



## Help for the Financial Costs and Consequences of Seminary: Three Collaborative Strategies

### Key Objectives:

1. Through research, to gain a deeper understanding of the economic challenges facing our students and alumni, and to discover how we might help ease those economic challenges.
2. Provide a new level of financial literacy education tailored to the issues students and pastors are facing.
3. Increase our capacity to deliver online instruction, making education more affordable and accessible.
4. Develop and implement new and strategic ways for the church and seminary to partner together in educating and financing future ministers.

### Most Significant Activities To Date:

1. Hiring of Project Researcher / Coordinator  
Mary Lederleitner is finishing her PhD in Educational Studies at Trinity in a few weeks. Her dissertation is a qualitative study with InterVarsity alumni. She has worked as a CPA and served internationally with the Wycliffe Global Alliance and SIL for many years. She is the author of *Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Mission* (2010; InterVarsity Press), a book used by leaders in the global mission community. We believe her unique background is well suited for helping to lead this project. She now has an office on campus and is meeting regularly with the project director, faculty and staff to develop research methodology and protocols for the first phase of the project.
2. University Leadership Meetings  
The project leadership team, consisting of denominational and university leaders (academics, enrollment management, financial aid, student life and advancement) met twice since January 1, 2014. Key agenda items have been to: a) identify the multiple dimensions of economic challenges from our different perspectives, b) identify and coordinate our existing data sources, and c) collaboratively identify questions that will guide research with students and alumni. We believe this early collaboration in the research phase will build a foundation for later developing collaborative and strategic solutions.

### Most Important Resources Discovered or Produced:

1. *Research Questions and Methodology* – working document that is guiding our research phase.
2. ATS Questionnaire Reports – Data from Entering, Graduating, and Alumni Questionnaires touching on educational debt, non-educational debt, income and perceived adequacy of finances.
3. Financial Literacy Resources – We are exploring resources used by educational and financial institutions for financial literacy education. An excellent example is found at Houston Community College <https://hccs.financialaidtv.com/#playlist-1561:video-5>. Anticipating that motivating students for financial literacy will be a challenge we are also intrigued by the development of games like “Financial Football” which seek to engage students who might otherwise shy away from financial literacy education: <http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/games/trainingcamp/ff/>.

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