

Educational Models and Practices in Theological Education

Graduate Professional Educators Study Group Report

The **Graduate Professional Educators Study Group** met in April and October of 2018 to discuss matters of graduate education in the professions, examining how graduate professional education might inform graduate theological education.

Graduate Professional Educators Study Group

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Executive Summary

The goal of the first meeting was *descriptive*, with the focus of developing a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities graduate programs are facing across the disciplines. Guiding questions were:

1. How have challenges and opportunities for your discipline's graduate professional education emerged over time? What has led to the current situation? What "promises" to students were made? Which have been broken? Are innovations a way of addressing educational issues? Or a survival strategy?
2. Have there been changes in the business model? If so, what prompted them? What are they? What are the implications?
3. What emphasis is placed on vocational identity, professional identity, or personal formation? How is that formation assessed? What are the key competencies required in your profession?

Members of the **Graduate Professional Educators Study Group** presented their current challenges, such as student debt, often coupled with low starting salaries, lifestyle expectations, vocational choices, and post-graduation pathways. They also addressed questions of professional identity and the formal and informal influences within schools. What is the "hidden" curriculum? What behaviors are modeled by faculty? Do our professions still have a sense of higher calling? What codes of ethics are upheld? How are graduate schools involved in formation, identity, and vocation?

Through the conversations, certain overarching themes emerged.

- The professions are interested in the public good in ways that transcend the separate disciplines. The professions are united by interest in the greater good for all people.
- Schools are navigating the need to add elements to the curriculum, yet also the necessity of streamlining the educational process.
- The value society places on professional expertise has diminished with the democratization of knowledge. Yet, what graduate schools offer society goes beyond simple knowledge or information.
- In the U.S., higher education is at risk of receding, while globally, there is remarkable expansion of demand for higher education.
- There are shared values of professional identity common to all professions. Professions, to serve the common good, are thinking beyond old ways of doing things and tapping into the expertise of other professions. There is promise of future potential collaboration.
- Schools are moving into online education and students in these programs are being formed in ways both similar and different from residential students.

- Among the 18 Educational Models and Practices peer groups, a dominant theme was partnerships. Partnerships are not necessarily signs of failure, but rather can bring new ways to fulfill a school's mission.
- Students come to graduate schools not only to learn, but also to live. Students are attracted to schools by relationships. The expectation is that students will make lifelong friends.
- Educators in the professions benefit from collaborative conversations about the meaning and purposes of their work and that of their graduates. Educators have a civic responsibility together to build the common good, and there are benefits to conversation, across the disciplines, on formation in the professions.
- Graduate professional educators across the disciplines face many common challenges: enrollment demands, financial demands, shaping professional identity, and the need for personal formation of students.
- For-profit educational entities are innovating, and their voices are important to hear. Other educators can learn from them.

Colleague presentations

Law – Vincent Rougeau, Boston College Law School

In 2008, legal education experienced a crisis. Until then, legal education had not changed much since the nineteenth century, when it was established as a profession at Harvard. A shift occurred in the 1930s, when law benefited by taking itself out of vocational training and moving it into the university, applying scientific research methods and establishing itself as a profession. After the 1930s, the basic framework of legal education changed little until 2008. Law, delivered in large-lecture format, became increasingly theoretical. After WWII, law schools increased in enrollment, number of graduates, prestige, and income.

Over time, tension built between the profession and the academy: were students graduating with what they needed to become good lawyers? The profession and the academy were talking past each other. Yet, law firms were still hiring, lawyers were becoming judges, and all seemed to be going well. Law had not had to face how it was doing as a business, because it was still making money.

When the recession hit in 2008, the big law firms stopped hiring, creating a crisis. Clients began telling law firms, "my bill covers practical training for new associates [elements not covered in the law school curriculum], and we will not pay the costs of that training anymore." Clients would not continue to pay for training, and they would not simply accept what law firms told them anymore. In many markets, the weakest law schools had to merge or close, affecting alumni who did not want their schools to close. And many graduates were unhappy. After a few years of unemployment, for example, a law school graduate blogged that he wanted his law degree refunded. This kind of failure was not supposed to happen in the law. What went wrong? The profession and the academy started talking. The model of relying on law firms to

teach practical skills to new lawyers had broken. In response, law schools shifted from theory to practice, offering more experiential learning. Teaching experiential skills costs law schools money. How do we prepare law students for professional demands? How do we engage the profession to help with the formation of law students?

Law schools have emerged from the 2008 crisis changed. The business model has changed, and there are structural changes in the legal profession. Government has cut back on the funding of public sector jobs, and computers now do what law associates used to do, such as searching through documents. In response, law schools are working to form students to make them more attractive to employers. Law schools have tried to think more strategically about how we are forming students.

Before 2008, law schools did not assess for learning outcomes, but the American Bar Association (ABA) now requires law schools to perform assessments. Law schools are thinking more comprehensively about what we are trying to produce in law students: how are we forming law students as citizens? Law is a rigorous degree. Law students have good writing and analytical skills, applied across a wide range of disciplines. How do we think about these competencies and acknowledge these skills in terms of professional identity? There is still something distinctive about being a lawyer, and there are ethical responsibilities involved in passing the bar exam. Professionally, lawyers are asked to manage projects and form business plans, and corporations often hire JDs not as lawyers, but for their other skill sets. How do we manage this hiring paradigm effectively?

The ABA's executive committee is studying why people choose to go into the law, with an eye to the question, "When should we begin talking to prospective law students about preparation and life decisions?" The law profession is elitist and conservative, and being perceived as elite is important to law students. Two thirds of law students make the decision to apply to law school before they finish college. Law schools are beginning to interview students for admissions and transfers, looking for professional qualities and their rationale for coming. Law schools are looking to build a community of law students and alumni.

Traditionally, law faculty have not always had legal experience, but now, law schools must engage with the legal profession, and the tenure and promotion of law professors must take professional experience into account. Law schools need "professors of the practice" who do not labor under the standard academic model with traditional metrics of progress in a research university. Boston College Law School has 85 adjuncts: people in legal practice who teach specializations to law students.

Many law schools are accepting fewer students. Boston College Law School is 15% smaller than it used to be. Applications have declined, but they are rising again. At Boston College, there were 5300 applications for 230 spots in 2018.

The ABA has encouraged a more outcome-focused profession. While there are 51 jurisdictions that credential lawyers, because people are now more mobile, there is a movement, in 23 states -- including all the New England states except one -- toward creating a uniform standard for the bar exam.

One key societal factor affecting law schools today is the decline of the expert and the perceived value of expertise, as technology makes the lawyer's role as the sole source of law expertise less essential. People come with their own knowledge from legal websites and question an attorney's training. These new realities push the law education paradigm: how are we providing value as a profession?

For law schools, the question remains: how do we charge for legal education, and how do students pay for it? Until 2008, law schools charged whatever the market would bear, but now, we have to justify the cost of legal education. Today, the highest ranking law schools now pay for the best-qualified applicants by offering scholarships. However, as economic conditions improve, law schools are returning to offering law students less in scholarship funding.

Business – Matt Merrick, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

Most businesses do not last. Of the original S&P 500, only one, GE, still exists. Churches and schools are much more long-standing than businesses. This reality influences the ethos of business schools. Some of the most famous business people do not have college degrees. If you are really good at business, you might not need an MBA.

Outside the top 20 business schools, enrollment is declining, as fewer people are earning MBAs. There is a transactional nature to the business degree, as students earn an MBA for a job, not primarily for learning or development. There are now several different MBAs, including executive MBAs and MD/MBAs. From a margin perspective, business schools are not good at accounting for MBA differentiation. Big challenges are hitting business schools, which are segmented by the top 5, 20, 50, and then all business schools globally. The highest ranking business schools have always had many applicants, but now, Tier 2 and Tier 3 schools are getting many applications as well. Business schools are developing in China and elsewhere, and this competition will affect U.S. business schools at some point. Kellogg is fighting to differentiate itself from two or three key competitors. Top schools are providing 50% scholarship, and other schools cannot compete with them for enrollment. Government subsidies hold back change in the tuition paradigm: if students could not borrow so much, tuition would not be so high.

Who is the customer of business schools? Students think they are the customer, and we market to them as if they are, but the student is not the customer. Are the companies, the ones hiring business students, the customer? No. In business schools, *the faculty member* is the customer. The business school is focused on research, not teaching, and research is rewarded first.

While Kellogg is committed to the residential experience, all business schools are experimenting with online education. It is hard for business schools to compete in today's market, where people can obtain a business education for free online from Khan Academy. Some business schools experiment with a blended course delivery. Even part-time students want a residential experience, for the engagement, and this experience is one of the advantages Kellogg sells. Busier students value the residential experience even more, as there is value in the network, and the people who attend, or who have attended, bring value. When you admit a business student, you are admitting a student for 50 years into the alumni network.

Among business students, there is interest in ethical issues, like diversity, inclusion, personal wellness, and mental health, and there are spikes of outrage and organizing of student clubs around these issues. However, it is *skill* that is most valued in business. Business involves certain competencies, such as communication, collaboration, and analysis, and these skills appear in job descriptions, differentiating new hires. About ten years ago, a group of students organized and signed an MBA oath addressing ethical behaviors. News networks ran the story, but this effort did not have a long-term impact on business. Millennials seem interested in meaning and causes, but their interest may be more talk than action, and it is uncertain how real and permanent the interest is.

Business schools must expend resources to prepare faculty to be effective with students. When the case method is done well, and everyone, not merely the professor, is accountable for the classroom learning experience, it works well. Businesses partner with business schools, and at Harvard, students are mentored by senior faculty. However, half of faculty time is spent on research. Clayton Christensen, who wrote *The Innovator's Dilemma*, taught on "disruptive" versus "sustaining" innovation. Most faculty are mediocre at preparing students, but the ones who are effective achieve great results.

Social Work – Allan Cole, Steve Hicks School of Social Work, The University of Texas at Austin

Social work was professionalized in the 1970s by clergy and community organizers to address social ills. Social work was coupled with social gospel movements and shared efforts toward addressing poverty and poor healthcare. Social work degrees are MSW (Master of Social Work), MSSW (Master of Science in Social Work), and MSSA (Master of Science in Social Administration). Most programs are two-year, full-time, 60 credit-hour programs, with many of the hours concentrated in clinical field education. MSW is still the terminal degree; however, a DSW (Doctor of Social Work) may become the terminal degree at some point. Social work is a generalist degree by accreditation, in which the student learns a little about a lot. Social work is a broad field, which is sometimes helpful, and at other times a hindrance. The field of social work wrestles with its identity, as it means different things to different people.

Social work offers relatively low pay at the master's level. The national average for a seasoned professional is \$48,000/year, with the starting salary under \$40,000. Low pay correlates with low

prestige, and social workers do not even show up on the professional scale. Burnout rates are high, as 56% of social workers stay in the field fewer than five years. Social work relies on government funding, and government spending on social services has been trending down for many years. Social work tuition is high compared with the anticipated compensation, with many facing high debt and low earnings. Top schools have scholarship endowments to offset tuition, but the national average debt load for social work is \$41,300, and 80% of social work students have significant debt at the master's level. Recently, social work has experienced increased recognition by the other professions, giving social workers a seat at the table with physicians and nurses, who rank highest in the power chart.

Social work is still a wonderful way to make constructive contributions to the public good. Seven percent of federal social work jobs are filled by millennials, who care about meaningful work and who value being part of a collective group. Social work provides an opportunity for students to work in a variety of settings. Millennials like professional nimbleness, and there are many job opportunities in social work for those willing to move: there were 682,000 social work jobs in 2016. Growth of 16% is expected, which is higher than the national average. The outlook for jobs in social work is good, but low compensation remains a challenge.

Social work is not innovative in fundraising for scholarships. Online education has made education accessible, boosting enrollment, but it has also sliced up the market. Employers are now taking students from schools of social work with online degrees, presenting a new challenge for residential programs.

Social work is a competency-based, outcomes-oriented profession. Social work is defined largely by adhering to values of social ethics, and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics is like the Bible for social workers. There is a demonstrated understanding of ethics in the licensing, and licensure is a gatekeeper. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) monitors accreditation.

The American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare has adopted 12 Grand Challenges to orient the profession:

1. Ensure healthy development for all youth
2. Close the health gap
3. Stop family violence
4. Advance long and productive lives
5. Eradicate social isolation
6. End homelessness
7. Create social responses to a changing environment
8. Harness technology for social good
9. Promote smart decarceration
10. Reduce extreme economic inequality
11. Build financial capability for all
12. Achieve equal opportunity and justice

At top schools of social work, the primary job of faculty is research. Schools encourage faculty to “buy out” of teaching, as adjuncts can teach for much lower compensation. 50% of social work courses are taught by adjuncts, as researchers are not the best practitioners, and practitioners are the best teachers. The cost of faculty is going up, and even for top schools, it is hard to retain faculty, who expect to be paid high salaries. Schools of social work have to raise money for faculty, programming, and financial aid, yet the public holds a faulty perception that the schools are government-funded.

Students with a BSW can complete the MSW in one year, with advanced standing. The DSW degree is not yet accredited with the CSWE and is still evolving. The DSW, which is not funded by scholarship, generates revenue for schools of social work. The DSW is a practitioner’s degree, structured for working executives, and in the long term it may adversely affect the MSW. However, the MSW is still the standard in social work, and smaller schools are under pressure to fund a master’s program.

Our enrollment consists of 50% local students and 50% out-of-state students, who pay out-of-state tuition. Top schools that can offer high scholarships are more competitive, and they can be more selective in admitting students. Social work is more diverse in student population than the other disciplines. Our enrollment is about 30% minority. Diversity follows funding.

As a profession, social work has an identity problem, and we sometimes overcompensate. Social work schools say things like, “we are the fourth most productive unit.” That is what you say when you are not sure. Yet, we are a real discipline and have something real to offer society.

Medicine – Bonnie Miller, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Challenges of medical education reflect the challenges of the healthcare system. We have fragmented, dis-coordinated care that is highly specialized and disease-focused, rather than prevention-focused. There is high cost and inconsistent quality of care, with waste and inefficiency, prone to both over- and under-utilization (high value care = high quality/low cost). There is a lack of high-reliability systems that routinely deliver safe care. We see rapid increases in knowledge and technology, with a long lag between discovery and widespread adoption of best practices. We have disparities based on race, ethnicity, income, and sexual orientation and a lack of attention to the social and behavioral determinants of health in crafting treatment plans for individual patients and strategies for improving population health. There is an impending physician shortage, with geographic and specialty maldistribution. Finally, there is physician burnout, due to productivity pressures, overwork, loss of autonomy, documentation burden, and loss of meaning.

Medical education involves a lengthy and costly process, with a high cost to students and a high cost of educational process to the schools. Medical schools have a strong disease focus, without as much emphasis on primary prevention and health maintenance. Students must learn new

content areas, including systems science, social and behavioral determinants of health, informatics, and data science, which programs have to incorporate into the degree time frame. There is a disconnect between sites of training and eventual practice settings, with an over-emphasis on inpatient settings, due to the service needs of our sponsoring institutions, despite the largely outpatient nature of current medical practice. Faculty time for teaching, given these pressures, includes time for faculty development activities. There are inadequate pools of underrepresented groups in medicine applicants; there is a need for broad diversity in our medical school classes. Clinical learning environments do not consistently reflect the values of the profession (i.e., there is a hidden curriculum). We see a shortage of post-graduate residency positions, in the face of a recent and rapid enlargement in total medical school enrollment. Medical students face burnout, depression, and suicidality.

Current opportunities in medical education include a new wave of curricular reform. An influential 2010 report by the Lancet Commission called for major reform of health professional education worldwide. The reform involves “transformative learning” to produce health professionals who are “enlightened agents of change.” New pedagogies are aligning with how people learn. Workplace-based strategies are focused on skills for lifelong workplace learning, including individualization and guided self-assessment with coaching. In medical education the concept of developing “master adaptive learners” has emerged, graduates who have learned how to learn, to identify and solve emerging problems, and who can think in new ways. Pipeline programs improve underrepresented minority (URM) enrollment. We have competency-based assessment systems that may allow shortened time to the degree. There is an increasing focus on population and community health, with student-run free clinics for underserved populations.

There is development in medical education as a career path. Core teaching faculty serve as role models, mentors, and advisors. There is real enthusiasm for embracing this role, as well as formal wellness programs. Professional organizations, including the American Medical Association (AMA), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the Macy Foundation, and the Kern Foundation, provide effective support for medicine. Longitudinal clerkships allow longer relationships with faculty preceptors and mentors. Interprofessional education is meant to improve the ability to participate in collaborative practice. New courses and threads are being developed, with a focus on high-value care, including the use of workplace-decision support and technology to improve adherence to best practice.

The business model of cross-subsidization of the school’s education mission with clinical income is disappearing because of low clinical margins and new relationships between teaching academic health systems and medical schools. Reliance on other sources of income, including philanthropy and some grant support for education, is increasingly important, yet tuition continues to rise. Government funding of graduate medical education (GME) is always at risk. That said, we are increasingly compensating faculty directly for their teaching roles to protect time and to encourage the ongoing development of teaching skills.

Professional formation has been a focus of medical education for about 30 years. We had the professionalism movement, then professional identity formation, and now professional formation. Schools of medicine understand that professional identity formation must be explicitly taught and modeled through the use of reflection, small group pedagogies, and learning community discussions, and through case conferences focused on ethics, moral distress, social justice, and health equity. Professional formation is assessed, using standardized assessment forms, by teachers, peers, and self, as well as with narrative comments. Professional formation is included in all final grades at Vanderbilt; it is a critical part of promotions and progress and is the most common cause for attrition.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Core Competencies adopted by most medical schools are Medical Knowledge, Patient Care, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Professionalism, Practice-based Learning, and Systems-based Practice, as well as the AAMC 13 Core Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for Entering Residency.

Are soft skills, such as empathy and communication skills, teachable? You can screen for them. We provide modules with simulation in medical schools. Medical schools have standardized patient centers, where students have opportunities to practice interacting with patients, and where the actors are taught to rate the students.

Most faculty in the clinical areas are practicing physicians. The expectation is that everyone will model the behaviors we expect. To provide formation, mentors are all practicing physicians. The physical diagnosis course uses a simulation center, and we have intersessions, where students return for advanced communications modules. Students are educated in end-of-life care conversations. There are practicums where faculty can watch and provide feedback, and where formative assessment helps students to improve. Vanderbilt has learned where to place certain courses in the curriculum, as students perceive the value of a course based on where it is placed in the curriculum. Friday at 3:00 pm, for example, is a low-investment time.

Medical students have an intentional focus on always looking for meaning in their work. A monthly meeting that involves getting together to talk about difficult patients, or where students are stressed, helps to reduce burnout. Medical schools need the capability of identifying people who have needs to be addressed. Regular conversations about meaning in the medical field can have positive results.

Health Humanities – Nathan Carlin, McGovern Center for Humanities & Ethics, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth)

The American Society of Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH) was founded by priests, not philosophers. Traditionally, medicine turned to pastors and theologians to address ethical problems. Later, the field became dominated by scientists and lawyers, and health humanities professionals have lamented the lack of reflection on meaning and experience. Medical, nursing, and dental ethics have been consolidated under health ethics, and leaders in the field are Alan

Bleakley and Tess Jones. Health humanities constitutes a growth area, with 230 students in the major. Schools of health humanities face a branding problem, as the profession is still developing.

In the health humanities, we are involved in formation. To develop empathy, students read books written by patients about their experience with an illness, including a biography by a doctor about his/her experience with the healthcare system as a patient. This kind of writing is influential on the medical-student “mind,” which listens to data and evidence, rather than anecdotes.

Curiosity by Faith Fitzgerald addresses “what single quality makes a good doctor?” Fitzgerald read reviews, written by supervising physicians, of third- and fourth-year medical students in clinical clerkships. Fitzgerald and her colleagues noted words like “caring” and “warm” and then looked to see if there was any connection between “caring” and “warm” students and the coursework taken prior to medical school. Surprisingly, there was a connection. The medical students viewed as more humane had taken more humanities courses in college, and the more courses students took, the more they were described as humane. According to Fitzgerald, there is a single trait underlying the desire to learn in the classroom and to be empathetic with a patient: *curiosity*. The same interest that fuels students to seek knowledge in the classroom also motivates them to learn more about their patients. Seeking to learn more comes across as compassion.

In a journaling workshop, students write about a patient’s suffering that has moved them. Recently, 5 of 15 students wrote about a domestic abuse case of a patient losing her teeth, getting them fixed, and then getting sent right back into the offending situation. In another case, cancer treatment was delayed because of delayed dental treatment. Historically, faculty were instrumental in demonstrating that HIV cannot be spread by dental treatment. Some dental patients have mental health issues and believe their teeth are being attacked by demons. At the undergraduate level, topics are esoteric, and there is a divide between theory and practice. Simulation labs are needed to deal with issues like informed consent and the opioid crisis.

In the health humanities, chaplains could play a larger role, and seminarians could be trained in clinical ethics. Seminaries could reach out to nursing, dentistry, and medical schools for formation. We are experts in thinking about ethics, and increased coursework addressing matters of death and dying would be helpful.

Steven Miles, Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Bioethics at the University of Minnesota, begins his lecture by telling the class that he suffers from bipolar disorder, which is the reason he became a psychiatrist. Miles was sued by the Medical Board of Minnesota, won, and rewrote the criteria about what physicians have to reveal. There is a stigma regarding mental illness, so, for instance, dentists do not get mental health treatment for fear of losing their licenses. Steven Miles also gave a lecture on gun violence from a public health perspective.

Assessment is pretty weak with regard to the difference health humanities education makes. The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) published a piece about qualitative data. Medical students are not required to see a therapist. Faculty are assessing student reflection, based on the depth of their writing. Students with a bachelor's in health humanities will go onto medical school, and they could double-major in biochemistry and health humanities. These double majors can make better doctors.

Education – Stanton Wortham, Lynch School of Education, Boston College

Teaching is a broad field that includes teaching leadership (e.g., high school principal), higher education, education methodology, counseling, and developmental psychology education. Teaching, as a profession, is in crisis. There has been a decline, at the level of a freefall, an extraordinary drop, of 40%, in enrollment.

Now, there are alternative pathways to becoming a teacher. Schools of education used to have a monopoly, even as recently as a decade ago. Now, we have state certification, Teach for America (TFA), and schools of education that are unaffiliated with universities. The business model of these approaches requires a constant churn of young people. In comparison with other countries, where teachers are highly respected, teachers in the U.S. are often denigrated. Teachers are woefully underpaid, and the job is stressful. More than 50% of teachers leave within five years. The teaching field is a leaky bucket, as people come in, and then go out.

The accountability movements, teaching to the test, and boot-camp style test preparation create problems. Schools are rated by how students are doing on tests, and the results are reported in the newspaper. Every billionaire thinks he or she knows how to fix education. These philanthropists have a hugely disproportionate influence on the public, and education is driven by these influential figures. Many think schools are worthless and inefficient, and that they are indoctrinating our children. Philanthropists present simple market-based metaphors for how schools can work, but which do not work. Charter schools are mixed, like public schools, with decontextualized tests and mediocrity. In Teach for America, there is 50% burnout, and the teacher core is becoming less and less seasoned. Prospects are dim, and churn is the norm, while the government continues to increase accountability measures. Congress does not push alternative pathways, because it cannot say no to Bill Gates. Public schools get pushed, and California State schools, for example, have taken a big hit.

The business model of schools of education is changing significantly. Schools are moving to executive education, reaching out to working professionals and getting them to enroll in graduate programs. Universities use the Ed.D. to increase tuition profit from those who are teachers and who want to be principals, superintendents, or university administrators. Schools offer an executive doctoral degree in Corporate Learning Leadership, in part because companies pay big for education. Online education is desirable for schools, because there is no discounted tuition. 2U education technology takes 62% of a school's profits for ten years, but 2U does everything, except provide the content, to administer the online education for a school. 2U is

working on the bulk model, and it is an extraordinarily successful business model, even being listed on the London Stock Exchange. Adjuncts are teaching more courses. Among schools of education, higher-status schools are not suffering, but acceptance rates are high across the board: “Do you have a pulse? Can you speak English? Do you have a checkbook? You are in.”

Reflecting on formation, professional identity development may not be the same as formation. Ontological learning certainly changes who you are; after learning science, I am a nerd, I am becoming a doctor. I have changed who I am, the way I relate to people. I have to think a different way about the folks I see. Yet, this professional identity development may not be the same as formation. Formation involves the development of wholeness, purpose, and community, and of being a whole person. Formation involves an integration or a wholeness across disciplines, being called to a higher purpose, embodying a vision of what the world should be like, and working with others in order to realize the vision. Transformation in the first year is about breaking students apart and then building them back up and integrating their new learning with the rest of their personhood. Schools ideally build these concepts of formation into students in a way that even a rich concept of professional identity development does not offer. Formation presupposes something that is not instrumental. The Jesuit tradition is a strong position out of which to build formation. We might reserve the term “formation” for this richer sense and clarify the definition of formation.

Graduate Humanities – Robert Smith, St. Mary’s University of Minnesota

We are mission-driven, financially speaking. For instance, business consultants would say not to offer a Kenyan degree program, but we have offered graduate programs in Kenya for 25 years. We are sound financially because we are fiscally conservative and strategic. Without strategic partnerships, such as with the Mayo Clinic and Allied Health, around the U.S. and the world, we probably would not exist today. Our administrative debates are usually with the CCO and CFO. People lose their jobs when a school closes. It is helpful to assess graduate schools for objective measurements of institutional health. It is better to find out if there are problems before you have to close your doors.

The ATS Strategic Information Report (SIR) does not work nearly as well for embedded schools as for standalone schools, but it can work, and it allows schools to give themselves a grade. Sometimes it is best to give a school a good send-off, rather than letting it die a slow death. Cash flow problems may be hidden, even to accreditors, while a school is barely holding together, because no one wants to say it has to close. Staff, faculty, and students are hurt by the closure. Before you drain your endowments, maybe there is a chance to partner. Schools need someone looking at the macro level. In business, an investor might approach a company and say, “you are drowning, how about partnering?” but there is often no savior in education. There is not a culture of not talking about fiscal problems, yet all educational institutions experience fiscal issues.

ATS has opened up a space for schools to talk non-competitively about institutional and fiscal issues that are hard to talk about. ATS helps schools to think through the organizational

framework of what they are doing, given the fiduciary responsibilities of school trustees. There are signals along the way: indicators, data to monitor, early signs, when a school is no longer viable. Can a school intervene at some point before the only option is merging?

The solutions schools try to come up with on their own are not necessarily viable. New programs do not actually increase the bottom line. Alternative revenue streams can stress resources more, with mission creep. Schools are really good at starting things, but they do not ever kill anything. Schools add, add, add, and they never drop. Key institutional indicators, aligned with mission, are absolutely critical. School activities must be real on the ground, and they must be monitored, reviewed, and aligned with mission. Boards might be pure corporate types or pure mission types. Schools need board members who prioritize both the corporation and the mission. Many trustees forget all the practical stuff they use to run their own businesses. Training for trustees and presidents is crucial.

The Graduate Professional Educators Study Group resumed its conversation at a meeting on October 24-25, 2018.