from the present to the future is discontinuous. The dance turns quick-quick. Nothing in the horse and buggy era could have predicted the social changes that the automobile would bring. If it is a discontinuous moment, and the future is less predictable than at other

historical moments, can we be hopeful about the future of theological schools? Yes, and that is a "yes" with confidence.

We can be hopeful because theological schools are vessels with an incredible capacity to endure. We can be hopeful because institutions can change and discover ways to meet future needs. We can be hopeful because theological schools will continue to provide formational education, in terms of both Christian identity and ministerial leadership. They will probably have less money than this kind of education truly requires, but they will find a way to do it. Theological schools will respond to changes in the church more slowly than the church would like and much faster than academic purists would like—but they will change. The future will be multidirectional, and we can be hopeful because schools will find the varied and variegated educational forms that the future will need. The educational capacity of theological schools will be changed and enhanced, and ministers and priests, lay persons and seekers will learn in-depth about the faith that gives them life.

The God of ages past is the God of ages to come. The wind will blow. The purposes of God will sustain communities of faith and call new ones into being. Those communities will need pastors and teachers who know the story, who have learned a theological wisdom pertaining to responsible life of faith, and who are capable of leading communities in pursuit of God's vision for the human family. These pastors and teachers will need schools because schools provide the kind of learning they most need. The Spirit of God moves, and we do not know "whence it cometh or whither it goeth," but we can be confident that God will be up to something, working out God's purposes, calling into being what those purposes require for every age.

Slow step, slow step, quick-quick. Hurry toward Zion. Make haste slowly. *Festina lente.* It is time to do what good schools have always done, only better. It is time for good schools to do things they have never done before. The water is changing into wine before our eyes. We work with vessels that can hold both. The future is calling.◆

ENDNOTE

1.   See Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra, eds., *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry,* especially Dykstra's essay, "Pastoral and Ecclesial Imagination" (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008).

RESOURCE

Earthen Vessels: Hopeful Reflections on the Work and Future of Theological Schools is now available through Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Daniel Aleshire explores the work of theological schools—learning, teaching, research, administering, and governing—and describes the positive value of these areas of work when done faithfully and well.

***Earthen Vessels* selected for library's milestone** Reaching a milestone this year, Andover-Harvard Theological Library selected *Earthen Vessels* to represent its half-millionth volume in circulation. Of theological libraries, Aleshire writes, "Theological libraries play a central role in the tasks of learning, teaching, and research. They have historically fulfilled this role by providing access to information that is reliable and trustworthy. Libraries provide the viewpoints that are not represented among the current faculty. If their collections have been carefully developed, they provide an exposure to the historical work of the church from centuries past as well as exposure to current work from a continent away."

EARTHEN VESSELS

HOPEFUL REFLECTIONS ON THE WORK AND FUTURE OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

DANIEL O. ALESHIRE
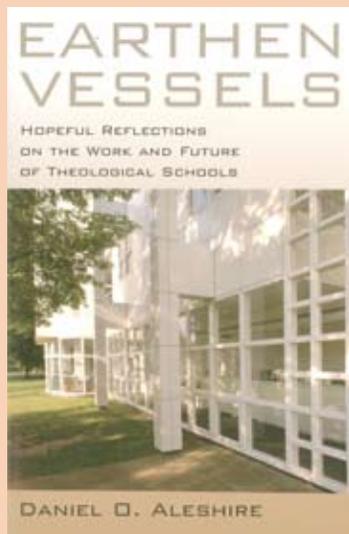
For the love of God,
for the love of God's people

Reflections on learning ministry and theological education

Craig Dykstra is senior vice president for religion at Lilly Endowment. He presented this plenary address, abridged for Colloquy, *at the ATS/COA Biennial Meeting in June 2008. The full plenary may be downloaded in text or audio format at www.ats.edu > Resources > PapersPresentations > BiennialMeetings.*

We have this treasure, which is the gospel. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, we have the church and its ministry, the very body of Christ. And we have a goodly number of specific theological schools of quite diverse kinds. What makes these seminaries so profoundly valuable? And how is their value related to the church and its ministry and to the treasure of all treasures, the gospel itself?

Perhaps it is best to start with the obvious, namely, the content, the substance of what is taught and studied and learned in the course of a theological education. The heart of any good theological education is a deep, sustained, and thoroughgoing engagement with the Bible and with a sound theological tradition that brings the Word of God into an ongoing history of endlessly contemporary thought and practice—all in an effort to discern who God really is, what God is actually up to, who we are as human beings, and what, as we live our lives, we can most securely trust to be true and real. Seminary students are invited into a centuries-long conversation about the deepest issues human beings face in every age, including our own: the wonder of our very existence; the reality of our intractable vulnerability and the inevitably of all our deaths; our greatest joys, our deepest fears; our longings and failures; our struggles with pride, self-deception, and persistent patterns of mutual self-destruction. The heart of what is taught and studied and learned in a good theological education is this: the deepest human questions addressed by the profoundest kind of knowing made possible by the astonishing presence of an eternally enduring Love.

Where else besides a theological school is this the focus of an educational community's ultimate and sustained attention? And where else is this attention paid in a way that engages us personally, at a level that has consequences for the shape of our own lives, our character, our deepest convictions, our faith, and our vocations? What makes a mere theological education a true theological education is that the study, the teaching, the learning, the formation that goes on are all shaped by a larger context and by fundamental purposes that give theological education a more profound *raison d'être*, a much deeper reason for being.

Theological schools, unlike most other institutions of higher and professional education, are places where the community gathers to worship God. And theological schools, unlike most other institutions of higher and professional education, are places where the community exists to prepare people for the sake of a particular kind of service in and for the world. If the ultimate context of theological education is worship, its ultimate purpose is ministry. Ultimately, theological education exists for the love of God and for the love of God's people, indeed, for the love of God's entire creation.

"Theological schools have a treasure, and because they do, they themselves—earthen as they may be— are of extraordinary value."

And this is why theological education is never complete if its subject matter is only the texts it studies and interprets in and of themselves. Why? Because the particular texts we study are calling us into a whole way of life, a way of life in God that (to borrow a phrase of Edward Farley's) "practices gospel." Theological education has a practical, existential teleology built into its very core. Theological education is

inevitably impelled, precisely by the very texts it reads, studies, and interprets, toward a particular way of living and of serving into which God is persistently calling all of us.

When Charles Foster and his colleagues at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching went out to study the actual teaching practices of a large number of theological schools, they consistently found woven throughout their whole educational programs four deeply interrelated "signature pedagogies:"

- Developing the facility for *interpreting* texts, situations, and relationships;
- Heightening consciousness of the content and agency of historical and contemporary *contexts*;
- Nurturing dispositions and habits integral to spiritual and vocational *formation*; and
- Cultivating *performance* in the thinking and performance of pastoral and religious leaders.[1]

Theological education requires that all four of these pedagogies operate in intimate relation to each other. Further, the formative, vocational, and performative character of theological education is essential if it is to fulfill its ultimate purpose.

So, what makes theological schools such special places, and what makes a good theological education such a remarkable gift? First, there's the substance of what is studied, taught, and learned there and the telos of worship and service that arises intrinsically from that substance. Second, there's the community of people who gather there. Clearly, they involve a great many kinds of people who bring diverse gifts and play a variety of roles, from extraordinary teachers—patient, passionate, and personal—to committed students.

I know that most people go to seminary for all kinds of mixed motives, and many may not know exactly what they will do once they have graduated. But my experience over many years tells me that virtually all of them are there because they want to learn about God. They want to know what the Christian faith is all about and what the gospel really is. They are there because they seek an opportunity to struggle with and address the deep human questions they are asking. They come in order to be a part of the community that will be gathered there. And they come because of the promise they believe a seminary offers of learning to live a way of life

marked by a sense of vocation. They all come, I think, hungry in one way or another to know and to live for the love of God and the love of God's people. What a remarkable thing it is to be amongst such people—to befriend them, to study and worship and serve with them, and to learn from them. What a gift to lament and to rejoice in communion with people like these.

Over the course of nearly twenty years of paying close attention across the whole landscape of theological education, I have learned that the very existence of an accredited theological school can never be taken for granted. I know now that a good theological education is not only a great gift, but a work of love and grace—and thereby, a kind of miracle. I have also learned how many different forms of excellence and beauty in theological education there really are. Put together artfully and coherently in ways appropriate to their diverse contexts and constituencies, all the different kinds of theological schools can be beautiful, true, and good in their own particular ways.

Learning ministry

The ministry of the gospel takes many forms and is undertaken and sustained through a wide variety of institutions—congregations and parishes, religious orders, denominations, missionary societies, independent faith-based social service and advocacy organizations, religious publishing houses, church-related colleges and universities, and on and on and on. In my view, theological schools have a particularly crucial role to play within the whole ecology of the church's various ministries and institutions. But they cannot be what they are without being integrally related to the rest.

There are many reasons for this, of course. I want to lift up just two. The first is this: learning ministry takes a long time. And it requires a sojourn through many places and contexts. We learn ministry over a long period of time and in many contexts—almost always starting long before a person ever enters a theological school and certainly continuing for many years after he or she leaves. In recent years, I have been writing and speaking about something I have come to call "the pastoral imagination"—a way of interpreting and seeing through eyes of faith that shapes and guides everything a good pastor thinks and does in every crevice of pastoral life and work.

It is clear to me that a rich, full pastoral imagination, wherever one finds it, emerges over time and through the influence of many contexts and forces—including a fine education in a good theological school. But it is always finally "forged in the midst of ministry itself, as pastors are shaped by time spent on the anvil of deep and sustained engagement in pastoral work. It is the actual practice of pastoral ministry—engagement in the many specific activities of ministry done faithfully and well and with an integrity reflected in the minister's own life—that gives rise to this particular and powerful imagination."[2]

Professor Christian Scharen at Luther Seminary is engaged in a full-orbed research project in which he hopes to learn from a widely diverse group of excellent pastors how and from whom and in what contexts they have learned ministry over time. It is clear from his early probing that all pastors learn ministry over the course of a long arc that includes a variety of significant and formative experiences with family, congregations, schools, and work experiences that students bring to their seminary educations as well as in the years of pastoral work itself following seminary. Particularly important, Scharen would argue, are those early years of pastoral ministry, when a profound transition of role and identity takes place and the development of new habits and attitudes (for good and for ill) are formed.[3]

We all know this. But we forget. Just like theological schools are sometimes taken for granted by the church as a whole, so too do those of us who live intensely within theological schools sometimes take for granted the other powerful formative contexts in which ministry is learned. To become aware of all this is crucial for theological education itself. Seminaries and divinity schools cannot do their work of education and formation well without being fully attentive to their own students' learning, which neither starts nor stops upon entrance to or exit from the seminary campus.

Further, it is important not only to be aware of the arc of experience, education, and formation that is involved in learning ministry, but it is also crucial to be well-connected with the other institutions most significantly involved in creating the various settings where ministry is learned. Whether we are conscious of it or not, every element in this ecosystem affects all the rest. What goes on in every one of these institutions—from theological schools and congregations, to de-

nominational agencies and judicatories, to colleges and universities—affects not only pastoral leaders and their learning; the institutions affect one another—and the available resources—as well. Only when all of these institutions are connected to each other in mutually fructifying ways can each of them—and the ministry of the gospel as a whole—fully flourish.

"It is clear to me that a rich, full pastoral imagination, wherever one finds it, emerges over time and through the influence of many contexts and forces— including a fine education in a good theological school."

Conclusion

In this address, I have tried to express three fundamental convictions. The first is that theological schools are remarkable gifts—vessels of the gospel treasure, gifts of a generous God that are virtually indispensable for sustaining the promise of learning for religious vocation. The second is that no one should ever take the existence of a good theological school for granted. Sustaining and renewing them over time requires enormous effort on the part of a great many people, an effort for which the church and the world, and especially all of us who have been given the gifts of our lives by being in them, owe a deep debt of gratitude. My third conviction is that theological schools exist and flourish only as works of love and grace made manifest in and through the whole body of Christ. Good theological education and strong theological schools are possible only when the schools themselves are deeply connected with myriad other institutions and people in the vast community of faith that likewise lives for the love of God and for the love of God's people. That is where the abundant resources and relations are to be found that are essential for the existence, vitality, and effectiveness of theological schools.♦

ENDNOTES

1. Charles R. Foster, Lisa E. Dahill, Lawrence A. Golemon, and Barbara Wang Tolentino, *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 33.

2. Craig Dykstra, "Pastoral and Ecclesial Imagination," in *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry,* ed. Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 41–61.

3. Christian Scharen, "Learning Ministry Over Time: Embodying Practical Wisdom," in *For Life Abundant* (see note 2), 265–289. See also James P. Wind and David J. Wood, *Becoming A Pastor: Reflections on the Transition Into Ministry* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2008).

A necessary march to the obvious

Theological Schools and the Church project recommends needed change

Theological education is embroiled in a transformational era. Neither the church nor the school is a static institution, and both are changing rapidly. Mainline denominations have declined in membership, and in many American cities, the newest and fastest-growing congregations are nondenominational. In response, student bodies at many seminaries reflect an increasingly wide array of denominations, and for many students, denominational identity has eroded. Denominational funding—particularly in mainline Protestant schools—continues to decrease. Theological schools, originally invented by denominations to educate clergy, continue to serve their founding church bodies but also relate to many other communities of faith. These and other changes have raised questions about the future relationship of theological schools and church bodies. Recognizing this, ATS in 2000 adopted as one of several targeted areas of work a "renewed attention to the fundamental patterns of relationship between theological schools and their respective religious communities."

Task force recommendations

At the Biennial Meeting in June, after three years of work supported by Lilly Endowment Inc., the task force on the Theological Schools and the Church project offered some observations about the relationship between theological schools and their respective religious communities, along with recommendations to member schools, the Association, and the Commission.

The observations were not surprising. The task force concluded that since both the church and theological schools are in a period of significant change, the way in which theological schools relate to their ecclesial constituents needs to be more responsive. This relationship calls for a broad-based conversation within the church and the academy and even beyond. The task force asserted that the conversations it had sponsored over the past three years among pastors, denominational leaders, and theological educators were of such value that they should continue. It recommended that schools engage in direct conversations with laypersons and church professionals who are active in churches, as well as with persons who have little or no church involvement, to learn about the changing realities in congregations and beyond. In addition, it suggested that schools undertake faculty immersion experiences in congregations and other processes by which faculty can learn about issues in congregational life and ministerial leadership. And it called for schools to bring together faculty, administrators, board members, pastoral search committee chairs, or church officials responsible for assigning pastoral candidates in order to develop recommendations regarding pastoral preparation. The DVD distributed at the Biennial Meeting and a special issue of *Theological Education* (vol. 44, no. 1, forthcoming) have added to the conversation.

Yet somehow, this slow march to the obvious was necessary. A recommendation such as "Schools should engage in direct conversations with laypersons and church professionals," for example, seems self-evident. But, as best as project staff or task force members could tell, most schools have not been engaging in such conversations. Some schools are too tightly attached to churches, which keeps them from engaging the intellectual prophetic work that good theological schools should do, while others are so removed from the church that it keeps them from doing profession-


The Promise Fulfilled: Five Perspectives on Theological Education features (L–R) Tim Keel, Del Staigers, Cheryl Palmer, Shannon Kershner, and Greg Waybright. Produced by David Hughes Duke.

Nancy Merrill

A video tool for recruiting and development

Changing patterns in church life have altered the relationships of theological schools to the denominations, churches, and ecclesial communities they serve. Yet these relationships are essential to the integrity and quality of theological education. First aired at the Biennial Meeting in June, this video captures the informal reflections of five pastors who affirm the critical and enduring value of their theological education for their lives and ministry.

Free copies of this DVD are available to member schools (one per school) until December 31 by contacting Nadine Banks (banks@ats.edu).
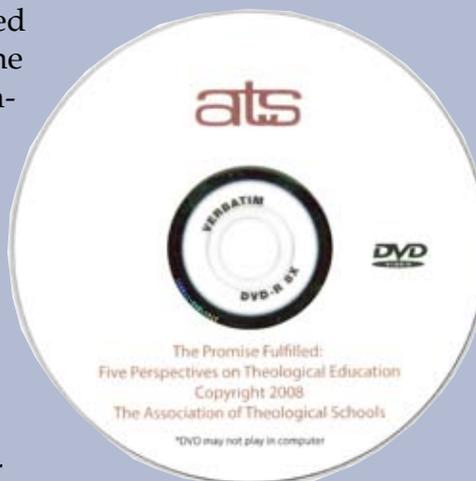
al education as well as it should be done. Some view the church as partner, while others view it more suspiciously. Although schools in the project varied regarding their relationships with church bodies, it seems that too few are properly and effectively relating to their church bodies. Perhaps the obvious is obvious only in retrospect.

The task force proposed a number of initiatives or strategies that the Association and the Commission should pursue to support theological schools and the church as they both move through these changes. It encouraged the Association to use existing structures, such as leadership education and faculty development programming, to support needed change; to identify successful innovations as ideas and models for other schools; to create incentives for theological schools to acknowledge and reward research and writing that address ecclesial concerns and the well-being of the church; to find ways to support research and writing that address various kinds of pastoral intelligences and their implications in admission and curricular goals; and to develop educational resources that schools could use about the church, its needs, and its changing character.

The task force offered recommendations to the Commission on Accrediting as well, suggesting that the standards revision process over the next four years emphasize the church-related mission

of theological schools, considering the ways in which shared governance in theological schools can support needed change and broadening assessments to include evaluation of the schools' interactions with the church.

By the end of the project, the importance of this relationship seemed more obvious than it was at the beginning: the negative consequences of failed relationships seemed more ominous and the prospects of success were more evident. It will not take a major restructuring of seminary DNA to cultivate stronger and more meaningful relationships with ecclesial bodies, but it will take work. The future of the seminary, and ultimately of the church, will be deeply influenced by the quality and integrity of the relationship between them.♦

Gratitude is due to the members of the Task Force for their work over the past three years: Laura Mendenhall (chair), Leith Anderson, Phyllis Anderson, Ron Benefiel, Charles Bouchard, Robert Cannada, Jr., Leah Gaskin Fitchue, Zeni Fox, David Greenhaw, Faith Rohrbough (project director), Martha Horne, Byron Klaus, Tite Tienou, Timothy Weber, James Wind, Peter Wyatt, and Gabino Zavala. Several commented that the task force had proved to be one of the best continuing education events in which they had ever participated, and all added immeasurably to the conversation.

Of wikis, Moodle, and blogs

Technology and Educational Practices program suggests new directions

With significant funding from Lilly Endowment, ATS has been for many years at the epicenter of efforts to use technology to enhance theological education. During the course of the late-1990s, Lilly Endowment gave $300,000 to each of seventy-three ATS member schools to implement educational technology programs. In an effort to evaluate these programs, the Endowment awarded a grant to ATS in 2002 to review the results and to synthesize and share the findings. Over the ensuing five years, a series of conferences and workshops, both live and online, gathered ideas and shared findings with administrators, faculty, and staff at member schools. The project has culminated in a developmental model for technology implementation in theological schools, a collection of electronic resources, two special issues of *Theological Education* dedicated to educational technology, and a commitment to carry its impact further.

A major discovery of the project has been the prevalence of a new professional in theological schools: the "educational technologist." More than simply technology gurus, these specialists work closely with faculty to conceive more effective ways to deliver their programs in both traditional residential and distance settings. Currently sixty or more individuals fulfill this role at member schools.

At a workshop in late spring, thirty-six of those educational technologists convened as a first cohort to share innovative practices through a marathon of demonstrations interspersed with roundtable discussions of local solutions to common technological issues as well as the possibility of a formal organization of educational technologists in theological education. Charles Willard, retired director, accreditation and institutional evaluation at ATS, led the workshop. According to one of the participants, Sebastian Mahfood of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, "The kaleidoscope of technology initiatives showcased at the workshop presented very little duplication of ideas. What they all pointed to, however, is the need for different kinds of pedagogy." He goes on to explain, "Most senior faculty members were trained in the method of their mentors' mentors: the stand-up lecture. In a technology-enhanced learning environment, faculty members have the opportunity—and arguably the obligation—to employ a variety of teaching styles that accommodate a variety of student learning styles."

As higher education embraces outcome-based rather than resource-based assessment models, faculty members are forced to define the intended outcomes of their teaching and the appropriate means of measuring those outcomes. Technology is able to support this process in a significant way. In recognition of this shift of focus, the Commission on Accrediting is in the process of reviewing its accrediting standards to ensure that they adequately address issues of technology and educational practice.

Among the innovations highlighted by member schools through this project:

Cam Howard—Christology Chart: An Online Learning Module
Alice Loddigs—Personalizing Lecture Learning Objects
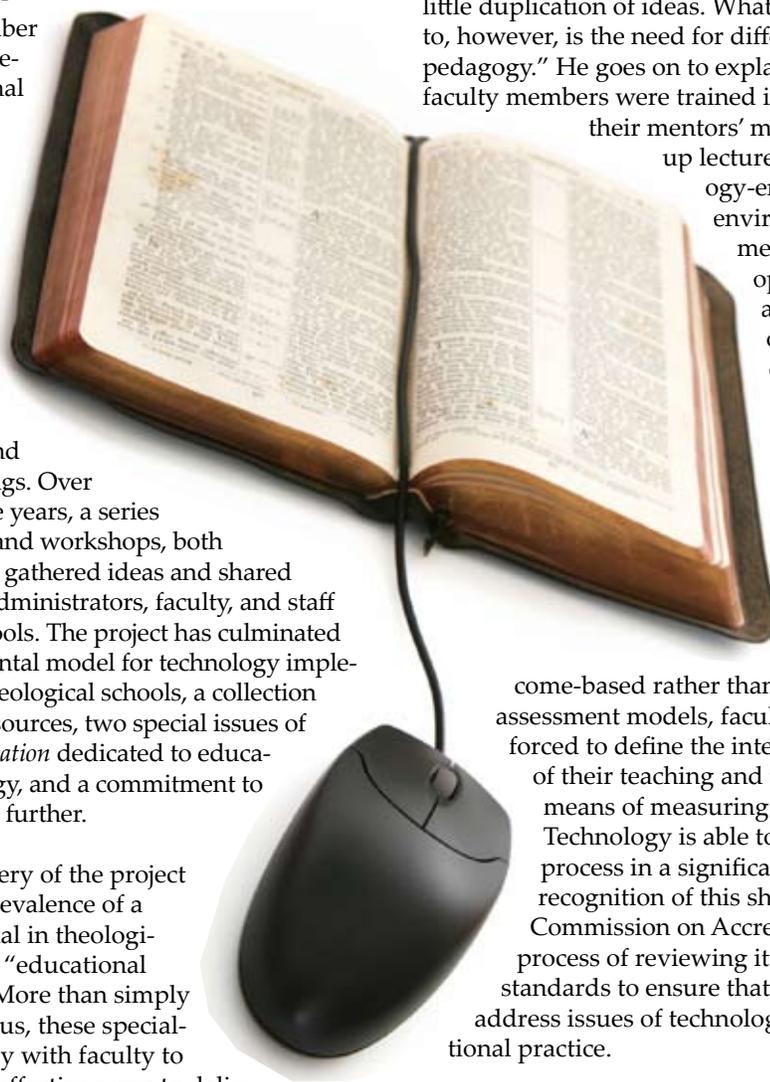
Julie Lytle—Evolution of EDS's "High Tech, High Touch" Blended Learning Model
Kris Veldheer—A Virtual Tour for a Mobile Audience: Serving the Needs of Students through a Virtual Library Tour

Likewise, the Association itself has launched educational technology programs over the past year in service to its members, and more programs are expected to follow:

- A **virtual self-study workshop** that presents a collection of texts and audio/video clips to walk schools through a sometimes-daunting process.
- **Student information tutorials** that introduce the processes related to managing the *Entering Student Questionnaire, Graduating Student Questionnaire*, and *Alumni/ae Questionnaire.*
- A **new chief financial officer orientation module** that introduces theological education and ATS through a series of video clips and texts.

During their time together, the overwhelming consensus among the project participants was that they share sufficient common interests to warrant continued work together on specific projects and as a leadership affinity group comparable to those sponsored by ATS for presidents, deans, and other senior administrators. Such a group will facilitate interaction and collaboration with a focus on advances in technology, faculty education and enhanced instruction, online literacy for students and alumni/ae, and proposed revisions to the accreditation standards with regard to technology and distance learning.

Ultimately, not only did the original seventy-three schools in the grant cohort increase their own skill and capacity, but an additional one hundred ATS schools received guidance and support as well. And with plans to assemble an affinity group, there's likely much more innovation to come.◆

RESOURCES

- Technology and Educational Practices, *Theological Education* 41, no. 1, 2005.

- Technology, Teaching, and Learning: Reports from the Field, *Theological Education* 42, no. 2, 2007.

- Virtual Self-Study Workshop
    www.ats.edu > Commission on Accrediting > Self-Study

- Student Information Project Module
    www.ats.edu > Resources > Student Information > Tutorials

- New Chief Financial Officer Orientation
    www.ats.edu > Leadership Education > Financial Officers > Orientation

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Updated ATS logo available

The ATS logo represents a "brand" through which the Association and the Commission on Accrediting are known worldwide. ATS permits use of its logo by member schools for acknowledgement of a school's accredited or candidate status and/or approval of a school's degree programs, providing an application has been submitted and approved. To request an application, please contact Linda Trostle at trostle@ats.edu. The logo is available in EPS, TIF, JPG, and GIF formats.

ats The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

Twenty-five research projects receive Lilly Theological Research grants

The Association and Lilly Endowment have announced the recipients of the 2007–08 research grants.

Faculty Fellowships

Ellen Jeffery Blue
Phillips Theological Seminary
In Case of Katrina:
Reinventing the UMC in Post-Katrina Louisiana

Elizabeth Margaret Bounds
Candler School of Theology of Emory University
Opening Prison Doors: Challenges for Christian Justice

Marion Sabine Grau
Church Divinity School of the Pacific
World Without End:
A Constructive Theology of Missionary Encounter

Robert J.V. Hiebert
Associated Canadian Theological Schools
Old Wine in New Wineskins: Reconstructing the Greek Text of IV Maccabees in the Age of the Computer

C. Kavin Rowe
Duke University Divinity School
The Apocalypse to the Gentiles and the Culture of God: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman World

Theological Scholars Grants

Peter J. Gentry
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Critical Edition of Septuagint Ecclesiastes—Daughter Versions & Hexaplaric Materials

Johnny Bernard Hill
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
Seeking Justice and Reconciliation in a Fragmented Age: Exploring the Nature of Public Theology and Community in a Post-Civil Rights Era—from 1968 to Present

M. Jan Holton
Yale University Divinity School
Strangers in a Land Called Home:
Faith and Survival in Southern Sudan

Kevin Jung
Wake Forest University Divinity School
Moral Limits to Social Practice:
Historicism and the Problem of Common Morality

Michelle Lee-Barnewall
Talbot School of Theology of Biola University
The Evangelical Debate on the Role of Women: Examining the Influence of the Women's Rights Movement and Manifest Destiny on Theology of Gender at the Turn of the Century

Martha L. Moore-Keish
Columbia Theological Seminary
Eucharist and Puja: Exploring Eucharistic Theology and Practice in South India

Caleb O. Oladipo
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
Their Brothers' Keepers: The Roles of the African Indigenous Church (AIC) in Reconstructing Post-apartheid South African Society

Thomas E. Reynolds
Emmanuel College of Victoria University
Remembering Ourselves Differently:
Theology and Christian Identity in a Global Age

José David Rodríguez
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
The Quest for Indigenous Identity:
A Postcolonial Reading of the Origin, Nature, and Historical Development of the Lutheran Mission in Puerto Rico from a Latino/a Perspective

Angela Senander
Washington Theological Union
An Identity Crisis in the Church: A Challenge for Catholic Individuals and Institutions in Public Life

Research Expense Grants

Reginald David Broadnax
Hood Theological Seminary
The Watts Riot of 1965 and Its Effect on the Moralscope of Martin Luther King, Jr.

J. Kameron Carter and **Willie James Jennings**
Duke University Divinity School
The Modern World and the Invention of Race—The Fifteenth Century: A Project in Translation and Theological Interpretation

Michelle A. Clifton-Soderstrom
North Park Theological Seminary
Faith Active in Love:
A Companion to the Early German Pietists

RESOURCE

ATS releases new viewbook

If you've ever found yourself at a loss to explain just what ATS is all about—to your administrators and faculty, to your board, to your donors—a new viewbook is available to tell the story. It outlines the full scope of the Association and the Commission on Accrediting as a community of schools, a community of accountability, a community of resources, a community of learning, a community of scholarship, a community of conversation, a community of collaboration. Each school has received two copies, but if you have need for additional copies, please contact Eliza Brown at brown@ats.edu.
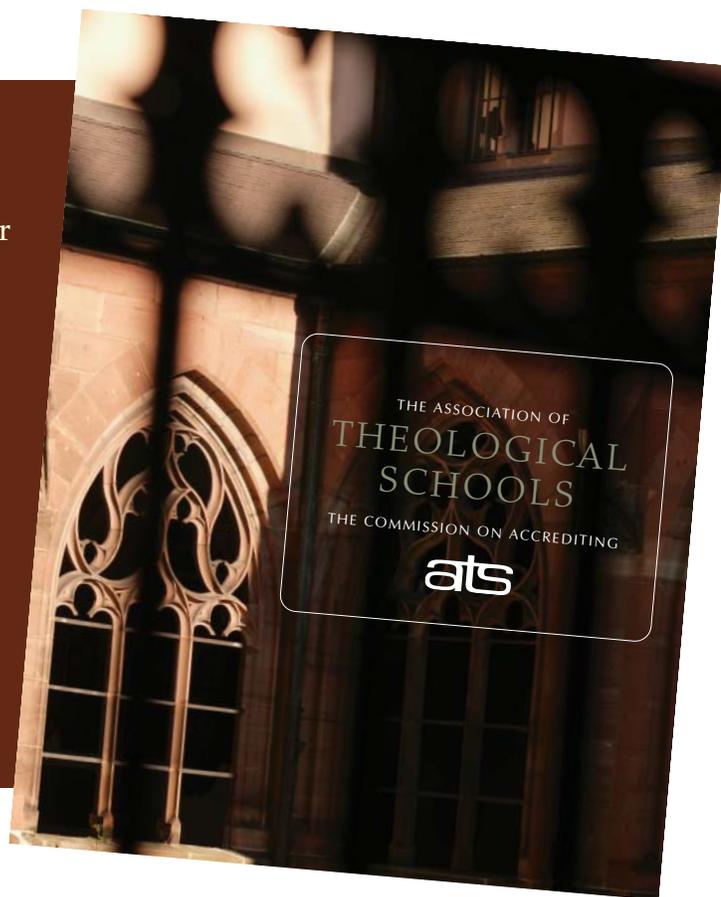
Don Sik Kim
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Dynamics of Eschatology and Nationalism in the Early Twentieth Century in Korea: The Impact to the Rise of Protestant Christianity in A Companion to the Early German Pietists

Ian Christopher Levy
Lexington Theological Seminary
Holy Scripture and the Quest for Authority in the Later Middle Ages

Karen Elaine Mason, **Pablo Polischuk**
and **Ray Pendleton**,
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Protestant Clergy Referral of Suicidal Persons

Devadasan N. Premnath
St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry
Daring Discourses in Colonial India: The Pioneering but Forgotten Voice of Pandita Ramabai

Scott Douglas Seay
Christian Theological Seminary,
Douglas Foster, Abilene Christian University,
Paul Blowers, Emmanuel School of Religion,
and **Newell Williams**, Brite Divinity School
at Texas Christian University
A World History of the Stone-Campbell Movement

Vitor Westhelle
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
At Ease: Intimations for a Church Protestant

Amos Yong
Regent University School of Divinity,
The Politics of Global Pentecostalism: Many Tongues, Many Practices◆

Continuing the Conversation

Watch the Spring 2009 issue of *Colloquy* for a new section that will launch online community conversations on topics of interest, such as distance learning, sustaining enrollment, assessing student outcomes, etc. In the meantime, we welcome your input as to what topics are of greatest concern to our readers. Please send your suggestions, along with any other comments, to Eliza Brown at brown@ats .edu. We look forward to your feedback!

ATS welcomes three new staff members

Nadine Banks joined the staff as executive assistant to the executive director and assistant executive director. In this position, Banks coordinates the ATS Board of Directors' meetings; maintains records of and communications with organizations holding affiliate status with ATS; assists with grant proposal development, administration, and reporting; coordinates special projects; and makes travel arrangements for the executive director and assistant executive director.

Nadine Banks

Prior to coming to ATS, she worked as a support supervisor at Equitable Gas and in various administrative positions of the human resource departments of Dollar Bank, Respironics, and Nabisco.

Banks earned a BA in marketing from Chatham University where she served as student representative for Chatham's Center for Women's Entrepreneurship. In this role, she acted as networking liaison for the Pittsburgh business district and local women business owners, building relationships and networks between the two.

Eliza Smith Brown

In 2001, Banks formed a nonprofit organization, Vision of Hope, which raised funds for school supplies for the children of Haiti. Due to political turmoil there, however, funding dwindled and Vision of Hope was forced to close in 2004. She continues her volunteer efforts by serving on the board of directors for the World Mission Initiative for Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and as an ordained elder for East Liberty Presbyterian Church.

Eliza Smith Brown joined the ATS staff as director, communications and external relations. She is responsible for developing and implementing the ATS communications plan, which includes print and electronic publications, the website, media relations, and promoting use of ATS resources and services by the Association's member schools throughout the United States and Canada.

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz

Brown has worked for more than twenty-five years in communications, marketing, and research, with a focus on historic preservation and architecture. Her career began in 1978 at the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, and she has worked in marketing and communications for three different architectural firms. Since 1995, she has headed a consulting firm specializing in cultural resource management. Brown is the author of *Pittsburgh Legends and Visions: An Illus-*

trated History and has co-authored several other books, including *A Legacy in Bricks and Mortar: African-American Landmarks in Allegheny County* and *The Duquesne Club Cookbook: Four Seasons of Fine Dining*. She has given lectures and tours for organizations such as the Smithsonian, the Frick Art & Historical Center, the Chicago Architecture Foundation, Carnegie-Mellon University, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Brown was educated at Mount Holyoke College and Cornell University. A lifelong resident of Pittsburgh, she currently serves as a trustee of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, as president of the Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation, and on the boards of The Carnegie Museum of Art, The Landmarks Financial Corporation, and St. Edmund's Academy.

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz joined the ATS staff as director, accreditation and institutional evaluation. His work includes facilitating accrediting reviews, providing education and support to member schools about the process of accreditation, and providing staff support to the work of the Board of Commissioners of the ATS Commission on Accrediting.

Prior to ATS, Ruiz was a faculty member of New York Theological Seminary in New York City since 1997 where he was professor of theology and culture. He became vice president for academic affairs and academic dean in 2006. A graduate in pastoral care and counseling from Ottawa University (Kansas), he holds a Master of Divinity with an emphasis on religion and society and a PhD in social ethics from Princeton Theological Seminary.

He is co-editor of four published works, including *Re-Framing the International: Law, Culture, Politics*, with Richard Falk and R.B.J. Walker. He has contributed numerous chapters to books and has been widely published in journals and other periodicals. He received an ATS Lilly Theological Research Grant and a Sohn Foundation Award for sabbatical research in 2005. He serves on the editorial committee of *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, is on the board of Global Education Associates in New York, and is a research fellow of the Institute for Advanced Theological Studies, Central Philippine University, Iloilo City, Philippines.

He is ordained in the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches (American Baptist Churches, USA).◆

Student enrollment declines in ATS member schools

For the first time in several decades, the head count enrollment reported by member schools of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada declined in fall 2007. The decline resulted in 1,949 fewer students enrolled in fall of 2007 compared to fall of 2006, or 2.4 percent of head count enrollment. This decline follows decades of consistent increases, of which the most recent were 0.3 percent in 2005 and 0.5 percent in 2006. While increases have typically not been large, they have been consistent, until last year.

The decreases were broadly distributed across the kinds of degree programs offered by ATS schools, as shown in the table below. The largest percentage declines were in the MDiv program (nearly 3%) and the "Other" category (nearly 4%), while the professional Master's programs registered no decline at all. More detailed data are available in the ATS Annual Data Tables found at www.ats.edu.

among Evangelical Protestant schools (0.9%). Roman Catholic/Orthodox enrollment declined 3.9 percent. The decline was more pronounced in Canadian schools (6.0%) than U.S. schools (2.1%). The decline did not appear to be concentrated in particular schools. More than half of all schools (143 of 250) reported a decrease in fall enrollment from 2006 to 2007, and 23 percent of all schools experienced a decrease of more than 10 percent between these two years.

While this decline was broad based, there were groups and schools that gained significantly from fall 2006 to fall 2007. The head count enrollment of Asian students increased by 2.6 percent and Hispanic/Latino/a students increased by 6.4 percent. At thirty-five schools, the enrollment increased by 10 percent or more.

The data do not indicate what contributed to the decline, and after decades of modest but consistent increases, one year of decline does not constitute a trend. Given the wide distribution

	Total	MDiv[1]	Prof. MA	Acad. MA	Adv. Min.	Adv. Res.	Other
2007	79,136	33,895	11,031	9,567	9,383	5,731	9,529
2006	81,085	34,901	11,030	9,844	9,460	5,939	9,911

Preliminary analysis of the data suggests that the decline was evenly distributed across a range of variables by which the Association tracks enrollment data. The number of men enrolled in all degree programs decreased by 1.8 percent, and the number of women decreased by 3.6 percent. Enrollment declined by most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest percentage decline for visa students (African-American, 4.6%; Native American, 3.5%; visa, 6.3%; and white, 3.6%). Enrollment also declined across the ecclesial families represented by ATS schools, with the greatest decline among mainline Protestant schools (4.8%) and the least decline

of the decline from 2006 to 2007 across types of schools and types of students, there is no ready explanation for the factors that may be influencing enrollment.◆

ENDNOTE

1. Degree categories are as follows: MDiv is Master of Divinity; Prof. MA are professional Master of Arts degrees oriented toward ministerial leadership, such as MA in Religious Education, MA in Christian Education, MA in Pastoral Studies, and MA in Church Music; Acad. MA are general theological studies degrees, such as Master of Theological Studies; Adv. Min. are degrees oriented toward advanced ministerial leadership, such as Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Missiology, and Doctor of Education; and Adv. Res. are degrees oriented toward advanced research, such as Doctor of Theology, Master of Sacred Theology, Master of Theology, and Doctor of Philosophy. Other represents students enrolled in certificate programs or those students enrolled in classes but not declaring a degree.

How a president can make a good advancement program better

Gary Hoag has been in development since 1990 and has served as vice president of advancement at Denver Seminary since 2002. He also serves as vice chair of the DIAP steering committee. This article represents a summary of a workshop he led for new ATS presidents in January 2008.

What a good advancement program looks like

When I started making a list of the characteristics of a good program, I found myself filling multiple pages in my notepad with things I had learned from experience, from other more seasoned development officers, and from seminars and conferences like DIAP. Knowing I had to come up with a summary list for a group of new seminary presidents, I decided to lean on the work of R. Scott Rodin because he has served both as a development officer and a seminary president. I took the seven-point outline from his book, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Christian Fundraising* and expounded on it. If you have not read this book, it is a must read. Upon re-reading the book, I was reminded that a good program avoids seven pitfalls.

1. Being unprepared for the battle
Generous giving is more than a series of financial transactions; it is a spiritual act of worship, and facilitating this takes both faith and fortitude. For this reason, a good program not only cheers the sacred work of giving but also prays for its constituents and strategically encourages them through phone calls, personal notes, and face-to-face visits to grow in the grace of giving. Many schools even appoint a prayer coordinator, often a pastor on the board, to send regular emails to unite the community in intercessory prayer.

2. Self-reliance over Spirit-reliance
Good programs chart their course with a clear sense of their purpose and plans, while trusting God to deliver the results. At Denver Seminary we say that

> The purpose of the Advancement Office at Denver Seminary is to move the institution in the direction outlined by the Board of Trustees and the President by strategically cultivating relationships with our constituents and new friends through providing (1) involvement opportunities and (2) instruction in biblical stewardship while encouraging their (3) intercession and (4) investment in our mission of equipping leaders.

Simply put, our job is to do our work faithfully and trust God to move people to participate.

3. Money over ministry
In his book *The Passionate Steward: Recovering Christian Stewardship from Secular Fundraising*, Michael O'Hurley-Pitts states, "The Church will not only serve itself better by encouraging passionate stewardship, but in recovering stewardship from fundraising, it will preserve its ethical, moral and practical relevance to humanity." Focusing on gifts leads to transactions; focusing on "growing givers" leads to transformation. Good programs seek more than monetary transactions; they seek spiritual transformation. As giving is a facet of the faith, we must all seek to facilitate the ministry of what Rebekah Burch Basinger describes as "growing givers' hearts."

4. Unwillingness to invest the time
While there are many factors that contribute to the success of a good program, I am confident that if there were an ATS version of Collins' famous book, *Good to Great*, one characteristic of exceptional programs would be that they have committed much time and money to building a program over many years. As relationships often take decades to develop, schools that commit the resources to building a good program often see fruit in the form of generous gifts in the short run and over the long haul.

5. Decisions without discernment
Rodin reminds the reader that "every act in development calls for spiritual and professional discernment from identifying prospective seminary partners to the development of all our strategies." This discernment comes from reading books and articles, through attending ATS meetings and workshops, and by visiting peer

institutions and gaining insights from others in development. It is also found on our knees. Prayer and meditation on Scripture help each of us as advancement and development officers become more spiritually discerning as we prepare for and do our work.

6. Activity without accountability

Rodin encourages leaders to perform audits in the areas of finance, time, attitude, motivation, and spiritual life. Too many programs measure only the bottom line amount of dollars raised. Faithfulness to activities such as visiting faithful givers, making phone calls to lapsed donors, hosting events to find new supporters, and other responsibilities that can be quantitatively measured and logged on systems like Raiser's Edge must be annually evaluated. A good program measures activity (the actual work accomplished), not merely productivity (dollars raised), in each of these areas so as to outline areas for improvement year over year.

7. Stealing the glory

Good programs thank givers and staff members frequently and appropriately for their sacrificial support and service and, more importantly, thank God for the results.

I believe good programs avoid these seven traps. A good exercise for team members might be to take a day and discuss this list in a retreat setting. Such an exercise may lead each of our teams to helpful conclusions regarding areas for improvement.

What advancement officers hope to find in a president

I started part two of my seminar for new presidents with a summary reading of *The Spirituality of Fund-Raising* by Henri J.M. Nouwen because I wanted them to see fundraising from a fresh, biblical perspective. This too is a must read and you may acquire a free copy of this booklet by visiting www.henrinouwen.org. In this booklet, Nouwen carefully helps the leader look at fundraising in a new light. "Fundraising is as spiritual as giving a sermon, entering a time of prayer, visiting the sick or feeding the hungry." Nouwen adds, "We are inviting those with money to a new relationship with their wealth . . . and it also calls us to be converted in relationship to our needs . . . If our security is totally in God, then we are free to ask for money . . . Asking people for money is giving them the op-

portunity to put their resources at the disposal of the Kingdom."

So practically what does this look like for a president? I offer seven suggestions:

1. Communicate the mission and vision of the seminary

In *The Reluctant Steward Revisited*, Mark O'Keefe candidly shares the following: "The transition from the world of faculty and part-time administration into the world of a seminary president is eye opening . . . Counseled in many ways by my predecessor, I was nonetheless surprised to discover the actual demands and challenges of leadership and administration, personnel management, public relations and external communications, fundraising, and donor relations . . . It is not at all difficult to ask for support for a cause you believe in . . . the message of stewardship makes sense in light of mission." A clear sense of the school's mission and vision as articulated by the president often converts the reluctant steward into the reliable supporter!

2. Work closely with the advancement/development team

"The president must hire fundraising staff whose skills and sense of call prepare them for the challenges of raising funds in support of theological education" says *A Handbook for Seminary Presidents*, edited by G. Douglass Lewis and Lovett H. Weems, Jr. To say it simply, hire good people, do what they ask you to do, and see who they ask you to see. Successful presidents are willing to spend upwards of 50 percent of their time doing advancement and development (friend raising and fundraising) related activities.

3. Engage board participation

Presidents must challenge trustees to seek the Lord, and then in session, provide opportunities for them to dream big and inspire them to help make that dream a reality. Out of session, good presidents "waste time" with their trustees and supporters. Invite trustees to be involved, but don't overwork them. Our consultant, David Lalka of DVA *Navion* reminded us in our last campaign to seek "Six Moments of Time" from board members over the course of the campaign, assisting by doing things such as hosting a luncheon with the president, inviting a friend to a campus activity, or filling a foursome at our golf tournament.

4. Commit time to build relationships

Seminary presidents don't just build friendships; they encourage the spiritual growth of the constituency, and that takes time. R. Scott Rodin concurs with this comment from *Stewards in the Kingdom*. "[W]hile we have produced resources for understanding what stewardship looks like, we have failed to raise up stewards. The result is the continual need to develop new fundraising strategies and undertake innovative approaches and clever campaigns to balance the budget and further the work of the church." Presidents who invest time in this area see returns as a result. Many presidents who go the extra mile to approach couples, as couples, often see relationships grow even deeper.

5. Understand advancement "dashboard" gauges

To use a car metaphor, the president's time is best spent not under the hood but behind the wheel, viewing the dashboard gauges. The president should track the school's progress toward unrestricted, temporarily restricted, and endowment funding goals knowing he or she has only so much gas in his or her proverbial tank to make calls to invite people to help reach the goals. The president should be able to articulate that strategic advancement activity is producing results. If the president knows that personal visits, mailings, and calling efforts are resulting in increased alumni/ae giving, an expanded donor base, and record-giving totals, then new friends will be enthused to get involved as well.

6. Receive outside counsel/research with openness

Here's another nugget from *A Handbook for Seminary Presidents*. "The financial fragility of most seminaries demands that presidents embark on a crash course in the basics of institutional advancement even as they are adjusting to the many other challenges of the job." As another president put it, "The learning never stops." Different research is required to meet different challenges: annual fund, capital projects, endowments, etc. . . . Seasoned presidents encourage their chief development officers to retain counsel and seek regular advice.

7. Give and ask others to give

In *Advancing Advancement: A Study of Fundraising Effectiveness Among Protestant Seminaries in the U.S.*, R. Mark Dillon stated it plainly and backed it up with research: "Presidential leadership in advancement, particularly as a solicitor of major gifts, is an important component of an effective program." Many presidents expect the chief development officer and development office to do all the work. Don't fall into that trap. Give generously and encourage others to join you by being ready to answer these questions for givers and prospects: Why give to the seminary? Why give now? What impact will it have? Presidents who can articulate answers to these three questions raise lots of money!

There are many more factors I could have included in both lists that can contribute to success for programs and presidents. Schools that start with these should be set on a good path.

Establish peer relationships

Perhaps one final thought as a postscript for both lists would be to establish peer relationships. Annually attending conferences that ATS hosts can help both development officers and presidents forge relationships with counterparts at peer schools facing similar challenges. I have personally found DIAP to be a place where I have built some close peer friendships and gained new ideas to improve my ability to raise up givers for Denver Seminary.◆
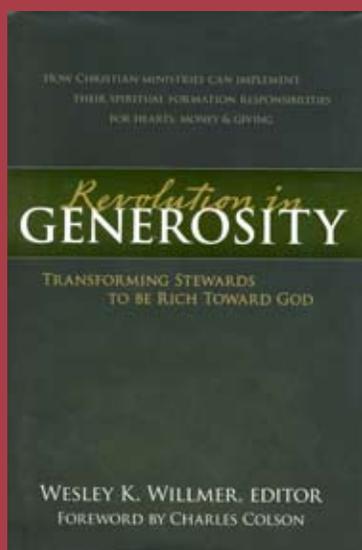
Only one mile from Egypt

The challenge of being faithful in unfamiliar territory

Edward L. Wheeler is in his twelfth year as president of Christian Theological Seminary and the first African American to serve in that capacity. This article is abridged from a presentation in March 2007 at the ATS consultation on Dismantling Institutional Racism and revised for the June 2008 Chief Academic Officers Seminar, whose theme was "Shaping Diversity in Theological Schools." The 2008 paper may be viewed in its entirety at www.ats.edu > Resources > PapersPresentations > LeadershipEducation.

> As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"
> (Exodus 14:10–12, NIV)

Like many who have wrestled with institutional racism, have embraced diversity, or are wrestling with how to become a truly inclusive institution, Christian Theological Seminary (CTS) has begun a faith journey but not yet arrived at its destination. In fact, in many ways CTS is symbolically "only one mile from Egypt" and frightened by the challenges. We have identified ourselves as a racist institution, which is painful, and we have committed ourselves to becoming an antiracist/proreconciliation institution and community. But the path to that worthwhile goal is elusive, and we are beginning to realize that, despite a good start, we are closer to Egypt than to our desired destination.

Challenges to dismantling racism

Like the Exodus of Israelites out of Egypt, the effort to dismantle racism and become an antiracist/proreconciliation institution is fraught with emotional highs and depressing lows. Institutional change is never easy, and the attempt to root out institutional racism ranks among the most difficult battles of all. Because the challenge is so great, there is an inherent temptation to give a sigh of relief once some headway has been made and some visible changes are apparent in the make-up of the faculty, student body, and/or staff. As important as these changes are, however, they can be illusions. As important as it is to see persons of color in increased numbers within our communities, we are usually only one mile from Egypt, because all too often the structures and systems that support institutional racism and white privilege are not disrupted by the increase of racial/ethnic persons at any level of the institution.

Nevertheless, the increase in visibility of persons of color can itself lead to new tensions and stress within an institution. As difficult as the initial process of dismantling racism may have been, the second tier in the process is even more difficult because it is at the second tier that the racist presuppositions are challenged and the institution moves from welcoming diversity to becoming inclusive. It is at this point that the struggle for the soul of the institution begins in earnest.

Diversity has become one of the mantras in business and educational institutions. But diversity is not the same as dismantling racism. An institution can be diverse without that diversity affecting the racist presuppositions that govern the institution and impact the lives of everyone in the institution. Dismantling racism will require institutions to move beyond diversity to the concept of *inclusion*. As I use the term, inclusion means power sharing and the challenging of racist presuppositions that enables white privilege to continue to maintain power in an institution. Inclusion means that new networks of authority are developed and that marginalized racial/ethnic persons help the institution move beyond racism to a new paradigm.
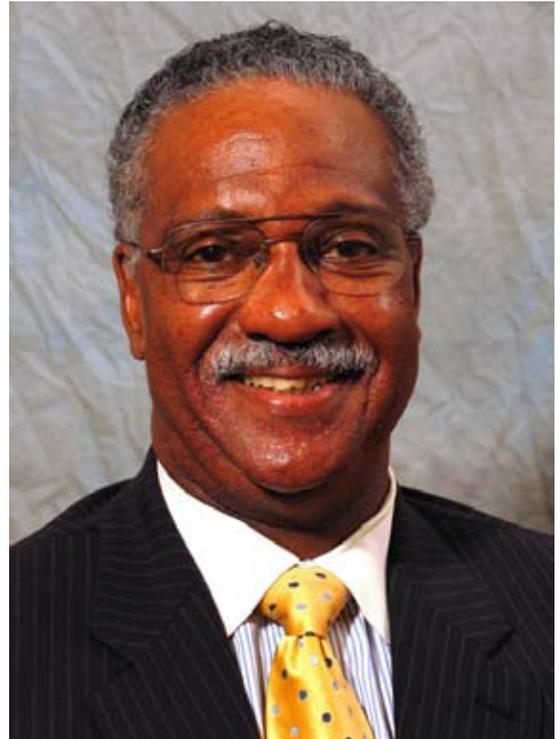
"[D]iversity is not the same as dismantling racism. An institution can be diverse without that diversity affecting the racist presuppositions that govern the institution and impact the lives of everyone in the institution. Dismantling racism will require institutions to move beyond diversity to the concept of inclusion."

As essential as the concept of inclusion is to dismantling racism and white privilege and creating an antiracist/proreconciliation institution, this effort will face internal challenges that can and often do derail the best efforts to defeat racism. The internal challenges can come from the "usual suspects," but they may also come from surprising "corners" of the institution. In order to move the institution forward, the leadership must be aware of some of the key challenges and be prepared to address them.

The liberal dilemma and its unexpected glass ceiling

One of the surprising challenges to dismantling racism is what I call "The Liberal Dilemma and Its Unexpected Glass Ceiling." Many individuals on our campuses characterize themselves as liberals on social issues and are committed to equality and justice as fundamental values in a faithful society. The tragic problem is that in all too many cases, these well-meaning, truly committed persons have never come to grips with their own racism, which is often undetected and far more subtle but no less harmful than the overt type. They are proud of being open to persons of other races and ethnicities; they have "friends" who are racial/ethnic; they may have even "marched with Martin" or been engaged in some lesser known but no less significant struggle for justice. Yet they do not recognize how vested they are in the status quo and the privilege they enjoy and how easy it is for them to see "white" perspectives as normative.

Reactionary opportunity

A second challenge is far more predictable but no less destructive. This is the "Reactionary Opportunity" that is resistant to change. Every institution has persons who are opposed to the effort to dismantle racism and eliminate white privilege. There are almost as many reasons as there are persons because some of the opposition is personal as well as systemic.

Some of the opposition that falls into this category will be visible, vocal, and overt. The persons who are up front with their opposition are usually persons who are secure enough in their institutional positions that they feel they can express their views with impunity. However, there are some whose personal biases are so strong or whose disdain for the institution is so high that they do not care if their views run counter to the position espoused by the institution.

Perhaps even more destructive are those persons within the institution who are opposed to the inclusion of racial/ethnic persons in the institution's power schemes and systems but who operate out of sight. These persons may appear to be supportive of the institutional goals but work undercover to derail the efforts to dismantle institutional racism and white privilege.

Persons who are resistant to change are always looking for opportunities to exploit the tensions and the problems that the dismantling processes are sure to create. New racial/ethnic hires are often judged by a standard that is higher than was evident in the past and the failure of a person of color is often interpreted as characteristic of

the whole race while the success of a racial/ethnic person is seen as the exception to the rule. Another subtle tactic is the assertion that the past (when there were few if any racial/ethnic persons present in the institution) was the institution's "golden age."

The racial/ethnic paradox: The loss of privilege and power

While the first two challenges come from whites who are part of the institution, the third comes from a different and somewhat surprising source: the racial/ethnic pioneers. I identify this challenge as "The Racial/Ethnic Paradox: The Loss of Privilege and Power." Most of our institutions arrived at where they are through a long and, at times, painful process. Some schools now have several racial/ethnic persons among their faculties, staff, and administrative teams who have been viewed as the breakthrough hires for the institution that paved the way for change.

Yet those racial/ethnic pioneers may also embody an almost unspeakable paradox that challenges efforts to dismantle institutional racism and white privilege. Few people can appreciate the energy it takes to "carry" their race in a

situation where their every move and action is scrutinized and where they are considered the expert on issues related to race. As members of a radically obvious minority on the campus (and sometimes a minority of one), they are often empowered to be the legitimate interpreters of the experiences of racial/ethnic persons. It creates the illusion for everyone involved that these individuals have power, when in fact they may have little or no power. And while most newcomers respect, if not honor, those persons who came before them, in many instances the very presence of new voices undermines the authority and power that the long-suffering racial/ethnic representatives once held. It is therefore not unusual that a once sole racial/ethnic representative may resist some of the very changes she or he helped to create.

The progressive quandary

I identify a fourth key challenge as "The Progressive Quandary." This challenge is closely associated with raised expectations and increased institutional vulnerability that is ironically rooted in the beginning signs of success. One painful reality is that for many persons of color within predominantly white institutions there is a large amount of skepticism when those institutions talk about dismantling racism and propose moving toward becoming an antiracist/proreconciliation institution. Nevertheless, despite the reservations some persons of color may have, there will be others who will be hopeful that the initiative has begun. The perspective of these persons often begins to include an expectation that the changes they see will expand across the life of the institution in a visible, meaningful, and concrete way. While this optimism is positive, raised expectations can open the institution to greater criticism and institutional unrest if the pace of change is seen as being too slow.

Balancing the tension: A leadership task

In response to these and other challenges, the institution must balance the tension that the effort to dismantle racism is sure to create. While the leadership of the seminary cannot do the work of balancing the tensions by itself, it must take the lead. Those who attempt to balance the competing tensions and increased stress must be persons with both the authority to support change and the community credibility that allows them to make difficult decisions about how the dismantling process is to proceed and how

the tensions are to be managed. The chief academic officer is a key component in this task.

It is important to state that some tension and stress is essential to the change process. However, too much stress and tension can negatively impact the institution just as too little stress and tension may be a sign of lethargy that is deadly for the process of change. Institutional leadership must understand this balance and have a feel for the level of stress and tension that is most productive. It must also know the various stakeholders and be familiar with the way they handle (and create) stress as well as the most effective ways of relating to them. The dismantling of institutional racism and white privilege requires working through conflict as opposed to ignoring the tensions, running away from the uncomfortable confrontations, or being stopped by the conflicts.

In the attempt to balance the institution's tensions, the institutional leadership must be uncompromisingly steadfast on one point: its unwavering commitment to the antiracist/pro-reconciling process. It must be understood, however, that such a commitment comes at a price. First, leadership must be prepared to accept criticism from all sides, and it must be open enough to discern which criticisms are worthy of further consideration and which have little or no merit. In either case, institutional leadership cannot become defensive or overly vexed by the

criticisms. Second, there will be casualties on the journey. Everyone who begins the dismantling process will not complete the work. Some who leave will not be a surprise, and in some cases, their departure will prove to be beneficial for lowering the stress levels within the institution. However, some who may leave will surprise the leadership. They will be persons who may have genuinely supported the process but for whom the institutional stress proved to be too great. Some good people will not continue the journey, and over time this can adversely affect the leadership and the effort to transform the institution.

## Re-creating an institutional identity

Christian Theological Seminary has made some meaningful changes in how it looks and feels, but we are only "one mile from Egypt." We have begun to see increased tension within the community as we begin scratching at the roots of institutional racism and white privilege. We have begun to move beyond diversity to inclusion, expectations have increased, and the traditional normative white standards have been challenged. All of this can be uncomfortable.

Much like the Israelites, who seemed trapped between their slave past and an uncertain future, the option for theological schools to return to the past is really not an option. The days of institutional racism as an accepted mode of operation are numbered. The changing demographics will necessitate its demise. Within twenty years, there will not be a racial majority in the United States as racial/ethnic persons will become more prominent in the society. Furthermore, persons who have envisioned a new future will not allow institutional racism to limit the possibilities for that future. Institutional racism will not survive because the integrity of the Christian faith is at stake. It has been slow in coming, but Christianity can no longer ignore institutional racism
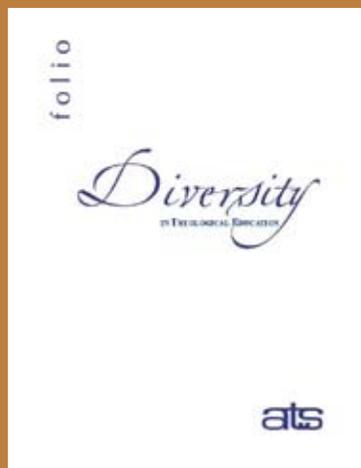
as one of the most grievous of sins with which it has been complacent and compliant.

White privilege will not last either. It may have a longer shelf life than institutional racism because it is less identifiable and tied to power structures that exist in our society—and in our schools—but the challenge to white privilege will be increasingly adamant and persistent.

Returning to the past is not an option for any theological school that desires to be relevant and effective in the twenty-first century. Institutions that want to be relevant for the faith must therefore look to the future. In so doing, they must re-create an institutional identity that realigns the past with their antiracist/proreconciliation future—a future that dismantles institutional racism and white privilege in an intentional way, and they must demonstrate how the emerging identity is consistent with the self-understanding of the institution's history and heritage.

Yet reshaping the institutional history is not enough to achieve the goal of dismantling institutional racism and white privilege. To challenge the tendency toward complacency, our institutions must identify reasonable benchmarks and time frames that stretch the institution but also recognize that progress is rarely made in a straight line. Three such benchmarks that will make an institutional difference are faculty appointments, administrative hires, and curriculum revision.

Making sure there is a solid core of tenured racial/ethnic faculty at the heart of the teaching/learning enterprise will change the institutional authority structure and faculty conversations in important and meaningful ways. Hiring several racial/ethnic persons to serve in decision-making positions can and will change both the face of the institution and institutional perspectives. Surrounding these persons with competent support and a mandate to help move the institution toward the goal of becoming an antiracist/proreconciliation institution will benefit the institution.

It is in the area of curriculum revision, however, that racist presuppositions and white privilege can be challenged and students can be changed in ways that more broadly impact the future of the church and communities. Nothing is harder

in academia than changing the curriculum, and it is often here that institutional racism and racist presuppositions are either perpetuated or dismantled. Who are the theologians that students are expected to read? What is the content of the church history courses? What is the standard by which students are judged to be good preachers? Good scholars? What perspectives are offered in the courses on church administration? What is considered normative for the interpretation of biblical texts? If the curriculum establishes Anglo-American or European perspectives as normative and sufficient, the journey to dismantling institutional racism will be long. If, however, the teaching/learning process helps students and faculty appreciate the gifts racial/ethnic voices bring to the conversation and they begin to value those perspectives that change the teaching/learning paradigm, our goal will be much nearer.

"Much like the Israelites, who seemed trapped between their slave past and an uncertain future, the option for theological schools to return to the past is really not an option. The days of institutional racism as an accepted mode of operation are numbered. The changing demographics will necessitate its demise."

Continuing on the journey

Our institutions have left the unquestioned bondage of our past. We still work in racist institutions, but at least we now know they are racist and that we are captives of white privilege. More importantly, we want to change. Our journey entails leaving what we have known and moving—however tentatively—toward the unknown. Nevertheless the journey is necessary if we are to be the people God has been calling us to be. There are challenges before us, but the task of dismantling institutional racism and white privilege is necessary if we are to be fully human. We may only be one mile from Egypt, but even if it means dying in the desert, we will not go back to accepting racism or white privilege as normative.◆

Stay calm, keep focus on fundraising in uncertain times

*This article, co-authored by Jeffrey Byrne & Associates CEO **Jeffrey Byrne** and Executive Vice President **Jennifer Furla**, first appeared on JB&A's website, FundRaisingJBA.com in October 2008.*

With the market swinging at dizzying rates and an array of alarming headlines in the news, it's important, now more than ever, to stay calm and keep our focus on our annual and major gift fundraising work during these last months of the year.

You don't want to seem like Nero, fiddling while Rome burned, by pushing forward blithely with solicitations and seemingly little regard to the current crisis. At the same time, it's critical to keep in mind that we must exercise our fiduciary responsibility to move worthy projects forward in order to meet the very real human needs that we work daily to address in the nonprofit sector.

Here are some things you can do now to position yourself for a stronger year-end and continued campaign success:

"It's now more important than ever to patiently focus on cultivation and conversations about your mission, your core programs and needs, and what you plan to accomplish with donor investment."

Arm yourself with resources . . . and use them to educate yourself, your volunteers, and your donors.

While most of us aren't comfortable giving investment advice or market prognostications, we can do a few things to help educate ourselves, our volunteers, and our donors about the current economy, perspectives on the market, and how economic downturns have impacted giving in the past. Look to authoritative sources with analysis from both sides. A recent special report in *Money Magazine*, "What this economy means for you,"[1] provides a thorough look at the state of the economy and its implications.

Seek to tap resources you have within your own organization. Most of us have bankers, financial advisors, or investment advisors within our leadership or donor base. Ask them to provide independent analysis that you can share with volunteers and donors.

Offer reassurance.

While we can't predict with certainty when things will improve, experts generally agree that the market will rebound some time in the first half of 2009. According to Standard & Poor's, history shows that the market makes a relatively quick recovery: equities typically recoup a third of what they lost in a bear market in the first forty days of a new bull market. A study by Ned Davis Research shows that Standard & Poor's 500 Composite Index tended to bounce back quickly after bottoming-out during the past ten recessions. The index generated a 24 percent mean return six months after bottoming, and 32 percent a year later.

Understand, too, that recessions occur about every five to ten years, but the impact on giving has been slight. During the five national recessions since 1974, giving was down an average of about 1 percent. However, giving has gone up around 4.3 percent during nonrecessionary years. A recent report by the Giving USA Foundation, "Spotlight: Giving in Recessions and Economic Slowdowns,"[2] offers a historical look at how different sectors of philanthropy have fared during recessions going back to 1969.

Get back to fundamentals.

It's now more important than ever to patiently focus on cultivation and conversations about your mission, your core programs and needs, and what you plan to accomplish with donor investment. Best fundraising practice tells us that success comes from deepened donor relationships. Use this time to build such relationships by slowing down the solicitation process and really talking with donors about their interests, desires, concerns, and questions.

Don't fear putting forth your need.

All thinking on fundraising says that you do not pull back on your efforts during hard economic times, but rather you should underscore your need and your project's importance to your donors as your closest allies. While you should be respectful and listen to understand donors' concerns, you should not assume that all donors cannot, or will not, support your cause or project.

Be respectful and empathetic.

In conversations with donors, acknowledge their concerns and ask if it's a good time to talk to them about a gift. Anticipate that they may have concerns about their own situations or those of others around them. Put yourself in your donors' shoes and meet them on their own terms.

Communicate, communicate, communicate.

Remember that current donors also have questions. Be certain to update them on your plans, progress, and your fundraising strategies. This is good stewardship and will boost confidence in the overall success of your campaign or project.

Know your business.

Take a good, hard look at your financials and your needs through the end of the year and into 2009. Be prepared to provide clear, concise answers. If you are working on a capital project, talk with your business partners to learn what the current state of the economy means to the project. Give solid reasons to donors as to why you are moving forward with your campaign. Remember, during times like these, need does not go away—it may actually increase.◆

ENDNOTES

1. Stephen Gandel and Paul J. Lim, "What this Economy Means for You," *Money Magazine*, October 9, 2008, http://money.cnn.com/2008/10/08/pf/money_crisis.moneymag/index.htm?postversion=2008100912.

2. "Giving During Recessions and Economic Slowdowns," *Spotlight e-Newsletter* 3, 2008, is available from the Giving USA Foundation at 847-375-4709 or by emailing info@givinginstitute.org.

Jeffrey Byrne

Jennifer Furla

Finding the right fit: Profiles of Ministry, Stage II, at Dallas Theological Seminary

George Hillman is assistant professor of spiritual formation and leadership at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Every summer, my wife and I take down a large bag of clothes from our daughter's closet as we make the yearly wardrobe switch from her school clothes to her summer clothes. Inevitably, as has happened every summer before, most of the clothes that fit her last summer no longer fit this summer. It is amazing how fast middle school girls grow. Although it would be much more economical for our daughter to stop growing each year, little girls eventually become young ladies. So our quest for right fitting clothes continues each year.

In many ways, Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS) has been on a quest for the last couple of years to find assessment instruments that "fit" its situation. As the director of the field education program, I needed a way to assess student character and readiness for ministry. After using a variety of self-made assessment tools prior to my arrival in 2002, DTS has been using Profiles of Ministry Stage II for the last couple of years. Let me share what we have learned as a larger nondenominational evangelical seminary in implementing this wonderful assessment tool.

Benefits of Profiles of Ministry

Richer internship exit interviews
The greatest benefit of using Profiles of Ministry program instruments has been seen in our internship exit interviews. Each student is required to have a ninety-minute exit interview with his or her internship coordinator (our department's professional field educators) at the conclusion of the internship. During these interviews the student's vocational clarity, understanding of strengths and weaknesses, plans for lifelong

learning, and theological reflection are discussed. The scores from Profiles of Ministry Stage II have become an objective starting point for many of these conversations with our students.

All of the areas discussed in the Personal Characteristics section of the *Interpretive Manual* (Responsible and Caring, Family Perspective, Personal Faith, and Potential Negative Tendencies) provide a gold mine of conversation and reflection material for our internship coordinators during these exit interviews. We are particularly finding rich discussions with our students on their scores of Personal Responsibility, Perceptive Counseling, Ministry Precedence over Family, and Belief in a Provident God. Profiles of Ministry Stage II and its use of case studies is fortunately bringing to the surface many of these crucial issues that were remaining invisible prior to our implementation of this assessment tool.

We currently use only the *Casebook* and the *Field Observations* with our internships, but we will be piloting the use of the *Interview* with our students this fall. The decision to add this important final component of Profiles of Ministry Stage II has come as a result of the successes we have seen from using the *Casebook* and *Field Observations* in these internship exit interviews. We believe that the insights gained from the *Interview* component will only add more potential discussion points with our students.

Assessment of seminary competencies
Another benefit is that Profiles of Ministry deals with a wide variety of issues that can be integrated into our seminary's competency measures. Our seminary has six core competencies for student development in the areas of biblical interpretation, theology, communication, Christian spirituality, servant leadership, and cultural engagement. Every intern at our seminary must have developmental goals for his or her internship, based on four of the six core competencies:

- *Christian Spirituality*—"The student, by means of the Spirit, demonstrates increasing love and devotion to God and loving service to others."
- *Servant Leadership*—"The student models servant leadership and equips others in a God-given direction through Christlike character, leadership capability, and love."
- *Communication*—"The student is able to persuade others with respect to biblical and

theological truth through oral, written, and electronic media."

- *Cultural Engagement*—"The student demonstrates appreciation for the contributions of different cultures and is committed to evangelism and biblically based ministry with appropriate engagement with people in those cultures."

What Profiles of Ministry Stage II provides is a snapshot of where our students are in relation to these specific competencies. Instead of having our interns and on-site field education mentors complete a battery of assessments on each student, Profiles of Ministry Stage II gives us the variety that we need for our competencies in a single assessment instrument. The class scores from Profiles of Ministry can then be used by our school in tailoring learning environments for student development.

Tailorings for a large nondenominational seminary

Physical dispersion and number of students
With the benefits, there have also been some tailorings that we have had to do to make Profiles of Ministry fit our setting. One challenge has been size. Dallas Theological Seminary is no different from other seminaries working with a more physically dispersed student body. Besides the campus in Dallas, we also maintain extension sites in Houston, Austin, San Antonio, Atlanta, and Tampa, as well as online formats. Another contributing factor is that we allow students to complete their internships globally. So even if we are working with a Dallas campus student, that student might be fulfilling his or her internship by serving at a church in inner city Chicago or working with a mission school in India. With a student population of approximately 1,800 students spread around the world, it is challenging to distribute and collect the Profiles of Ministry material.

The good news is that an important time saver is now offered. This summer The Association of Theological Schools made the *Field Observations* for Profiles of Ministry Stage II available online. Our first wave of online *Field Observations* will come in this fall, and I am anticipating that having this form online will save my staff many hours of collating. Instead of having six answer sheets to keep track of (one *Casebook* answer sheet and five *Field Observation* answer sheets), my administrative staff will have to deal with

only the *Casebook* answer sheet. Also, having the *Field Observation* online will help eliminate the need to mail "replacement" *Field Observations* around the world to student or field observers who misplaced these forms (which is a constant request considering the number of forms that leave our office each semester).

Wording for nondenominational evangelicals
Another challenge has been wording. Because The Association of Theological Schools represents such a broad variety of denominations and Christian traditions, some of the wording and theological views of the Profiles of Ministry do not necessarily connect with our students or churches. Many students at our seminary come from nonliturgical backgrounds with either loose or nonexistent denominational ties. Words such as "parish" and "Eucharist" have little contextual meaning for these students or churches. This has sometimes created a barrier for our students working through the *Casebook* and for our field observers working through the *Field Observation*.

The *Casebook* and *Field Observation* instructions provide information about the use of certain terms in the questions. We have addressed this language barrier by emphasizing and elaborating these mental word substitutions for our students and field observers to assist them in completing the forms:

- *Parish, Congregation, or Church*—"The ministry venue where he/she is serving"
- *Worship, Eucharist, Mass*—"Leading of worship either in front of the entire congregation or in front of his/her ministry venue"
- *Teaching or Preaching*—"Presenting a lesson either in front of the entire congregation or in front of his/her ministry venue"

With these suggestions, most people are able to make the mental substitutions needed to complete the *Casebook* and *Field Observation.*

Nontraditional vocations
A final challenge has been with nontraditional vocations. Besides traditional pastors and missionaries, we are supervising internships for school teachers, curriculum developers, biblical researchers, chaplains, media arts technicians, conference speakers, webmasters, and authors. While Profiles of Ministry Stage II is a more natural assessment for traditional ministerial roles,

Selected highlights of the spring
Graduating Student Questionnaire

The 2007–08 group profile from this spring's *Graduating Student Questionnaire* included 4,937 responses from 137 schools. The following highlights should provide a helpful sketch of the overall findings.

Overall assessments of the seminary experience were positive:

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

- 79.2 percent of MDiv students rated their field education or internship experience *Important* or *Very important*. For these students, the two top effects of field education/internship were *Improved pastoral skills* and *Better idea of my strengths and weaknesses.*

Financial support and debt continue to be of concern among graduating seminarians:

- 62.1 percent of graduates brought no educational debt with them. 8.7 percent came with a debt load of $30,000 or more.

- 43.0 percent of graduates incurred no new educational debt during seminary while 22.3 percent had a debt load of $30,000 or more at the time of their graduation.

- 12.6 percent of graduates had a monthly payment for educational debt of $500 or more.

- The three most important sources of income for graduates included *Scholarship/grant, Off-campus work,* and *Spouse's work.*

In thinking about future employment, fewer than half of all graduates anticipate full-time parish ministry:

- 47.8 percent of MDiv graduates anticipated full-time parish ministry. The next two areas were *Undecided* and *Hospital or other chaplaincy.*

- 18.2 percent of non-MDiv graduates anticipated full-time parish ministry. The next two areas were *Undecided* and *Other*.♦

some of the questions do not connect with these more nontraditional roles. This challenge is most obvious in the *Field Observations*, since many of the people completing these questions have not seen the student in the church settings that are described. Still we believe so strongly in the benefits of Profiles of Ministry that we are having all of our students complete the materials as a part of their internships. Our rationale is that every student will need to learn how to function in a leadership role in a local church, whether or not he or she is fulfilling a more traditional ministerial role.

One solution has been to provide a guide for our field observers. In these unique settings for our nontraditional vocation students, we have developed a list of *Field Observation* "essential questions." These questions relate to Fidelity to Task and Persons, Commitment Reflecting Religious Piety, Christian Spirituality, Self-Serving Behavior, Self-Protecting Behavior, Intuitive Domination of Decision Making, and Clarity of Thought and Communication. As noted in the previous section, these characteristics directly correspond to our school's core competencies. A chart is provided to these field observers, guiding them through approximately half of the questions in the *Field Observation* booklet. Our reason is simple—we would rather receive some information from a field observer than to have a field observer become frustrated and not complete the *Field Observation* at all. We believe that every one of our field observers should be able to answer these selected questions with relative ease.

Finding the right fit

Compared to many of our sister schools using Profiles of Ministry, Dallas Theological Seminary is a relative "newbie." As with any newbie, there are growth spurts and adjustments that need to be made along the way. We are still in the process of trying to find the right fit for making Profiles of Ministry run smoothly with our students. More importantly, we are constantly trying to adjust our own system so that the students are getting the maximum benefit from the treasures that are found in the Profiles of Ministry scores. But we love how the clothes are fitting so far.♦

Financial leadership is a vocation

David L. Tiede, president emeritus of Luther Semi-nary, made this presentation at the 2007 CFO Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Excerpts of it appear here. To view the full-length text and PowerPoint slideshow, please visit www.ats.edu > Resources > Papers and Presentations.

Some of our academics don't think much of the idea that any administration is about leadership. And "financial leadership"? Can you hear the scholars groan? "Spare me! The CFO is just here to say no. Financial leadership is an oxymoron."

Still, financial leadership is our topic, and we maintain that it is not only possible but also necessary to the work of the schools for the churches. Thus financial leadership is a vocation, a calling in God's mission. Nobody ever promised that having a calling meant things would be easy.

To say that "financial leadership is a vocation" is not only personally significant for you and your work, but this conviction also touches the educational missions of our schools in a new era of theological education. Many schools have been challenged to define the excellence of their educational work by more than aspiring to the standards of the traditional academic guilds. Through struggles, many of them financial, faculties have heard their alumni/ae declare, "Quit preparing your graduates for a church that no longer exists!"

A complex discussion is emerging in the community of ATS schools, marked by the language of leadership education, the focus on the vocations of Christian communities, and the affirmation of the callings of all God's people in the world. ATS Executive Director Daniel Aleshire has caught this spirit in his declaration that "Theological education is leadership education." To say your financial leadership is a vocation, therefore, is to raise a theological claim for your work within the callings of your schools and to hold your stewardship accountable to this high standard.

In the late 1980s, a great bear of a man named Bob Terry showed up at my door. He came from the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota, and he was a well-paid consultant on leadership to major corporations. He also had an MDiv from Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School and a PhD in ethics from the University of Chicago.

"I hear you are proposing to do leadership education at this place," he thundered. "Do you have any idea what you are talking about?" I backed up a bit, and he continued. "I don't want to be rude, but this is either the best news I have heard from a theological school in a long time, or it is just tripe!"

Bob was not one to mince his words.

"Listen," he said, "I tell my corporations the same thing. They all say, 'What we need around here is leadership!' but they seldom know where they need to go or how far or how fast. Leadership means change."

Bob Terry's first insight from the public world of leadership education was that leadership is about figuring out **what is really going on** in our organizations and the world. This fits Max De Pree's definition of leadership: "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor."[1]

And who said it is easy to "define reality?" Who is so smart in any organization as to know "what is really going on?" Clearly the CFO is in a unique position to diagnose what's really going on, at least from the school's financials, but the money may only be a symptom of deeper realities.

Legacy of the gospel vs. a new era

One of the reasons so many kinds of seminaries exist is the desire to conserve what varied communities treasure most in the legacy of the gospel. On the other hand, theological schools are also expected to prepare leaders for a new era of the church's mission, like scribes trained for the kingdom, bringing out of their treasuries what is old and what is new (Matt. 13:52). Faculty meetings often reflect this tension, sometimes productively, between what has been the real
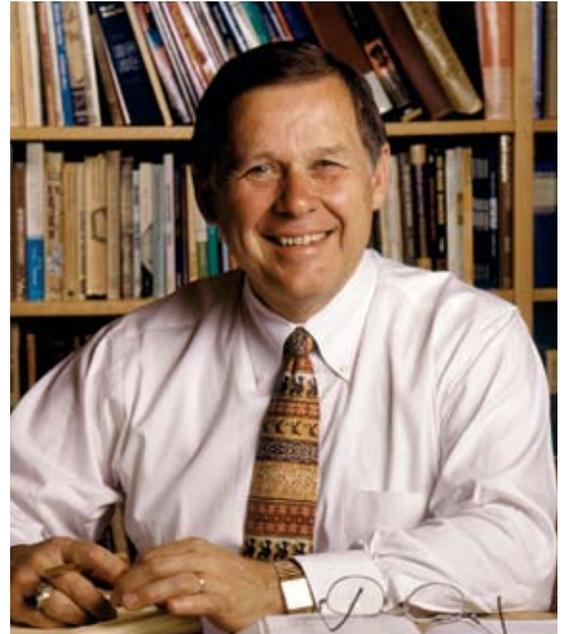
situation and the new day that is dawning. But I fear often faculty struggles are not over defending the faith once delivered, but are preoccupied with protecting modern traditions of academic excellence. "No one," said our Lord, "No one after drinking old wine desires new wine, but says, 'The old is good.'" (Luke 5:39, NRSV)

So, theologically, where is your seminary located from the past to the future, from stability of purposes and practices to innovation to address new challenges? In seminaries, the academic forces of conservation regularly claim theological justifications, but one of the revelations of the ATS community of schools is that many of our more theologically conservative seminaries are risk-taking, innovative, entrepreneurial institutions.

"Authentic leadership isn't just 'upsetting the apple cart.' The question is not only how much change can people stand, but what changes are truly needed and how fast? What leadership is needed in which places?"

Leadership is about managing change

The second insight Bob Terry gave us was to teach us that leadership is about managing change or, as I put it, stewarding institutions on the move. Moses in the Exodus or Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem display authentic leaders taking a people someplace, from here to there. It is impossible to get there without leaving here. The new wine will stretch or even break the old wineskins. Leadership means people move.

When congregations are looking for a new pastor, they often tell people like me, "We want a fine preacher, and we want a real leader!" Echoing Bob Terry, I often say, "Are you sure? A leader will call your community beyond its enclave. How uncomfortable do you want to be?"

Terry's focus on the courage of leadership also anticipated the splendid work of Ron Heifetz in *Leadership without Easy Answers*[2] and with Marty Linsky in *Leadership on the Line*.[3] Listen to Heifetz and Linsky: "Any community can take only so much pressure before it becomes either immobilized or spins out of control. The heat must

stay within a tolerable range—not so high that people demand it be turned off completely, and not so low that they are lulled into inaction. We call this span the productive range of distress."[4] Authentic leaders move people into a "productive range of distress."

Authentic leadership isn't just "upsetting the apple cart." The question is not only how much change can people stand, but what changes are truly needed and how fast? What leadership is needed in which places?

Leadership in very stable organizations, like some of our deeply endowed seminaries, will probably be incremental, deliberate, requiring, among other things, financial scenarios and models. What does the church or the world need that will justify more than cosmetic or technical change?

Many more of our institutions are unstable, almost chaotic, with great opportunities to be creative and address new realities. Adaptive leadership is required if you are the CFO of one our entrepreneurial ventures in ATS. The wind of the Spirit is in your face. Your risky work merits deep respect.

School governance

Let's explore how your leadership as CFO is exercised in each of three phases[5] of stewardship of the powers of our schools.

Fiduciary phase
The word *fiduciary* communicates stewardship, held in trust. What's also interesting, however, is how each group has a differing stewardship with distinct powers and fiduciary responsibilities.

Boards don't tell faculty what to teach or meddle in the classroom, and faculties, students, and staff don't approve audits or budgets or award degrees. If you like to watch competitive ice skating, this is the "compulsory figures" phase. You can't freestyle until you have shown mastery of the fundamentals. You can't be strategic, let alone generative, unless you do this work competently.

The fiduciary phase is not the place for dreamy schemes. This is where administrative competencies are disciplined and performance is tracked by annual goals. Accounting that gets too creative will be challenged by a good audit,

with particular accountability of the CFO and the president. Fiduciary stewardship of the seminary's powers is not only about the separation of powers but even the segregation of duties, and the public accountabilities of boards (à la the Sarbanes-Oxley act) are not optional.

Our schools are filled with people who are literate to the nth degree, but our numerate intelligence needs help. Our CFO once said to me, "How can people who are so smart about what truly counts in our faith be so inept at counting?" I said to him, "That's why God sent you to us, to be our teacher." As Daniel Aleshire wrote in *Earthen Vessels*, "I don't know if the devil is in the details, but I know that God is in the particulars."[6]

Strategic phase

Your leadership vocation is not, however, constrained to the fiduciary phase of the seminary's governance. When that same CFO, named Howard Ostrem, first arrived at Luther Seminary, he came from a career in organizational planning at AT&T. He asked to see our strategic plan, and I was pleased to provide him with a copy of the first plan we had written, titled "Excellence for Ministry." We had worked hard on the document, sorting out our theological and educational priorities. When Ostrem returned to my office, he was impressed, but also perplexed. "I've read a lot of plans over the years," he said. "This one is rich in ideas and convictions." Then he added, "Where is the operational section?" Alas, we had an inspirational document but not yet a strategic plan.

But that is only the beginning. Even as a school moves with greater confidence as it masters its fundamental, managerial disciplines, its capacity to move the work forward logically requires another kind of stewardship, not least from the CFO. Funding strategic priorities can't be simply giving more funds to faculty for projects. Disciplined priorities will also enable strategic abandonments. Business plans with goals and budgets are needed.

Generative phase

Many presidents and CFOs want to keep their boards and faculties informed, but in a generative phase, everybody's hopes and commitments are welcomed. This is the kind of engagement that is practiced when schools develop case statements for a capital campaign. The listening actually begins outside, with the customers.

These people are not expert in the work, but they hope the seminary will fulfill the promise it holds in trust.

Consider the statement about shared vision from the MIT guru on learning organizations in *The Fifth Discipline*: "A shared vision is not an idea. . . . It is, rather, a force in people's hearts, a force of impressive power. . . . At its simplest level, a shared vision is the answer to the question, 'What do we want to create?' . . . Shared visions derive their power from a common caring."[7]

Grand visions must have strategic discipline for real results to come from them. But the greatest powers, the prospects for revenue, and the visions to lead people beyond themselves all lie in the generative phase.

Your fiduciary leadership is indispensable to the school's integrity, requiring the courage to steward limited resources. You are entrusted with responsibility for a bottom line that is honestly black as often as possible. Your strategic leadership is essential to the disciplines of plans and their operational execution, requiring the wisdom of allocation for results. And your generative leadership is a calling to listen, learn, and guide the fundamental calling of the school in gratitude for God's abundant love.

Thanks be to God for your vocations of financial leadership!

"Our CFO once said to me, 'How can people who are so smart about what truly counts in our faith be so inept at counting?' I said to him, 'That's why God sent you to us, to be our teacher.'"

ENDNOTES

1. Max De Pree, *Leadership is an Art* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2004), 11.

2. Ronald L. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

3. Ronald L. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2002).

4. Ibid., 108.

5. Richard P. Chait, William P. Ryan, and Barbara E. Taylor, *Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of Nonprofit Boards* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2005).

6. Daniel O. Aleshire, *Earthen Vessels: Hopeful Reflections on the Work and Future of Theological Schools* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 7.

7. Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990; rev. 2006), 206.

Emerging trends in higher education accreditation

Implications for ATS

Jeremiah McCarthy is director, accreditation and institutional evaluation. He serves as secretary to the Board of Commissioners.

The ATS Board of Commissioners has established a task force, consisting of members representing the diversity and ecclesial families of ATS, to review the ATS Commission standards and procedures for possible revisions and amendments. As Dan Aleshire indicates in his editorial, it has been twelve years since the redeveloped standards were adopted by the Commission membership in 1996, and the time is ripe for a thoughtful consideration of the standards in light of significant demands for provision of theological education and new mission imperatives from the member schools to respond to the needs of their constituencies.

As we move forward with this exciting conversation that will engage us as a community of schools for the next two biennia (2008–2012), I would like to offer some reflections on the larger context of higher education accreditation that also affect the landscape in which "we live and move and have our being."

Under the leadership of the U.S. secretary of education, Margaret Spellings, an active and spirited conversation has occurred regarding the future of higher education accreditation. Calls for greater accountability and assurance to the public about the quality of higher education have increased in recent years, and questions have been raised about the objectivity of peer-based accrediting practices. As a result of thoughtful engagement between the Department of Education (DOE) and the institutional and specialized accrediting agencies recognized by the DOE, the value of peer-based accreditation has been affirmed as well as the central value of honoring the distinctive mission of each institution of higher education in the United States. However, it will be increasingly important for accrediting agencies to provide greater transparency about accrediting decisions so that the public can make informed decisions.

CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation), the agency that represents the institutional and specialized accrediting agencies (including ATS) recognized by the DOE, has been in the forefront of this dialogue with the DOE to find ways to protect the value of peer review and mission-sensitive accreditation. This input from CHEA has influenced several provisions in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 that has recently been approved by the U.S. Congress, August 14, 2008.

Among the provisions in the Act, there are new requirements for accreditors. In particular, I would like to highlight the following provisions that have implications for the ATS Board of Commissioners and for all of us in ATS:

Student achievement

The new law requires accreditors to have standards that assess "success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission, which may include different standards for different institutions or programs, as established by the institution, including, as appropriate, consideration of State licensing examinations, consideration of course completion, and job placement rates . . ."

Comment: This new emphasis is welcome in that it clarifies that higher education institutions, colleges and universities, and not government, have responsibility for making these determinations about student achievement. The new ATS document, "A Guide for Evaluating Theological Education" provides clear guidance to ATS schools about assessment of student learning and complies with this new emphasis in the legislation. (See Resource box to left.)

Transfer of credit

As a matter of federal law, accrediting agencies must now assure that institutions have transfer policies, that the policies are published, and that the schools have criteria with respect to recognizing credit earned at another school.

Comment: ATS Commission Degree Program Standard M currently addresses the issue of transfer of credit but not to the extent necessary. Standard M will be reviewed by the Commission as part of the overall standards review currently underway.

Information to the public

According to the new law, institutions are now required to provide information on a routine basis, and this information will likely need to be expanded.

Comment: The Board of Commissioners will review this new requirement as part of its current petition for renewal of recognition by the DOE in June 2009. In addition to the information that is presently disclosed (current accredited status, approved programs, distance learning sites, probation or notations), additional information may be appropriate such as the nature of reports required by the Commission and, possibly, summaries of accrediting decisions by the Board of Commissioners. The board will conduct its assessment with due concern for confidentiality.

Due process

The new law changes the terms and conditions under which an accrediting agency can impose negative sanctions.

Comment: Since disclosure requirements may be increased, the Board will also be evaluating its practices in light of these new requirements.

The role of institutional mission

The new law highlights the role of religious mission in determining institutional operation. The emphasis is helpful to ATS schools, but it will also require that the emphasis on religious mission not compromise the consistent application of accrediting standards.

Comment: The sensitivity to religious mission in the COA standards clearly reflects this new emphasis in the law.

Federal committee for recognition of agencies by the U.S. Department of Education

On a final note, all agencies recognized by the DOE, by virtue of that recognition, serve as gatekeepers for the federal student loan program. ATS performs this function for all ATS accredited schools. In order to retain this role, all of the agencies are reviewed every five years for renewal of recognition. ATS is currently scheduled for its five-year review by the DOE in June 2009. The federal committee that performs this function on behalf of the secretary of education has been the National Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Under the new law, the structure of NACIQI will be changed so that the new structure will have eighteen members (an increase from fifteen), and appointment to the committee will be shared by the secretary, the House and the Senate. Broadening the membership beyond the sole authority of the secretary is a welcome development. The shape of the new structure remains to be determined.

There are other important features in the new law, and you can find more discussion and information by consulting the CHEA website, www.chea.org.

In summary, the new provisions in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 will require discussion among the ATS Board of Commissioners and will also inform the board's deliberations as the work of the task force for the review and revision of the standards goes forward.◆

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.

Annual Report Forms Deadline

Annual Report Forms need to be submitted by December 1.

Board of Commissioners
June meeting report

The ATS Board of Commissioners met at the ATS office June 9–11, 2008:

The Board considered reports from evaluation committees for the following schools:

Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA
Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, OH
Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI
Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, IN
Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, CA
Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA
Columbia International University, Seminary & School of Missions, Columbia, SC
Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA
Franciscan School of Theology, Berkeley, CA
Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, GA
Logos Evangelical Seminary, El Monte, CA
Memphis Theological Seminary, Memphis, TN
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, MO
Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, PA
Oral Roberts University School of Theology, Tulsa, OK
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA
Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS
Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, PA
San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, CA
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA
Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, IA

The Board approved the following changes in membership status:

From Candidate to Accredited Status:
St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, Denver, CO

From Associate to Candidate Status:
Urshan Graduate School of Theology, Florissant, MO

The Board considered petitions for new or revised degree programs, changes in degree programs or nomenclature, and other petitions regarding course-offering sites, distance and extension programs,

and removal of notations from the following schools:

Ambrose Seminary of Ambrose University College, Calgary, AB
American Baptist Seminary of the West, Berkeley, CA
Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA
Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis, MO
Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO
Biblical Theological Seminary, Hatfield, PA
Carolina Evangelical Divinity School, High Point, NC
Christ The King Seminary, East Aurora, NY
Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, IN
Columbia International University–Seminary & School of Missions, Columbia, SC
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO
Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, VA
Emmanuel College of Victoria University, Toronto, ON
Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, TN
Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, TX
Erskine Theological Seminary, Due West, SC
Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA
George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA
Houston Graduate School of Theology, Houston, TX
Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO
International Theological Seminary, El Monte, CA
Knox Theological Seminary, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Logsdon Seminary of Logsdon School of Theology, Abilene, TX
Multnomah Biblical Seminary, Portland, OR
Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, IL
Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA
Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, TX
Queen's College Faculty of Theology, St. John's, NL
Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology, Richmond, VA
Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY

St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary,
    Boynton Beach, FL
University of Notre Dame Department
    of Theology, Notre Dame, IN
Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver, BC
Wesley Biblical Seminary, Jackson, MS
Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, MA

**The Board acted on reports received from
the following member schools:**

Alliance Theological Seminary, Nyack, NY
Anderson University School of Theology,
    Anderson, IN
Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis, MO
Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary,
    Elkhart, IN
Baptist Missionary Association Theological
    Seminary, Jacksonville, TX
Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, IN
Bethel Seminary of Bethel University,
    St. Paul, MN
Bexley Hall Seminary, Columbus, OH
Biblical Theological Seminary, Hatfield, PA
Carey Theological College, Vancouver, BC
Catholic University of America School of Theology
    and Religious Studies, Washington, DC
Central Baptist Theological Seminary,
    Shawnee, KS
Chapman Seminary of Oakland City University,
    Oakland City, IN
Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School,
    Rochester, NY
Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO
Duke University Divinity School, Durham, NC
Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, IN
Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest,
    Austin, TX
Florida Center for Theological Studies, Miami, FL
George Fox Evangelical Seminary, Portland, OR
Grand Rapids Theological Seminary of Corner-
    stone University, Grand Rapids, MI
Haggard School of Theology of Azusa Pacific
    University, Azusa, CA
Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT
Huron University College Faculty of Theology,
    London, ON
International Theological Seminary, El Monte, CA
James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology,
    Atlanta, GA
Knox Theological Seminary, Fort Lauderdale, FL
La Sierra University School of Religion,
    Riverside, CA
Logsdon Seminary of Logsdon School
    of Theology, Abilene, TX

Commission on Accrediting invites third-party comments

The following member schools are receiving comprehensive evalua-
tion committee visits during the spring semester:

    Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
    Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary
    Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond
    Chapman Seminary
    Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology
    Fuller Theological Seminary
    Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary
    Kenrick-Glennon Seminary
    Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary
    Oblate School of Theology
    Pacific School of Religion
    Phillips Theological Seminary
    Princeton Theological Seminary
    Seabury-Western Theological Seminary
    Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
    St. John's Seminary (CA)
    Westminster Theological Seminary in California

The ATS Commission on Accrediting invites any member school to
submit third-party comments on any school scheduled to receive a vis-
it. Comments should be addressed to the attention of the Commission
on Accrediting and sent by mail, fax, or email to Susan Beckerdite,
beckerdite@ats.edu by December 1.◆

Loyola Marymount University Department
    of Theological Studies, Los Angeles, CA
Mount Angel Seminary, Saint Benedict, OR
Nashotah House, Nashotah, WI
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary,
    New Orleans, LA
New York Theological Seminary, New York, NY
North Park Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL
Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA
Payne Theological Seminary, Wilberforce, OH
Phoenix Seminary, Phoenix, AZ
Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary,
    Pittsburgh, PA
Regis College, Toronto, ON
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary,
    Wake Forest, NC
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary,
    Fort Worth, TX
University of St. Mary of the Lake Mundelein
    Seminary, Mundelein, IL
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo, ON◆

The Association of Theological Schools
IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA
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