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# Loving the Questions: Finding Food for the Future of Theological Education in the Lexington Seminar

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*ABSTRACT: Although it ran for more than ten years and involved more than 200 faculty from forty-four ATS member schools, the findings of the Lexington Seminar have not been engaged as robustly as they could be in facing current challenges. This essay collates the experiences of the Lexington Seminar with recent educational literature to suggest a range of options in faculty development for meeting the adaptive challenges facing schools, particularly in terms of shifting dynamics of authority, authenticity, and agency.*

... have patience with everything unresolved in your heart  
and try to love *the questions themselves*  
as if they were locked rooms  
or books written in a very foreign language.  
Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now,  
because you would not be able to live them.  
And the point is, to live everything. *Live* the questions now.  
Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually,  
without even noticing it,  
live your way into the answer.<sup>1</sup>

This is the epigraph that Seabury-Western Theological Seminary used for the report it wrote out of its experience in the Lexington Seminar. It is an apt way to begin this essay, too, for in reflecting upon what theological education looks like today—let alone what it might need to look like in the future—we discover that there are more questions than answers, more change than stasis, and infinite opportunities to *live into* our questions rather than to close them off too quickly. Such a situation calls for what Glenda Eoyang and Royce Holladay describe as “adaptive action.”<sup>2</sup>

My own contribution to this challenge rests at the heart of the discussion about teaching and learning, and in this essay I hope to offer a perspective drawn from recent research in theological schools as well as specific dynamics to which we must attend as we move forward. Toward that end, I will be drawing primarily upon the experiential, participatory action research embodied in the work of the Lexington Seminar, a Lilly-funded project that ran from 1998 to 2008. The annals of that project remain immediately accessible on its website, but few scholars have employed those data in their work. The project involved more than forty-four theological seminaries and university divinity schools committed to dealing with issues of teaching and learning

in theological education. Each year, as many as five schools were invited to participate in a weeklong seminar held in June for teams composed of the six members of the faculty and administration of each institution. Following the June seminar, each of the participating schools was invited to submit a grant proposal for an educational project that addressed the issue in theological teaching and learning identified by the whole faculty. At the end of each two-year cycle, a joint consultation for the schools was held to reflect on their projects and a final report was written, which is also available on the project website.

## Teaching in theological education

We are only two decades into the renewed discussion about teaching in higher education that began with the initial publication of Ernest Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered*. Discussion of the role of teaching within theological education is even younger, although there is more of a center to the discussion—not yet a consensus, but at least common ground is emerging. Vincent Cushing, for example, in his opening forward to the book published out of the Keystone Conferences, writes,

Educators are coming to the realization that their work is more about learning than teaching. While teaching is a constituent element in any good education, it is the *process* of teaching that has reformulated the calculus of education. Process involves the awareness of students' cultural backgrounds, the recognition of the experiential as well as the cognitional, and the evaluation of whether real learning actually occurred. All this places the emphasis squarely on learning.<sup>3</sup>

A concern for *process* in teaching, not simply the *content* of what is to be shared, emerges from biblical reflection on the topic as well. Rolf Jacobson notes that

the people that formed the Bible did not differentiate between different types of knowledge in the same ways that we moderns do. . . .

. . . biblical concern for the corporate good must crowd in on us when we are thinking about education. Education must be about the common good.<sup>4</sup>

This concern for the common good is not simply pragmatic, however; it is an essential consequence of the deep recognition of relationality that pervades the biblical witness, the felt sense that our Bible tells us of God's ongoing relationship with God's people. Melchert notes that

congruence between the *what* and the *how* (content and method) is pedagogically striking in Jesus' teaching and in the Gospel texts. Jesus talked of the kingdom, the compassionate

and just rule of God, what it was like to be a subject, and he enacted that in his interactions with people. The texts not only portray Jesus' sending apprentice-disciples to do as he did but effectively invite later reader-learners to find themselves sent as well.<sup>5</sup>

Similar points are being made by theologians who argue, as does Parker Palmer, that "we know as we are known."<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Conde-Frasier writes that "knowledge is an activity in which the totality of one's being is engaged, not only the mind. . . . Full comprehension is manifested in action that corresponds to the relationship apprehended."<sup>7</sup> A recent book titled *To Teach, To Delight, and To Move*, centers on "theological education in a post-Christian world," claiming in its very title this integrative and congruent theological claim.<sup>8</sup>

Within the educational disciplines more generally, a host of studies and theories point to the essentially relational character of learning, at the same time urging that teaching and learning not be understood as either relativist or instrumental in character. Jane Vella's very popular text on adult learning is titled *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach*; while the classic text on curriculum design by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, notes that there are six facets to understanding: not only are explanation, interpretation, and application part of the process, but equally important aspects of understanding are perspective, empathy, and self-knowledge—these latter three particularly implicated in relational forms of knowing.<sup>9</sup> Educators continue to draw on the work of researchers in a variety of disciplines. Within psychology Robert Kegan's work is central, and his constructive developmental theorizing also argues for an intensely relational, contextual aspect to learning.<sup>10</sup> Sociologists working within education have also argued in this vein. University of Chicago professors Anthony Bryk and Barbara Schneider, for example, studied years of educational reform within the K-12 public school system in Chicago and concluded that *relational trust* is the key predictive element for whether reform would be successful and sustainable.<sup>11</sup> Even neuroscientists have begun to use the language of emotions and relationality to describe the complex processes by which synapses fire to create pathways of memory and learning. As James Zull points out,

Presenting our subject as stories . . . is a way to help the learner become emotionally engaged. But there is more to effective teaching than how we present the *subject*. Specifically, there is how we present *ourselves*. And there may be no more important part of teaching than the emotional reaction of a student to a teacher.<sup>12</sup>

Teaching is fundamentally concerned with the process of learning. Learning is fundamentally a relational, even spiritual practice.<sup>13</sup> There is widespread agreement about these two assertions within the educational literatures. But do theological educators accept these assertions and grasp their implications for teaching in the theological context? There are signs that more and more

of our colleagues are, in fact, moving in that direction. The books produced out of the Lexington Seminars, *Practical Wisdom* and *Revitalizing Practice*, and out of the Keystone Conferences, *Educating Leaders for Ministry*, are eloquent arguments for such an understanding. Three other recent books, *The Scope of Our Art: The Vocation of the Theological Teacher*, *Educating Clergy*, and the book I noted earlier, *To Teach, To Delight, and To Move*, engage these issues directly.

Yet haunting all of these books are echoes of other definitions of teaching and learning, other, perhaps more technical or instrumental, conceptions of the role of the theological educator. At the same time as our wider cultural spaces are shifting dramatically, responding to huge changes not only in the mixing of cultures as peoples move across vast distances of terrain and religion, but also to huge technological shifts that make it possible to shift time and space in brand new ways, theological institutions are clinging ever more tightly to disciplinary categories and pedagogical methods that were developed centuries before and which grew out of contexts that no longer exist.<sup>14</sup>

Ronald Heifetz has developed a distinctive way of framing this dilemma by distinguishing between a “technical” challenge and an “adaptive” challenge.<sup>15</sup> A technical challenge is one that can be met well by a specific technical skill. When you have a broken wrist, for example, the best course of action might be to find the most technically skilled doctor you can and then to sit as still as possible while you allow that doctor to set your wrist. An adaptive challenge, on the other hand, demands active participation in seeking a solution and generally requires a shift in practice. It is not usually possible to solve an adaptive problem without changing, without evolving in some way. Learning that you have developed a chronic illness demands of the patient not only a technically proficient doctor but also one who is skilled in supporting the active changes in behavior that the patient will need to adopt to cope with the illness.

As Heifetz, Kegan, and others note, we are currently living in times that present a wide assortment of *adaptive* challenges. This is as true within theological education as outside of it, but it is perhaps not as thoroughly understood. As theological educators face such challenges, many teachers (not to mention institutions) have grasped at what might be termed “technical” solutions, rather than seeking to engage the underlying, adaptive challenges.

This is the point in the conversation at which the Lexington Seminar research is so pertinent. I am disappointed that the work of this Lilly-funded project has not been more widely assimilated into theological education. The Lexington Seminar ran from 1998 to 2008 and involved teams of educators and administrators from forty-four ATS Commission-accredited schools. Aimed at engaging the entire culture of a school, rather than individual faculty, the Lexington Seminar asked schools to write stories that evoked rather than detailed specific challenges they were facing. It then used those stories as a focus for shared and concerted work on those challenges. The project’s narrative approach created a more open-ended and flexible process, which in turn provided more room for adaptive challenges to be identified and engaged. The rest of this essay will focus on what has been learned about teaching from the forty-four Protestant and Reformed seminaries

and divinity schools, more than 200 committed teachers, and ten years of work to be found in the project files of the Lexington Seminar. Three adaptive challenges emerge in particular: contestation over authority, growing from that contestation a renewed quest for authenticity, and growing out of that quest a compelling need to shift understandings of agency.<sup>16</sup>

Theological knowledges in postmodern contexts, for instance, are not knowledges accepted *a priori* or simply through assertion. They are knowledges that must build their authority and credibility through the development of authentic agency. You can see such challenges in the numerous stories of teachers in the Lexington project schools who can no longer assume that their students begin from the same base of knowledge and with similar expectations as in the past. Rather, teachers must build credibility with students—credibility of the knowledges shared, credibility of their own authority as researchers and teachers, credibility of the impact of their knowledge for the contexts in which the students will be exploring and utilizing it.

The recognition that authority grows out of credibility built from authentic experience arises intimately out of the current dynamics of formation within theological schools. Indeed, authenticity was not, until recently, an issue within higher education more generally, let alone theological education specifically. But as numerous studies point out, formation is increasingly the element of theological education that differentiates it from higher education more generally.<sup>17</sup> While formation is not easily nor universally defined—as the Carnegie Foundation study notes, “almost no one, even in Catholic communities who use this terminology most frequently, is truly satisfied with formation language”<sup>18</sup>—the language of formation is ubiquitous and nearly always carries affective elements to it. Where Wiggins and McTighe speak of the elements of understanding as being “explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self-knowledge,”<sup>19</sup> it is generally the latter three that come into play in the context of formation. All three are woven into what is meant by the phrase “authentic expression” that is used so often in these contexts.

Finally, embedded in many of these school reports, in the experiences of many seminaries in this era of theological education, is deep and abiding tension over the “ends” of their endeavor. For what purposes do such schools teach? David Tiede speaks of this dilemma in terms of the tensions seminaries face in abiding within conflicting images of themselves as abbey, as academy, or as apostolate.<sup>20</sup> If the schools themselves are struggling with these tensions, the challenge becomes even more specific and pointed for individual teachers. The incentives for scholarship built into the *academy* model of a seminary dovetail well with the demands of specific academic guilds but do not rest easily with the challenges of translating scholarship into units of meaning sequenced well for learning. Similarly, the demands of translating critical analysis into a frame of engagement that supports prayer and meditation (that is, the *abbey* element) are not easily met. Finally, the task of preparing students for an *apostolate*, for sending them into contexts in which they are leading communities of faith in mission, often does not align well with the more distanced objectivity of academic scholarship.

## **The challenges: Authority, authenticity, agency**

The middle section of this paper looks at several of the challenges specifically identified by schools in the areas of authority, authenticity, and agency, collating their experiences with the more general conclusions of the educational literatures. Then the final section of this paper considers a range of options of faculty development to meet challenges in each of these areas.

### ***The adaptive challenge of shifting notions of authority***

What constitutes authority in a given setting is clearly bound up with philosophical discussions of epistemology. How do we know? How do we know that we know? What constitutes knowing? These are the underlying questions that well up in the midst of more limited debates over who has authority in a given classroom, or what constitutes an "A" paper vs. a "C" one.<sup>21</sup> If our larger cultural contexts were not immersed in such vivid debates, it's unlikely that they would spill over into classroom settings in quite the same way. Yet it is the larger cultural context that presses into theological classrooms and shifts teaching dilemmas from simple, more technical choices of which particular text to use or which kind of lecture to prepare, to a much larger and more adaptive challenge of what it means to *know* religiously and how one might prepare to lead a community of knowing. The schools in the Lexington Seminar voiced this challenge in a number of ways.

***Institutional DNA.*** Over and over again amongst the reports and narratives comes striking language about the shifting nature of theological authority in denominational contexts. Whether it was Calvin Theological Seminary pondering the role and shape of reformed theology in its current incarnation, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School struggling to understand the ways in which its social gospel heritage remains active, or Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary rethinking what missional leadership is, many of the schools in the Lexington Seminar felt challenged by the necessity of moving beyond simply transferring their traditional heritage to, first, seeking to understand it critically, and then making it "come alive" through justifying it to their students.<sup>22</sup>

No longer is it enough simply to transfer and hone specialized information between members of a community who have been previously socialized into that community's practices. Rather, the teaching/learning task is now one of simultaneously introducing students to the deeper rationales and elements of a theological tradition at the same time as they must also be introduced to effective ways to critique and transform it. Many of the schools in the Lexington Seminar refer to this teaching/learning challenge as introducing students to critical thinking.<sup>23</sup>

***Student body composition.*** Underlying this challenge of needing to rethink, retrieve, and reclaim theological traditions is the shifting nature of student bodies in theological education. Where previously a faculty could assume that students were devoting their full-time attention to learning the content a faculty had determined was necessary, now students span a spectrum from full-time, young, single students who reside in dorms on the

seminary's campus, to students studying full time *and* working part time, to students studying part time *and* working full time *while* parenting, to students studying part time while living and working at a huge geographic remove (this last made possible through digital technologies and distributed learning frameworks). Most if not all of the schools in the project shared their struggles with supporting students from multiple backgrounds, but the narratives of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and Lancaster Theological Seminary are particularly pointed on this topic.

Teaching across such diversity (which is further stretched if you take into account the shifting racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of student bodies) requires more than simply adding a few courses to the required curriculum. Most often it requires radical rethinking of the entire curriculum itself—again, an adaptive challenge that forces faculty to rethink much of what they know about teaching and learning. Developing the relational competence necessary for teaching across such vast diversity is difficult, and many schools reported that the Lexington Seminar was one of the first times they could devote any concentrated attention to the challenge.

**Faculty training and background.** Changes in epistemology and changes in student bodies—these in turn lead to yet another challenge that schools in the Lexington Seminar identified: lack of specific training and expertise in teaching. Faculty generally prepare for their roles as teachers in seminary settings by studying for and achieving a PhD in a specific field of study. Few doctoral programs—although more than there used to be—provide specific instruction in teaching methods. Thus faculty learn how to teach by observing their own teachers, and their own teachers in doctoral programs are generally focused on undertaking original research and initiating their students into the practices of such research. Faculty understanding of how one acquires and maintains authority in educational settings, for instance, is most directly linked to research methodologies and the criteria for authority that are developed within academic guilds.

Students, on the other hand, are most often preparing for pastoral ministry in congregational or nonprofit settings. While credible research results carry some authority in pastoral settings, it is far more often the case that pastoral leaders need to be effective “shepherds, builders, and gardeners,” to use Scott Cormode’s terminology.<sup>24</sup> That is, they need to be capable of sensitive human interactions, they need to be adept at structural engagement, and they need to be agile interpreters of current contexts. Few doctoral programs prepare their graduates well for the process of making research accessible, and fewer still prepare their graduates for the hard task of building authority through the nurturing of learning community.

Thus, yet another adaptive challenge arising out of the broader category of authority lies in helping seminary faculty learn to be adept teachers in this changing context.<sup>25</sup>

**Broader issues of cultural epistemological shifts.** While I’ve already mentioned some of the epistemological shifts that underlie these challenges, many of the schools in the Lexington Seminar specifically identified one cluster of

such shifts as having to do with the challenges raised by racism in the US context.<sup>26</sup> Given the ubiquity of “white privilege” in the US context, theological school faculties have begun to cultivate deliberately what Brookfield and Hess have termed an “aggressive humility” in their teaching, and that, again, is an element of adaptation pertaining to authority.<sup>27</sup>

Other schools have worked on understanding the specific challenges raised by students coming from largely international contexts. As Virginia Theological Seminary noted, international students bring with them a variety of ways of responding to teachers and often live within a complicated set of differences in relation to what is considered authoritative in their studies.<sup>28</sup>

As faculties struggle to figure out how to teach amidst such conflicting demands, they often reach for technical “fixes”—adding more required courses to the curriculum, adding more noncredit requirements, struggling with one another about grading issues—without digging more deeply into the adaptive challenges, seeking solutions that have sufficient ambiguity and flexibility to truly meet the needs of their students and the communities they will eventually lead.

### *The adaptive challenge of competing ways of defining authenticity*

Authenticity as a category grows out of notions of genuineness, of affective experiences that have resonance, of faithfulness and factuality.<sup>29</sup> In the theological setting, it is a term that has profound epistemological consequences. Is human experience an appropriate criteria of theological knowing, for example? To what extent is authenticity even appropriately used in theological formulations? Yet while theological faculty will most often engage the term philosophically, our students—and often the communities from which they come and to which they will be sent—hear the term in profoundly affective, embodied ways. Ask a professor of worship what constitutes authentic worship and you are likely to receive a response that is based on historical precedent and biblical warrant. Ask a student in our seminaries, or a member of our congregations, what constitutes authentic worship and you are more likely to receive a description of emotional response to specific forms of music or of visual or embodied gesture. The differences are profound and often lead to some of the most difficult conflicts in seminary settings. The schools in the Lexington Seminar often worked with this theme, engaging it in terms of reflection and experiential learning.

*Integration and formation issues.* One direct element of facing the adaptive challenge of what constitutes authenticity grows out of differing understandings of what constitutes “integration” or “formation” for our students. Several schools in the Lexington Seminar focused their work on this question, Bethel Seminary and United Theological Seminary in particular. One of the more painful conflicts arises here between what a faculty understands as integration, and what students see that term conveying. Some of the conflict is developmental in nature, and both of these schools have developed substantial processes for engaging the developmental growth they seek to support in their students.<sup>30</sup>

Other faculties have found themselves divided on the definitions of these words, and many of the Lexington Seminar projects used project funds to create retreats and other settings in which theological faculties could seek to understand the many ways in which they defined these terms, and then sought to teach toward such practices.<sup>31</sup>

*Time stress.* Teachers and students alike agree that *time* is a crucial element of authentic practice; time for adequate experience, time for appropriate reflection, time for serious study. Indeed, one overwhelming impression upon reading the Lexington Seminar project files is that schools simply wanted to duplicate the Lexington Seminar process by providing time for their faculty to have generative conversations in more nurturing contexts than is typical for seminary faculties.

Here the challenge for authenticity is perhaps most explicitly about having the time and space necessary to support authentic practice. As noted early in this essay, teaching is no longer understood primarily as a process of delivering content, but learning how to focus on content within relational structures is not something most faculty have much experience with. Creating room for the reflection and learning that leads to appropriate change takes deep trust; developing such trust takes real time, and time is in short supply at most seminaries. As the narratives from Church Divinity School of the Pacific and General Theological Seminary make clear, this is a very pointed challenge.<sup>32</sup>

*Media shifts.* Finally, while no school's project focused only, or even primarily, on media shifts in the surrounding cultural contexts (cf. Campbell's work on "networked religion"), there were elements of these shifts present across many of the narratives and reports. From the student in Wesley's narrative who was surfing the net while in a lecture, to the student who refused to check her on-campus mailbox at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, to the faculty member at Luther who loosed his blunt comment to the whole faculty email list, rather than to the specific colleague to whom he intended it to go, media shifts in communicative practice are present throughout the teaching/learning landscape. The presenting dilemma may be one of attention—to what does one "pay" one's attention?—but the underlying challenge is rooted in epistemological shifts that form around issues of authenticity.<sup>33</sup>

### *The adaptive challenge of agency*

In many ways, considering questions of authority leads directly to issues of authenticity, and those questions, in turn, lead to issues of agency, of how to *put into practice* what seminaries are about. Indeed, the issue is even more bluntly one of *to what end* are seminaries educating their graduates?

When faculties were drawn primarily from people who grew up within their respective denominations, going to school together, entering the pastorate together, going back to graduate school, returning to the seminary as faculty where they began as students, *agency* was not a very visible concern. There was a clear process by which people moved along a career path, and there was often tight relationality between the seminary and the communities of faith that seminary graduates led. Funding structures reinforced that close relationship, with churches and denominations largely footing the bill of pastor training, and thus receiving back from the seminaries trained pastors who entered as church members sent them.

All of these structures are shifting and changing in ways that are not always evident and toward ends not always clearly defined. In addition, individual faculty face all manner of difficult questions in relation to agency across the seasons of their teaching life. Early in one's career, agency often focuses on developing a focus of study that can be made one's own, while later in the process, the focus might be more on integration across disciplines.<sup>34</sup>

**Structural shifts.** Many of the school reports in the Lexington Seminar databank speak of the dramatic shifts schools have faced over several decades as the cultural role of "pastor" has shifted, with fewer people wanting to enter that role and fewer churches existing to fund and call pastors. Several of the schools have faced abrupt structural shifts, moving either away from the universities to which they were originally attached (as at Phillips Theological Seminary) or toward university connections (as at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Palmer Theological Seminary, and Bethel Seminary)—a trend that has only intensified in the years since the Seminar concluded. These shifts have dramatically changed the structural contexts in which faculty teach, often shifting incentive systems either *toward* more academic scholarship or *away* from it into church practice. In both cases it is the shift that is difficult, the change which requires new practices of teaching. Where once one's role was to preach effectively and teach students how to do so, now preaching professors may face pressure to publish in scholarly journals, or vice versa. The adaptive challenge here becomes one of understanding how one is to practice one's vocation as teacher in a context in which the very ground has shifted. If previously one's worth and practice as a teacher was substantially reinforced by frequent pulpit supply across the church, and now one's worth and practice rests on guild recognition, how does that complicate or support what you do in the classroom? Or, similarly, if previously one's worth and practice was directly linked to the guild's reception of one's research, but now there are explicit incentives for impacting the church more directly, how do you adapt to such a change?

**Graduate vocational outcomes.** Underlying and in many ways *underscoring* the structural challenge is the shifting nature of student bodies in theological education. Increasingly, students come from a diversity of backgrounds and previous preparation and are heading toward not simply pulpit ministries but a vast assortment of extended pastoral ministry settings. Here the teaching challenge is not simply discerning how a tradition needs to be represented, but in what ways students are to be prepared *to lead* within that tradition.

Similarly, as more and more students are drawn toward MA programs—many of which are much shorter and do not require the same kinds of candidacy elements demanded of MDiv programs—faculties find themselves having to struggle with ways to adequately differentiate their teaching. A class on the Pauline correspondence, for instance, may contain students with fluency in *koine* Greek and an interest in moving toward doctoral-level work, while at the same time containing students who are passionate about supporting ministries with youth and who have little attention for original languages—and these are just the MA students. Most seminaries do not have

large enough faculties to support courses that are specialized to fit specific master's degree programs but, instead, must field courses that fit the needs of multiple degree programs. Schools as diverse as Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, General Theological Seminary, Bethel Seminary, and Luther Seminary are all facing this specific challenge.

**Media shifts.** Here again, media shifts in communicative practice become relevant. A teacher who learned how to teach through lecturing can find it very difficult to learn how to teach in online environments. A teacher who is most comfortable using an overhead projector suddenly feels stifled and overwhelmed by a mandatory shift to a digital projector. A teacher used to providing evaluation feedback upon a hard copy of a student paper now finds herself or himself using electronic commenting tools to offer feedback. A teacher who circulates small group work across multiple groups in one hour of classtime, now feels herself forced to spend hours reading small group responses on a web-based course platform, just to stay in touch. It is easy to become caught up in these difficulties, but the real challenge is *not* primarily the technical one (how to use a specific piece of equipment), but rather the adaptive one of discerning how to be most effective, how to *practice* teaching in these shifting cultural contexts, how best to have *agency* as a teacher in a learning community.

### Effective responses

The challenges raised are difficult and perduring, but the Lexington Seminar schools have been enormously creative and innovative in their responses to these challenges, and it is to those responses that I turn now. Perhaps the first and most important conclusion to share is that all three of these adaptive challenges—questions of authority, issues of authenticity, dilemmas of agency—are often interwoven in complex ways. The schools in the Lexington Seminar who have best met such challenges have sought, wherever possible, to do so in ways that meet multiple purposes, that draw on existing institutional pressures, and that provide multiple opportunities for engagement. Hence, over and over throughout the reports, successful schools note that the Lexington Seminar arrived at an important moment—just as they were *also* embarking on a self-study for accreditation, or had decided to revise their curriculum, or were being joined to a larger university.

Three overarching strategies stand out, and we'll consider specific instances within each. In engaging questions of authority, schools have found it most effective to dig into their institutional histories and founding documents to trace solutions to authority challenges that draw on institutional DNA in creative ways, often reframing what had been intractable debates. In responding to challenges of authenticity, schools implemented a series of steps that might overall be termed *reflective practice*. And in confronting challenges of agency, the schools concluded that challenges must be understood as *cultural* in scope, and thus any interventions must also be *cultural* in nature.

***Reframing authority through drawing on institutional DNA***

When it comes to questions of authority, teachers in the Lexington Seminar schools have found a number of creative ways to respond to the adaptive challenge embedded in authority that draw on the institutional DNA of their schools for effectiveness.<sup>35</sup>

***Learning-centered and/or problem-based pedagogies.*** One method has been to make very explicit changes in overall pedagogical strategies. Palmer Theological Seminary, for instance, has systematically shifted its entire institutional focus toward learning-centered pedagogies.<sup>36</sup> Drawing on the “Baptist DNA” of its mission statement—“the Whole Gospel for the Whole World through Whole Persons”—the seminary has developed a list of learning outcomes it prepares its students to accomplish. This list drives everything in learning at the seminary—from the development of overall curriculum, to specific assignments in individual courses. Such a shift makes transparent the expectations the school has for the learning the students will engage and at the same time both requires and affords the faculty an opportunity to assess to what extent their teaching indeed leads to such outcomes. The need to reframe their curricular work in a way that very explicitly focused on “whole persons” was particularly important for this shift in pedagogy, as faculty began to discover that their previous modes of teaching had very little impact on the specific learning outcomes they sought. Other schools that are beginning to implement learning-outcome-based practices include Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia; Methodist Theological School in Ohio; Luther Seminary’s children, youth, and family program; and United Theological Seminary.

Yet another shift in pedagogical strategy comes under the title of “problem-based learning.”<sup>37</sup> Few schools have been able to make the kind of whole-scale move that Palmer Theological Seminary has made, but many have chosen to use the Lexington Seminar to bring such ideas to their faculties through a variety of workshops and retreats.

***Shifts in feedback and evaluation for students.*** The Methodist Theological School in Ohio began its Lexington Seminar project by describing faculty concern with their current processes of grading student papers. In the course of several retreats and a large project involving statistical self-study and further research, that faculty began to reflect back on the historical roots of their institution. Their memories of the innovative educational leaders who founded Methesco inspired them to rethink their strategies for evaluating student work. Rather than simply rewriting their grading policy, they sought to invite students to become more active learners. They have created a system in which students receive a paragraph evaluation from every course that they take. These evaluations, in turn, are gathered and read by student advisors and form the basis of a midprogram assessment that comes shortly after students complete their first full year complement of courses. Faculty are frequently invited when considering the broad group of students, to note any who ought to receive developmental support of some kind. While the process may seem cumbersome—and indeed, in one way requires more direct engagement with student evaluation than did their previous system—it is a process the faculty

has received as being worth more than the extra work it creates. As it draws deeply on founding goals for the institution, it has also drawn the faculty members more closely together in renewing their commitment to being an intellectual resource for their whole region. Students, in turn, have clear and precise information on how they are—or are not—progressing through the curriculum, along with specific resources for improving their progress.<sup>38</sup>

*Make explicit faculty positions on disputed issues.* One of the more difficult elements of disputes over authority has been the shifting interpretations and understandings that arise as schools seek to reform and renew their founding commitments. Many of the Lexington Seminar schools wrote narratives and developed projects that ended up engaging—whether intentionally or not—previously tacit conflicts among faculty over competing interpretations of such commitments. As faculties diversify—denominational faculties, for instance, often now have members from other churches—complications arise over how to teach in settings in which there is not faculty agreement.<sup>39</sup> Luther Seminary’s narrative, for instance, used the metaphor of a supertanker to talk about how a change in direction began long ago and only becomes visible now.

Many of the Lexington Seminar schools found themselves using their projects to explore more deeply such conflicts, ultimately leading to faculty learning to “teach the conflict” more effectively than simply delivering their own position in isolation. Such a process required the development of faculty trust.

### *Implementing reflective practice*

One of the more powerful strategies for engaging the adaptive challenge posed by shifting notions of authenticity is that of reflective practice. Indeed, the very concept of adaptive challenge is met in the literature with corresponding work on the development of reflective practice.<sup>40</sup> If there is one overwhelming similarity throughout the Lexington Seminar reports, it is the experience of schools seeking to create more room for generative reflection.

The Lexington Seminar process of engaging groups of faculty members in extended conversation over school narratives and then providing sufficient, even generous space for relaxation and reflection, was nearly universally experienced as generative. School after school wrote projects that sought to replicate, in some way, the process of the Lexington Seminar. Most of the schools developed retreats that were held off site at more comfortable places than were usually accessible for the schools. Some schools translated the retreat format into multiple special dinner engagements, and others used project funds to provide release time for specific faculty to do research on behalf of the whole.

Yet reflective practice is not simply, or even solely, about faculty members reflecting on their own vocations within theological education (although that is, in itself, a laudable enterprise).<sup>41</sup> It also has very specific elements within the process of supporting learning. Much has been written about reflective practice in teaching contexts, but here are several elements created by Lexington Seminar schools.

### ***Developing portfolio processes***

Several schools have either begun, or further refined, a portfolio process of development and assessment with their students. United Theological Seminary's narrative, for instance, expressed deep frustration with its then current process of an integrative exam. It has since developed a multilevel process that has students keeping an integrative notebook, writing a spiritual chronicle, and participating in lunchtime forums in which faculty members share their own spiritual journeys. These elements are then, in turn, added to the portfolio that students keep over the course of their time in the degree program.<sup>42</sup>

***Implementing critical reflection processes.*** Faculty members at Palmer Theological Seminary have built into all of their courses and highlighted on their syllabi a variety of reflection practices that help students and faculty to stay clearly focused on the learning outcomes the school intends and, in the process, to develop and shape critical reflection capabilities.

Another example growing out of the Lexington Seminar comes from the faculty at Luther Seminary who have instituted the use of the critical incident inquiry form in their classes. This process, developed by Stephen Brookfield, asks students to reflect on their experiences *within* a class session in terms of engagement, distance, affirmation, confusion, and surprise.<sup>43</sup> Their responses are then, in turn, summarized by the professor who reflects on her or his own learning from the process.

***Inviting faith journeys into public storying.*** Many school faculties found themselves first in retreats, and then later in more public contexts, sharing and learning from one another's stories of journeys in faith. United Theological Seminary, for instance, implemented a series of lunch time discussions in which faculty members shared their own stories. As one faculty member put it: "our students always knew we had faith, they just didn't have any idea what that meant!" In several instances at other schools, emeriti faculty were invited back to share their own stories, and these stories, in turn, were placed in the context of the institutional history—directly exposing, and in some cases reclaiming, institutional DNA that had been lost or forgotten.

### ***Recognizing and shaping cultural interventions***

The strongest message coming through the Lexington Seminar schools with regard to the adaptive challenge involved with agency and teaching is the recognition that schools are undergoing profound cultural changes, and those changes require explicitly cultural responses.<sup>44</sup> Many of the schools remarked upon the need to shift practices in relation to pedagogy, and those changes needed to be system-wide—explicit interventions in school *culture*. Hence, in many cases, there was need to draw upon institutional DNA and to build change into existing dynamics.

Over and over again schools wrote about the gift of the Lexington Seminar being the gift of time and reflection to layer over and under and around existing pressures and assignments. Many of the schools were in some part of the reaccreditation process—either embarking on a self-study or having just concluded one and thinking about its implications. The project afforded them the time and space necessary to be more present to such processes than they had

been able to be in the past. Other schools were in some place on the spectrum with relation to curriculum revision, and the Lexington Seminar gave them needed motivation as well as concrete conceptual frameworks (often, the writing of the narrative) in which to engage deep questions of mission and goals.

**Faculty reflection on teaching and learning.** I've already mentioned the extent to which time for faculty reflection proved essential in most of the Lexington Seminar projects. Faculties facing teaching challenges often resort to the "technical fix" of curriculum revision, rather than the deeper work of engaging teaching dilemmas. Prominent in the task of doing that deeper work is the development of sufficient trust on a faculty's part to engage in real reflection on the issue at hand. Faculty retreats—emphasis on the word *retreat* rather than recreating work in another setting—are one key element Lexington Seminar schools found useful. Recognizing that cultural intervention requires active engagement in a specific faculty culture—which can mean, in this era of faculty retirements, *creation* of a faculty culture—leads to recommending that schools find ways to regularly honor faculty reflection on teaching and learning issues. Faculty retreats are one source of such time, but so, too, are faculty reflection groups, peer collaboration projects, and so on.

**Restructuring faculty divisions.** One of the more dramatic ways in which Lexington Seminar schools have responded to the teaching/learning challenge of reconfiguring issues of agency in a school culture has been by restructuring the ways in which their faculties convene. Marianne Winkelmes once wrote that "seminary classrooms are perhaps the single most important and most feasible place for formation to occur," and several schools have taken that assertion very seriously and sought to embed integrative work directly in the structuring of faculty practice.<sup>45</sup>

Bethel Seminary, for instance, completely reshaped how its faculty regularly convene from what were more typical divisions into three centers of learning: the Center for Biblical and Theological Foundations, the Center for Transformational Leadership, and the Center for Spiritual and Personal Formation. Each center has its own associate dean, who is in turn responsible for leading the various elements of the curriculum and shaping their accountability structures. Clearly Bethel is quite large as an institution, and this structure make sense for them, where it would not for a smaller school. The point, however, is not the specific configuration but rather the effort to reshape, *structurally* and particularly in terms of accountability, the main elements of its curriculum.

**Sharing syllabi.** Perhaps a more manageable, smaller first step can be seen across many of the schools in their efforts to reflect in shared ways upon their course syllabi. Many of the Lexington Seminar projects included sessions in which faculty members shared syllabi and reflected on the teaching/learning challenges they were facing. One particularly interesting example of a way to systematize such reflection is in place at Palmer Theological Seminary, where every faculty member files his or her course syllabi a couple of weeks in advance of the first course meeting with the library director. This practice arose in part because doing so allowed the library director to ensure that the

library collection had adequate resources for specific course goals, but it has grown into an opportunity for the library director to reflect in formative ways with the faculty (rather than in summative, employment evaluation terms) on the scope and sequence of what is being taught at the seminary. Thus the specific action—reflecting on course syllabi—has become a part of the larger culture and structures of the seminar.

**Hiring practices.** One additional element of cultural change in seminary faculties was frequently mentioned in follow-up interviews in relation to school reports: changing the composition of the faculty. Several schools spoke of how important hiring people *into* the faculty who had specific commitments to teaching was, and how much they have changed their job descriptions to reflect their hiring goals. Palmer Theological Seminary, for instance, is lately only hiring faculty who are at least bilingual, if not multilingual. Bethel Seminary requires faculty to teach across various platforms—teaching in regular classrooms, in distributed online classrooms, in their various geographically disparate classrooms, and so on. Luther Seminary includes a sentence about “teaching in an innovative learning environment” in all of its position descriptions. Several other schools that are working on issues of diversity in regard to deconstructing racism also noted the importance of changing faculty culture through hiring when such opportunities arise.

## Conclusions

Theological schools are facing enormous amounts of adaptive challenge. The boundaries of such challenges are messy, the parameters for change ambiguous, and the marks of success elusive. Nevertheless the Lexington Seminar schools found multiple ways to engage these challenges, and their experiences point toward paths for other schools to try. To recapitulate briefly, those challenges within teaching and learning—at least as identified by the forty-four schools that participated—include questions of shifting authority, struggles over what constitutes authenticity, and the need to reshape faculty and student practices around agency. In engaging these adaptive challenges of authority, authenticity, and agency, the schools drew on three primary strategies. First, they worked wherever possible to draw in fruitful ways on the institutional DNA of their schools. Second, they sought to implement reflective practice in a multitude of ways across their school’s teaching and learning contexts.<sup>46</sup> And third, they kept in mind the profoundly cultural nature of the challenges, and thus built into their strategies responses that took seriously the entirety of the learning environment.

Considered in light of the broader literature on teaching and learning, these schools have accomplished remarkable change. Lee Shulman has outlined a series of principles that characterize communities of learners:

The subject-matter content to be learned is *generative* . . .

The learner is an *active* agent in the process . . .

The learner not only behaves and thinks, but can “go meta” —  
that is, can *reflectively* turn around on his/her own thought  
and action . . .

There is *collaboration* among learners . . .  
Teachers and students share a *passion* for the material . . .  
The process or activity, reflection and collaboration are supported, legitimated, and nurtured within a *community* or *culture* . . .<sup>47</sup>

There is a striking degree of similarity between this list and the “authority, authenticity, agency” elements of the work of the Lexington Seminar schools. Many of these schools have been quite successful in forming communities of learning, and the Shulman principles suggest further directions in which they can continue to grow. And that, of course, is the hope and promise of the Lexington Seminar more generally: that theological schools can continue to grow and learn as they face the many challenges of the contexts they inhabit. Unfortunately, the landscape and environment of theological education at the moment does not privilege the formation of communities of learners. In some ways the pressures of our time push in the precise opposite direction—toward fragmentation, “each school on its own,” and faculty competition rather than collaboration. It is my profound hope that by lifting up once again the findings of the Lexington Seminar, faculties and their institutions will be encouraged to turn again to the necessary work of living into these challenges and growing to “love the questions.”<sup>48</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

1. Rainer Marie Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, trans. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1984), 34–5; emphasis in original.
2. Glenda Eoyang and Royce Holladay, *Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).
3. Vincent Cushing, “Foreward,” in *Educating Leaders for Ministry: Issues and Responses*, eds. Victor J. Klimoski, Kevin O’Neil, and Katarina M. Schuth (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005), v.
4. Rolf Jacobson, “Biblical Perspectives on Education,” in *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* 4, no. 7 (July 2004).
5. Charles F. Melchert, *Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 264.
6. While Parker Palmer is not professionally recognized as a theologian, his books certainly speak to pragmatic or practical theology. His small book *To Know As We Are Known: A Spirituality of Education* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983) is a required text in seminaries across the country within religious education.
7. Elizabeth Conde-Frasier, *A Many-Colored Kingdom: Multicultural Dynamics for Spiritual Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 196.
8. David S. Cunningham, ed., *To Teach, To Delight, and To Move: Theological Education in a Post-Christian World* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2004).

9. Jane Vella, *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997). Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2001).
10. See both Robert Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), and Robert Kegan, *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). For an account of this work that is contextualized within pastoral ministry settings, see Anita Farber-Robertson, *Learning While Leading: Increasing Your Effectiveness in Ministry* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2000).
11. Anthony S. Bryk and Barbara Schneider, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement* (Washington, DC: US Department of Education, ERIC, 1996).
12. James E. Zull, *The Art of Changing the Brain: Enriching the Practice of Teaching by Exploring the Biology of Learning* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2002), 230.
13. See, for instance, Vachel M. Miller and Merle M. Ryan, eds., *Transforming Campus Life: Reflections on Spirituality and Religious Pluralism* (New York: Lang, 2001); Margaret A. Jablonski, ed., *The Implications of Student Spirituality for Student Affairs Practices* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001); Leona M. English and Marie A. Gillen, *Addressing the Spiritual Dimensions of Adult Learning: What Educators Can Do* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000); Elizabeth J. Tisdell, *Exploring Spirituality and Culture in Adult and Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Sherry L. Hoppe and Bruce W. Speck, eds., *Spirituality in Higher Education: New Directions for Teaching and Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).
14. The literature on these shifts is widespread. Of particular importance is Heidi Campbell's essay, "Understanding the Relationship between Religion Online and Offline in a Networked Society," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80, no. 1 (Fall 2011): 64–93. Her essay provides a substantial review of current literature. Two essential texts in the wider educational fields are Lee Rainie and Barry Wellman, *Networked: The New Social Operating System* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2012) and Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown, *A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change* (Amazon: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011).
15. Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).
16. Foster et al., quote Wenger's work on identifying three modes of belonging that are involved in communities of practice around learning: "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning," "producing new 'images' and generating new relations that become 'constitutive of self,'" and "[aligning] one's engagement in an educational activity with the 'energies, actions, and practices' of something larger" (35). These three, while not the same as "authority, authenticity, and agency," nevertheless are analogous to the themes emerging here. Charles R. Foster, Lisa E. Dahill, Lawrence A. Goleman, Barbara Wang Tolentino, *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and Pastoral Imagination* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).
17. Stephen Brookfield makes this point directly, in "How Can We Teach Authentically? Reflective Practice in the Theological Classroom," in *Teaching Reflectively in Theological Contexts: Promises and Contradictions*, eds. Mary E. Hess and Stephen D. Brookfield, (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 2008).
18. Foster et. al. *Educating Clergy*, n. 1, 125.
19. The rubric they use can be found in their primary text, *Understanding by Design* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 2001). It is contextualized within

theological education in Mary E. Hess, *Engaging Technology in Theological Education* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005) 42–3.

20. Lois Malcolm notes Tiede's formulation in her essay "Teaching as Cultivating Wisdom for a Complex World," in *The Scope of Our Art: The Vocation of the Theological Teacher*, eds. L. Gregory Jones and Stephanie Paulsell (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 140.

21. For a good introduction to many of these questions in a theological context, see Hanan A. Alexander, *Reclaiming Goodness: Education and the Spiritual Quest* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001). For a more general introduction within higher education, see Kenneth A. Bruffee, *Collaborative Learning: Higher Education, Interdependence, and the Authority of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). The classic text by Parker Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known* (see n. 5) is often used to prompt exploration of these issues.

22. References to the projects of individual schools are all drawn from the files of the Lexington Seminar, located online at <http://www.lexingtonseminar.org/>.

23. In addition to the schools already referenced, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Ashland Theological Seminary, and Phillips Theological Seminary also engaged these questions in their Lexington Seminar narratives.

24. Scott Cormode, "Multi-Layered Leadership: The Christian Leader as Builder, Shepherd, and Gardener," in *Journal of Religious Leadership* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 69–104.

25. One resource several schools referred to in the context of this challenge is Walter Brueggemann, William C. Placher, and Brian K. Blount, *Struggling with Scripture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

26. Seabury-Western Theological Seminary and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia named this issue explicitly.

27. Mary E. Hess and Stephen D. Brookfield, "How Can White Teachers Recognize and Challenge Racism? Acknowledging Collusion and Learning an Aggressive Humility," in *Teaching Reflectively in Theological Contexts: Promises and Contradictions* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 2008). For a broader consideration within higher education, see Frank W. Hale Jr., ed., *What Makes Racial Diversity Work in Higher Education* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2004). There is also a brief, but useful, rubric on the spectrum of change in relation to racial justice to be found in Mark Chesler, Amanda Lewis, and James Crowfoot, *Challenging Racism in Higher Education* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), figure 8.2, 172–3.

28. See Alan Ka Lun Lai, "Educating Chinese Seminarians in North America: A Cross Cultural Understanding of Teaching and Learning," in *Consensus* 25, no. 1 (1999) 69–92.

29. See, for instance, Jerold Apps, *Teaching From the Heart* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 1996); Patricia Cranton, *Becoming an Authentic Teacher in Higher Education* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 2001) and Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

30. For more on such dilemmas in higher education more generally, see Karen Strom Kitchener and Patricia M. King, *Developing Reflective Judgment: Understanding and Promoting Intellectual Growth and Critical Thinking in Adolescents and Adults* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994).

31. Other schools whose work focused on this challenge included Lexington Theological Seminary and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

32. See also Marilla Svinicki, "If learning involves risk-taking, teaching involves trust-building," in *Teaching Excellence* 2, no. 3 (1989) for more on the underlying issues.

33. For more on this topic, see Mary E. Hess, Peter Horsfield, and Adan M. Medrano, eds., *Belief in Media: Cultural Perspectives on Media and Christianity* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2004), and Mary E. Hess, *Engaging Technology in Theological Education* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).
34. A particularly interesting reflection on the issue of individual faculty agency over the lifespan can be found in Anna Neumann, Aimee LaPointe Terosky, and Julie Schell, "Agents of Learning: Strategies for Assuming Agency, for Learning in Tenured Faculty Careers," in *The Balancing Act: Gendered Perspectives in Faculty Roles and Work Lives*, eds. Susan J. Bracken, Jeanie K. Allen, and Diane R. Dean (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2006).
35. One possible way of reframing "institutional DNA" for schools particularly committed to missional approaches is Robert J. Banks' *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999).
36. See Maryellen Weimer, *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).
37. An excellent, brief introduction to problem-based learning can be found in Lee S. Shulman, "Problem-Based Learning: The Pedagogies of Uncertainty," in *Teaching as Community Property: Essays on Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004). See also Barbara J. Duch, Susan E. Groh, and Deborah E. Allen, "Why Problem-Based Learning? A Case Study of Institutional Change in Undergraduate Education," in *The Power of Problem-Based Learning: A Practical "How To" for Teaching Undergraduate Courses in Any Discipline*, eds. Barbara J. Duch, Susan E. Groh, and Deborah E. Allen (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2001).
38. There has been an enormous flowering of work on classroom assessment. See, for instance, Thomas A. Angelo, ed., *Classroom Assessment and Research: An Update on Uses, Approaches, and Research Findings*, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, no. 75 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998); Susan M. Brookhart, *The Art and Science of Classroom Assessment: The Missing Part of Pedagogy*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 27, no. 1 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000); Lorin W. Anderson, *Classroom Assessment: Enhancing the Quality of Teacher Decision Making* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates, 2002); Susan M. Butler and Nancy D. McMunn, *A Teacher's Guide to Classroom Assessment* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).
39. Stephen D. Brookfield's *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995) is an excellent resource in the midst of this kind of faculty discussion, as is his book, cowritten with Stephen Preskill, *Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005). See also Nicholas C. Burbules, *Dialogue in Teaching: Theory and Practice* (NYC: Teachers College Press, 1993).
40. Here is another area in which much has been published lately. A good place to begin is Stephen Brookfield's *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (see n. 38). See also Karen F. Osterman and Robert B. Kottkamp, *Reflective Practice for Educators: Professional Development to Improve Student Learning* (Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, 2004); and Parker Palmer, *The Courage To Teach* (see n. 28).
41. There is a growing literature available on the scholarship of teaching and learning that details faculty reflection and its utility and generativity for research. See Thomas Hatch, *Into the Classroom: Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006).

42. United's process is further explored and engaged in "Student Learning and Formation: An Improvisational Model" by Peter T. Cha, in *Revitalizing Practice: Collaborative Models for Theological Faculties*, ed. Malcom L. Warford (New York: Peter Lang, 2008). There is a growing literature on the use of portfolios in student assessment. Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is the preeminent school in this arena. Good basic information can be found in "Student Portfolios: An Alternative Way of Encouraging and Evaluating Student Learning" by Carmel Parker White in *Alternative Strategies for Evaluating Student Learning*, eds. Michelle V. Achacoso and Marilla D. Svinicki, New Directions for Teaching and Learning series, no. 100 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).
43. This process is introduced in Stephen Brookfield, *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (see n. 38). Multiple examples of the use of this process in theological education are scattered through the essays in Mary E. Hess and Stephen D. Brookfield, *Teaching Reflectively in Theological Contexts: Promises and Contradictions* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing, 2008).
44. Indeed, in some ways the Foster et al. *Educating Clergy* is primarily focused on this issue: "we have attempted more generally to account for ways to assess the extent to which the alignment or misalignment of the institutional culture and mission of a school either augments and reinforces or hampers and diminishes the intent in faculty teaching practices for student learning" (37). For a broader consideration of this topic in settings that are still related to ministry, but beyond congregations, see Gary R. Gunderson, *Boundary Leaders: Leadership Skills for People of Faith* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004). For a more general exploration of the topic in relation to organizational development, see Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).
45. Mary Ann Winkelmes, "Formative Learning in the Classroom," in *Practical Wisdom: On Theological Teaching and Learning*, ed. Malcolm L. Warford (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 162.
46. In addition to the books referenced previously, several texts have excellent chapters that make for good faculty reflection prompts. In particular, Sandra Chadwick-Blossey, ed., *To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development* (Boston: Anker Publishing Company, 2006), and Thomas Hatch et al., *Going Public with Our Teaching: An Anthology of Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005).
47. Lee S. Shulman, "Communities of Learners and Communities of Teachers, in *The Wisdom of Practice: Essays on Teaching, Learning, and Learning to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004) 493-4.
48. Yet another resource for doing so is Sam M. Intrator, ed., *Living the Questions: Essays Inspired by the Work and Life of Parker J. Palmer* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).