

## LEADERSHIP FORMATION IN MINISTERIAL EDUCATION—PART 3: A COMPARISON OF TRANSFORMATIONAL EFFECT IN THREE SELECTED PROGRAMS

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Part 1 of this study<sup>1</sup> sought to establish frames of reference for measuring success in pastoral ministry and to evaluate the relationship between leadership practices and those criteria. The purpose was twofold: to discover correlations between leadership practices and success in pastoral ministry, and to move toward evaluating effectiveness of leadership formation in graduate theological education.

The study demonstrated a strong correlation between success in pastoral ministry and a pastor's leadership practices. We concluded that "using superior leadership practices enables pastors to be more successful in their ministry."<sup>2</sup> Given the correlation between leadership practices and pastoral success, the formation of key leadership practices that prepare a person for success in ministry is an appropriate goal of graduate theological education.

The second stage of research measured the effect of graduate theological education on the leadership practices of persons in pastoral ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.<sup>3</sup> No significant variation was found between pastors with a graduate theological education and those with only an undergraduate degree. In the research process, a valuable benchmark for Seventh-day Adventist pastors in North America was formed.

The purpose of this third research stage is to investigate potential correlations between three selected programs in graduate theological education, offering increased emphasis on leadership development and actual leadership formation among their graduates in pastoral ministry.

<sup>1</sup>Skip Bell and Roger Dudley, "Leadership Formation in Ministerial Education—Part 1: Assessment and Analysis of Leadership Traits in Seventh-day Adventist Pastors in North America," *AUSS* 40 (2002): 277-299.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>3</sup>Skip Bell and Roger L. Dudley, "Leadership Formation in Ministerial Education—Part 2: The Impact of Graduate Theological Education on Leadership Development in the Local Pastorate," *AUSS* 42 (Spring 2004): 203-216.

Further, this research will identify the specific curricular distinctions of these programs as compared to the usual Master of Divinity (MDiv) program in seminaries belonging to the American Association of Theological Schools (ATS).

The degree of correlation between leadership emphasis in graduate curriculums and growth in leadership practices, as well as the distinctive curricular elements, provides a significant factor in forming seminary curriculum and church policy for pastoral education.

### *The Three Selected Programs*

The three institutions selected for this study are the Biblical Institute for Leadership Development (BILD), Vanguard University (formerly Southern California College), and Dallas Theological Seminary. Vanguard University and Dallas Theological Seminary were among the institutions identified by a panel of researchers as demonstrating significant emphasis on leadership formation within their graduate theological program curriculum in Alen Nelson's doctoral dissertation "Leadership Training of Ministerial Students in Evangelical Institutions of Higher Education" for the University of San Diego in 1994. Nelson found that ATS seminaries generally, by contrast, provide minimal emphasis on leadership development.<sup>4</sup>

Vanguard offers a Master in Church Leadership, taken as an alternate to an MDiv degree by persons desiring a career in pastoral ministry. Dallas Theological Seminary offers a traditional ATS-accredited program, but with an unusual leadership-formation emphasis.

BILD is known as a leader in church-based theological education, working formally with groups of churches or associations of churches in fourteen countries to develop church-based theological education paths and resources that meet needs for church leadership. The curriculum offered by BILD is recognized by a growing number of seminaries, although BILD is not an ATS seminary.

### *Research Method*

Curricular distinctions in the three institutions relevant to leadership formation were examined. A list of graduates from each of the three chosen institutions between 1994 and 2000 was secured. Those presently serving congregations were requested to give copies of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)<sup>5</sup> to three of their congregational lay leaders. The LPI was the

<sup>4</sup>Alen E. Nelson, "Leadership Training of Ministerial Students in Evangelical Institutions of Higher Education" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of San Diego, 1994).

<sup>5</sup>A technical presentation of the Leadership Practices Inventory may be obtained from

same assessment tool used in the first two stages of this research, and it was applied in the same manner as in the previous research stages.<sup>6</sup> Lay leaders were asked to rate the performance of their pastors on each of the 30 items included in the LPI and to return the survey to the offices of the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University. Fifty-two surveys were received and form the basis for this report of graduates of the three institutions. By comparison, 160 surveys formed the basis of the report of graduates of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary (SDATS).

Five scales are formed in the LPI from 30 questions to describe five leadership practices: Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way, and Encouraging the Heart. In addition, all five scales are combined into one total scale to provide an overall leadership score. Each rating sheet is assigned a score for each of the five practices and a total score. Means are calculated for each practice and for the total score.

The means of the ratings of graduates from the leadership-emphasis institutions were compared with the means of the ratings for Seventh-day Adventist pastors who had graduate theological education but who, in most cases, did not receive a specific emphasis on leadership-practices training. This latter group was described in Part 2 of this research project.

### *Literature Review*

The direction of any leadership formation program is significantly impacted by the model or theory of leadership upon which it is built. Bernard M. Bass and Ralph Melvin Stogdill describe twenty-two of the more familiar leadership models and theories.<sup>7</sup> J. Robert Clinton provides an overview of five dominant leadership theories, which, he asserts, define the leadership studies of particular eras.<sup>8</sup> More recently, Robert J. Banks and Bernice M. Ledbetter provide an evaluation of leadership theories

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the authors at [www.kouzesposner.com](http://www.kouzesposner.com).

<sup>6</sup>Bell and Dudley, "Leadership Formation in Ministerial Education—Part 1"; idem, "Leadership Formation in Ministerial Education—Part 2."

<sup>7</sup>Bernard M. Bass and Ralph Melvin Stogdill, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*, 3d ed. (New York: Free Press; Collier Macmillan, 1990), 37-52.

<sup>8</sup>J. Robert Clinton, *A Short History of Modern Leadership Theory* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas, 1992), 8.

from biblical, historical, and contemporary perspectives.<sup>9</sup> After reviewing leadership literature, ranging from the apostle Paul to Fred Fiedler to Stephen Covey, it was concluded that any Christian critique of leadership theories must be open to discovering truth wherever it is found and yet maintain a keen sense of “discernment to sort out what is true and false, fitting and inappropriate, abstract and practical, timely and outdated.”<sup>10</sup>

Viewing leadership development from the perspective of the employing or educating organization, Cynthia McCauley, Russ Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor built a comprehensive three-point model of leadership development that outlines the responsibilities of the organization to the emerging leader in his or her development process. They state that the organization is responsible for providing assessment, challenge, and support to emerging leaders who are being exposed to a variety of developmental experiences.<sup>11</sup> The responsibility of the emerging leaders, McCauley et al. assert, is to learn how to learn from experience. In their development of the spiral of experience and action-observation-reflection models, Richard Hughes, Robert Ginnett, and Gordon Curphy focus on the critical aspect of a leader’s ability to learn from experience.<sup>12</sup> Both models describe processes that impact a leader’s ability to accurately perceive experiences, analyze and compare them with previous knowledge, and extract new knowledge from them. In harmony with the leadership development models of Hughes et al., Stephen Kaagan contends that the most efficient and cost-effective method of leadership development is to carefully structure opportunities for leaders to meet in groups and reflect on the actual experiences in their current roles as leaders.<sup>13</sup> Merle Strangway identifies five developmental factors in a study of Protestant pastors, who scored exceptionally high as transformational leaders. Each of the five factors (Drive to Achieve, Intentional Learning, Leadership as

<sup>9</sup>Robert J. Banks and Bernice M. Ledbetter, *Reviewing Leadership: A Christian Evaluation of Current Approaches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004).

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>11</sup>Cynthia D. McCauley, Russ Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor, *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; Center for Creative Leadership, 1998), 4-17.

<sup>12</sup>Richard L. Hughes, Robert C. Ginnett, and Gordon J. Curphy, *Leadership: Enhancing the Lessons of Experience* (New York: Irwin/McGraw Hill, 1999), 79-82.

<sup>13</sup>Stephen S. Kaagan, “Leadership Development: The Heart of the Matter,” *International Journal of Educational Management* 12/2 (1998): 74-83.

Praxis, Challenging Leadership Experiences, and Shift of Values) relate in some way to the responsibility of the leader to learn from experience.<sup>14</sup>

A considerable amount of the relevant literature focuses on the responsibility of the emerging leader over the span of an entire lifetime. Bass begins his discussion of the research on leadership development with issues such as birth order, parental modeling, and leadership opportunities in childhood and adolescence.<sup>15</sup> Curtis Brungardt, in his comprehensive review of leadership and education literature, summarizes research findings into three broad categories. According to him, the broadest category is Leadership Development, which includes every experience during one's lifetime that might enhance one's leadership abilities. The next two categories are subsets of Leadership Development. Leadership Education refers to any intentional intervention to foster leadership abilities. The smallest subset, Leadership Training, attempts to improve specific skills for a particular role or job.<sup>16</sup> These observations are consistent with Clinton's research, which identifies predictable leadership development phases during the entire life of a Christian leader.<sup>17</sup> These observations are also consistent with the principles Jesus used to develop the twelve disciples into world-class leaders, as demonstrated by Robert E. Coleman, who discusses eight similar principles used by Jesus in the four Gospels.<sup>18</sup>

"Leadership development is a fundamental responsibility of colleges and universities," according to Stacey Connaughton, Francis Lawrence, and Brent Ruben, all of whom are from the Student Leadership Development Institute at Rutgers University.<sup>19</sup> Throughout North America, an increasing number of colleges and universities are adding undergraduate courses or entire degree programs in leadership concentrations. According to the descriptive lists

<sup>14</sup>Merle Douglas Strangway, "The Development of Transformational Leadership in Pastors of Protestant Churches" (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1999), 91.

<sup>15</sup>Bass and Stogdill, 807-811.

<sup>16</sup>Curtis Brungardt, "The Making of Leaders: A Review of Leadership Development and Education," *Journal of Leadership Studies* 3/3 (1996): 81-95.

<sup>17</sup>J. Robert Clinton, *Leadership Emergence Theory* (Altadena, CA: Barnabas Resources, 1989), 311-337.

<sup>18</sup>Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming J. Revell, 1964), 21-114.

<sup>19</sup>Stacey L. Connaughton, Francis L. Lawrence, and Brent D. Ruben, "Leadership Development as a Systematic and Multidisciplinary Enterprise," *Journal of Education for Business* 79/1 (2003): 46.

maintained by the Center for Creative Leadership, there are hundreds of colleges and universities that offer courses in leadership development, some of which offer entire degree programs in leadership development.<sup>20</sup> However, the number of graduate-degree programs devoted to leadership development is significantly less. A research team from Fort Hays State University recently located only 44 such programs—38 at the master's level and six at the doctoral level.<sup>21</sup>

Several themes reoccur in most of the literature regarding leadership development in academic settings. The most successful programs seem to be characterized by “a holistic, practical approach”;<sup>22</sup> a combination of “academic study, extensive service, and mentoring”;<sup>23</sup> the coupled use of “service and reflection”;<sup>24</sup> an emphasis on students who are engaged with social justice and the needs of their local community;<sup>25</sup> and “citizen leaders” who engage in a “reflective learning process.”<sup>26</sup>

The literature indicates a critical need for leadership development in the curriculum of traditional seminaries. As we concluded in Part 2 of this study: “Graduate theological education is not doing a superior job of developing leadership practices.”<sup>27</sup> Our study of 200 North American Seventh-day Adventist pastors revealed no significant difference in leadership skills between pastors who had a seminary education and those who did not. The leadership development deficiency does not appear to be localized to any particular seminary, denomination, or even geographic region. A variety of

<sup>20</sup>Mary K. Schwartz, Kristin M. Axtman, and Frank H. Freeman, eds., *Leadership Education: A Source Book of Courses and Programs*, 7th ed. (Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership, 1998), 1-458.

<sup>21</sup>C. B. Crawford, Curtis L. Brungardt, Robert F. Scott, and Lawrence V. Gould, “Graduate Programs in Organizational Leadership: A Review of Programs, Faculty, Costs, and Delivery Methods,” *Journal of Leadership Studies* 8/4 (2002): 64.

<sup>22</sup>John Nirenberg, “Toward Leadership Education that Matters,” *Journal of Education for Business* 79/1 (2003): 6.

<sup>23</sup>Mary Sue Polleys, “One University's Response to the Anti-Leadership Vaccine: Developing Servant Leaders,” *Journal of Leadership Studies* 8/3 (2002): 117.

<sup>24</sup>Frederick W. Gibson and Amy Pason, “Levels of Leadership: Developing Leaders through New Models,” *Journal of Education for Business* 79 (2003): 23.

<sup>25</sup>Frank Fear, Margaret Adamek, and Gail Imig, “Connecting Philosophic and Scholarly Traditions with Change in Higher Education,” *Journal of Leadership Studies* 8/3 (2002): 42-52.

<sup>26</sup>Crawford et al., 49.

<sup>27</sup>Bell and Dudley, “Leadership Formation in Ministerial Education—Part 2,” 203.

studies produced similar results in each case. C. Weese, in a study of 146 senior pastors of various denominations and regions of the United States, consistently found that the pastors in their study did not believe that their seminary training had equipped them with the leadership abilities needed in their ministry.<sup>28</sup> In a study of 400 California pastors from five mainline denominational churches, T. J. Naman found that “only 36% of the respondents felt that as a direct result of their seminary education that [sic] they were equipped to lead the local congregation.”<sup>29</sup> D. Macaskill conducted research on the pastoral leadership abilities of the ministers of the Church of Scotland. Twenty percent of all ordained ministers in the Church of Scotland participated in the study. “The substantial majority of interviews conducted and comments expressed about training in this survey were of a negative nature, suggesting that the ministers felt ill-prepared and ill-equipped for the realities of the task which they faced within the parish.”<sup>30</sup> A study conducted by Alen E. Nelson, which evaluated the curricula of 64 seminaries and 77 undergraduate theology programs in the United States, found that only six of the 141 programs—three graduate and three undergraduate—offered significant leadership development as part of the required curriculum.<sup>31</sup>

Pastors and researchers have expressed the deficiency in seminary leadership development in various ways. Often, they describe the traditional seminary curriculum as being too academic and disconnected from daily pastoral demands.<sup>32</sup> Another typical assessment is that the seminary is not responsive to the needs of the local church.<sup>33</sup> Some point to the lack of

<sup>28</sup>C. Weese, *Standing on the Banks of Tomorrow!* (Granada Hills, CA: Multi-Staff Ministries, 1993), 1-53.

<sup>29</sup>T. J. Naman, “Pastoring the Church into the Twenty-first Century (D.Min. dissertation, Pepperdine University, 1998), 143.

<sup>30</sup>D. Macaskill, “Ministerial Training: Toolkits or Compasses? A Study of Training with the Church of Scotland,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 11/1 (2000): 24.

<sup>31</sup>Nelson, 111.

<sup>32</sup>R. D. Beach, “Managerial Leadership Instruction: Assessing Contemporary Seminary Coverage in Light of Biblical Standards” (MBAMA dissertation, Regent University, 1994); B. Brainard, “Professional Education and the Preparation of Assemblies of God Ministries in Oregon” (Ed.D. dissertation, Portland State University, 1996); Macaskill; C. N. Shaw, “A Philosophy of Education Leadership Development through Theological Studies” (D.Miss. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1989); Weese; C. S. Wong, “Christian Religious Education in Hong Kong: Professional Ministry and Ministerial Preparation” (Ph.D. dissertation, Trinity Evangelical School, 1998).

<sup>33</sup>R. M. Franklin, “Future Directed: Trends in Theological Education,” *Theological*

training in specific skills, such as decision making, conflict resolution, administration, financial planning, time management, or problem solving.<sup>34</sup> Other concerns include the failure to learn critical-thinking skills,<sup>35</sup> learning individualistic rather than team-building skills,<sup>36</sup> lack of self-development, and the disconnection of intellectual from affective development.<sup>37</sup> Nelson<sup>38</sup> and T. C. Turner,<sup>39</sup> respectively, conclude that leadership training in the average seminary is virtually nonexistent.

Members of ATS have formally debated the effectiveness of the traditional seminary curriculum—specifically its impact on pastoral leadership formation—for at least fifty years. The debate began with the publication of ATS's 1954 self-study of every accredited theological school in North America,<sup>40</sup> and took specific form later with the publication of Edward Farley's two classic critiques of contemporary seminary education.<sup>41</sup> Joseph Hugh Jr. and John B. Cobb Jr. summarize decades of ATS research: "Theological education is torn between academic norms, defined chiefly as excellence in the historical disciplines, and modern professional norms defined in terms of excellence in performing the functions church leaders are expected to perform. . . . Partly as a result of this tension, theological schools do not succeed well by either standard."<sup>42</sup>

*Education* 37/2 (2001): 113-116.

<sup>34</sup>E. M. Clouzet, "A Biblical Paradigm for Ministerial Training" (D.Min. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1997); E. L. Dower, "A Needs Assessment of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary's Master of Divinity Program as Perceived by the Graduates, Faculty, Students, and Employers of Graduates" (Ed.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1980).

<sup>35</sup>Brainard, 1-28.

<sup>36</sup>A. Le Cornu, "The Shape of Things to Come: Theological Education in the Twenty-first Century," *British Journal of Theological Education* 14/1 (2003): 13-26.

<sup>37</sup>Macaskill, 32-34.

<sup>38</sup>Nelson, 165.

<sup>39</sup>T. C. Turner, "Seminary Practices and Ministerial Realities: A Dichotomy That Calls for Change" (Ph.D. dissertation, Washington State University, 2001), 108.

<sup>40</sup>H. R. Niebuhr, D. D. Williams, and J. M. Gustafson, *The Advancement of Theological Education* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957).

<sup>41</sup>Edward Farley, *Theologica* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983); and idem, *The Fragility of Knowledge* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

<sup>42</sup>Joseph C. Hugh Jr. and John B. Cobb Jr., *Christian Identity and Theological Education* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), 16-17.

In 1994, ATS devoted an entire issue of its quarterly journal, *Theological Education*, to the reporting of another self-study.<sup>43</sup> In one of the key articles in that issue, “What Is the Character of Curriculum, Formation, and Cultivation of Ministerial Leadership in the Good Theological School?” Donald Senior and Timothy Weber concluded that “curriculum should be mission-driven rather than market-driven.”<sup>44</sup> Curriculum, they assert, must not be conceived as merely the collection of various courses, but rather as “an overall process of critical reflection and integration.”<sup>45</sup>

In that same year, Lyle Schaller, a voice from outside ATS, evaluated the seminary situation even more harshly. He asserts that “the time has arrived for a new system for enlisting, training, screening, and credentialing the next generation of parish pastors.”<sup>46</sup>

Most of the literature regarding seminary curriculum, especially in the past ten years, has shown a strong emphasis on these themes of reflection, integration, and adaptation to societal changes. While there is some emphasis in the literature on seminaries’ provision of practical hands-on training,<sup>47</sup> most writers stress the crucial connection between practical experience and theological reflection on that experience.<sup>48</sup> Robert Franklin

<sup>43</sup>American Association of Theological Schools, “The Good Theological School,” *Theological Education* 30/2 (1994): 1-88.

<sup>44</sup>Donald Senior and Timothy Weber, “What Is the Character of Curriculum, Formation, and Cultivation of Ministerial Leadership in the Good Theological School?” *Theological Education* 30/2 (1994): 22.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Lyle Schaller, *Innovation in Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 21.

<sup>47</sup>See Paul Ballard and Stephen Pattison, “Practical Theological Education—A Profile,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 13/2 (2003): 97-105; Roland Riem, “Why Calling Matters More: Weighing Vocational and Competency Approaches to Ministerial Development,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 14/1 (2003): 78-92; and Philip Tovey, “A Case Study of Accreditation of Prior Learning in Ministerial Training,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 12/2 (2003): 145-153.

<sup>48</sup>See Robert W. Burn and Ronald Cervero, “How Pastors Learn the Politics of Ministry Practice,” *Religious Education* 97/4 (2002): 304-321; Kraig Klautt, “The Ashram as a Model for Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 34/1 (1997): 25-40; Patricia A. Lamoureux, “An Integrated Approach to Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 36/1 (1999): 141-156; Lewis S. Mudge and James N. Poling, *Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987); R. T. Gormann, K. Talvacchia, and W. M. Smith, “Teaching from a Community Context: The Role of the Field Educator in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 37/2 (2001): 1-57; Stephen Pattison, Judith Thompsen, and John Green, “Theological Reflection for the Real World: Time to Think Again,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 13/2 (2003): 119-131; Eric Stoddart, “Living Theology: A Methodology for Issues-led Theological

called for seminary training that would equip pastors to perform the functions of parish ministry, such as resolving conflicts, convening meetings, or mobilizing members—functions which should be seen as theological expressions rather than mere technical skills.<sup>49</sup> Donald Beiswenger makes a similar point in describing six paired items that must be integrated within seminary field-school experiences, three of which include theory and practice, academic study and ministry activities, and personal faith and social realities.<sup>50</sup> Efrain Agosto used the phrase “rigorous reflection on pastoral action” to describe the leadership-development method needed in seminary curriculum.<sup>51</sup> As Terry Veiling<sup>52</sup> and David Kelsey and Barbara Wheeler<sup>53</sup> independently observe, when discussing reflective learning as a means of pastoral leadership development, this approach incorporates the basic ideas advanced in Farley’s *Theologica*. Carolyn Jurkowitz summarizes it well: “Professional learning happens in communities where students not only learn through reflective practices how to apply knowledge, rules, and procedures and to think like a particular type of professional, but where they are coached to invent new rules, reframe problems, and make new sense out of uncertain, unique, or conflicted situations.”<sup>54</sup>

The literature appears to contain more challenges and suggestions for leadership development than case studies of seminaries that have experimented with innovative approaches or research which evaluates the

Reflection in Higher Education,” *British Journal of Theological Education* 14/2 (2004): 187-201; Andrew Todd, “What Is Theological about Theological Reflection?” *British Journal of Theological Education* 11/1 (2000): 35-45; and Malcom L. Warford, “Renewing the Practices of Ministry,” *Theological Education* 33/2 (1997): 69-77.

<sup>49</sup>Robert M. Franklin, “Future Directed: Trends in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 37/2 (2001): 114.

<sup>50</sup>Donald Beiswenger, “Field Education and the Theological Education Debates,” *Theological Education* 33/1 (1996): 49-58.

<sup>51</sup>Efrain Agosto, “The Gift of Urban Theological Education: A Personal and Professional Reflection,” *Theological Education* 33/1 (1996): 100.

<sup>52</sup>Terry Veiling, “Emerging Issues Concerning the Practices of Theological Education,” *Religious Education* 94/4 (1999): 411-427.

<sup>53</sup>David H. Kelsey and Barbara G. Wheeler, “The ATS Basic Issues Research Project: Thinking about Theological Education,” *Theological Education* 30/2 (1994): 71-80.

<sup>54</sup>Carolyn M. Jurkowitz, “What Is the Literature Saying about Learning and Assessments in Higher Education?” *Theological Education* 39/1 (2003): 85.

effectiveness of those efforts. Key ideas from those reports will be briefly summarized below.

One of the specific suggestions for developing pastoral leaders through an integration of theory and experience is the partnership of seminaries with local churches.<sup>55</sup> Robert Ferris reported on a successful partnership between the Canadian Theological Seminary (CTS) and local churches. Students participate in a three-month internship, with local pastors providing instruction and supervision. A CTS outcomes study of the program indicated that students who had served as interns considered themselves better prepared for ministry on eleven out of eleven ministry categories than those who had not served as interns.<sup>56</sup> Harry Poe reported on several types of partnerships between seminaries and local churches. According to Poe, the Conservative Baptist Seminary of the East, which has no permanent campus, sends its faculty to teach on location. Conservative Baptist's goal is to develop individualized learning internships for ministerial students in their local churches.<sup>57</sup> Poe also cites the Biblical Institute for Leadership Development (BILD), a parachurch training center; the In-Ministry program of Bethel Theological Seminary that allows pastors to earn an MDiv degree without leaving their full-time parish ministry; and certain mega churches that select and train leaders for ministry from within their congregation.<sup>58</sup> According to Eddie Gibbs, the latter example is an idea that seminaries and churches of the future will need to explore and exploit.<sup>59</sup>

Emmanuel School of Religion has attempted two innovative programs for pastoral leadership development. The first program is an integrative approach to teaching the subjects of "preaching and worship, education, counseling, evangelism, administration, and leadership."<sup>60</sup> The entire

<sup>55</sup>See Eddie Gibbs, *Church Next* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000); Philip S. Keane, "What Is the Character of Teaching, Learning, and the Scholarly Task in the Good Theological School?" *Theological Education* 30/2 (1994): 35-44; and Ronald E. Osborn, *The Education of Ministers for the Coming Age* (St. Louis, MO: CBP Press, 1987).

<sup>56</sup>Robert Ferris, *Renewal in Theological Education: Strategies for Change* (Wheaton, IL: Billy Graham Center, 1990), 46.

<sup>57</sup>Harry L. Poe, "The Revolution in Ministry Training," *Theological Education* 33/1 (1996): 28.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Gibbs, 92-100.

<sup>60</sup>Bruce E. Shields, "Integrating Ministry and Theology," *Theological Education* 33/2

practical theology faculty team-teaches, designs integrative assignments, and seeks to “lead students to develop their understanding of ministry in the light of the nature of the church and to integrate the various activities of ministry together into a theology of ministry.”<sup>61</sup> The second innovative program is a three-module, field-education, ministry-supervision program. The three modules include assessment (initial and final), supervised ministry experience that incorporates a learning covenant and personal-growth goals, and, finally, weekly group meetings for interactive reflection on students’ ministry experience.<sup>62</sup>

United Theological Seminary offers two semesters of mentoring and pastoral supervision. Students are required to work ten to twenty hours per week in some community ministry, meet regularly with their supervisor, attend class sessions one day per week, and receive feedback from a lay-advisory committee. The leadership-development focus is on self-awareness and practical application of biblical and historical themes in a ministry context.<sup>63</sup>

A final example reported in the literature is Wycliffe College, an Anglican seminary in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Wycliffe provides weekly opportunities for students to lead in liturgy, public worship, and small Bible-study and prayer groups. A mentoring program and counseling referral program address spiritual and personal issues for emerging leaders. Students are required to participate in several mission projects locally and abroad. Wycliffe’s program also includes significant elements of personal reflection and objective assessment, evaluation, and feedback. Most of the worship and service is done with faculty and students working closely together in informal mentoring settings.<sup>64</sup>

One indication from the literature is the need for more reports and studies regarding innovative leadership development in seminary programs. In particular, seminaries with such programs need to conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of their leadership development and publish the

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(1997): 12.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 14.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>63</sup>Cathy Lynn Hall Stengel, “Pastoral Supervision as a Vehicle for Leadership Development in Theological Education” (D.Min. dissertation, United Theological Seminary, 1998), 88-103.

<sup>64</sup>Merv Mercer, “Formational Initiatives at Wycliffe College,” *Theological Education* 39/2 (2003): 53-63.

results for the benefit of other seminaries. Until such studies are reported, it will be difficult to determine the validity of isolated examples or the many suggestions currently present in the literature.

### *Program Comparison*

#### Dallas Theological Seminary

Dallas Theological Seminary is an ATS member school in Dallas, Texas. The bulletin describes the seminary as “transdenominational and seeks to serve those of like biblical faith in evangelical Protestantism.”<sup>65</sup> Dallas is a large seminary, with a reported enrollment of 1,877 in the 2004-2005 academic year. The core program preparing candidates for pastoral ministry is the Master of Theology (ThM). The enrollment in that program is 877.

A Dallas Theological Seminary ThM requires 122 semester hours. Students with undergraduate majors in Bible or theology may receive up to 30 hours of advanced standing toward the degree. The 122 hours include 19 hours in a ministry track, 2 hours for an internship, plus 15 hours of open electives. Included in the required courses for all ThM students are 4 credits of spiritual formation. Such courses, for the purpose of the comparisons of this study, are considered part of the leadership-development credits of a seminary program.

We assessed graduates of the “Pastoral Leadership” track. The 19 required credits include 6 in preaching courses emphasizing leadership in expository preaching, 3 credits in leadership of worship, 3 in leading and managing the church, 3 in leading the church to growth, 2 in counseling, and 2 in a leadership internship. It may be assumed that available electives add to the leadership course portfolio, and electives in leadership and church management are available.

In 1996-1997, the 3 credits in “Leading the Church to Growth” were recast as “Leading the Church to Effective Ministry.”<sup>66</sup> In the same year, the number of open electives was reduced to 12 hours, with required research courses being added to the required curriculum. The academic year 1999-2000 saw the required credits in the ThM curriculum reduced to 120, a reduction in elective hours to 9 for those in pastoral ministry tracks, and a reduction of the leadership track to 14 hours, removing 3 credits in “Leadership in Preaching” and 2 in counseling.

Our review of Dallas Theological Seminary’s ThM program

<sup>65</sup>*Dallas Seminary Bulletin*, 1994-1995, 14.

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, 96-97, 24.

curriculum reveals a traditional class-based development approach, with emphasis on pastoral ministry as leadership, as well as added curriculum for those taking the leadership track in pastoral-ministry education. The 1999-2000 bulletin lists three ministry goals for students: communicating the Bible effectively; demonstrating skills in various ministries; and leading a local church or other group by means of biblical exposition, leadership skills, evangelism, and service.<sup>67</sup>

### Vanguard University

Vanguard University of Southern California, founded in 1920, is a Christian liberal-arts university of 2,000 students offering four-year Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees and several Master's-level professional degrees, including an MA in Religion or ThM.

We assessed graduates of Vanguard University's MA in Religion who had a concentration in Leadership Studies. The program "emphasizes disciplined research and theological reflection for the study of local and global church mission and leadership. This concentration, based on a blend of theological reflection and the social sciences, will be especially beneficial for church and religious organization leaders or graduate students who desire the enrichment of theological education."<sup>68</sup> The objectives of the program are to provide an understanding of the theological and ethical mission of the local and global church; offer a holistic understanding of leadership that integrates theology with the social sciences; develop an intercultural framework for local and global church mission; examine the principles for the development of vision and its implementation through organizational structures; and learn how to conduct research for developing, testing, or applying theory and hypotheses related to local and global church mission and leadership.<sup>69</sup> Vanguard also offers an MA in Leadership Studies for Hispanic Leaders, which has a similar structure.

Vanguard's 36-unit program is traditional class-based development, but in some ways it is distinct from the approach of ATS seminaries. It is the most clearly dedicated to leadership studies of the three programs reviewed in this study. The program requires theological study on the undergraduate level and thus does not attempt to advance biblical studies,

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 99-100, 15.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. [www.vanguard.edu](http://www.vanguard.edu), Vanguard University of Southern California, October 18, 2004.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

except in the understanding of leadership. The 12 core course units, 18 elective units, and 6 units in thesis or project focus entirely on leadership studies, including theological, missiological, and sociological reflection on leadership. Students may choose to include up to 6 units of the 18 electives in preaching or pastoral care.

### Biblical Institute for Leadership Development (BILD)

Finally in this study, we assessed graduates of BILD International, an organization based in Ames, Iowa, which fosters the paradigm of church-based theological education. BILD has developed and implemented a curriculum of church-based theological education that distributes to the local church the context, delivery, and professors for professional ministry preparation. It is not a traditional seminary, and thus it does not attempt to replicate the approach of the traditional seminary. Its vision is to “train leaders within churches, by churches, and for churches.”<sup>70</sup>

The philosophy of BILD is further described:

*Theological Education:* The context of theological education must be the multiplying and establishing of local churches. In that way, character, skills, and academics are integrated into a hands-on, apprenticeship type training and development under a qualified and proven minister of the gospel within a community context. *Theology:* Theology has become institutionalized. It must be returned to the activity and sphere of local churches, and not as a field of Christianity delegated to scholars in institutions. For theology to become fresh, engaging, and applicable, it must again return to the living and ministering local church.<sup>71</sup>

Jeff Reed, founder of BILD, in his apologetic for BILD’s philosophy of theological education, “Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm,”<sup>72</sup> quotes Jonathan Chao’s comments on the Lausanne Covenant.

It is not possible to “improve theological education” as suggested by the covenant, in isolation from its ministerial context. Rather, a complete, integrated approach to the development of indigenous leadership within the overall context of the church and her ministry must be undertaken. . . . A critical and historical analysis of the traditional missionary model of ministry exported from the West shows that it is built on the

<sup>70</sup>Cf. [www.efcc.org/BILD](http://www.efcc.org/BILD), BILD International, October 18, 2004.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., BILD International Ministry Philosophy, October 18, 2004.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., BILD International, “Church-Based Theological Education: Creating a New Paradigm,” October 17, 2004.

administrative structure reflecting the Roman mentality rather than on a functional structure of service as found in the New Testament. . . . This kind of rethinking, although by no means new, implies that any attempt to “improve” the present form of theological education is not enough. What we need is not renovation, but innovation. The whole philosophy and structure of theological education needs to be completely reshaped.<sup>73</sup>

Pastors receive training/mentoring as they apply curriculum materials in small groups in local churches. They must “live with the matter” as ministry is done. Wisdom as opposed to information or knowledge is focused upon. The pastors who engage in training are not qualified by academic degree, but by success in ministry. Courses focus on evaluation of ministries, transformation of people in ministry, team formation, mission emphasis, and mission models. Each course requires study within a congregational context for 15-18 weeks. Courses are described as “theological readers”—series of questions around issues believed to be of primary importance. There are five progressive program levels, with leadership as the second and paradigm transforming as the third. The distinctive element of this program is the delivery of the education process within active church ministry (as opposed to the traditional class-based approach) in the company of parishioners and a mentor.

### *Assessment Findings*

In this study, we benchmark graduates of the SDATS at Andrews University with graduates of the three programs described above.<sup>74</sup> Research on MDiv graduates from the SDATS through the application of the LPI has been accomplished in two previous studies, and the SDATS is found to follow a traditional seminary curriculum among ATS schools. The SDATS MDiv degree requires a minimum of 96 semester credits. As with Dallas Theological Seminary, a required spiritual formation course is part of the MDiv curriculum; however, the SDATS requires 2 credits rather than 4. A counseling course is required, but there are no preaching courses emphasizing leadership in pulpit ministry. There is one required course in church leadership and administration for 2 credits, and 2 credits in church growth are required. It should be noted that a comparison of the

<sup>73</sup>Jonathan Chao, “Education and Leadership,” in *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1976), 198-199, 202.

<sup>74</sup>See n. 6 above.

SDATS curriculum with the Dallas leadership emphasis and Vanguard's MA in Religion with a Concentration in Leadership Studies is not equitable, since the SDATS MDiv program does not have an emphasis in leadership studies nor a program dedicated to that area.

The following table provides data comparing LPI scores for graduates of SDATS with the three institutions examined for this study.

**Comparisons of Pastors from Leadership-Emphasis Institutions  
with Seminary-educated Seventh-day Adventist Pastors  
on Five Leadership Practices**

Leadership Practice	Mean of Pastors Leadership Institutions	Mean of Pastors Adventist Seminary Graduates
Challenging the Process	45.3	41.0
Inspiring a Shared Vision	47.6	44.0
Enabling Others to Act	50.4	46.7
Modeling the Way	49.8	44.9
Encouraging the Heart	44.9	44.1
<b>Combined Leadership Score</b>	<b>238.0</b>	<b>220.7</b>

### *Conclusion*

Our research, accumulated in all three published stages, indicates a consensus among thoughtful investigators that an effective approach to leadership development within the professional programs of ATS seminaries is deficient. Generally, seminaries defer to traditional theological disciplines, even in their professional programs. There are noted exceptions, surfacing in relatively recent years, and in such cases further research will contribute to evaluation. However, the means for effective leadership development in graduate theological education are identified, and significant reflection on the challenge is present.

Stage 1 of this study affirmed that using superior leadership practices enables pastors to be more successful in their ministry. Given the correlation between leadership practices and pastoral success, the

formation of key leadership practices that prepare a person for success in ministry is an appropriate goal of graduate theological education. The assessment data applied in this third stage, while offering a limited sample, affirms that experimentation with leadership curriculum and delivery in the three institutions studied has translated to greater ministry effectiveness. Graduates of the three examined programs noted as offering unusual leadership development integration into their programs consistently scored higher in the LPI assessment in all five scales after four or more years of ministry.<sup>75</sup> It is our observation that both curriculum revision and church-centered delivery paradigms impact the effectiveness of leadership development in graduate theological education.

The application of empirical data to measure leadership effectiveness in ministry after four or more years provided in the three stages of this research is the first such attempt we have discovered. Valuable benchmarks have been established. Further, such analysis will yield additional specific information and inform program revisions.

The researchers believe the mission of graduate theological education calls for a paradigm revision that accomplishes integration of theory and practice and theological reflection and leadership skills within a professional learning context inclusive of coaching. Faithfulness to mission in graduate theological education requires such change.

<sup>75</sup>See "Research Method" section above.