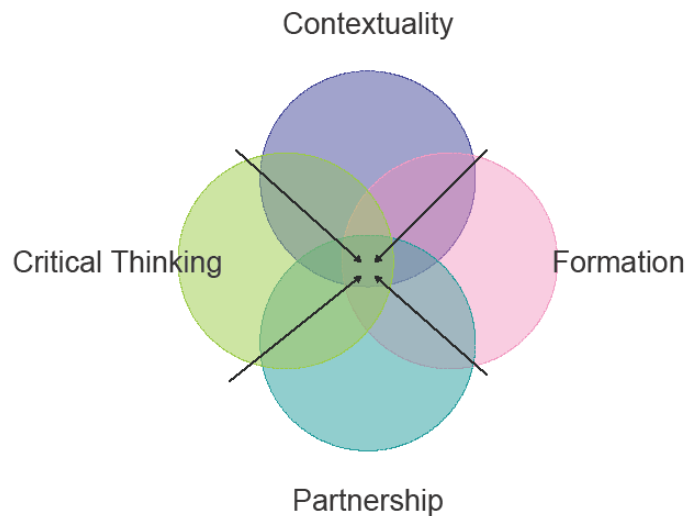


**Pacific School of Religion  
Educational Effectiveness Review Report  
November 2008**

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PSR Core Educational Values  
In Relationship to our MDiv Curriculum



## **Introduction**

This report represents the second of two reports submitted for the re-accreditation review for Pacific School of Religion. Our proposal for our self-study was submitted to WASC in June 2005 and shared with ATS. Our [Capacity Report](#) was submitted in the summer of 2007, and we received our capacity review visit in October 2007. Since then we have completed our educational effectiveness review self-study and have taken seriously the issues raised by the team during the capacity review visit. This report presents the results of our educational effectiveness review and our responses to the capacity review issues.

In our [Institutional Proposal](#), we identified three themes for our Educational Effectiveness Review: (1) education for progressive Christian leadership; (2) the MDiv degree curriculum, which is the school's principal means of educating for leadership; (3) the PSR faculty, which is the "delivery system" for that curriculum. These three themes are not only linked to each other, they are grounded in PSR's history and mission, consonant with its current strategic plan, and therefore a good lens through which each dimension of the School can most effectively be examined.

The expected outcomes we identified in the proposal for the study of each of these three themes are as follows:

1. Regarding education for progressive Christian leadership:

Negotiate and clarify our collective understanding of what "progressive Christian leadership" should mean in the current institutional, religious, and social contexts; test our assumptions about the educational processes that contribute to the development of progressive Christian leaders; determine how successful we are in educating students to be progressive Christian leaders; determine how effective we are as a progressive institutional leader in Christianity today; and begin to take the actions necessary to ensure or enhance positive results in each of these areas.

2. Regarding the Master of Divinity degree curriculum:

Continue to discuss and refine the goals of the MDiv degree program and the criteria we use for determining success in relation to those goals; improve the assessment tools by which we measure the program's effectiveness based on those criteria; review and revise the program curriculum, requirements, and delivery system based on the results of our assessments; and ensure that the structures for assessment and the utilization of data derived from continuing assessment processes are firmly in place.

3. Regarding Faculty development:

Clarify, evaluate, and revise as needed expectations of the PSR faculty, including teaching and advising loads, committee assignments, and other responsibilities in academic administration, and qualitative and quantitative expectations for research and publications; clarify, evaluate, and revise as needed supports for faculty development, including appointments, tenure and promotion processes, salary, and leave programs for research, and publications; evaluate and propose changes as warranted in the size and allocation of the faculty relative to the school's curricular needs.

Since first proposing these outcomes in 2005, it quickly became clear that we needed to be more precise about what we were assessing, since these goal statements are not always clear.

In the area of assessing progressive Christian leadership development, we have come to a better understanding of the meaning of this concept, identified some relevant indicators of our success, and have better infused this overall outcome into the discourse and presentation of the school. We have emphasized the way in which this commitment grows out of our understanding of Christianity. And we have taken leadership in particular aspects of progressive Christian movements in the larger society, particularly in those related to LGBTQ concerns.

In the area of assessing the MDiv degree, we have connected the curricular outcome objectives to the overall goal of progressive Christian leadership development as well as to the commonly understood outcomes of any good MDiv degree program. We have clarified the relevant indicators of our success in achieving these outcomes and explored the range of information available to us in understanding how best to assess our effectiveness in this degree program. We have developed assessment processes and instruments that we hope will also help us shape effective assessment strategies for our other degree programs as they come up for review in the next cycle. We have used all the data available to us and made some decisions about what data is most relevant for developing a systematic long-term assessment plan for this degree. In turn, this MDiv assessment plan will become a template for the assessment plans for our other degree programs. We have assessed the strengths and weaknesses of our MDiv degree in comparison with our previous curriculum and have made some changes already based on this assessment, and we are considering other changes as we do further assessment.

In addressing faculty development, we have completed work on a revised faculty manual that clarifies and revises policies supporting faculty development as teachers and scholars, focusing particularly on the task of progressive Christian leadership development. We have worked to improve our faculty evaluation processes, and we have come to a common understanding of the needed size of our faculty for the student body we believe we can sustain.

### **Progressive Christian Leadership Development Section**

Of the three themes PSR has chosen as foci for its Educational Effectiveness Self-Study and Review, progressive Christian leadership development provides an institution-wide focus, a long-standing overall educational objective, and "signature pedagogy" in all of our degree and certificate programs. This goal derives from our mission statement and direction statement and is explicitly emphasized in our strategic plan. PSR has a long history of supporting and fostering a progressive interpretation of Christianity as it has developed over the last hundred years of engagement with the cultural and economic changes in the world.

Educating for progressive Christian leadership, as [defined by PSR](#), requires us to prepare people for ministries of justice and compassion in an ever-changing world. (To call our students "progressive" implies primarily that they have the ability to analyze contexts.) We specifically expect them to ascertain situations of injustice, inequality, or oppression, in particular, those related to race, gender, sexual orientation, and economic class or structural poverty. We also expect them to address such situations theologically, pastorally, practically, and politically, with care and respect for all people while striving for justice and liberation. The collection of qualities in the box below, representing what PSR faculty have come to regard as characteristic of a progressive Christian leader, is actually a composite of several consensus statements developed by different constituencies at PSR over the last few years.

**A Progressive Christian leader:**

1. Is rooted in Christian tradition
  - Has the ability to re-appropriate tradition for new times/places
  - Can critically analyze texts and traditions
2. Understands the contextual nature of knowing and understanding
  - Understands one's own perception is limited
  - Understands the reality and value of multiple perspectives
  - Understands ambiguity and complexity and can hold the tensions related to difference
  - can critically evaluate a context and respond
3. Is self aware/spiritually grounded
  - Has an engaged spirituality
  - Is self-reflective and reflexive
4. Works in partnership
  - Is actively involved in ecumenical and interfaith conversations
  - Appreciates the value of diversity and moves beyond appreciation to engagement
  - Is socially connected and can work collaboratively
  - Is competent in cross-cultural situations
  - Nurtures the development of leadership in others
5. Can envision and engage in the creation of a more just world
  - Holds a liberation perspective
  - Has a global consciousness
  - Works for social change and has a systemic perspective
  - Is involved in institutional transformation

We identify these characteristics for understanding how well we build the competency in our students to be critical, theologically reflective practitioners who can lead toward liberative outcomes in messy, indeterminate situations. PSR faculty members, in partnership with our constituent faith communities and the wider community of people who are engaged in ministries of justice and compassion, have developed these competencies as critical for the development of progressive Christian leadership. Some of these are basic ministry competencies taught in most MDiv programs; others are particular competencies needed for progressive Christian leadership. Together, these make up our signature pedagogy, which we discuss more fully in the MDiv section of this report.

PSR has chosen to focus on two specific aspects of progressive Christianity, the positive theological engagement of issues related to gender and sexual orientation, and the struggle to create racial justice. At PSR these two issues provide a dynamic nexus of conversation because they are often treated separately rather than together and are often thought to be in conflict. A major objective at PSR is to see if we can find ways to engage in theological conversation and ethical analysis across the lines of gender, sexual orientation, and race, and ways to understand the effect of racism and homophobia on PSR as a community and the larger structures of religious organizations and society.

Progressive Christianity is a wider movement in modern Christianity, and has several elements widely shared by those who claim this position. Our own definitions and constructions of this concept grow out of and are related to these wider currents of thought. We are also aware and continue to struggle with certain problems associated with the term "progressive." The term is also used by those engaged in the development of a globalized economy. For them, the term "progressive" indicates increasing levels of economic development and efficiency. The term has also been used by certain fundamentalist Christians.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the term "progressive" has been embraced by Christians who continue to work for the liberation of people from many forms of systemic oppression. In addition, secular groups working for the same kinds of agendas refer to themselves as progressive. Some of us have come to the conclusion that "liberative" Christianity might be a less encumbered term, but progressive remains the dominant adjective among these constituencies. At PSR we remain committed to engagement with progressive Christianity knowing that sensitivity to diversity means that we will never have an "orthodox" definition of the movement.

Thus, progressive Christian leadership development is an overarching theme at PSR, taking into consideration the dialogue between PSR's historic mission and emerging concerns and movements in its partner denominations and communities. Beginning with the revision of the MDiv curriculum and development of PSR's strategic plan, we have made progress in coming to consensus about the meaning of this idea. We have discussed its definition as well as the parameters within which progressive Christian leadership could be identified within the work of PSR's students or alumni. PSR consciously educates for progressive Christian leadership through its various extra-curricular activities and non-curricular programs. We have undertaken the study of our effectiveness in progressive Christian leadership development in both our explicit curriculum and our implicit curriculum.

### **Progressive Christian Leadership as found in PSR's Explicit Curriculum Represented in Degrees and Certificates**

#### 1. Master of Divinity Program

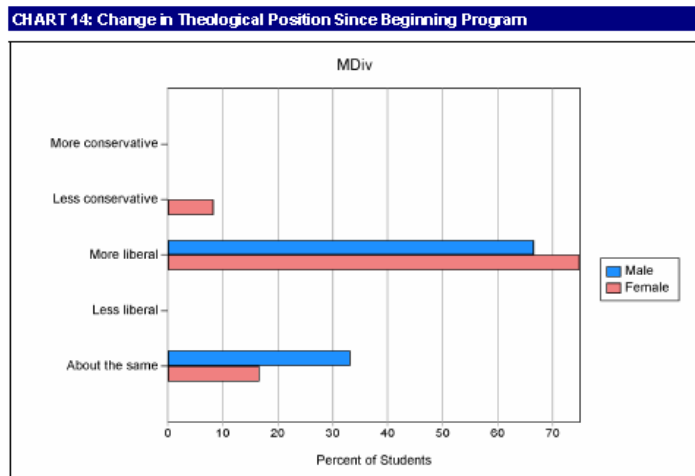
We have created ways to assess our MDiv program using the outcomes of progressive Christian leadership development as signature pedagogy. Our curriculum map for this program relates the degree program outcomes to our signature pedagogy. We have organized our rubric using four key educational values related to progressive Christian leadership development: critical appropriation of texts and traditions; contextual understanding of the work of ministry and the nature of texts and traditions; working in partnership with denominational, ecumenical, and interfaith communities as well as secular organizations engaged in progressive social justice activities; and an engaged leadership and spiritual formation for the task of ministries of justice and compassion in a changing world. We also used these key educational values, broken down into specific learning objectives, to create a [rubric](#) for assessing our milestone assignments, the Middler Review and the Senior Seminar papers. The rubric will also be useful to faculty in making assessments of student work in class and will be helpful to students in knowing what to expect across the board in PSR classes. Noting that in some cases our curricular outcome objectives would generally apply to any

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<sup>1</sup>Bruce Lawrence, in his book *Defenders of God* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989, 86-92), points out that many fundamentalist Christians refer to themselves as progressive patriotic Christians. In this case "progressive" entails the triumphal spread of Christianity in anticipation of the second coming of Christ

good MDiv program, we noted specific ways in which we would define the results of our application of these values toward a progressive Christian end.

Another measure of the progressive Christian leadership development aspect of the MDiv program is the question asked on the ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire about how the student's theological position has changed.



ATS GSQ Table 14 2007-2008

Looking at three years of data from [this table](#), our students in general are more theologically liberal when they graduate than when they come, and they come to PSR already generally liberal in theological orientation. Much of this change happens in the MDiv cohort rather than in those of the other degree programs.

The best test of our ability to train people for progressive Christian leadership would be the work of our alumni/ae. We have looked at the activities of many of our alumni/ae to ascertain how their ministries exhibit the characteristics of progressive Christian leadership. The questions we asked in designing the alumni/ae survey correspond to questions we ask on our milestone worksheets for the MDiv degree program ([MDiv Manual](#) pp 42-61) and are also related to questions from the ATS Entering and Graduating Student Questionnaires. Three-hundred and fifty of our MDiv graduates from the last 55 years responded to the survey. The majority have graduated since 1990. Specific questions give us a look at how our alumni/ae are doing in "progressive" aspects of ministry. While just over half are engaged in parish ministry, 4.3 % are doing inner-city ministry, 5.8% are engaged in social work or social services ministries, and 11% are engaged in social justice ministries. Almost a third of our graduates are engaged in ministries related to social justice issues. One of our alumnae, for instance, is the executive officer of the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries. Several of our alumni/ae have been involved in the revitalization of [mainline congregations](#) in the Bay Area using a progressive Christian frame.

In delineating their satisfaction with their preparation in a number of aspects of ministry—many being skills and knowledge acquired in any good MDiv program—alumni/ae who studied under our previous MDiv curriculum responded to some specific skills and knowledge related to progressive Christianity. The items on our [alumni survey](#) were rated by graduates on a scale from 1-10; we consider a composite score of 8 or higher to be an acceptable indication that we succeeded in teaching that aspect of our program effectively. It is important to note that PSR students come to this school with relatively high awareness of these issues to begin with, and these figures represent an increased knowledge over the course of their studies here. The following give us specific indications

of students' competence in progressive leadership development with the percentage of alumni/ae scoring that item as an 8 or higher: skill in community organizing, 20.2%; ability to think critically and analyze new ideas, 80%; increased empathy for the poor and oppressed, 54.9%; increased concern about social justice, 57.6%; increased sensitivity to racial justice and cross-cultural competency, 58.7%; increased knowledge and sensitivity to GLBT issues, 62.5%; and increased understanding of the dynamics of social and economic class, 54%. The alumni/ae survey will form a benchmark for assessing whether our new MDiv curriculum is better at doing these things. Another alumni/ae survey will be conducted 5 years after the first class graduated from the new MDiv program, in 2012. The Middler Review and Senior Seminar papers from the new MDiv curriculum show that, while students are generally competent, we can improve our teaching of critical appropriation of texts and traditions and the ability to think critically about context. These key aspects of progressive Christian leadership will receive attention as the faculty considers changes in the curriculum based on the recent comprehensive assessment of the MDiv (discussed more fully in the following section).

## 2. DMin Program

Although our DMin program has not explicitly focused on progressive Christian leadership development, it does serve many progressive clergy in the U. S. as well as international students who have significant leadership roles related to progressive Christian issues in their countries. From 1997 to 2008, 38% of the DMin theses contained explicitly progressive references in their [titles](#). In addition, the program is deliberately inter-cultural and contextual in its style, contributing to students' understanding of cultural difference and enhancing their abilities to shape their local work with a knowledge of its effect in a wider context. We continue to receive interest from theological schools in East Asia and the Pacific Islands to develop partnerships in offering Doctor of Ministry education. The DMin program was last [reviewed](#) in 2007.

## 3. The MTS Program

The MTS degree program was created to provide opportunity for religious "seekers" to have a broad yet comprehensive education in theological studies. The [degree program was assessed](#) in April 2005 with two findings pertinent to our progressive Christian leadership development project. The first is that the students who have graduated from our MTS course of study report that they acquired a critical approach to the study of religion, particularly Christianity. Though this is a general degree, not particularly focused on leadership development, study in a progressive mode is the basis for the curriculum. The second finding is that the curriculum lacks attention to contextuality, one of our core educational values. As a result of the assessment in 2005, the [instructions for the synthesis essay](#) were made more explicit, and the development of contextuality aspects of the core MDiv courses should ensure greater exposure of MTS students to these issues because they take many of the same courses as the MDiv students. The degree program will be assessed again in the next year or two, and we will be able to see if these are persistent problems. In addition, building on the experience of assessing the MDiv using the milestone assignments of the Middler Review and Senior Seminar papers, we will incorporate data from the MTS synthesis essays into the program assessment.

#### 4. Certificate in Sexuality and Religion:

Offered in cooperation with the Center for Gay and Lesbian Studies in Religion and Ministry, this certificate is one of the foundational pieces of PSR progressive Christian leadership education. The certificate is described in these terms: “More than ever, strong leaders are needed to provide compassionate and informed guidance on these issues in religious communities and institutions, professional societies, advocacy organizations, and legal and legislative bodies. PSR's Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR) is designed to develop and nurture such leadership by providing a unique program focusing on the theological, historical, ethical, pastoral, and practical dimensions of sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The [CSR](#) is a professional development certificate providing specialized training in sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion. It is designed for participants from a wide variety of backgrounds.” (CLGS Website)

This program originated out of PSR's historical progressive trajectory. It supports compassion and justice for LGBT people in the churches and in society, it cultivates critical inquiry into the theology and practice of the churches on issues of sexuality, it fosters awareness of the contexts of gender identity and formation, and it engages the churches in participation in public life.

#### 5. Participation in the GTU Common MA

Since participation in the GTU Common MA ([last reviewed in Spring 2006](#)) means that we cooperate with schools who do not necessarily share our explicit commitments to progressive Christianity, we sought out indicators of the theological stance of our MA students.

The information available to us through the ATS Graduating Student Survey provides one way for us to look at the experience of our entire graduating class in any year regardless of degree program. In particular, we can look at the data indicating students' perceived change in theological position since entering our school. We would expect if we are educating people for progressive Christian leadership that there would be shift to the theologically liberal side. Looking at the [GSQ Table 14](#) for the last three years, we find that over half and sometimes two-thirds of our graduates report being more theologically liberal than when they first came to PSR.

The MA students show little change from their theological position on entering the degree program, perhaps because they already hold a liberal theological perspective. The most recent ATS Entering Student Questionnaire indicates that all of the entering MA students perceived both themselves and the school as "very liberal," and in previous years the majority of students entering the program regarded themselves and the school as either "liberal" or "very liberal." In the most recent survey of MA students conducted by the GTU, there is no indication that our MA students are particularly engaged in social service or advocacy or justice ministries.

Another indicator we can use is the MA theses written by our students. In the last five years 30 students have graduated with an MA, and half of those wrote theses whose [titles](#) indicate some engagement with progressive themes.

#### 6. The Bay Area Faith and Health Consortium

The Bay Area Faith and Health Consortium, in which PSR participates along with the University of California Public Health department and several other community health groups, has focused on developing collaboration between communities of faith and health care professionals, particularly in public health. This program has had a small constituency, with varied student

participation. The outcome for students is their increased knowledge of the other sectors of society that deal with issues of health; it also provides opportunities for them to engage in leadership development as they take on projects that require partnership and collaboration with groups outside the theological settings. Through this program, participating students increased their knowledge, developed leadership, and were able to collaborate successfully. It has been one of the strongest programs connecting us to communities of accountability within the church community and outside it.

Until recently, the program was rooted in faculty work in bioethics and community ministry development. It has been an attractive factor for drawing students to PSR. The Field Education Director interviews all first-year MDiv students and finds that every year about one-third are interested in some form of healing ministry or relationship of faith to health. Specific courses have been developed to address this interest; for example, the BAFHC and the School of Public Health at UCB offered a class in the spring 2008 semester entitled "The Interdisciplinary Team: Improving the Care of our Elders." Two PSR students participated in the class. In 2002-03 a PSR student did her field education with the Alameda Public Health Department and produced a report for them—entitled "Faith and Health: Exploring the Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Promoting Healthy People and Communities in Alameda County." The consortium is involved in a planned immersion project to Appalachia for students and faculty to address faith, health and economic life in January 2009. The evaluation tools for the Bay Area Faith and Health Consortium projects include course evaluations and evaluations from workshops at the Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference, Field education evaluations from students and mentors in health and faith placements; evaluations from students who engage in health projects, and consortium group assessments after each project is undertaken.

This program lacks the funding and infrastructure of our other centers. Therefore, its educational offerings are limited and depend on the availability of interested resource people. Due to the retirement of two closely related faculty members and the serious illness of a third, there is serious question about the sustainability of this program in its current form. At present, the faculty has decided to discontinue advertising this program to prospective students, and to consider whether we want to commit resources to rebuilding it or to discontinue it altogether. The outcome of this discussion will hinge on several unknowable factors including the health of the principle faculty member involved and the potential interest of new faculty coming to PSR in the near future.

### **Progressive Christian Leadership as found in PSR's Implicit Curriculum - Campus Atmosphere and Student Life**

#### **1. Worship and Community Life**

Two co-curricular aspects of student life at PSR—worship and the programs of the community life office—are closely related to the MDiv program but are not explicitly part of the curriculum. Both have a critical role to play in the leadership formation of the MDiv students, even as they serve the whole community.

The worship committee that plans the weekly chapel services and other occasional worship opportunities at PSR is explicit in avoiding the term "progressive" to describe what it does so that students who may not so identify themselves feel included. The core progressive educational values of PSR are present in the work of the chapel committee nonetheless. The chapel committee especially promotes deep, authentic struggle with biblical texts, values biblical preaching, and strives to be inclusive of all theological perspectives represented in the student body, including those in addition to the Christian perspective of the majority of the community. In its weekly and yearly

evaluations of the chapel services, the worship committee struggles particularly with the nature of inclusivity. Evangelical students have noted that their voice is not represented enough in the PSR chapel services. There is a tension between inclusivity of diverse religious traditions and diverse expressions of Christianity. For the most part, PSR finds this tension to be healthy and not something to be resolved easily. It may in fact not be resolvable in the context of the development of progressive Christian leadership. It may be an integral sign of the progressive nature of our education.

The Office of Community Life has undergone regular assessments. One such assessment ten years ago resulted in a major organizational change in the way the school serves student community needs. Another assessment is currently underway. Their contributions to progressive Christian leadership development are a significant aspect of that review, and the results should be available by the time of the EER visit in March.

The Office of Community Life serves an important role in organizing the orientation activities for each new class. For all of our degree programs and for the MDiv in particular, the Office of Community Life introduces students to the essential culture of this degree program and helps to set the tone of the class for the students' approach to the curriculum. Orientation is our students' introduction to progressive Christian education as PSR understands it. As a result of our assessments of the new MDiv curriculum looking at the course evaluations for the first year's classes, the race relations audit undertaken in 2004, and using the GSQ data and informal conversation with students from all programs after their first year at PSR, we addressed several issues by making changes in the orientation for students. We now provide an overview of PSR's core educational values and an introduction to critical thinking. This began as a workshop for international students coming from other academic cultures, but this year was expanded to the orientation for all students. We added required workshops on dismantling racism and introduced the practice of engaged spirituality.

## 2. Building Racial Justice

When progressive Christian leadership development was proposed as one of the major foci of the PSR Strategic Plan in 2005, one of the conflicts that arose related to the perception by some that progressive Christianity was a movement among liberal Protestants focusing mostly on two issues—the theological engagement with science and modernity, and the theological engagement with LGBT inclusion and other gender-identity issues. Indeed, the renewed use of the term progressive in these circles during the 1980s was in response to the conservative turn in American Christianity since World War II and its expression in American politics. This conservatism was expressed in the efforts to teach a sectarian doctrine of creation in science classes, a reluctance to grant equal political rights to women, and an effort to suppress same-gender relationships. In this new manifestation of the progressive Christian movement, as in the historic Progressive Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century, the issues of racism, race relations, and racial justice were largely not included in the progressive agenda as first articulated at PSR. It quickly became clear that the progressive agenda had to include a wider range of issues and, in fact, that the issues of racism could not be addressed adequately by simply articulating their inclusion in the progressive Christian leadership section of the Strategic Plan. In addition, the historical issues of racism and cultural insensitivity, which still manifest themselves in the PSR community, were addressed in a separate section of the Strategic Plan to give them prominence. PSR was redefining its understanding of progressive Christianity to [engage homophobia and racism](#) as related issues in society which needed to be related in theological discourse and teaching.

The project of dismantling racism and creating cross-cultural competence is carried out at present in several venues. One is the Roundtable program of CLGS, the African American Roundtable, and the Asian American Roundtable discussions, each of which concerns the intersections of race, gender identity, and sexual orientation. A second is in the work of the Dismantling Racism Committee, which provides forums and other educational venues for the discussion of race issues at PSR. Building from recommendations made by the United Methodist Commission on Race and Religion when they conducted a [racial audit](#) at PSR, the committee has carried out a number of educational programs. Important among them was the series of discussions related to the issues of race that have emerged in the 2008 presidential campaign. The most visible educational program was the celebration of Racial Justice Month in April 2008 which featured lectures, films, and discussions focused on racial justice issues in history and in the present. We have also recently hired a part-time staff person as the Dismantling Racism Program Director. She is in the process of designing and carrying out an assessment of our programs in light of the audit recommendations and the emphases of the Strategic Plan and has worked with the DRC to establish a [Racial Justice Advocacy Group](#) to create a better means of response to incidents of racism and racial insensitivity on campus.

A third is in the development of a course for our curriculum, to be required in the future, for all students to learn about the issues of color prejudice, systemic racism, and strategies for creating racial justice, particularly in the churches, but in the larger community as well. This course is in the planning stages as this report is being written; it will be an important component of our progressive Christian leadership development education at PSR in the future. One difficulty that has emerged in planning this course has to do with faculty's lack of confidence in their ability to design and teach such a course. While we have particular faculty members with expertise in this area, we do not feel ready to undertake the teaching of everything that will need to go into it. In the fall semester 2009, the faculty will have a semester-long seminar to explore these issues together and gain a sense of capacity to deal with them this course is planned.

A fourth venue for this education in the MDiv curriculum lies in the [contextual education](#) requirements. These short- and long-term educational opportunities provide students with experiences leading to an understanding of racial justice issues and the development of their theological voice in addressing them. At the completion of their contextual learning requirement, students will be able to: identify their social location; describe how social location shapes world view; critically analyze diverse perspectives; articulate the theological issues and meaning discovered from encounters; and identify how the experience applies to their spiritual and vocational formation. The director of the program has worked with faculty in designing the courses. At first, the faculty did not find the students able to articulate the theological issues and meaning very well. Later courses built in days of theological reflection guided by the faculty member, and [student reflection papers improved](#). In the fall of 2009, the PSR faculty will hold a seminar, much as it did when doing the initial work of revising the curriculum, to learn more about how to teach toward building racial justice at PSR and in the larger community.

### **Progressive Christian Leadership Programs in Community and Continuing Education**

We selected the following non-curricular programs as illustrating our work in progressive Christian leadership development: the Bay Area Faith and Health Network, the Earl Lectures and Pastoral Conference, the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (CLGS) Out Front Workshops, the Institute for Leadership Development and Study of Pacific and Asian North

American Religion (PANA) R2W program, the Summer Session, and the Certificate of Ministry Studies program.

### 1. Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference

The primary continuing education opportunities offered by PSR are the annual Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference, held in January, and the Summer Session. Since the delineation of progressive Christian leadership development as one element of PSR's Strategic Plan, the theme of the Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference has focused on the theological themes of progressive Christianity and a critique of its limits. This conference is one of PSR's most important ways of offering continuing education to clergy. The lectures themselves date from 1901, when Edwin T. Earl established an endowment to support lectures that would bring important scholars to speak on themes of Christian life and thought. From its earliest years, the lectures have attracted progressive thinkers. Theodore Roosevelt, a premier Progressive Era politician, was a lecturer in the early 20th century. In addition, Paul Tillich, Elie Wiesel, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, and Gustavo Gutierrez, who have played important roles in the development of progressive Christian theology, participated in the Earl Lectures. Since adopting progressive Christian leadership development as a major focus of PSR's Strategic Plan, the Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference has served as a forum for addressing major justice issues by bringing leaders from around the world to give the public lectures on specifically progressive topics. We have used the lectures to explore the nature of progressive Christianity, and the discussions there have helped us in refining our understanding of the term. The conferences provide an opportunity for clergy, laity, and students to hear leaders in such areas as earth sustainability; peace-making in a time of war, arts, and social change. It is also a continuing education event for leadership development of graduates of PSR and other church leaders.

In the past, the Earl Lectures evaluations have been used to help us be more effective in future events. We have not had instruments that really helped us find out if the event was effective in promoting progressive Christian leadership development. We have revised the evaluation form to give us more information about outcomes for supporting and developing progressive Christian leadership. In the Fall of 2007, we developed specific progressive Christian leadership outcomes for the evaluation process of the 2008 conference.

The theme of the [2008 Earl Lectures and Leadership Conference](#) was focused on the development of inter-religious thinking on the relationship of concerns for the environment and racial and economic justice. About two thirds of the attendees were clergy or seminary students. Many of the clergy are PSR alumni/ae who come for continuing education, as well as for a chance to meet with other alumni/ae. The [evaluation survey](#) for the conference asked particular questions related to the conference's effectiveness in presenting useable material for developing progressive Christian leadership. By a large majority, the attendees indicated that the event increased their awareness and commitment regarding environmental and economic sustainability issues, increased their sensitivity to injustices involving race and culture, made people more aware of the relationship of gender and sexual orientation issues to environmental justice, and successfully provided resources for further action.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 1) Did this event increase your awareness and commitment to act regarding sustainability issues? 20.8% strongly agreed, 64.6% somewhat agreed. 2) Did this event increase your sensitivity to sustainability injustices involving race and culture? 31.9% strongly agreed, 48.9% somewhat agreed. 3) Did this event significantly heighten my awareness

In their written comments, several people noted that they came to the conference already committed to this agenda, and therefore it did not increase their awareness. Clearly, however, the conference and lectures provided a significant place in which to engage this aspect of progressive religious thinking. The 2008 survey is the first to use progressive Christian leadership development criteria for assessing its effectiveness. To see if we can consciously improve this program's effectiveness, a more general rubric will need to be developed so that we can compare from one year to the next.

## 2. Summer Session

The major purposes of Summer School have been to provide continuing education for those in ministry. The educational goals for progressive Christian leadership development are evaluated by faculty in their own area. Then the faculty as a whole reviews the course offerings as to whether they meet academic standards and are in keeping with PSR values and outcomes that PSR wants to impart to students.

Currently, two main types of evaluation are a written evaluation at the end of instruction for each course and a program evaluation where students comment on their PSR experience as a whole. Students are asked to assess what they found useful about the course and what knowledge they will be able to take with them to apply to their ministry setting. The overall assessment is coordinated by the Summer School director and reviewed by the academic dean and administration as requested. Faculty members teaching in the summer session receive evaluations for their classes and, if they teach again in the summer session, are expected to revise content and process accordingly. [The evaluations](#) are used to inform future course offerings and to improve the operation and overall learning environment. The evaluation forms are currently under revision to gather information on specific “progressive Christian” attributes the Summer Session student learns and experiences. Summer Session 08 was the first time specific progressive Christian leadership attributes were measured in summer session course evaluations.

Instructors hired for Summer Session 2008 were progressive leaders themselves, modeling ministries of justice and compassion in an ever-changing world. Several Summer Session instructors are PSR alumni (e.g. Michael G. Bausch, Wakoh Shannon Hickey, and Pat Schneider) giving back to PSR and passing on its tradition of boldness. All of the instructors this year were rated as excellent instructors (a 5 on a 5-point scale) by their students. In addition, when asked about how well courses met their outcomes related to our progressive Christian core educational values, students in all courses reported that these outcomes were met.

## 3. The Certificate of Ministry Studies

The statement of purpose of the Certificate of Ministry Studies (CMS) indicates that it is a general leadership education program for lay people in churches who perform significant ministry work.<sup>3</sup> While progressive Christian leadership development is not an explicitly stated outcome of

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and/or my ability to be more sensitive to sustainability as related to gender, sexual orientation and social justice? 8.5% strongly agreed, 57.4% somewhat agreed. 4) Did this event provide resources for action regarding issues of sustainability? 21.7% strongly agreed, 54.3% somewhat agreed.

<sup>3</sup>The program description for the certificate reads as follows: “CMS is a unique program that combines the real-life practice of ministry with basic theological education. Multicultural in its design and focus, the CMS program provides leadership training for lay and clergy leaders, equipping them to strengthen their congregations and create new ministries .

the program, it has been sustained by ongoing active interest from laity and clergy in progressive congregations in the Bay Area and in Southern California. In addition, many PSR faculty members view the program as an outreach to racial and ethnic minoritized communities which may have experienced traditional progressive Christianity as uninterested in issues of racial justice. In addition, several students from this program have eventually entered our MDiv program.

The Certificate of Ministry Studies relates directly to our overall institutional effort of developing leaders in progressive Christianity. While this certificate program has not undergone a review with the same formality as the degree program reviews, an informal preliminary review was part of the budget discussions this year. The CMS program is currently undergoing an evaluation, for which we do not yet have a report.

#### 4. PANA Programs

The PANA Institute offers several programs that support PSR's progressive Christian leadership development purpose. PANA offers educational programs for adults and PSR/GTU students, such as participation in the Pilgrimage to Manzanar and the [Civil Liberty and Faith project](#), with the goal of "amplifying the voices and perspectives of progressive Asian American and Pacific Islander (API) religious leaders engaged in the work of increasing civil liberty for all, and in bringing about greater inter-ethnic and inter-religious understanding." In addition, PANA sponsors the APARRI Conference each year, a gathering of scholars studying Asian and Pacific Islander American religion, and focusing attention on the relationship of religion and public life.

The PANA program for educating youth leadership in Asian American and Pacific Islander churches, [R2W \(Represent to Witness\)](#), is now in its sixth year. It has attracted over 140 youth, and about 50 have continued to participate or stayed in touch. This program reaches out to diverse youth and young adults who are marginalized across race and class lines, and fosters their leadership development and critical reflection on Scripture, their life context, and current issues in the world. This program has resulted in an increased sense of awareness and agency among the youth, especially the young women. Through the R2W Web site, the youth speak about the effect the program has had on them and what they learned: <http://represent2witness.org>.

#### 5. CLGS OutFront Workshops

As part of the [Teaching Learning](#) work of CLGS in addition to its certificate program, CLGS offers a nationwide series of events for local churches and clergy. "The CLGS OutFront Workshops are designed to help progressive people of faith and their allies throughout the country become voices of authority and agents of societal change in the current heated debates surrounding homosexuality and religion by developing and/or increasing their expertise in matters of sexuality and religion. A primary goal of these workshops is to enable LGBT people of faith themselves (and their allies) to counter those who use religious argumentation (often very effectively) to alienate and marginalize LGBT people within communities of faith and within society at large.

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... The program serves lay pastors who are seeking an experience-based education that stresses critical reflection on actual pastoral practice and experience; lay people in specialized ministries such as Christian education, music, youth, seniors, single adults, or administration; congregations and denominations that are looking for seminary education for their Sunday School teachers, youth organizers, Bible-study leaders, council and committee members, and others in positions of leadership; faith-seekers and prospective ministers who are discerning their call to serve God and want to explore seminary studies."

“By providing on-site weekend training sessions on such topics as religion and homosexuality; religious issues concerning same-sex marriage and civil unions; homosexuality, race, and ethnicities; and the Bible and homosexuality, [OutFront Workshops](#) are able to offer uniquely valuable educational resources and networking opportunities for LGBT people of faith, local religious leaders, members of LGBT grass-roots advocacy organizations, and non-LGBT allies. In addition, CLGS OutFront Workshops assist members of these groups as they work together to develop progressive positions on religion and sexuality, to formulate effective strategies for social change, and to become an authoritative public voice in local and national debates relating to LGBT people and religion. We currently offer five to six workshops per year.”

The center plans to assess the effectiveness of these workshops after the summer 2009 sessions. The participant evaluation surveys from workshops that have already happened, for instance the one in [Kalamazoo, MI](#), show a high level of satisfaction with the program.

### **Conclusion of Progressive Christian Leadership Section**

In the course of the assessments of our implicit and explicit curriculum, we have become increasingly aware of the need to be clearer about our understandings of outcomes and the need to develop ongoing well-functioning feedback loops. We have also become more aware of the connections and relationships among all of our educational efforts. Since this is the first time PSR has reviewed these programs in a connected way, the individual reviews are somewhat uneven. We have learned a lot about the need for a well-understood and commonly used set of criteria for review and have begun to develop rubrics from our common understandings. The list of qualities of a progressive Christian leader, provided on page 4 of this report, increasingly provides the framework for some of these evaluations. The more we begin to do this, the more we will be able to compare these programs with each other. The assessment of the MDiv degree under the rubric of progressive Christian leadership development is the most highly advanced assessment process we have at PSR and is discussed fully below in the MDiv review section. The MDiv assessment process and tools, for instance the rubric we developed for assessing student work in the milestone assignments, will become the prototype for creating better assessment processes for the other PSR degree and certificate programs and other educational efforts. Besides the development of these competencies in the MDiv curriculum in general, weight is given to them especially in [field education](#), where students begin the complex process of integrating their education into a professional practice of ministry. Since including progressive Christian leadership development as a major piece of PSR’s Strategic Plan in 2005, and choosing it as one of the three aspects of our educational program to assess for our Educational Effectiveness Review in the accreditation process, we have made significant progress in clarifying our understanding of progressive Christianity and how development of leadership for this larger project serves as an overarching objective of everything we do at PSR.

After reviewing the ways in which all of our programs address progressive Christian leadership development, we discover that two themes emerge as especially important at PSR: 1) addressing gender and sexuality issues, especially the inclusion of LGBTQ people, fully into the life and community of our society and the churches; and 2) creating a racially just society. We have made a deliberate effort at PSR to begin learning how to negotiate the intersections between these two (notable efforts include work by PANA and CLGS) though we have a lot to learn. Neither of these emphases was characteristic of historic expressions of progressive Christianity but both grow directly out of the spirit of that tradition. We also observe that the classical progressive interest in economic justice and labor rights is missing at PSR. In a few places, particularly in our contextual

immersion courses, we face the economic structures that shape our society and our churches and also shape the context in which we work for racial, gender, and sexual orientation equality and justice

In summary, the positive developments in progressive Christian leadership education at PSR are these: We have come to a common understanding about what we mean by “progressive,” though it is complex and individuals do not necessarily share the same emphases; we have integrated the concern for progressive Christian leadership into our curriculum and have begun to make it clear to students how this effort shapes the overall culture of our educational programs; we have developed a rubric for discerning the extent to which students at the middle and end of the MDiv program exhibit evidence of knowledge and skill in progressive Christian thought and practice of ministry; and we have taken seriously the need to integrate the liberal theological concerns, LGBT concerns, and the effort to create racial justice at PSR and in the world.

We still have work to do in this integration project as well as in conveying to our students a more systematic and systemic understanding of the relationship of theology and theological thinking to the tasks of leadership in progressive Christian communities, or in communicating the meaning of progressive Christianity in the larger society.

At PSR we look for five characteristics in a progressive Christian leader. In our educational programs, we have historically emphasized a critical approach to texts and traditions and fostered student capacity to appropriate these texts and traditions for new times. Our assessment has shown that we continue to do this work and have developed new ways to approach the education of leaders in this area.

We have developed a growing concern for teaching students to understand the contextual nature of knowledge. Recent PSR graduates understand well their own contexts and something of the limits of that contextual awareness for understanding people of other contexts. Our assessments have indicated that we still need to attend to fostering the ability of students to do an equally good job of coming to understand the contexts of those different from themselves, and to understand the complexity of that difference.

With the introduction of a requirement in spiritual development in the curriculum, we have tried to foster an “engaged spirituality,” a spirituality that moves a person outward to engage the larger community and world with compassion and justice. In the spiritual formation courses, we are beginning to develop ways to assess this aspect of progressive leadership development. This engaged spirituality is not yet evident in student performance on our degree program milestone assignments, where it may or may not be an appropriate aspect of the assignment. In the future, we will need to locate the most telling evidence of an engaged spirituality and develop a way of tracking our progress using this evidence.

PSR also has a history of working in ecumenical partnership and being involved in interfaith conversation. In many ways our degree and continuing education programs are the result of years of collaboration with the denominations and communities we serve. As we work to foster racial justice and a community open to LGBTQ leaders, we are aware we have some work to do to learn how best to educate so that we move beyond appreciation of difference to engagement with the ways such difference can ultimately change us all for the better.

Finally, PSR also builds on a long history of progressive Christian vision for a more just and compassionate world. In our assessments of our programs, we find that we continue to foster this vision everywhere at the school. We also find that there are ways in which we could do a better job of helping students understand the systemic nature of racism, homophobia, sexism, poverty, and other social ills. This will be critical if our graduates are going to be effective agents of institutional transformation.

## Master of Divinity Section

### The Paradigm of PSR's MDiv Curriculum

"Progressive Christian leadership development" is PSR's version of what Lee Schulman in the book *Educating Clergy*<sup>4</sup> terms "signature pedagogy" for the multi-dimensionality of professional education. Professional theological education contains at least four dimensions: 1) a surface structure for the interaction of teachers and students, fostering conversation; 2) a deep structure for concreteness of context connected to professional character and focus on preparation for religious leadership; 3) a tacit structure including attitudes, values, and dispositions of professional practice; and 4) it can be distinguished by what is missing -- "what is not taught and what methods and strategies are not employed" (Lee Schulman, *Educating Clergy*, 33). As we assessed our MDiv curriculum, we tried to keep in mind these issues.

At PSR its educational values, as characterized by progressive Christian leadership development, are articulated in terms of direction toward certain goals: (1) toward justice and compassion for all; (2) toward building capacity for racial justice and cross cultural competence; (3) toward peace; (4) toward environmental responsibility and justice; and (5) toward a liberation trajectory. Progressive Christian leadership development is a school-wide central project. The assessment of its actual embodiment in our work and programs is discussed in the previous section of this report. The assessment committee, overseeing the assessment of the MDiv and other degree programs, worked in tandem with the faculty and staff assessing our effectiveness in developing progressive Christian leaders through this specific degree program in order to discern the curricular implications of our "signature pedagogy." In the MDiv curriculum, this signature pedagogy has two functionally separate but integrated dimensions—development of the “pastoral imagination” and the “prophetic imagination.”

Expanding the [core elements of our signature pedagogy](#) using the characteristics of progressive Christian leadership, we have these outcome objectives for the MDiv degree at PSR. When they finish the program, students should be able to do these things; though with the understanding that ministry requires continued growth into these tasks and abilities.

The objectives of the MDiv program, as stated in our degree program description on the Web site and in the View Book (p. 7), are to provide students with:

1. The ability to draw critically on the biblical Christian heritage and resources of contemporary society to provide for their own spiritual and ministerial formation and to prepare effective leaders to the Christian movement in witness and mission.
2. Insight and skill for communicating Christian faith and ethics through preaching, teaching, speaking, writing, personal involvement, contemporary visual electronic media, arts, and other appropriate means.
3. The capability, experience, and willingness to take leadership in social change on behalf of the prophetic witness of the Christian tradition and its commitment to justice and love.

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<sup>4</sup>Charles R. Foster, et. al.; foreword by Lee S. Shulman; introduction by William M Sullivan. *Educating Clergy: Teaching Practices and the Pastoral Imagination..* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006) 33.

4. Knowledge, experience, and willingness to lead Christian communities in worship and to prepare laity to participate in leading worship.
5. Preparation and practice in caring ministries.

PSR's MDiv curriculum has undergone a paradigm shift in the formulation of its current revised design. The theory-practice model of the previous curriculum has been largely replaced by a paradigm focused on practices (pedagogical and theological), habitus (both of students and faculty), and integration rather than disciplinary fragmentation. In this sense, PSR's current MDiv curriculum is a direct response to Ed Farley's work, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education*,<sup>5</sup> which called for moving beyond the restrictions placed by the theory-practice model. The interdisciplinary model employed in the current curriculum with its four educational principles—critical engagement with texts, contextuality, formation, and partnership—is firmly based on an organic paradigm of theological education. Our choice of this paradigm and the related core educational values emerged in conversations during the [Faculty Seminar in 2001](#) and this has shaped our assessment of the MDiv program.

This new paradigm of MDiv education is fluid in nature, a work in progress, rather than a finished product. Three years after the implementation of this new curriculum, we undertook a comprehensive study of its effectiveness compared to the old curriculum. We designed a study based on multiple sources of data, both direct and indirect, incorporating evidence from student work. We took into consideration the concerns of the visiting team from the capacity review that we must “develop a thoughtful and formal plan for the assessment of student learning, including the need and potential use for the data collected, the coordination of data sources, the relevance of information collected to specified and measurable learning outcomes, and feedback loops that demonstrate improvement in those accomplishments.” As we began our assessment of the MDiv, we were attentive to the need to develop analogous assessment processes and tools for our other degree programs as they come up for their next reviews. In the process of using the data available to us, we made a critique of each of them with reference to their usefulness in helping us assess our educational effectiveness.

We began by conducting an [Alumni/ae survey](#) of those who had graduated from our old curricula. This provided us with a baseline sense of our program's strengths and weaknesses. We have two kinds of direct quantitative data about our graduates—[graduation or completion rates](#) for all our degree programs, disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, and the number of our [alumni/ae who are working](#) in some way in religious leadership. We created tables that show this data. We also have indirect quantitative data available to us. ATS provides us with the results of student survey data, the entering and graduating student questionnaires, comparing us to other peer schools on a number of aspects of PSR life. In addition, we carried out further surveys of students at the beginning of their program, [the Entrance Interview](#), the mid-point [Middler Review](#), and the [final semester](#) with more specific focus on the objectives of the PSR degree program. Most of these surveys are part of our milestone assessments of students in their progress in the program, and some were carried out for the purpose of answering a specific question we had about student experience of the new curriculum. We have several sources of non-quantitative data available to us as well. For direct evidence, we analyzed examples of student work in the milestone assignments of the [Middler Review paper](#) and the final paper for the [Senior Seminar](#). Using more indirect evidence, we looked carefully at the

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<sup>5</sup> Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983).

development of the core courses of the program, using [course evaluations](#) by students and [narratives from faculty team conversations](#) about the development of these courses over four years in light of their experience of student work and in response to feedback from students about the class.

The observations and findings that have surfaced in the assessment of the educational effectiveness of the MDiv indicate several points in the curriculum where we will want to make significant changes in the near future. In addition to findings about the effectiveness of our curriculum, in the process of assessing these materials we further developed our rubrics<sup>6</sup> and did a major critique of our course evaluation process. We also narrowed the list of data sets we think are essential to assessment of our MDiv to the reports on the Middler Review and Senior Seminar papers and the graduation rate and employment rate data. These sets of data proved to be most helpful, partly because they gave us direct evidence of our effectiveness, and partly because they give us more information about where to focus the improvements in our program. This will help us create a better template for planning the assessment of our other degree programs.

### **Results of Studies of Direct and Indirect Evidence**

#### 1. Results of Alumni/ae Survey:

We undertook this survey of our alumni/ae who graduated before the beginning of the new MDiv curriculum. The old curriculum had been in place for nearly 25 years, with some modification in detail but not in substance. Most of the respondents were from the 1996-2005 decade, with the second largest from the years 1981-1986. For 82%, this was their terminal degree. Slightly over half are in parish ministry—22% United Methodist, 40% UCC, 87% ordained. Scores for preparation for ministry ranged from 6.11- 9.56. Over half of our alumni/ae make under \$80,000 annually.<sup>7</sup>

Alumni/ae were aware of our development of a new curriculum and expressed fear that in the new curriculum too many requirements would result in large classes throughout the program and less GTU access (which our alumni/ae feel is one of the main strengths of PSR).

We used the general [alumni/ae survey](#) and previous ATS [entrance](#) and [graduating](#) student surveys to create benchmarks. The alumni/ae survey indicated that the old MDiv program was viewed positively by most alumni. There were the following strengths and weaknesses in the old curriculum:

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<sup>6</sup>We redeveloped our rubrics using resources we learned about through attending the WASC conferences in 2007 and 2008. We paid attention to the new WASC rubric for assessing capstone experiences, the ATS Standards for the MDiv program, and our core educational principles at PSR.

<sup>7</sup> We defined strengths in the survey as items scoring over 9 on a scale of 1-10. We defined weaknesses as those items scoring under 8 on a scale from 1-10. The high nature of both scores indicates a high level of satisfaction with the old curriculum and with PSR. The associate dean made a report to the assessment committee at the conclusion of this survey, but no one actually did a separate formal report on the alumni/ae survey. We have the [raw data](#) to work from..

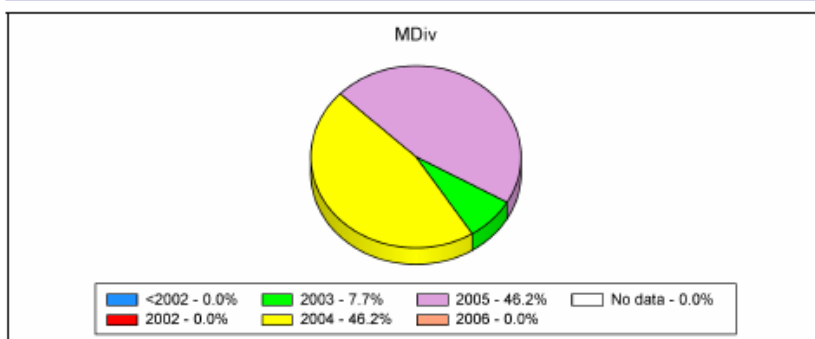
Strengths of Old Curriculum	Weaknesses of the Old Curriculum
Ability to interpret and use Scripture Ability to relate faith to social issues Ability to think and preach theologically Ability to seek out relevant and appropriate sources Ability to explore new issues independently and develop your own point of view Appreciation for what is intellectually unfamiliar and novel Ability to think critically and grasp and analyze new ideas Ability to think theologically about current issues	Skill in community organizing Skill in using the arts in communication Ability to give spiritual guidance Ability to plan and lead religious education  Ability to lead an organization/parish  Ability to pray  Desire to become an authority in one's field  Self-discipline and focus

We have noted the weaknesses and have addressed them in our new curriculum. The concern about using the arts in communication has under-girded a change in the conception of the [required course in the arts and religion](#) and has shaped the [current search for a faculty member](#) in this area. Our required course in spiritual disciplines emphasizes the need for attention to one's own spiritual focus and discipline before attempting to lead others. We have further developed our required course in religious education with a focus on the education of the whole congregation. Our course in organizational leadership addresses parish organization, leadership style, and budgeting, but we may still need to address concerns raised in the alumni/ae survey about lack of preparation in fundraising and legal matters related to non-profit status. We do not yet provide a course explicitly in community organizing, though that could be said to be an essential aspect of progressive Christian leadership. Our next alumni/ae survey is scheduled for 2012 (five years after the first graduating class in the new MDiv). It should help us see if we are making progress on this issue. We will, of course, wish to strengthen the strengths of our program and continue to assess our success.

## 2. Graduation or Completion Rates

Our graduation rates are supplied by our registrar to ATS, and ATS provides us with comparative data with peer schools. In the [Institutional Peer Profile Report for 2007-2008](#), our graduation rates for the new MDiv curriculum, since 2004, are consistent with those of peer schools.

CHART 2: Year Began Program



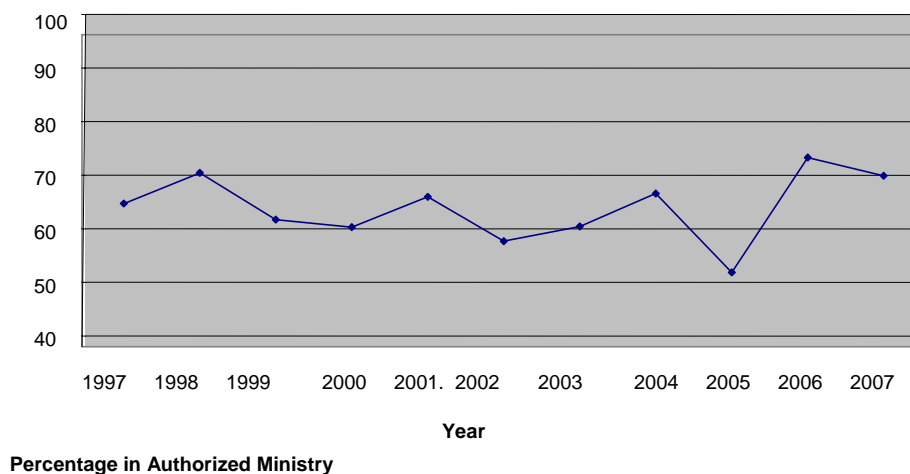
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Before 2004, our completion rates were significantly higher. The new curriculum began in 2004, fairly recently, and may be a factor in this change because of the increased number of hours needed to complete the degree—though our alumni/ae survey indicates that about half of our alumni took longer than three years to complete the old curriculum. In addition, we took a hard look at grade inflation and the kinds of electives we encouraged students to take as we prepared to launch the new curriculum. We disaggregated graduation data from the student data on race, ethnicity, and gender we have developed recently. Our international student's average graduation rate for that period is 80%; African American students 100%; Native Americans 100%; Asian Pacific Islanders 78%; Hispanic/Latinos 100%; Whites 89%; male 83%; and female 89%. This data from the old curriculum indicates that our Asian American and Pacific Islander students are having some difficulty with the curriculum, compared to other racial and ethnic minorities. Probably this in part has to do with language. We will pay attention to whether the enhanced international student support program makes a difference in this number. The question remains whether the current tighter curriculum does disservice to racial/ethnic minoritized students. The drop in evening classes may also be a factor for certain students. Males had slightly more difficulty than females in the old curriculum.

All of these groups had higher completion rates than those in our peer schools. Our total average completion rate has dropped since this period, and we will need to further disaggregate figures from the period of the new curriculum. Only two classes have graduated under the new curriculum, so it is too early to tell what trends are developing.

### 3. [Employment Rates](#)

We undertook a study of how successful our graduates were in negotiating the ordination or authorization process in the denominations we serve, or how successful they were in becoming employed in other ministries of justice and compassion, since not all of our MDiv students are thinking about being ordained (See Entrance Interview [Vocational Data](#) and [Report](#)) and many are not eligible for ordination in some denominations.

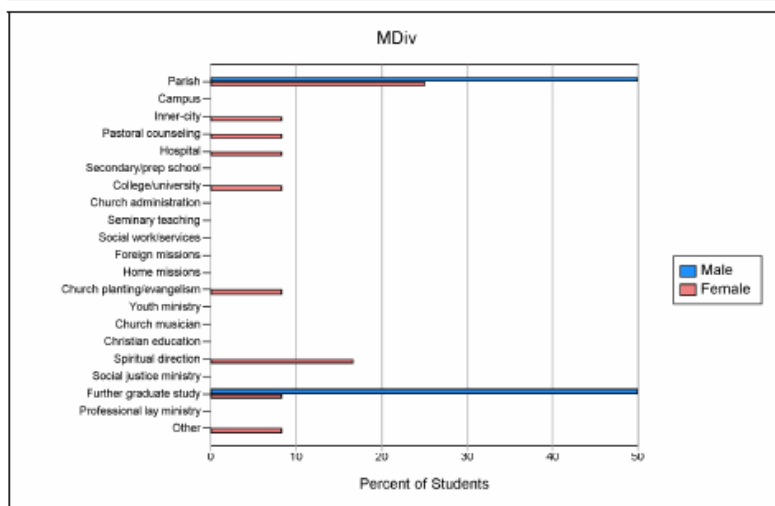


While we have not found any comparative data from other institutions, we believe that our consistent authorization rate of about 60-70% of our MDiv graduating cohorts in the last ten years is an adequate rate, given the diversity of our MDiv student population. As we continue to keep this data and add the numbers of those graduates who are working in ministry but not ordained or denominationally licensed in some way, we will develop a good outside measure of our effectiveness.

The alumni/ae survey indicates 87% of MDiv grads are ordained. We may have been able to contact a higher proportion of ordained graduates in the course of our survey because they remain more closely related to the churches and thus are easier to find. This would indicate that our alumni/ae office needs to find ways to track our non-ordained alumni. Or the cumulative ordination rate may have dropped substantially in the last 50 years, in which case we need to find out what the larger contextual factors are for that drop.

The relationship of these rates to our graduation rates is not clear. Interestingly, there was a dip in ordination rate in the cohort that had the highest graduation rate. We have complexities in our student body that make the interpretation of this data difficult.

**CHART 22: Position Expected in Five Years by Degree Program**



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Typically, the denominational authorization of a student interested in church-related ministry of some kind would be ordination. However, denominations differ in their ordination process, and many of our graduates actually serve as authorized ministers while in the ordination process. Also, some of our MDiv graduates serve in officially authorized diaconal, commissioned, or service ministries and denominations differ in the status granted these ministers. The denominations where the majority of our MDiv graduates serve are the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Swedenborgian Church, the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, and the Presbyterian Church USA. The length of the ordination process after graduation from seminary varies from denomination to denomination; we would expect the number of ordinations of recent graduates to be lower because they have not all yet finished the process. In addition, many of our graduates are female and LGBTQ and are not eligible for ordination in some denominations. PSR has never expected that the goal of all of our MDiv graduates is to enter ordained or other denominationally related authorized ministry. Data on

alumni/ae serving in other ministries of justice and compassion—such as work in social service non-profits, teaching, or community organizing—is harder to find, so these figures are less solid than those for ordained or otherwise authorized denominationally related ministries.

Together these two kinds of data provide us with a kind of capstone evidence of our success and effectiveness in MDiv education. The graduation rates allow us to see if people actually can accomplish the degree requirements. In our case, a significant majority of students complete the degree. While we know that some groups of students have a harder time doing this, the curriculum is one that most students can accomplish in a reasonable amount of time. The employment rates indicate, with some important complicating factors, whether our graduates' education is sufficient for employment in ministry areas requiring an MDiv. Most of our graduates are working in the field for which they prepared in the program. The fact that our ordination rate is well over half indicates that the majority of our students are judged qualified for ordination. The curriculum is in that sense performing the function for which it was designed. Whether all our qualified students are eligible for ordination is a question outside the control of the curriculum itself. Since we have at present no comparative data from other institutions, we will watch these figures for trends that may help us have a more complex view of the meaning of these figures.

#### 4. Assessment of Milestone Assignments for this Degree

##### 4a. Results of Assessment of [Middler Review Papers](#)

Some of the most important insights into the strengths and problems of our new curriculum have come from having two faculty members read all the Middler Review papers from the second and third classes using the new curriculum as a group, rather than individually as faculty members as the reviews come up. We did not assess the Middler papers from the first class to go through the new curriculum, but we have anecdotal evidence of some of their frustrations. From the first year, the faculty teams teaching the basic courses made changes based on student feedback. Particularly important were the changes the faculty teaching the interdisciplinary history, theology, and ethics course made after the first year's experience with this class. The first reading of the Middler Review papers took place after these changes had been made. As a result, the team made further changes in the course. The second set of papers showed improvement in the areas of concern, particularly in the area of explicit theological discussion and ability to articulate the significance of context.

The most important insight gained from reading these papers had to do with evidence of students' ability to critically appropriate texts and traditions for new times. Most of the students showed some competence in the core outcomes we expect in the MDiv program. It is clear in comparing the Middler Review papers from 2006-2007 with those from 2007-2008 that students have improved in giving evidence of competence in our desired outcomes. We discerned in the first group of Middler papers a definite lack in some students' ability in their second year to give an account of their theological development. This general lack of theological development in these students' papers led to changes in the way the interdisciplinary course in history, theology, an ethics was taught.

In the old curriculum, students studied theology in their first year. In the new curriculum, the disciplines of history, theology, and ethics were offered in the second year in the form of an interdisciplinary basic course. The first year the course was taught, theology was not introduced formally until the second semester, and thus students were not able to understand theological concepts and methods well enough to complete the Middler Review paper assignment well. The

second year the course was taught, theology was introduced at the beginning of the first semester. The third year the IDS course was taught, it dealt only with theology and history due to the serious illness of the faculty member slated to teach the ethics component. Ethics was taught as a separate course that year. Faculty and students reported that the class became more clearly focused, and the reading of Middler Review papers improved for the students taking the course in this new format. Consequently, we have subsequently preserved that change.<sup>8</sup> Ethics is taught as a separate course and history and theology together in a two semester sequence. The second group of Middler papers represents students studying in this revised format. Overall, their competence improved in all the outcome areas. In a recent conversation about the ongoing improvement of this course, the faculty teaching it has recommended that the course be started at the end of the students' first year and continued to the fall of the second year, introducing theological ideas a semester earlier, and allowing students to complete their introduction to theology by the time they write their Middler papers. If that revision is decided upon by the faculty as a whole, it could go into effect for the class beginning their studies in fall 2009. Meanwhile, this year and next, the team will continue to introduce theological concepts in historical context to familiarize students with the theological vocabulary and ideas they will need to work with in their Middler papers. In addition, we have added a small-group component to the course for those students who are working on Middler papers.

A second related issue raised by the reading of the Middler papers has to do with the introductory level of many of the courses in the MDiv. We wonder if our courses need to be more clearly delineated by level, with some introductory courses offered at higher levels based on prerequisite work in earlier courses in the curriculum. As we developed the curriculum, we understood, for instance, that in many ways biblical studies are foundational for other principal courses, such as theology and preaching. The conversation about the IDS course described above is part of a larger conversation, based on our reading of the Middler papers and other assessment tools, about the best ways to improve the curriculum.

Related to the other objectives of the MDiv program as outlined above, we noted that, while most students at PSR at the Middler level are good at showing the relationship of context to theological ideas and discussing how their understanding of their own context enlightens their theological thinking, they show uneven ability to give an account of the context of a person, writing, or event outside their own context. This was seen in some of the Middler papers as a focus on the self.

We noted that students in these two classes show strong concern and knowledge about the connection of theology with social justice issues. Many of them are already taking leadership in these areas and have developed a public voice. These two groups of Middler papers show our students have improved in their ability to correlate their awareness of social justice concerns with theological thinking; they are aware of their larger communities of accountability; and they are self-aware and able to discuss their own spiritual development. Finally, our students almost always give evidence of commitment to our basic progressive ideals, regardless of their religious tradition. In the future, we will be working on ways to increase the number of students who show strong competence in these areas, as well as to help those who are still weak in their understanding of the role partnerships will play in their ministry, in their understanding of systemic injustice, and their ability to connect their own spiritual practice to their work for social justice.

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<sup>8</sup> Another measure of the success of this move will be to look at the student satisfaction reported in the exit interview forms this coming spring, when the first class studying theology and history in this new format graduate.

#### 4b. Results of assessment of [Senior Seminar Papers](#):

Two faculty members read the senior seminar papers for the first and second graduating classes. This reading uncovered several weaknesses in the use of this assignment as a capstone assignment, and led to changes in the senior seminar format and assignment. The reading of the second set of papers indicated significant improvement due to better student clarity about the nature and purpose of the case-study assignment. In preparing to read the third set of papers from the senior seminar this fall, we noted that the final assignment is not necessarily a good representation of student work in the seminar as a whole, and therefore we agreed that the teacher of the seminar would fill out the assessment forms based on reading all the papers for the seminar. This third reading should produce a more accurate picture of the competencies of our senior class.

So far, the [senior seminar papers](#) show the majority of our students to be competent in the basic outcomes for the MDiv degree. Our seniors are particularly strong in their ability to engage the Bible critically, knowing their own tradition, and their ability to articulate the relationship of their faith to concerns of justice and compassion. We are aware of some areas in which we should watch for improvement. Our assumption, based on the students' work in the Middler reviews and in their courses, is first that we need to make sure the assignments for the senior seminar are asking students for the things we wish to evaluate, and second that we are taking all their work in the seminar into account. Then we will be better able to use this capstone assignment to assess our program.

In reading the final papers for the senior seminar for the first graduating class in the new curriculum, we discerned a common thread in many of the papers of an uncritical conflation of liberal values, social analysis, and theological reflection; and a lack of an articulated sense of direction in leadership, sense of spiritual ground from which to respond, or a sense of theological tradition as a resource for leadership. In addition, several papers showed a superficial use of biblical resources, and trouble describing a context different from the student's own. In reading the next year's papers, after changes had been made in the senior seminar syllabus, we found considerable improvement. The majority of the papers showed evidence of competence or engagement in most of the categories, particularly in critical appropriation of biblical and theological texts, knowledge of their own religious tradition, polity and practice, and ability to articulate the relationship of their faith to concerns of justice and compassion. Some weaknesses were evident in a number of papers. It may be that if we take all the papers of the senior seminar together, these concerns will be alleviated. Students seem familiar with biblical and theological terms, theologians' ideas, and can quote or cite them, but some do not engage these ideas. Rather they continue to use them as texts for a point they want to make. Many are not articulating the implications of the case for any of their own theological thinking.

Secondly, students seem to be able to name the issues of difference, both in the context of the case and in the community they understand to be affected; but, in these papers, they do not engage this sense of difference. Most are sensitive to the issues of race and class entailed in the case, in that they are able to name these issues; but they do not go on to discuss the implications of this sensitivity for their own work. The students had trouble connecting the case to their own contexts. The faculty members who are teaching the senior seminar this year are revising the syllabus to put more emphasis on the exercise of critical thinking about context and community, and in being more explicit about asking students to engage biblical and theological texts as they think about each case.

We have analyzed these milestone assignments only twice so far. Changes have been made both times in the format of the seminar (to clarify the assignments) and in courses (to make more

explicit to students the need to use fully all they learn as they go forward in the curriculum, rather than compartmentalizing each discipline as a separate task unrelated to the others).

## 7. Assessment of Student Surveys

### 7a. Results of assessment of Entrance Surveys (ATS ESQ and Entrance Interview):

We have two milestone surveys for the beginning of students' work in the MDiv program. The first is one we have collected for many years, the [ATS Entering Student Questionnaire](#). The other is the [Entrance Interview](#) designed for the new MDiv program that is aligned with similar surveys done at the Middler Review and at the end of the program to ascertain the student's perception of building capacity in the core competencies associated with our progressive Christian leadership development mission.

First, students expect to complete the degree within 3 years. It is important to note that the alumni/ae survey indicated that, in the old curriculum, also a 3-year degree program with fewer required course units, only 57% of the students completed the degree in 3 years. This may be an unrealistic expectation, and if we do not plan for students to take longer, costs rise for them in a number of ways, housing is less available, and students lose a sense of momentum. Our new tuition pricing plan, charging by the instruction hour rather than by semester, will reduce the costs in the long run for students who need to take longer.

Second, according to our [ESQ results](#), the top three expectations entering students have for their PSR education are: gaining the ability to provide spiritual guidance, to provide pastoral care, and to be able to relate faith to social issues. The report notes that while students come to PSR expecting to acquire the ability to provide spiritual guidance, few actually practice spiritual discipline themselves; and while they expect to learn to provide pastoral care and guidance, many do not identify where they will receive their own pastoral care and guidance, or they expect to receive pastoral care and guidance from PSR faculty, a problematic expectation from people who also judge their work and give them grades. The new Spiritual Disciplines course is designed to assist students in their first semester to plan for this aspect of their work. In addition, the weekly chapel service and a variety of other daily or weekly meditation, prayer, or worship opportunities are offered. Our expectation is that students are active in some faith community, but this is not a requirement for entrance into the curriculum. Students seeking ordination tend to be active in congregations because this is a requirement for ordination in most of the denominations we serve. Our GSQ results show that the ability to relate faith to social issues is one of the strengths of our educational programs in general and one of our key indicators of effective progressive Christian leadership development.

Third, in relation to our emphasis on building racial justice competency and competency to deal with LGBTQ justice issues, we note that most incoming students expect to be exposed to diversity and seek such exposure, but less than half of these hope to be challenged or changed by this exposure. To address the LGBTQ sensitivity and justice issues, PSR has pioneered in the formation of CLGS, the Certificate in Sexuality and Religion, and in openness to the full admission and participation of LGBTQ students in all of our programs. Justice issues remain to be addressed among us having to do with heterosexual privilege and particular tensions between these concerns about gender and sexuality related to the issue of racism. Here too we have begun pioneering discussions centered at both PANA and CLGS. To address the on-going concern for racial justice at PSR, the institutional focus in our Strategic Plan on dismantling racism in our community supports our educational efforts. All students are introduced to the work of building racial justice

during orientation. Because we do not feel that we have effectively addressed this issue in our curriculum, the faculty will hold its own seminar in the Fall of 2009 to address the question of how best to teach this competency at PSR, particularly within the MDiv curriculum. We will want to follow up the racial audit we did four years ago to see how we have progressed. We will also want to design more effective ways to assess our progress on LGBTQ justice issues as well.

Finally, the [Entrance Interview Reports](#) indicate that only a small number of our students come with undergraduate education in religion or theology. This raises questions for our curriculum and admission standards. If we are attracting large numbers of students who are not previously interested or educated in theology or religion, are we offering adequate support for them to gain the basic understandings necessary to do graduate-level work in these areas? The [IDS faculty](#) has paid particular attention to this issue because it has influenced the classroom culture in that course. The most recent decision about this course moves its position in the course sequencing to the second semester of the first year so that students who do not have a theological background will have time to learn theology before they need to use it in field education, preaching, and in writing the Middler Review paper.

#### 7b. Results of assessment of Exit Surveys (ATS GSQ and Exit Interview:

In August 2007, one of our support staff undertook an analysis of the [ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire Results](#) for the years 2001-2006. This represents the years in which we phased in our new MDiv curriculum. While generally positive, our graduates consistently identified "Ability to Manage a Parish" as the area in which they felt least prepared; three things seem to be at issue in this anxiety—budgeting, dealing with conflict, and conducting ceremonies such as funerals and weddings. PSR has not offered a course specifically in church administration in the old MDiv curriculum. In the new curriculum, the Congregational Leadership course serves this purpose. In that course, students learn basic administrative skills and leadership and conflict resolution strategies. Students also gain the ability to manage a parish in their Field Education and denominational polity courses. In addition, the new curriculum graduates for the first year were more satisfied than the alumni/ae with their skill in community organizing. As we search for a new professor in Field Education and in Congregational Leadership, we will continue to pay attention to this aspect of our curriculum.

The first class to graduate from the new curriculum took the GSQ in spring 2007. In addition, MDiv students completed an [exit interview survey](#) which follows student perception of their progress in a number of categories at their entrance into the program, at the Middler Review, and at the end of their program. Michael Mendiola and Karen Oliveto [reviewed data](#) from the Entrance Interviews for the new MDiv program and reported it to the Assessment Committee in April 2007. This data represented the first two classes to enter the new MDiv program. This report noted several important things for us to watch. A member of the Assessment Committee wrote a [comparative report](#) outlining the main findings. The average scores for the items on the alumni/ae survey were between 6.11 and 9.46 on a scale from 0 to 10. The average for the same list of items for the spring 2007 graduating class was between 6.82 and 8.42 on the same scale, and the averages for the spring 2008 graduating class was between 5.13 and 8.71. In some areas, the changes in curriculum produced some drops in satisfaction level, but most were slight. We had one significant drop in satisfaction in the 2008 figures in the areas of theology, history and ethics—confirming other data we had about difficulties with this course. The [IDS faculty](#) subsequently made significant changes in that course.

Data from the 2009 graduating class will give us an indication of whether students feel more confident in these areas. Their Middler Review papers last year show that they already demonstrate better competence in these areas. These numbers also indicate that both alumni/ae and 2007 graduates had a relatively positive experience at PSR. Students particularly felt more satisfied than before with "ability to live faith in daily life" and "knowledge and sensitivity to g/l/b/t/ issues." In reading the student written comments from the 2007 GSQ survey, we noted the students expressed the same concern as they had in the first year's course evaluations—that the integration of the curriculum was unclear and the courses did not build on each other throughout the curriculum. We have addressed this concern by paying more attention during orientation to introducing the core educational values of PSR and the design of the MDiv curriculum. In addition, we are paying more attention in our basic courses to how each individual course connects to others in the curriculum.

We note that some students have doing constructive theological work in their Middler Review and Senior Seminar papers correlates with their feeling of being unprepared by the basic IDS course, and this concern was present in a few of the written comments in the exit interview forms. We made a change in the new curriculum in the number of hours of required basic theology, from one basic course and an additional more advanced course, by eliminating the requirement of taking a more advanced course. In addition, we moved the introduction of theology from the first year to the second. As noted above, we have decided to move the introduction of theology again to a point earlier in the curriculum. We have not yet considered making a change back to the additional required course in this field.

It is important to compare the first graduating class (2007) with the recently graduated second class (2008). [Comparing the GSQs for the last three years](#), the study indicates that, regardless of their critiques of the specific classes and our concerns about the work they do in the milestone assignments, students report the [ability to think theologically](#), to [conduct worship/liturgy](#), to [relate social issues to faith](#), to [use and interpret Scripture](#), and [knowledge of own religious tradition](#) are the areas where our graduates think they have made the most progress. Their [basic satisfaction](#) with their experience of PSR is also above the median score. The students also indicate basic [satisfaction with the environment](#) of PSR in general. These are key indicators of the basic success of our new curriculum in comparison with the old one. These results show that we have successfully continued the strengths of the old curriculum.

#### 7c. Results of Course Evaluations of Basic Courses:

The ALO read all the [course evaluation summary forms](#) for the core MDiv courses for the first three years of the new curriculum, looking for evidence of the effectiveness of the course for facilitating student learning, and hoping to find evidence of student exposure to our core educational values and abilities in progressive Christian leadership skills. Most of our courses had only positive feedback from students. A small but persistent number of students in each course found difficulty with understanding the course objectives and linking the contents of the course with the practice of ministry, a lack of critical engagement with the required class materials, and reported a less than perfect record of preparation for class.

The results of this reading of the course evaluations for the core courses of the MDiv were reported to the assessment committee. The faculty, especially those teaching the core courses, took the report into consideration in the revisions of the following year's course. These developments are detailed below.

The assessment committee has proposed changes in our course evaluation process as a result of these assessments. Those changes are being worked on during the fall 2008 semester in collaboration with the degree and certificate committee and the faculty development committee, including a revision of the course evaluation form and additional thinking about assessment of teaching. DCPC and FDC have identified specific outcomes for the next three years toward which the course evaluation revision can contribute. These changes should assist us in more effectively improving our courses.

## 8. Analysis of Faculty Practices of Assessment and Development of Courses

### 8a. Results of degree outcomes mapping

We looked at the outcomes of our MDiv program and correlated them with our institution-wide focus on progressive Christian leadership development. We organized the outcomes in [a chart](#) organized by our core educational values representing a progressive approach to leadership development for churches and other religious bodies. Then we looked at our course outcomes for the basic courses in our curriculum and correlated them to the degree outcomes. We were looking for any places where a degree outcome is not covered in a core course. All degree outcomes were represented in the course outcomes in more than one core class in the curriculum, and several degree outcomes were represented in the course outcomes for all core classes.

### 8b. Core Course Assessment and Development

Perhaps the most intensive and important venue for assessment and improvement in our MDiv curriculum comes in the work of the teams and individuals teaching the core courses. We have gathered narratives concerning the development of these courses: [Frameworks for Critical Engagement](#); [Old Testament/New Testament sequence](#); [Interdisciplinary Studies Sequence](#) (Theology, History, and Ethics); [Spiritual Disciplines for Leadership](#); [Worship](#); and [Religious Education](#). In the four years of development for these courses, faculty have used student evaluations, analysis of Middler Review reports, the report of the alumni/ae survey and exit interview surveys, and their own sense of how the courses were going, and some have begun to pay explicit, sustained attention to student written work and performance. In addition, the [Dean conducted a survey](#) about the MDiv core courses in the Spring of 2008.

In these assessments, faculty has made decisions about changing the courses for two reasons. First, the faculty changes a course so that it better incorporates the core educational values of the faculty. For instance, the Worship, Religious Education, OTNT, and Spiritual Disciplines courses all have changed or added to their reading lists to incorporate a richer diversity of authors, even if this meant going outside the usual boundaries of their discipline. Other teams have been deliberate about forging partnerships with the churches we serve or with community organizations. The OTNT and IDS courses have made changes to foster better critical thinking and reading skills. The faculty in the IDS course also made a decision to make Ethics a separate course since they found that students had trouble integrating all three disciplines at the introductory level. The Spiritual Disciplines course has developed a more explicit understanding of “engaged spirituality,” as one which fosters socially responsible spiritual practice instead of an individualized experience.

Secondly, faculty has made changes based on student work and practice. Where it has been clear that students were not engaging the reading or thinking about the questions presented in class, faculty have instituted student-led discussions and exams. Where Middler Review papers and Senior Seminar papers have indicated students struggling with the articulation of theological ideas, the IDS course has been modified to make more room for students to practice thinking and talking about theology. The OTNT course has similarly provided students opportunities to think critically about issues of interpretation, theology, and basic meaning. In the Religious Education course, students had a hard time articulating the reasons for educating the way they do; they were more focused on techniques. The faculty member changed the course to encourage the connection.

As the faculty moves to an even more learner-centered form of assessment for courses and curriculum, they will want to connect these assessments more consciously. At present, they work on their courses as individuals or individual teams, but do not do much to put the courses in relationship to each other. They share a concern about student performance on the Middler Review and in the Senior Seminar case study papers, and those findings influence all courses. They report changes to each other by sending their syllabi to the degree and certificate committee and discussing what they are doing there for approval of their basic plan, and they have informal hallway conversations about teaching.

### **The "Signature Pedagogy" Progressive Christian Leadership Development**

The questions and issues raised in the assessment of the MDiv curriculum are those of the coherence of theological education at PSR. The MDiv curriculum is an integral part of the educational endeavor of the school to integrate the various facets of its life, the administration's Strategic Plan, the faculty and its curricular design, and the institutional life of the students and staff. As we assessed our MDiv program to see if we have effectively achieved the outcomes we had in mind (outlined on p. 18-19 above), we can use Craig Dykstra's ideas of pastoral imagination and prophetic imagination to frame our conclusions.

#### 1. The "Pastoral Imagination"

Craig Dykstra's notion of "pastoral imagination" is the umbrella term for ministerial excellence. "The 'pastoral imagination' as it operates in really good pastoral work is the capacity to perceive the 'more' in what is already before us. It is the capacity to see beneath the surface, to get beyond the obvious and the merely conventional, to note the many aspects of any particular thing or situation, to attend to the deep meaning of things."<sup>9</sup>

In PSR's MDiv curriculum, the "pastoral imagination" is defined in terms of the four educational principles identified by our faculty. The way these principles work together in the PSR faculty's sense of the pastoral imagination may be illustrated by the learning objectives statement from Angels Fear, the core course in pastoral care. The objectives for the course include: (a)

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<sup>9</sup>Craig Dykstra, "Keys to Excellence: Pastoral Imagination and Holy Friendship," Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Program, Duke Divinity School. Funded by the Lilly Endowment. <http://www.divinity.duke.edu/programs/spe/articles/200506/dykstra-p1.html>. Accessed Feb. 6, 2008.

engaging in theological thinking and contextual awareness about pastoral care situations, and appreciating the role of tradition, music and the arts, and nature in creating pastoral care interventions (critical appropriation of texts and traditions); (b) distinguishing first, second, and third order theological reflection in particular pastoral care contexts (contextuality); (c) distinguishing the roles of practical theology, pastoral care, and pastoral counseling in the helping process (leadership formation); (d) using a systemic model for pastoral care to adapt to their own situation; (e) using a method or model for discerning critical questions for diagnostic purposes, assess pastoral care situations in order to communicate intelligently with other healthcare professionals (partnerships and critical thinking); and (f) applying key concepts in systemic thinking—metaphor, reflexivity, social-psychological and bio-medical science information—and discern the relevance of systemic thinking for ministry (critical thinking). [See [Syllabus Collection](#) for other examples.]

## 2. The Prophetic Imagination

At PSR the task of inculcating in students the prophetic imagination based in progressive Christian leadership development is still at an early stage. PSR students have, in some sense, always had a prophetic imagination. Many of our alumni/ae are working in prophetic ministries because of what they learned at PSR about relating the Christian faith to social justice issues.

## Conclusion of the MDiv Section

We have succeeded in creating an MDiv curriculum rooted in the core educational values of PSR, and in contributing to the larger project of progressive Christian leadership development, while contributing to religious leadership in general. This review represents the first review of the revised curriculum, though individual courses have been in a continual process of development and improvement.

In assessing our new MDiv curriculum, we have kept the strengths of the old curriculum. Our students continue to be able to interpret and use Scripture, to relate faith to social issues, to think and preach theologically, to think critically and develop their own points of view, and to apply theological ideas to current events. We have addressed the weaknesses in the old curriculum by developing courses in congregational leadership, arts and religion, world religions, and spiritual disciplines for leadership. While students expressed some anxiety and dissatisfaction with being the first ones to experience the new curriculum and having to live with us as we worked out problems with it, their level of satisfaction was approximately the same as those students who had recently graduated from the old curriculum. We have made substantial progress in aligning our core courses with the values and characteristics we seek to instill in progressive Christian leaders. The first cohort of students to graduate from the new curriculum show progress in their milestone assignments in giving evidence of these values and characteristics, indicating that we have made progress both in stating the assignment clearly and in teaching these things in the core courses.

After four years, we have made good progress and are discerning some new directions. While there have been some obvious benefits to the team integrative model, results have been uneven. We are continuing to assess student work and progress and professor satisfaction to determine new directions and changes.

We are not working on the evaluation of our MDiv curriculum in a vacuum. Theological education as a whole is facing some enormous challenges: the profession has weakened in status; the best students are not entering theological education; the increase of non-theologically educated

pastors not only in evangelical churches but also in more and more mainline churches; the future of most churches seems precarious in both influence and numbers. It may be that our progressive educational principles and our collaborative pedagogical practices will transform organizations in such a way that the churches will be strengthened and their leaders will gain confidence in developing new paradigms of Christian life. But this may be a questionable assumption. Despite the best pedagogy, the substance of theological education cannot be served by focusing on pedagogical practice alone. Such a focus will not address the glaring and pressing problems that face theological education here at PSR as we work toward progressive Christian leadership development. The faculty itself will need to engage in a more conscious process of constructive theology and religious leadership.

The report of the review of the MDiv program went to the PSR Faculty Assessment Committee August 27, 2008, and that committee recommended the following for continued faculty work in the next year:

1. The first issue raised in the review has to do with "pedagogical practices." The main question is whether the faculty conversation about this issue is becoming a technical exercise. We need to discuss if the faculty as a whole is consistent in understanding the signature "pedagogical practices" in relationship to the four educational principles of the MDiv program.
2. Related to this issue is whether the MDiv students have a good understanding of the four educational principles and if their understandings are represented in the students' evaluation of the program. We have begun, through the curriculum map and discussion and adaptation of the rubric designed to assess milestone assignments, to help faculty be more self-conscious in incorporating attention to the core values in their courses.
3. We need to address the question of how theology is taught beyond the IDS basic course in order to infuse theology throughout the MDiv curriculum. The sequencing of the courses will need to be discussed by the faculty. The nature of the electives offered in the program will also need discussion.
4. We need to make a significant [revision of our course evaluation process](#) by the end of this fall semester in order to address the weaknesses of our current process. The student evaluation form needs to be revised, and we need to formalize the use of student work in assessing the effectiveness of the courses. The assessment committee will work on this in the fall semester 2008. In addition, it is clear that some of our data is more helpful than other data. The direct observation of student performance on the Middler Review report, the Senior Seminar assessment modified to take account of the several assignments students are asked to complete, the exit interview survey form, and the subsequent employment rate of our graduates proved to be the most helpful assessment tools. The Assessment Committee will need to decide which sets of data to concentrate on to make the ongoing assessment of the degree programs more manageable.
5. Any revisions of the curriculum must be undertaken now in the context of the future of GTU and its impact upon the MDiv curriculum of PSR. Since the Alternative Futures Task Force of the GTU and the committees that are at work to redesign the GTU so that it can remain a viable educational consortium all include the consolidation of MDiv programs in the consortium, our program will no longer stand alone. We have become aware in this review process of the core values at stake for us—what is not negotiable—but we have not yet begun to think about how our program can relate to the programs of other schools. We do

know that we can no longer consider the revision of our program in isolation from the conversation. By the end of the 2008-2009 school year we expect these conversations to have become more concrete. At that time we can be more systematic about addressing the issues raised in this review.

## **Faculty Development Section**

PSR identified faculty development as one of our three assessment themes because we knew that this was an urgent and important need. Our understanding of this theme has grown and also changed as we have thought more intentionally about its scope and significance. In thinking, then, about assessment and faculty development, we have identified these three arenas for conversation and exploration: Institutional needs related to faculty load; pedagogical training related to the demands of the new MDiv curriculum; and support for individual faculty members' growth related to research and publication

The locus for these conversations is the faculty development committee. When this committee was first formed, its singular purpose was to serve as a "listening post" for the dean. The committee offered advice and counsel about academic and institutional concerns and issues. Wisely, the scope of the committee has expanded throughout the past seven years to include the three arenas listed above. Thus, the committee is concerned with tenure and promotions, faculty development related to teaching and research, and hiring. The latter means that they are concerned with the make-up of the faculty, monitoring institutional needs related to curricular needs, and to insuring diversity.

### **Institutional Needs Related to Load**

The most obvious institutional need related to faculty development was a revision of the PSR Faculty Manual. The [manual in use \(last revised in 1996, 1997\)](#) reflected neither current nor desired practice. Expectations for faculty were not clear. In particular, expectations for promotion and tenure were vague and ambiguous. The decision-making structure defined in the manual was outdated; faculty committees had changed since 1997 in form and function.

In August, 2007, Dean Mary Donovan Turner completed a [draft revision](#). This draft was based on a series of conversations about faculty load, sabbaticals, etc. under the deanship of Del Brown. In a series of faculty-wide conversations, the manual was assessed. The draft has been reviewed by the academic committee of the Board of Trustees and the PSR faculty. During the spring semester, 2008, the dean reviewed suggested changes and finished a revised draft. This was sent to the faculty and Board of Trustees during their October meetings. As faculty expectations are clarified and articulated, the forms governing annual conversations with the dean and president have been changed. The new [annual conversation form](#) asks individual faculty members to reflect on their teaching experiences and the students' assessments of PSR classes. Institutionally, then, changes made in the curriculum and individual courses based on student and professor assessment can be documented. Faculty are also asked to delineate their goals and accomplishments related to research and writing. They are asked how their work reflects progressive Christian commitments and beliefs. The new forms help us track future plans for sabbaticals and retirements so that issues related to the shape and size of the faculty and faculty load can be more adequately considered.

Related to the question of faculty shape and size are significant issues of faculty load. In the spring of 2006, the dean sent an assessment tool to the faculty asking for information about teaching

loads, administrative and committee responsibilities, and community ([PSR](#), [GTU](#), and wider community) service. Through questionnaires and interviews with individual faculty members, the following conclusions were reached by the FDC and dean. Faculty load is a major concern. According to the first set of questions on the questionnaire, all faculty members except one work over 48 hours per week on teaching and administrative assignments alone. Five work 60 hours/week or more. In addition, they work on research, writing, lecturing, and traveling to represent the school. This workload is not sustainable; it is attributed to the following factors: Only six faculty members teach full time. Others carry heavy administrative loads. PSR had more students in fall 2005 than ever in its history. (The number of students has decreased 15% since fall, 2005, due to smaller entering classes, leaves of absences, and deferred registrations). The fall class in 2008 is larger, but we do not yet know if this is a trend.

The new MDiv curriculum requires more advising time. The team teaching components of the new curriculum require more planning time among colleagues. Four faculty and dean search committees doubled committee assignments for most faculty. Inadequate GTU faculty in some areas puts heavy demands on some PSR faculty in relation to student committee work with PhD students.

Thoughts about the relationship between curriculum and heavy faculty load are reflected in questions 10-14. Faculty members indicate that there is not enough faculty support to meet these added demands. Faculty members strongly agree that they often feel overwhelmed by their job and that they frequently cannot complete the tasks or fulfill the responsibilities assigned them.

PSR completed three successful faculty searches in spring 2006; the new faculty members help with teaching responsibilities related to team-taught, integrative seminars. Answers on the survey indicated a desire for additional faculty development opportunities and additional funding for travel to guild meetings, workshops, seminars, etc. In the area of general faculty compensation, we face a particular difficulty with relation to our context in the Bay Area, one of the most costly places to live in the country. [Data from the GTU](#) and from [comparison with other peer schools in the SIRS data](#) shows that our salaries are competitive, even somewhat higher than many of our peers. However, faculty do not perceive these salaries to be competitive with other sister institutions, particularly when the very high cost of living in the San Francisco area is factored into the equation. Other aspects of faculty compensation, such as the sabbatical program, are consistent with or better than those of peer institutions.

The questionnaire invited several follow-up questions for the faculty. What additional staff support do they need to be able to function maximally? What additional resources do they need? Several changes have been implemented as a response to these challenges: the MDiv advising load has been revised; 4.5-hour required MDiv courses have been changed to 3.0-hour classes; committee assignments have been changed so that faculty serve on only one standing committee; GTU advising loads are considered when assigning PSR advisees to individual faculty members; and the Wabash grant contains monies to hire adjuncts and allow time for faculty teams to meet and make course preparations for team taught classes. Significant challenges remain, especially related to the current small proportion of faculty teaching full time. Further investigation demonstrated that while the student body had doubled since 1991, and while the faculty had doubled (from 11 to 21), the Faculty FTE had only increased from 10 to 14. This, in large measure, explains some of the difficulties related to faculty load.

In spring 2008, at their monthly meeting, the faculty discussed the "ideal" size of the student body and faculty at PSR. The faculty had previously failed to make significant progress in this important conversation. Based on the size of entering classes, and experiences with them, it was

decided that an [ideal student FTE for the institution](#) was 175. Targeting, then, a 10/1 student faculty ratio, we were able to make both long- and short-term decisions about faculty needs. (10/1 reflects only PSR students. Because most faculty have GTU advising/ teaching responsibilities also, the overall ratio is approximately 14/1).

PSR currently has a faculty of 19; there will be 17 faculty members in the 2008-2009 academic year. A faculty position in Practical Theology was approved in spring 2007 by the faculty and Board of Trustees; the search was canceled because of a hiring freeze. The FDC considered the following:

- 1) The announced retirement of two faculty members at the end of the 2008-2009 academic year;
- 2) Seven projected retirements in the next five years;
- 3) Courses required in the MDiv curriculum for which there is no permanent faculty.

Three new faculty positions were approved by faculty and the board in May 2008; Field Education/Leadership; PANA Executive Director; and Art and Religion.

### **Pedagogical Training Related to the Needs of the New Curriculum**

Initial assessments (by students and professors through written class evaluations, town hall meetings, dean's "open door" days, consultations of teaching teams with the dean, individual annual conversations with dean and president) indicated that a primary institutional need associated with the MDiv curriculum was training in philosophies and pedagogies related to team teaching.

The school applied for and received a Wabash grant to help focus faculty attention on team teaching. Outside consultants Jack Hill, Jack Seymour, and Marquita Chamblee have visited the campus and provided very helpful assessments of team-teaching practices and diversity challenges on the campus. Prof. Seymour's suggestion of a rubric for assessing our core educational values provided the basis for the rubric we developed to assess our MDiv milestone assignments. Plans for the fall 2008 faculty retreat will again focus on teaching development and curricular and course assessment. This conversation is expanding as we consider the interdisciplinary nature of team teaching and the issues related to power and race in the classroom. [Course evaluations](#) from the Dean's Survey indicate that throughout the first four years of the MDiv curriculum, there has been significant improvement in course structure and team teaching techniques. We will enjoy the benefit of the Wabash grant funding for the next academic year; our questions about team teaching, race, and power were articulated in our last in-service and will provide the basis for our faculty-wide conversations for the coming year.

Since we have identified capacity for engaging difference and working for justice as an important part of progressive Christian leadership, and since the PSR Strategic Plan calls for us to attend to the racial justice aspect of this engagement in particular, the PSR faculty plan to hold a faculty seminar in the fall semester 2009 in order to better prepare ourselves to engage these issues in our teaching and curricular development.

### **Scholarly Development of Individual Faculty Members**

In the fall 2006, the dean initiated an orientation and mentoring program for new faculty. New faculty have reported in their annual conversations and in their informal observations of their first year at PSR (posted on the PSR Web site) that the mentoring system was invaluable as new

faculty make their way into the PSR/GTU system. In addition, the dean met with all new faculty members to clarify research agendas for summer 2007 and for the 2007-2008 school year.

To help younger faculty find time for writing and research required for tenure and promotion, no untenured faculty member was asked to chair a standing faculty committee. The dean invited an editor from a major publishing house to come to campus and discuss with any interested faculty member their desired writing and research projects. Out of this visit three faculty members have received contracts, and more are in process.

An important element in the individual faculty member's development at PSR is increasing the ability to think critically about their methods of teaching. In the PSR classrooms and, through their addressing a broader audience in their research and writing, faculty embody progressive Christian thinking. In January 2007, the faculty met to talk with each in an effort to define and mark leadership qualities of progressive Christians.

These qualities are used in the evaluation of our teaching, as demonstrated in the discussion related to the MDiv curriculum. They are also used to evaluate scholarship. At the annual conversation, faculty members are asked to identify the ways in which these values are represented in their course structure, required readings, teaching styles, and in their scholarship and writing.

### **Important Findings from Faculty Survey 2007-2008**

Instead of their 2007-2008 individual annual conversations, faculty members answered a set of particular questions. Each of the categories of questions is followed by a summary of the information we received and, additionally, steps we have taken to address question, needs, and concerns raised.

#### **1. Teaching**

In responding to questions about teaching, the faculty members raised the following issues: Administrative work diminished significantly the amount of time that can be spent preparing for classes and providing substantively feed back for students. New pedagogical strategies were needed for large, required classes. Expectations for students needed to be made explicit. There is a great need for PSR to think about requiring prerequisites for students who have not come from a liberal arts or a religious studies background. In addition, the faculty needs more adequate secretarial support and assistance. In some classes, large-group discussions need to be coordinated more carefully with small-group experiences. The required capstone class for the MDiv needs to be owned by the entire faculty. The faculty needs additional help in thinking about the intricacies of team teaching.

In response to these concerns, the following changes were made: To allow more time for teaching preparation and evaluation, the committee and organizational structures were re-organized in an effort to reduce faculty members' administrative responsibilities. At team meetings with the dean, the faculty teams for the large, required courses met and substantively restructured their classes. This restructuring was based on student and faculty evaluations and on a careful analysis of student work in courses and in Middler Review and senior seminar papers. (Changes included things such as moving away from PowerPoint presentations and lectures; re-evaluation of required texts; alternation of written assignments; and the reduction of required reading material.) A comprehensive list of changes made in the team-taught courses is outlined in the MDiv Curriculum portion of this paper. Faculty support services have been restructured. We will continue throughout the next academic year, discussing and bringing in consultants who will help us think about strategies,

processes, and dynamics related to teaching in teams. These sessions are being planned by the dean and religious education faculty.

## 2. Research

The ten PSR faculty members who filled out the annual conversation questionnaire have published approximately 26 articles in the past year. They are preparing for publication or have finished approximately 10 volumes. An analysis of the research interests of the faculty indicates that the core values of the MDiv curriculum that guide our teaching content and strategies are also clearly at work in the faculty's research and publication. Words like Diaspora, Asian and Asian American, multicultural, pluralistic, identity, political, post-colonial, minorities, margins, identity, communities of color, embodiment, race, etc. are prevalent in titles of faculty publications. In this way, the values that inform teaching in our "local context" are dispersed more widely as faculty publications are used to teach other seminary and university students. The titles reflect the values and assumptions fundamental to progressive Christian thinking. The needs faculty identified related to publication were: editorial support and additional research assistant support. [See [Faculty CV File](#)]

The dean is researching ways that editorial support for faculty publication can be secured. Because of last year's budget cuts, no additional provisions were made for research assistants.

## 3. Service

The answers to these questions bear witness to the fact that the PSR faculty takes service seriously. All who filled out these forms have some association with at least one professional guild. Many hold offices. It is through these guilds that their creativity in research is enhanced. Most PSR faculty members are core doctoral faculty of the GTU. This additional level of responsibility (administrative and pedagogical) gives them responsibilities and obligations that have not traditionally been accounted for in evaluations of faculty load. Faculty members make frequent presentations in churches, synagogues, and in community organizations and institutions. Through these they are cognizant of their responsibility of helping progressive Christianity find a "public voice."

In response to the challenge of finding ways to account for a faculty member's work at the GTU, PSR advising responsibilities were calculated with GTU responsibilities in mind. For instance, if the faculty member had three advisees at the GTU, they were given fewer PSR advisees. While this does not totally eliminate the problem of "overload," we are beginning to develop a template of ways that loads can be made more equitable.

## **Conclusion to the Faculty Development Section**

PSR has always had high standards for faculty. We expect our faculty to be active scholars, to be good teachers, and to be visible in community, church, and academic organizations as well as active participants in the GTU. Our assessment of faculty effectiveness has followed a typical American academic path of periodic reviews for promotion and tenure involving outside evaluation of faculty publications and syllabi. Our focus has been primarily on a faculty member's scholarship, course design, and student feedback about teaching, taking into account the faculty member's appropriate participation in the life of the school and community.

The strength of our faculty development in the last couple of decades has been that we have been clear about the nature of PSR as a progressive Christian seminary, whether we used that term or not. This clarity of focus has led us to seek and attract a faculty with deep commitments to critical scholarship, fostering partnerships with the churches, willingness to make theological education relevant to the Pacific Coast context, and commitment to fostering spiritual and leadership formation in our students.

With this review, because of our commitments to work beyond simply our own scholarly disciplines, we began to ask how on the one hand we might assess our need as a whole faculty to develop different pedagogical methods for use in the new curriculum, and on the other hand how we might better assess the effectiveness of our teaching toward those progressive Christian values we hold.

Consequently, we focused our self-study on two things. One was to foster the completion of our revised faculty manual with these concerns in mind. The other was to develop a series of in-service training events to enable us to explore better methods of team teaching and foster interdisciplinary capacity in ourselves and our students. The revision of the faculty manual led the faculty development committee to think more about the assessment of faculty work, and to be more clear about the criteria for review. The new faculty manual (available by the time of the team visit) will reflect this work. The workshops we had on interdisciplinary and team teaching and on looking together at issues of racial justice present in the classrooms at PSR raised important issues for further work (to be carried on in a faculty seminar next fall). In addition, as a result of our assessment of the new MDiv curriculum, it became clear that we need to distinguish the assessment of a course from the assessment of faculty teaching. The assessment of faculty teaching includes the assessment of the individual courses we teach, but is a broader question. As the faculty assessment committee prepares to make a major revision of the course evaluation form, the faculty development committee is thinking about what aspects of teaching it wants to highlight in the student course-evaluation surveys. In addition, we are thinking about how to assess teaching teams rather than simply assessing the team members as individuals.

In order to assess faculty development needs for the future, the student evaluation forms for all PSR courses are currently being revised. Through conversations in the Faculty Development and the Degree and Certificate Program Committees, we are researching ways to develop evaluation forms that measure the students' perceptions of specific classes in relation to the PSR and MDiv direction statements and our educational values. The information we receive from these revised forms, along with the professor's own evaluations of the classes and an analysis of student work, we will be able to chart a course for short and long term conversations and training that will help develop our explicit and implicit curriculums. These course evaluation forms are being developed in Fall, 2008 and will be available for visiting team perusal in March and for our own use in May.

### **Responses to the Capacity Review Report and Commission Letters**

In the Capacity Review, the visiting team [raised several important issues](#) for us to continue to consider as we worked on our Educational Effectiveness Review. These issues fall under three main categories. First were concerns about our preparation for the educational effectiveness review of our programs; second were financial issues, including related issues concerning the facilities and recruitment of students; and third were issues related to the larger context of the GTU in which PSR operates.

### **Responses to the Academic Concerns:**

Most of these items are also addressed in the main body of the report and summarized here for convenience.

1. Formalize assessment plans. Establish a thoughtful and formal plan for the assessment of student learning. An institutional chart has been created that documents the assessment strategies for each of the degree and certificate programs of the institution. The chart lists each program and its objectives. The assessment tools are delineated as well as who receives and analyzes and interprets the results. In putting the chart together, places in the process that were ambiguous and not clearly defined were noted. It also became obvious that we need an institutional research person who can insure that the interpreted results of the assessment tools are sent to appropriate places so that changes can be made and documented and so that the "loop" can be completed. We are in the process of hiring a part-time institutional research person.

2. Make improvements in assessment instruments and develop rubrics for program-level assessment. It became obvious in faculty annual conversations and also in analyzing our assessment data that our course evaluations, filled out by students at the completion of every class, are not adequate for measuring the effectiveness of our courses in light of our MDiv values and expected outcomes. The need for revision will be sent to our assessment committee and the degree and certificate program committee in the fall. Other instruments, such as the entrance, Middler and PSR exit interview questionnaires, have been revised in light of program objectives and each other. They are now clearly aligned so that we can mark progress of our students as they go through the MDiv curriculum. We will be working this coming academic year to clarify expectations for the MTS synthesis essay, which is the capstone requirement for this degree. Expectations and understandings vary about process and content related to the essay that is required for graduation. The dean serves on the MA subcommittee of the GTU and is working there to ensure that assessment instruments and thesis expectations are tied to learning objectives for GTU/PSR students.

3. Design additional methods of collecting and assess [direct] evidence of student learning. Traditionally, much of the data collected for assessment of our programs has been indirect or secondary evidence. We are working to correct this by developing plans for student portfolios to include entrance, Middler, and exit questionnaires, the Middler theological statement and the final paper from the senior integrative seminar. A newer addition to our assessment plan is mandating faculty to keep copies of student papers, exams, etc. that demonstrate how well students are progressing in relation to degree/certificate goals and the guiding values of the MDiv program.

4. Longitudinal assessment of students from admissions information to summative courses needs to be established more systematically. The admissions committee will be evaluating the application forms and processes currently used at PSR. The question they will be asking is, Do our application process and do our forms provide us with the information we need to make decisions about potential students who wish to study with us? When a student begins at PSR, he or she fills out an entrance interview questionnaire which asks for information about their hopes for seminary experience and their expertise and knowledge in a variety of seminary-related areas. These entrance interviews are aligned with Middler and exit interviews, so that we can get an adequate sense of the progress the student has made. The exit interviews are then read by the Assessment Committee which note trends,

concerns, areas of growth, etc. These are, in turn, reported to the Dean and to the appropriate faculty committees for follow through and for change. The Registrar keeps the information in [a chart](#), tracking students from admissions to graduation.

6. Formalize assessment processes showing alignment of program-learning outcomes with courses. The faculty of every required basic course at PSR has been asked to outline the ways that individual courses are aligned with program-learning outcomes. An analysis of the results demonstrates that every named outcome is addressed by our required curriculum. A good example of how this is beginning to take hold in the institution is in the syllabus for the required preaching class. Desired learning outcomes of the program are evident. Written assignments, then, are correlated with the learning outcomes so that it is clear to the student the purpose of each written and oral assignment.

7. Formalize plans for data collection and analysis, including determining the need and potential use of data collected, coordination of data sources, and paying attention to the relevance of information collected to specified and measurable learning outcomes. It has been pointed out to PSR in previous accreditation visits that we have, over the years, gathered a great deal of information, but the information has not been analyzed sufficiently, nor has it been sent through proper sequences so that the data could inform amended or future programming. We are in the process of discerning what kinds of data most clearly help us in reviewing and assessing our degree and certificate programs so that we can devise an assessment program that is vigorous and yet sustainable. We are finding ways to institutionalize and systematize, for instance, the reading of the capstone papers for the MDiv program and the creation of [a chart, mentioned above](#), tracking several pertinent pieces of information by entering student cohorts. Rubrics were developed for the evaluation of the students' work. Results of the evaluation will be passed on to the assessment committee and, ultimately, if change is warranted or seen as potentially valuable, recommendations will go on to the degree and certificate program. This is one example of assessment processes that are being formulated institution-wide.

8. Show how the assessment program for PSR takes account of the learning outcomes [assessment of the Northwest Consortium](#). At the last NWHTS meeting in spring 2008, the representatives from the varied seminaries in the consortium asked NWHTS administrative staff to document the goals for their program and the learning objectives for their students. The staff is supplying us with this information. In our approval of the Oregon "on site" courses, the advisory board will ask that learning objectives for each course be clearly identified for the students.

9. Encourage and fund faculty continuing education to develop knowledge and skill to conduct assessment and integrate assessment into faculty work. We were fortunate to have received a Wabash grant that focuses on team teaching just as we were beginning our assessment of the MDiv curriculum and of our team-taught integrative required courses. The monies received from Wabash have funded four faculty in-service experiences that have focused on assessment, learning outcomes, and course and program evaluation. In these workshops, we have discussed pedagogical strategies and course formats. Our narrative related to the MDiv degree theme demonstrates how teams have been able to meet, discuss, and evaluate student work and responses. Out of these meetings have come significant documented changes in class and curricular expectations. With assessment monies, faculty members have been able to attend WASC and ATS conferences so that they can receive

information first hand about accreditation expectations. Faculty have also attended Wabash conferences designed for beginning faculty and for those who are interested in issues related to theological education and developing cross cultural competencies in their programs.

10. Assess the effectiveness of student services functions and their impact on student learning.

We assess the work of several aspects of our student services. The [International Student Services](#) office has probably the closest link to student learning because this office was created to address concerns about facilitating the learning of international students. The most recent assessment of international student services in relationship to student learning indicates that while we have anecdotal evidence of improvement of student papers, more clarity is needed in communication between faculty and the international students office about what would be the most helpful and effective academic support for these students. The faculty representative to the international students committee brought these to the faculty for discussion and the IS office is in the process of implementing their suggestions.

The [Office of Community Life](#) supports student learning in a number of ways and evaluates its programs regularly. The orientation program has a direct relationship to student learning in setting forth the overview of the curriculum, introducing students to the support services available, providing workshops on study skills for graduate students and helping students feel at home at PSR before the semester starts. The training for the campus care network directly fosters leadership training and practice. The “engaging difference” workshops support PSR’s effort to build student capacity to understand context and work in partnership with people different from themselves.

11. Assess the effectiveness of the library and its impact on student learning. Because each of the nine member schools of the GTU are required to consider the effectiveness of the library as part of their own assessment process, the library is formulating its own report that can be shared with GTU schools. The library is working with the GTU faculty library committee, on which PSR is represented by Prof. Lynn Rhodes, to assess seven aspects of the library and the way they relate to student learning. This [assessment process](#) will be in place by May 2009.

### **Responses to Financial, Institutional Development and Facilities Concerns:**

1. Review PSR's overall cost structure, including employee benefits, with an eye toward the elimination of deficits and decreasing the high draw rate from the endowment to a more prudent level.

In early October 2007 the projected shortfalls in the budget for 2007-2008 were highlighted and a plan formulated to improve performance for the fiscal year. Perennial problem areas in the budget were highlighted and a plan was put in place to develop a budget revision to be approved by the board. Furthermore, communication to all staff and faculty on Oct. 22 and 25 outlined the financial challenges and the need for structural expense changes, including a study of benefits during the next budget cycle. The revised budget process included the following actions:

- Freeze all hiring activity requiring ad staff approval for any exceptions
- Adjust financial aid award schedule for spring admits and revise process for 08-09 to eliminate over-awarding
- Include financial effects of CLGS and PANA in 08-09 budget

At the October board meeting, the board called for the 2008-2009 budget to include a draw rate of less than 6% and to begin phasing in funding for depreciation.

The 2008-2009 budget process focused special attention on perennial budget problem areas and structural changes needed to improve PSR's long-term performance, while at the same time ensuring our budget priorities supported PSR's Strategic Plan. A new process was developed for establishing financial aid award schedules, awarding of new and continuing students, and ensuring that awards were within budgeted amounts. Our [tuition structure](#) was examined in comparison with our peers, and a new tuition structure was to be phased in with fall 2008 entering students to better match credits earned to tuition revenue and to improve our competitiveness with our peer institutions. When completely implemented, these two changes should contribute approximately \$375,000-\$500,000 to PSR operations.

With regard to changes in benefits, the following steps were taken:

1. Communicated need to examine benefits in comparison to peers and to ensure long-term sustainability – October 2007
2. Established support staff budget task force to look at benefits and other structural changes – October 2007
3. Benefits survey conducted – February 2008
4. [Initial benefit proposal](#) released, including [study of salary increase vs. CPI](#), and [benefits in comparison to peers](#) - April 2
5. Discussions of the proposal with staff and faculty – early April
6. [Revised benefit proposal](#) – mid-April
7. Short-term task force formed to balance budget 08-09 without changes to benefit structure – April 28
8. Objectives of the long-term budget task force approved by the board of trustees (May 20, 2008) as follows:
  - a. To come to a common understanding of the current financial situation of PSR
  - b. To prepare a plan to reduce the draw rate to 5.5% over the next five years, addressing all items impinging on the budget – specifically including fully funding depreciation and addressing employee compensation/benefits in light of the Accreditation Report of February 15, 2008
  - c. To develop a process for community-wide discussion of the options
  - d. To prepare a report to present to the Finance Committee by December 15, 2008.

The long-term budget task force began meeting over the summer and includes all members of the administrative staff, two support staff, two faculty, and three trustees (including the board chair).

2. Incorporate all known expenses in the annual budget including depreciation.

Costs traditionally excluded from the annual budget were primarily related to the operation of the centers. Additionally, PSR has not in the past included depreciation expense in producing a balanced budget.

The exclusion of the budgets from the centers was not a significant problem in their infancy when each had to provide funding on its own and was required to ensure that its expenses were covered without relying on contributions from PSR. Now that the centers have significant

endowment assets, PSR needs to subtract the portion of the endowment restricted to funding of the centers from the amount available for other operations. In both the revised 07-08 and the 08-09 budgets, restricted center funding in the amount of \$104,600 and \$106,700 were removed from the budgeted endowment funding available for operations.

With regard to depreciation, PSR will be phasing this into the budget process over the next several years. In the 2008-2009 budget, PSR funded \$100,000 of depreciation expense (approximately 28% of total annual depreciation.)

3. Arrange for consultant services aimed at monitoring investments and making recommendations relative to appropriate draws and fund management.

According to the common fund benchmark study, PSR's endowment has consistently performed well in comparison with its peers. Our investment subcommittee of the board has sufficient expertise to exercise its role of performance monitoring, fund management, and asset allocation. We recognize that endowment spending must be lowered and do not believe hiring a consultant will help us achieve that goal. We will continue to add investment expertise to our finance committee and investment subcommittee and must make the structural expense changes to eliminate persistent high draw rates. Specific actions taken by the board since the CPR visit include electing a trustee to the position of treasurer (formerly held by CFO), and electing two new board members with extensive financial oversight experience. The 5-year plan being developed will provide an achievable outline to reduce our draw rate to 5.5% in the next 5 years.

4. Develop a process to better align the Strategic Plan with the budget. Review and clearly establish the vital connections between strategic planning, action plans, and budgeting.

As part of the [2008-2009 budgeting process](#), meetings were held with various departments (Music/Worship, CMS, Community Life, Summer Session, Earl Lectures, Contextual Learning, DRC, etc.) led by the CFO and dean to ensure that our budgeting was supporting the priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. In addition, the committees of the board have identified goals and priorities for the fiscal year that grow out of the Strategic Plan and provide additional focus for their work.

5. Develop a process to implement cost-savings measures when revenue targets are not met.

A revised budget was prepared in November 2007 to take into account the tuition shortfalls for the fall semester. Steps taken to offset the tuition shortfall included instituting a hiring freeze, changing gift-acceptance policies to allow unrestricted bequests to be used on an exception basis for current operations, instituting a utilities surcharge for students in the spring, and reducing expenses where possible. PSR did a good job of controlling expenses and finished the 07-08 academic year \$105,000 under the revised budget and \$243,000 under the original budget. The challenges on the revenue side continue to be intense, however, as PSR finished the year with an approximate \$600,000 shortfall in revenue from the revised budget (\$750,000 short of the original budget). The draw rate will not be adjusted to cover the \$500,000 deficit; instead, this amount will need to be funded in the long-term plan being developed in fall 2008.

6. Adopt and employ action plans to implement the strategic plan including the [facilities audit](#) and plans to address deferred maintenance.

The results of phase one of the facilities audit was presented to the board of trustees at the May meeting (attached). Minimum standards were set in the areas of structural, accessibility, energy efficiency, and modernization, and all current properties were given a rating in these areas. Additionally, market values were estimated for all properties. PSR's residential properties have significant market value, and some of the properties least suited for our needs are among the most expensive to maintain and to bring up to minimum standards. Of special note are the duplex/triplexes owned by PSR. Significant opportunities were identified, including the following:

1. The majority of our residential buildings were purchased by PSR rather than constructed for our own use. They have significant market value and appeal to a wide range of buyers.
2. In general, the market values of our residential properties exceed the replacement values.
3. It appears we have the opportunity to sell some of our least suitable properties and utilize the proceeds for replacement and modernization of remaining buildings.

Additionally, ongoing maintenance expense would be greatly reduced by reducing the number of small properties in our residential mix. This theory will be tested in the next phase of this study. Phase two of this study will involve engaging consultants to advise on a comprehensive plan that may involve possible sale of smaller properties, modernization of remaining buildings, and possible new construction, and will be completed in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

### **Responses of Office of Institutional Advancement:**

Responding to the findings of the 2007 assessment of [PSR's effectiveness in institutional advancement](#) the office has made the following progress:

1. Clarify, disseminate widely, and continually update progress on fundraising goals.

A campaign "thermometer" has been constructed and is used to visually display PSR's Annual Fund progress on campus. Monthly reports have been provided to the advancement committee outlining fundraising progress. A regular major gifts report has been drafted and is distributed monthly to the advancement committee of the Board of Trustees..

2. Increase cultivation of major donors and concentrate on soliciting and upgrading gifts.

A director of major gifts was not hired this year due to budgetary constraints. Increased accountability has been initiated, including the use of regular status reports on donor meetings, stewardship, and asks. A major gifts plan has been drafted and was adopted by the advancement committee of the Board of Trustees. Based on the feedback from the Klein Roth report and our own analysis of our donor base, we know that one key element of stepping up to stronger advancement performance has to be growing our base. Our base of current and potential supporters is simply too modest to support the level of goals we need to pursue. The trustees addressed that issue as part of their October board meeting, and during the advancement committee meeting (in addition to raising our cultivation/solicitation profile, will need to add numbers to the pool). We believe we have the beginning of a strategy in place for that process. It will be important for us to pay more attention to our donor base in relation to other academic institutions in order to help us judge our progress.

3. Attend to opening up the organizational culture to increase trust and honesty. In the opinion of the vice president, after conversation with development staff, this particular recommendation does not

need outside consultation. Increased accountability for all staff should address the concerns lifted up in the report.

4. Set specific goals and objectives for staff performance. The president and vice president for advancement have adopted the goals set forth in this recommendation for the coming year. The vice president has reviewed the job descriptions of all development staff and has redirected responsibilities for development staff. The director of advancement will be focusing on annual fund development, the gift coordinator will also take on additional annual fund responsibilities. The development associate will take on event planning responsibilities. The vice president is working with the personnel director to formalize these changes and to revise staff evaluation forms.

5. Evaluate staff in relation to their ability to do their job. All staff evaluations will be modified to include outcome parameters (see #4).

6. Provide board members with orientation, training, and support for fundraising. Trustee engagement is a high priority for the advancement committee. Board members will hear fundraising "success" stories at the February board meeting as a beginning exercise. Team Ask, a new trustee committee, has been chartered. It is composed of eight trustees and three staff and has the task of cultivating major donors for PSR. Each of the trustees has an assigned portfolio of 10 to 12 donors. Monthly accountability meetings have been instituted.

7. Strengthen communication with and among Board members. See #6. Former trustee and board chair, Scott Hafner, is working with the advancement committee in developing a new program to keep former trustees engaged with PSR.

### **Relationship to the GTU**

1. Address GTU budget clarity and transparency.

The entire 2008-2009 GTU budget was presented in detail to the Council of Presidents in early 2008. We are observing greater transparency than has been true in previous years.

2. Address GTU equity in financial arrangements. The member school allocation formula was revised in early 2008. Prior to this schools paid into the GTU according to the percentage of the consortial student body represented by their student bodies. This caused a problem of rising allocations for schools with stable student bodies when enrollment declined in other schools. The formula has been simplified and is based on the 12-quarter average of students enrolling in courses for graduate credit. In addition, the library allocation will increase or decrease as overall consortial enrollment changes. This should eliminate the problem of rising allocations with stable enrollment based on declines in other schools.

3. Address improved GTU communication among relevant governing bodies, committees, and personnel.

A new council of board chairs is now meeting semi-annually. A meeting for members of school board and the GTU board was convened by the Alternative Futures Task Force in February 2008.

4. Address [GTU Library governance, funding and planning](#). PSR is represented on the library committee, and the librarians are open to the needs of our curriculum and the centers. They have been especially helpful with CLGS and the LGBT archiving project.

5. Address the impact of [GTU relationship on PSR faculty workload](#). The FDC has done some preliminary assessment of this question, and its findings are included in the faculty development section above. Karen Lebacqz, who recently retired, and Doug Adams who died last year, both carried heavy GTU advising loads. The Alternative Futures Taskforce has also proposed new ways for the [Core Doctoral Faculty work](#) to be organized.

6. Address [GTU use and maintenance of Facilities](#).

This is underway as part of alternative futures. We should know where we are headed by the time of the visit in March.

## **Comprehensive Institutional Assessment Plan**

Ultimate responsibility for governance of PSR lies with the Board of Trustees, a volunteer body of about 30 persons. The board assigns responsibility for day-to-day management of the school to a president and three vice presidents, one of whom is the dean. The board assigns the faculty and the dean the responsibility for oversight of the school academic programs. The Board's oversight provides the umbrella under which the detailed work of assessment of programs is carried out. The accreditation processes, with its periodic review every ten years, forms the longest and most comprehensive of our regular assessment cycles. Since our last accreditation review in 1997, the board has been more conscious of its role in the assessment of the institution. The scaffolding of the board's assessment processes of PSR as it has been developed in the last few years is framed from the elements discussed below.

### **Current Institutional Assessment Processes:**

A strong board development committee oversees assessment of the board's work. The committee, which meets monthly, assesses the performance of each trustee toward the end of his or her three-year term. This review includes an interview with each trustee. In 2007, the committee contacted with *In Trust* magazine to conduct a board performance audit, which led to a restructuring of board meetings to permit more time for discussion of strategic and generative issues.

Over the years, the full board has had several discussions of its role in assessing institutional performance. They have made assessing the performance of the president a priority. This is done on a three-year cycle by a task force of senior board members and includes input from all of the school's constituencies, including faculty, staff, students, and partner institutions. The 2006 presidential review identified a number of issues not directly related to the president. The board executive committee has worked with the president and the vice presidents to ensure progress on these issues.

The board has provided leadership, with management, to work toward a culture of assessment throughout the life of the school. Except for presidential assessment, the board prefers to receive assessment reports from staff rather than to conduct assessments on its own. On a few occasions the board has specifically asked the president to arrange for outside consultants to help review individual programs. For instance, as board chair Scott Hafner was leaving his position in 2006, he suggested the school might benefit from a review of its institutional advancement program.

PSR contracted with Klein-Roth Associates, a local firm, to conduct the review. Klein and Roth interviewed staff, board members, donors, and others and prepared a report. After reviewing the consultants' work, new board chair Jerry Vallery appointed a special task force to review the report and work with staff to implement its recommendations. One important change is the creation of a new major gifts effort, whose work has begun with the new academic year. A second example of the board working directly with assessment grows out of the Strategic Plan's goal regarding racism and cross-cultural competence. Because this goal affects the whole institution, two board members now serve on the seminary's dismantling racism committee. This gives others on the committee direct access to the board itself through its advancing racial justice standing committee. A third example is the alternative futures committee of the Graduate Theological Union. Recognizing both the importance of the GTU to the work of PSR and its substantial cost to the school financially and in faculty time, the board has encouraged the president to provide leadership in redeveloping the consortium in a sustainable way. Similarly, PSR's board chairs have been leaders with their counterparts in other schools to better understand the possibilities of further cooperation that will lead to future cost savings.

Perhaps the best evidence of the increased attention to assessment issues is a new willingness to explore new ways of accomplishing old tasks. One example is the decision to move the [GTU Bookstore](#) operations to UC. The centerpiece is surely PSR's instructional technology program, which now serves eight schools. Schools have their technology needs met at a fraction of the cost they would incur by doing this on their own. The IT model is receiving considerable attention by the alternative futures committee and has been influential in the redevelopment of the GTU registration system. It also informs early discussions of new programming to meet needs of international students led by PSR and the Jesuit School. We have taken this accreditation assessment time as a vehicle for assessing our Strategic Plan and will continue to do so in subsequent accreditation assessment cycles. As the strategic plan has led to more focus across the life of the school, driving decisions regarding budget and staffing, the board is beginning to ask whether it ought to think about changes in its internal life. Might we be better served, for example, by a committee structure that paralleled the goals of the Strategic Plan? This discussion is at a very early stage, but some board leaders are intrigued by its possibilities, especially for assessment purposes. The board will probably experiment with such a restructure in the academic year 2008-2009.

The board has recently taken seriously the need to develop a regular cycle of assessing itself, which it does at the annual executive committee retreat each fall. The board has developed a presidential assessment undertaken every 4 years and has added, in addition to the question "How is the president doing?," the question "How is the school doing?" The board will entertain a recommendation from the executive committee at its next meeting that will put in place a regular institutional assessment at the time of the president's assessment every four years. The board has been pushing management to make assessment a part of the culture at PSR.

Besides the assessments directly undertaken by the board itself, there are regular cycles of assessment of financial practices, courses, and curriculum. The financial audits occur annually and are reported to the ad staff and the board. Courses are evaluated each semester, and faculty are responsible for addressing concerns in the development of subsequent versions of the course. Each of our degree programs is reviewed on a regular three to four-year cycle by the faculty assessment committee, and significant changes are made at that time in response to the review are carried out by the degree and certificate program committee. We also carry out periodic assessments of facilities, dining hall, IT, and the Office of Community Life.

The Strategic Plan forms the framework for the assessment of all the departments and programs at PSR. [Each department and program is assessed](#) for its effectiveness in promoting the objectives of the school, particularly progressive Christian leadership development, but also [telling PSR's story](#), resource development. The promotion of [racial justice](#) is also becoming a part of assessment conversations among the faculty about courses as well as in larger conversations about the campus climate. In addition to the overall objectives of the Strategic Plan, the faculty uses our core educational values to assess the effectiveness of our courses and curricula.

### **Emergence of a Comprehensive Institutional Assessment Plan:**

As a result of the current accreditation process, PSR has become aware that we need a more systematic and comprehensive institutional assessment plan. In the fall of 2008, President McKinney proposed a new institutional assessment committee to be composed of the administrative staff, two faculty, two trustees, two support staff, and two students. The committee would meet bi-monthly to monitor assessment progress across the life of the school. The committee builds on the experience of previous task forces that have dealt with issues that cut across traditional governance lines (e.g. budgeting and anti-racism work). The committee's role is not to conduct assessments but to encourage and assist program and administrative units to build assessment into their regular work. The committee would also have the responsibility of conducting an annual review of PSR's work in relation to the ATS and WASC standards. The results of these assessments will be reported to the ad staff, which will be responsible for making needed changes.

At the time of this report, a task force of trustees, faculty, and staff is meeting to examine long-range budget options. This task force should complete its work by the start of 2009. The new institutional assessment committee will begin its work when the budget task force completes its report and will be available to meet with the visiting team during its March visit.

## **Integrative Summary**

### **What we set out to accomplish in this review process**

Pacific School of Religion set out in its self-study process for this accreditation cycle to assess several aspects of our life as a school at a turning point in our history. None of these issues was simple, all were important to our life and health as a school, and all of them represented points of change. We took the accreditation process as an opportunity to do some hard work thinking about how we could strengthen our school to move into a rapidly changing future landscape of religious life in the world. At the time of our proposal, we were simultaneously working on three major pieces of this process: the development of a Strategic Plan, the revision of our MDiv curriculum, and initiating necessary conversations about the future survival of the GTU. We knew that we faced several persistent issues from the past, including ongoing difficulties in bringing down our draw rate on the endowment and developing effective and focused academic assessment processes. The Strategic Plan was adopted just as we were preparing our self-study proposal, and it guided the choice of themes for our Educational Effectiveness Review. The emergence of progressive Christian leadership development as an overall institutional mission and educational outcome, along with the closely related outcome of achieving racial justice, provided both an opportunity to clarify and deepen the meaning of these outcomes in the life of the school, and also to focus the assessment of our academic work. We had just implemented the new MDiv curriculum

the previous fall. Knowing that many elements of it were untried by our faculty and still under development, and that the regular review cycle of this degree program would coincide with the time of the Educational Effectiveness Review, we chose to focus on assessing this degree program in light of the newly articulated progressive Christian leadership development outcome. We also knew that we were implementing a significantly different kind of pedagogy in the new MDiv curriculum, but with a faculty that had been developed for a very different kind of degree framework. In addition, we have used the accreditation process as an opportunity to think through as a community how to make the best and wisest use of our financial resources in light of concerns raised by the visiting teams from ATS and WASC in recent years, concerns which we share.

### **What we discovered about ourselves**

In the process of this review we have come to several understandings about ourselves as a school. First it is clear that the community has become more conscious of progressive Christianity as a concept shaping our educational efforts. The vocabulary is present in most venues of campus life. Conversation about the complexity of meaning associated with the concept is bearing fruit. Over the period of the self-study, the PSR community has in some sense cohered under a broadly shared sense of preparing progressive leaders for Christian and other faith communities, existing and emerging.

Second, there has been increased faculty conversation about the MDiv curriculum. We are more aware of what is taught in each others' courses, and we have begun to be more conscious in using our stated core educational values in assessing both our students' work and our own teaching. We have discovered that, while we still have a diversity of views about the nature of MDiv education, we are still willing to work together to improve the revised curriculum and to think through those aspects of it that are not working as well as we had hoped. In particular, we are finding that, while interdisciplinary skill is important for our students, introducing basic subject matter in an interdisciplinary way can be confusing rather than enriching. We will be continuing to think about how better to help our students learn the core sets of skills and knowledge they need and also integrate what they learn.

Third, we learned that our community feels passionately invested in the way PSR makes decisions about the allocation of resources. In sometimes painful confrontations, we have joined together in a consideration of what it means for us to reduce our draw rate to a healthy level while still valuing the needs of our least well-paid employees in a difficult economy. We consequently formed a budget task force made up of people from all parts of the PSR community to face together the financial issues and help to shape the decisions about the budget for the coming years. That task force will finish its work in time for the team visit in March.

### **Where we want to go from here**

PSR moves out of this accreditation process with a renewed and stronger sense of direction and identity, particularly in addressing the future leadership needs of progressive faith communities. We will shortly have a sustainable budget in place. However, our identity and sense of direction will be tested in upcoming work in relationship to the GTU. The conversation about substantial change at the GTU level and PSR's participation in it is moving quickly to a conclusion this fall. By the time of the visit, the shape of the challenges PSR will face in this area of its life will be clearer as will the ways in which these changes can serve to strengthen our work. We will have in place better structures for assessment of our progress and a clearer and commonly shared sense of direction.

## **Index to ATS and WASC Standards**

- 1.1 Formally approved statements of purpose and practice: 3, 4, 5
- 1.2 Educational Objectives, Indicators, and Evidence: 2, 3, 5-8, 17-18, 29-30, 31, 39
- 1.3 Leadership system of high performance, appropriate responsibility, and accountability: 33, 35-36, 42-44, 45
- 1.4 Academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students: 5, 9-10, 34, 37
- 1.5 Response to increasing diversity: 10-11, 12, 30-31
- 1.6 Appropriate autonomy of institution: 31, 46
- 1.7 Truthful representation of academic programs: 5, 9-10, 18
- 1.8 Clear, conscious, consistent organization structures: 37, 42-43
- 1.9 Honest communication with accrediting bodies: 39-47
- 2.1 Appropriate educational programs and faculty: 5-7, 8, 29-30, 30-31, 31-33
- 2.2 Clearly defined requirements for student achievement: 5-6, 7, 8, 17-18
- 2.3 Expectations for students are clearly reflected in programs and policies: 5-6, 17-18, 30-31, 36, 37
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- 2.5 Academic programs actively involve students and provide ongoing feedback: 11, 37
- 2.6 Graduates consistently achieve stated goals: 20-21, 21-23, 40, 49
- 2.7 Regular program review: 13, 36, 37, 39-40
- 2.8 Values & promotes scholarship and curricular innovation: 35-36, 37, 39, 41
- 2.9 Links scholarship, student learning, teaching, and service: 8-9, 9-10, 10-11, 11-12, 37-38, 41
- 2.10 Assesses needs, experiences, and satisfaction of students: 18, 20, 23-29
- 2.11 Co-curricular programs are consistent with academic goals & student development: 9, 10, 11, 41
- 2.12 Students understand requirements and receive timely information: 11, 31
- 2.13 Student Services meet the needs of students: 9-10, 46, 48
- 2.14 Information for transfer students: See Capacity Report p. 19, 20
- 3.1 Employs sufficient personnel to support programs: 35
- 3.2 Employs sufficient faculty committed to institution: 34-35, 36, 37, 49-50
- 3.3 Integrity of faculty & staff policies and evaluation: 34-35, 37, 45
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- 3.5 Resources aligned with institutional purposes and objectives: 42-45, 46
- 3.6 Access to information resources sufficient to support programs: 42, 46
- 3.7 Sufficient IT resources for educational purposes and administrative functions: 47
- 3.8 Clear, consistent organizational structures and decision processes: See Capacity Report p. 3, 4, 14, 15, 16, 27, 28, 29, Exhibit 5 “PSR Organizational Chart,” and other appropriate exhibit documents
- 3.9 Has independent governing board: 45, 46-48 See Also Capacity Report
- 3.10 Has CEO and appropriate cadre of administrators: 46, also see Capacity Report Exhibit 5 “PSR Organizational Chart”
- 3.11 Faculty exercises effective academic leadership: 36
- 4.1 Engages in periodic strategic planning: 44, 46-48, 49

- 4.2 Planning aligns academic, personnel, and resource needs with objectives: 39-40, 46-48, 49
- 4.3 Planning is informed by analyzed quantitative and qualitative data: 5-7, 26-30, 39-47, 49
- 4.4 Quality assurance processes at every level: 2, 5, 10, 12, 13, 18-19, 20-21, 21-22, 23-29, 30-31, 39, 46-48
- 4.5 Regularly collect institutional research and incorporate it into decision-making: 2, 5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 18-19, 20-21, 21-22, 23-29, 30-31, 39, 46-48
- 4.6 Leadership is committed to improvement: 9, 30-31, 39, 46-48
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- 1.1.3 Statement of purpose is realistic, adequate, and accurate: 3-5
- 1.2 Planning and evaluation: 9, 30-31, 39-37, 44, 46-48, 49
- 1.2.2 Ongoing evaluation includes goals, data gathering, assessment, and goal revision: 2, 5, 10, 12, 13, 18-19, 20-21, 21-22, 23-29, 29-30, 30-31, 39, 46-48
- 1.2.3 Comprehensive evaluation process: 23-29
- 2.1 Cooperates with accreditation board: 39-47
- 2.3 Accuracy in published materials: 5, 9-10, 18
- 2.4 Ethical treatment of students, faculty, administrators, employees and relevant publics: 5, 9-10, 18, 37, 42-43
- 2.5 Promotes awareness of diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture: 10-11, 12, 30-31
  - 3 Cultivates theological reflection, wise & skilled ministerial practice, formation of spiritual awareness & moral sensitivity: 8-9, 9-10, 10- 11, 11-12, 35-36, 37-38, 39, 41
- 3.1.1 Learning reflects goals of curriculum and is appropriate to degree: 17-18
- 3.1.2 Standards of teaching: 17-18, 35-36
- 3.1.3 Standards of research: 17-18, 37-38
- 3.1.4 Efforts to ensure quality of teaching, learning, and research in the context of its purpose and relevant scholarly and ecclesial communities: 13, 17-18, 29-30, 34, 37, 39-40, 48
- 3.2.1 Standards of scholarly collaboration: 8-9
  - 3.2.1.1 Scholarship involves collaboration among faculty, librarians, and students, and fosters lifelong commitment to learning and reflection: 4, 12
  - 3.2.1.3 Collaboration relates to wider church, academy, and society, and includes active engagement with diversity and global extent of wider publics: 4, 15
- 3.2.2 Freedom of inquiry: 5, 9-10, 34, 37, see relevant policies in Faculty Manual
- 3.2.3 Involvement with diverse publics: 6, 7, 8-9, 19-20, 46-48
- 3.2.4 Standards for awareness, appreciation, and responsiveness of global interconnectedness: 17-18
- 4 Standards for theological curriculum: 5-7, 8, 29-30, 31-33
  - 4.1 Standards for goals of curriculum: 2, 3-5, 5-7, 13, 17-18, 29-30, 36, 39
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- 5 Standards for library and information resources: 42, 46
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  - 6.1.3 Composition of faculty is guided by institutional purpose: 34-35, 36, 37, 49
  - 6.1.4 Faculty responsibility for planning, design, and oversight of curriculum: 4, 29-30, 32-33
  - 6.1.7 Adequate salaries and working conditions for faculty: 35-39, 41, 42-43, see also Capacity Report Stipulated Policies “Staff Handbook” and “Faculty Handbook”
  - 6.1.8 Faculty work load permits adequate attention to students, scholarly pursuits, and other institutional & ecclesial concerns: 33-35,
  - 6.2.3 Regular opportunities to enhance teaching skills: 35-36, 37, 41, also see Capacity Report p. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 31, 32, 34, 35
  - 6.2.5 Mechanisms for faculty evaluation: 34-35, 37, 45
- 6.3 Standards for faculty role in student learning: 3-5, 29-30, 31-33, 37, also see Capacity Report p. 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 31, 32
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- 7.2 Standards for student admissions: see Capacity Report p.16-20 and appropriate exhibit documents for Essay II
  - 7.2.3 Regular review and strategies to maintain & enhance quality of admitted students: 18, 20, 23-29, 29-30, 40
- 7.3 Standards for student services: 9-10, 46, 48,
  - 7.3.3 Students receive reliable & accessible services: 9-11, 41-42, also see Capacity Report p. 12, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 31, 34
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- 9.1 Standards for human resources: 35, also see Capacity Report p. 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 29
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- 9.3 Standards for Physical Resources: 42-45, 46, also see Capacity Report p. 10, 15, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 33
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- A.2 Primary Goals of MDiv program: 2, 3, 3-5, 5-7, 13, 17-18, 29-30, 30-31, 37, 39
- A.3 Standards for program content, location, and duration of MDiv program: 17-18
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- A.3.1.1: MDiv program provides structured opportunity to develop understanding of religious heritage: 4-9, 17-18, 25-26, 27-29, 29-31
- A.3.1.2: MDiv program provides opportunity to develop understanding of cultural context: 4-9, 10-11, 17-18, 25-26, 27-29, 29-31
- A.3.1.3: MDiv program provides opportunities for personal and spiritual formation: 4-9, 10-11, 17-18, 25-26, 27-29, 29-31
- A.3.1.4 MDiv program cultivates capacity for ministerial and public leadership: 4, 9, 10-11, 17-18, 25-26, 27-28, 29-31, 41
- A.4.1 Standards for admission to MDiv program: see Capacity Report p.16-20 and appropriate exhibit documents for Essay II
- A.4.2 Standards for distinctive resources needed for MDiv degree: 5-6, 7, 8, 17-18, 5-6, 17-18, 30-31, 36, 37
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- M.1 Standard for admission to programs: see Capacity Report p.16-20 and appropriate exhibit documents for Essay II
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**Stipulated Tables for WASC**

**7.1 Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators**

**8.1 Inventory of Concurrent Accreditation and Key Performance Indicators**



## PSR EER Data Table 7.1 Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

CATEGORY	(1) Have formal Learning outcomes been developed?	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published?	(3) What data/evidence is used to determine that the institution or its graduates have achieved stated outcomes?	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?	(5) How are the findings used?	(6) Date of last review
<p><b><u>At the institutional level:</u></b> Pacific School of Religion Outcomes for Institutional Learning and assessments</p>	Yes	Direction Statement Strategic Plan Web Site	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board review of President every 3 years</li> <li>2. Outcome: Telling PSR's Story Data Gathered to Prepare Strategic Plan: Focus Groups, Market Survey, Interviews with public opinion makers</li> <li>3. Outcome: Dismantling Racism Racial Sensitivity Audit</li> <li>4. Outcome: Resource Development OIA Klein Roth Report</li> <li>5. Outcome: Progressive Christian Leadership Development See Progressive Christian Leadership and MDiv sections of EER Report</li> </ol>	Board of Trustees Ad Staff	Development of Action Plans by Ad Staff and Board Taskforces and Committees	Last Review of President 2007-8 Review of Strategic Plan Progress at each Board Meeting  Accreditation Review in progress

<b><u>Master of Divinity</u></b>	yes	Degree Program Manual PSR Website PSR View book	Middler Review Papers Field Education Senior Seminar Papers Graduation Rate Rate of ordination, authorization and employment in work requiring an MDiv	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Faculty team reads a large sample of middler review and senior seminar papers every year and reports to the faculty Assessment Committee. The committee compares this data with previous years and reports findings to the faculty.</li> <li>2. Field Education Faculty and Middler Review Committees review progress with students.</li> <li>3. Registrar keeps a data chart of graduation rates and ordination/employment rates. Assessment Committee looks at the data during degree program review for trends.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessment of Middler review and senior seminar papers has been used to improve the integration of MDiv core courses, to improve faculty communication of core educational values, and to clarify the purpose of these assignments.</li> <li>2. Field education faculty reports of student work in field education played a significant role in the recent revision of the MDiv program.</li> <li>3. We have only recently begun collecting ordination and employment data and have not used it yet to make specific changes.</li> </ol>	Review currently in progress - see MDiv section of the EER report.
<b><u>Master of Theological Studies</u></b>	yes	Degree Program Manual PSR Website PSR View book	Integrative Essay Graduation Rate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Faculty committee reviewing the program read a sample of the integrative review essays.</li> <li>2. Graduation rate data is kept by Registrar and used by Faculty Assessment Committee during periodic program review.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report was used to change the description of the assignment and to change the approach of faculty advisors in their work with students.</li> <li>2. This is a new degree at PSR and it is early yet to see trends in graduation rates.</li> </ol>	2005
<b><u>Doctor of Ministry</u></b>	yes	Degree Program Manual PSR Website	DMin Thesis Graduation Rate	1. Program Review Committee used a sample of DMin Theses.	The most recent program review of the DMin resulted in a significant	2006-2007

		PSR View book		2. Grad Rate kept by Registrar and used by Assessment Committee during program review.	conversation about whether to continue this degree program. The faculty decided to continue it for the near future.	
<b><u>Master of Arts</u></b> in cooperation with the GTU	yes	GTU Catalogue GTU Website PSR Website PSR View book	MA Thesis Graduate Placement and Successful application to Doctoral Programs	Master of Arts review process is done by the GTU Council of Deans. See GTU EER for their process.	From PSR faculty perspective two uses of the findings are evident. GTU Dean held faculty MA advisors workshop at PSR Improved oversight of MA student progress through the degree Other use of the findings will be recorded at the GTU.	Fall 2005

## PSR EER Data Table 8.1

### Inventory of Concurrent Accreditation and Key Performance Indicators

(1) Name of accredited or certified program	(2) Professional, special, state, or programmatic accreditation agency for this program	(3) Date of most recent accreditation action by agency	(4) Summary (“bullet points”) of key issues for continuing institutional attention identified in agency action letter or report	(5) One performance indicator accepted by the agency; selected by program	(6) For one indicator, provide 3 years’ trend data. Use link to cell for graph if desired.
<b><u>Master of Divinity</u></b>	ATS	2007 Prep & Capacity Review Currently under EER review - see MDiv section of EER report.	Develop a thoughtful formal plan for the assessment of student learning, including 1. The need and potential use for the data collected 2. The coordination of data sources 3. The relevance of data collected to specified and measurable learning outcomes 4. Feedback loops that demonstrate improvement in those accomplishments.	Graduation Rate Employment and Authorization Rate	<a href="#">Hyperlink to Grad Rate Chart</a>  <a href="#">Hyperlink to Employment and Authorization Chart</a>
<b><u>Master of Theological Studies</u></b>	ATS	June 2005	None noted at the time. Issues above from Prep. and Capacity Review Fall 2007 apply.	Graduation Rate	<a href="#">Hyperlink to Grad Rate Chart</a>
<b><u>Doctor of Ministry</u></b>	ATS	January 1998	1. Plan for assessment of institutional effectiveness and the manner in which PSR will implement its emerging educational program. 2. Budget and Financial Analysis	Graduation Rate	<a href="#">Hyperlink to Grad Rate Chart</a>

<b>Master of Arts</b> in cooperation with the GTU	ATS	June 2007 GTU Reaccreditation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Proactive mapping of the Common MA from admission to completion with a clear delineation/flow chart in the MA handbook to guide students.</li><li>2. Ready availability of personnel to address student concerns.</li><li>3. Clear assistance to MA student in becoming socialized into the system of the GTU</li></ol>	Graduation Rate	<a href="#">Hyperlink to Grad Rate Chart</a>
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