

**Board of Trustees
The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia**

**Fall Meeting, October 25-26, 2016
Bulletin of Board Meeting Materials and Reports**

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Agenda – October 25-26, 2016

Monday, October 24

Location

4:00 p.m. Executive Committee convenes Brossman 309

Officers: Chair John Richter, Vice-Chair Elise Brown, Secretary Cheryl Meinschein, Treasurer Fred Risser, Assistant Secretary Robert Smith, President David Lose

Bishop: Claire Burkat

Committee Chairs: Peter Boehringer (Academic), Phil Harrington (Planning), Cheryl Meinschein (Student), Robert Smith (Property), Charles Miller (Finance), Kathie Bender-Schwich (Trustees)

Invited Guest: Jonathan Strandjord

6:30 p.m. Dinner – Chestnut Hill Hotel

Tuesday, October 25

7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast Brossman, Benbow A

8:30 a.m. Board convenes Brossman 309
Devotions Mercedes Lee, Senior Class President

Call to Order/Roll Call
Minutes of August 2016 meeting
Agenda Adoption
Recognition of Student Body President – Eric Madsen
Recognition of Alumni/ae Association President - Annemarie Cook
Recognition of Faculty Representatives – Quintin Robertson, Karyn Wiseman
Recognition of Staff Support Committee Representative - Rachel Zimmerman
Executive Committee Report – John Richter
Election of Board Officers

9:00-10:30 a.m. Vision Block 1 – Update on LTSP-LTSG Venture

Report of President Lose
Report from the Transition Team – Elise Brown
Report from the Presidential Search Committee – Charles Miller
Report from Alumni/ae Association President – Annemarie Cook
Report of Academic Dean and Update on Curricular Work – Dean Kiran Sebastian

10:30-11:45 a.m. Executive Session

12:00-1:30 p.m. Lunch and Conversation with Faculty Brossman, Benbow A

1:45-3:15 p.m.	Board Committees Meet Finance, Foundation, and Property Academic Student	Brossman 201 Brossman 310 Brossman 209
3:30 p.m.	Vision Block 2: Administration, Finance & Foundation Finance Committee Report: Treasurer's Report FY17 Budget Update Reception of FY 2016 Audit Report of the CFO – John Heidgerd Foundation Board Report – Paul Jann and Dennis Trotter Report of VP for Advancement – Dennis Trotter	Brossman 309
5:00 p.m.	Dinner Board Chair and Committee Chairs dine separately	Brossman, Benbow A Brossman, Benbow B
6:30 p.m.	Board Reception	Lull Lounge
<u>Wednesday, October 26</u>		
7:30-9:00 a.m.	Breakfast	Brossman, Benbow A
9:00 a.m.	Board reconvenes Devotions	Brossman - 309 Dennis Trotter, VP for Advancement
9:15 a.m.	Vision Block 3 – Committee Reports and Student Affairs Property, including update on LTSP campus Academic Student Report of VP for Student Vocation and Formation – Trina Johnsten	
10:00-11:00 a.m.	Executive Session	
11:00-11:45 a.m.	Vision Block 5 – Board Action and Resolutions	
12:00 p.m.	Chapel	
1:00 p.m.	Lunch with Students	Brossman, Benbow A
2:15 p.m.	Unfinished business New business Meeting evaluation	Brossman 309
3:00 p.m.	Adjournment	

President's Report to the Board of Trustees

Just ten months ago the Boards of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg committed to partnering together to create a new school of theological education and leadership formation. Since that time, an incredible amount of work has been accomplished by a great number of people to move this initiative forward even as we continue to work on the goals we've set for ourselves at LTSP. In the report below, I'll highlight some of the accomplishments at LTSP, give an overview of our work to form United Lutheran, and also provide an update on some of our other ELCA partners.

LTSP Highlights

Admissions: We had a 50% increase in MDiv admissions and a 30% increase in students overall. This is a significant accomplishment during a year of transition since it would have been very easy for students to take a wait-and-see attitude about the new venture. Instead, they responded to our efforts to make school more accessible via Distance Learning and more affordable via increased scholarship support, though I think the greater payoff of scholarships is down the road. We benefited from the hard work of committed and capable staff, from moving to a more data-driven approach to admissions, and from making our response to the inquiries of prospective students our chief priority. While these gains are strong, we had a decrease in the MAR and MAPL programs that we will explore and try to develop.

Advancement: We had one of our strongest years in recent memory with regard to the Annual Fund (called the Leadership Fund at LTSP) which bodes well as we work to develop a steady, predictable, and robust level of annual support to undergird the new school. Overall advancement efforts, which are affected also by bequests, remained steady. Having created a strong team that can focus on making the most of available data, we now need to develop significant relationships by one-on-one visits with our supporters. We have an ambitious but realistic plan that draws upon the gifts of our capable team and seeks to accomplish this as well as to broaden our base of support to ensure the vitality of United Lutheran Seminary.

Finances: After registering a \$2.2MM operational deficit in FY 2015, we sought this past year to cut that by 25% and budgeted a \$1.6MM deficit. Instead, through fiscal restraint, lower than anticipated financial aid awards, and some modest increases in revenue, we managed to close out the year with a \$1MM deficit. While it's difficult to celebrate falling short of breaking even by a million dollars, we can nevertheless give thanks for the significant progress we've made in creating a reality-based budget and exceeding those expectations.

Campus Development: The first phase of our work to explore developing, leasing, or selling portions of our campus in order to reduce our debt, replenish the endowment, and provide a strong financial position for the new school is largely complete. That work included developing a comprehensive analysis of existing properties we may develop or sell and estimate their value based on exploring comparable properties. More recently, architects have developed a variety of possible uses for the seminary property to prepare us to engage a developer (or developers) to finalize plans for sale and start the process of re-zoning. While it is unlikely this work will be completed by the start date of the new school, we should know a great deal more about our progress and eventual timeline for completing this work by our April Board meeting. We have also put before the Mission Investment Fund a bold proposal suggesting several ways they can help us manage our debt on the Brossman Center so that it does not become an impediment to the success of ULS. We are waiting on MIF's response as to next steps.

United Seminary Progress and Pathway Forward

In addition to the work conducted by the eight focused task groups throughout the spring, the Boards of LTSP and LTSG met twice over the summer. Each meeting not only fostered stronger relationships between members of the two Boards, but also provided opportunities to make some significant decisions, including choosing a name for the new school, charting the most advantageous corporate pathway forward, and authorizing a presidential search.

Since those summer meetings, the Transition Team met with the tenured faculty at both schools and invited and then received their input on the composition of the initial ULS faculty. Based on those conversations and input, they made recommendations about the constituting faculty of ULS that will be shared with the new Board when it meets in January. They also made recommendations regarding the senior administrative team. Recommendations regarding the rest of the staffing at ULS are expected to take place early in the new year. This continues to be both important and challenging work, as we value all of our staff and faculty and will endeavor to make decisions in the best interest of the new venture while also extending care and support to all employees who will not continue into the new venture. Toward that end, the Transition Team recommends that LTSP and LTSG each set aside \$50,000 to create a fund for health care coverage support on which any employee can draw on. I come away from each meeting of the Transition Team grateful for the care, commitment, and dedication of this group. They have been entrusted with weighty decisions and bring their intellect, experience, and faith to this work.

Currently, we are continuing our efforts to prepare the necessary documents for our accrediting agencies and the State of PA Dept. of Education regarding a “complex substantive change” and teach-out plans. Much of this work has been entrusted to the academic deans of LTSP and LTSG as well as additional staff, and they are to be commended for their diligence. We are on schedule to deliver those documents in time for a response in the late winter or early spring.

We also continue work on a new curriculum that will set United Lutheran apart in three ways. 1) It will be competency based, stressing the skills leaders need to acquire rather than simply courses needed to pass. 2) It will emphasize formative leadership, focusing not simply on what leaders need to do, but rather what congregations can be equipped to do because of their leaders’ role and work among them. 3) It will be integrative and experiential, drawing on multiple disciplines and on the practical and ongoing experience of students in order to train leaders that can think theologically and help their parishioners do the same. After several months of intensive work, the curriculum development group is now working with the recently named ULS faculty to complete this exciting curriculum.

We have been working on developing the ULS Board that will convene for the first time in January. Until June 30, when an official name change takes place, that Board, representing both Regions 7 & 8, will govern Gettysburg Seminary as it prepares to become United Lutheran Seminary. This Board will make official offers to faculty, call a new president, and prepare to receive the LTSP assets that will guarantee a strong start. In the meantime, the LTSP Board will continue to oversee the work of the school and I am grateful for the talent and commitment of all the members of this Board.

Perhaps the greatest amount of effort over the next several months will be spent integrating the various systems of the two schools into one efficient operation. Decisions about payroll schedules, software, use of campus assets, personnel decisions and policies, and the development of shared handbooks for faculty, staff, board, and students will keep the staffs at both schools busy. While we have accomplished much, there is still significant work to be done, and I ask you to keep the staff at both schools in prayer. At this

point we look to be on-target to create a new seminary that has a balanced budget, a growing student body, greatly increased student aid, and a much stronger financial position than we could have imagined even a few years ago.

ELCA Partners

Over the last two years, I have spent a significant amount of time in meeting with my colleague seminary presidents and various members of the churchwide leadership in coordinating efforts of the network of ELCA seminaries. To date, there is not a great deal to show for these efforts. The Learning Exchange is on hold indefinitely, as the major donor funding this effort lost confidence in the ability of the larger network to work efficiently enough to realize significant savings. We are slowly working toward developing a common application for the schools, though the progress has been remarkably slow and the reluctance to make even minor changes to established practices has been notable. (On the whole, this is a system that is far more comfortable talking together about cooperation and change than actually engaging in it. I will put at the end of this report a document drafted to demonstrate various conversations we are having.)

Having concluded its formal work, the Theological Education Advisory Committee has entrusted its efforts to a committee of the ELCA Church Council. While the consolidation of LTSP and LTSG may end up being one of the singular efforts in the church representing the spirit and recommendations of TEAC, we have thus far received little tangible encouragement or financial support. Nor has there been any major shift in churchwide commitments to funding theological education or identifying key strategies to address the growing shortage of congregational leadership. To date, we have spent a great deal of time and money talking about the problem of theological education but have done little to address it. I suspect you can tell from the tone of these last two paragraphs that I am frustrated with our penchant for substituting conversation for decisions and process for action. My hope is that we will grow into a more mature and function system of theological education for the sake of the church and world; for the time being, however, ULS will need to rely primarily on the support it generates even while being open to more creative external partnerships.

In addition to ELCA-wide conversations, we also continue our work with LTSG and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary as part of the Eastern Cluster. That group continues to operate a shared library, foster faculty scholarship, and make application for and receive grant funding, including the current Abundant Life grant. Given the consolidation of LTSP and LTSG into ULS, we have begun assessing the future of the Eastern Cluster. At this point, the general consensus of the leaders of the three schools making up the Cluster is that this entity can and should continue until such a time as it no longer strengthens the mission of these three (soon to be two) schools and the work of the ELCA. At the same time, at the last meeting of the Seminary Presidents, we briefly explored the possibility of expanding that cluster to include all eight (soon to be seven) seminaries to make it possible to achieve greater economic efficiencies and explore a more robust sharing of faculty and other resources than previously imagined. This work is in its early stages (a draft proposal is attached at the end of my report) and given the difficulty the seminaries have traditionally had in cooperating in substantial and complex efforts, I am not confident when or if it will come to fruition. Nevertheless, it is worth our careful attention as it may provide a vehicle by which to expand the work of coordinating and unifying seminary education across the ELCA network.

Gratitude and Grace

Two words of gratitude to conclude this report. First, I am keenly aware that a leader is only as effective as his or her team, and I have been blessed by exceptional colleagues who put in more than 100% every day, often with little external recognition. Second, we would not be at this exciting point in the history of our school were it not for the vision and courage of our Board members. Other Boards, confronting similar

challenges, have shied away from bold action and opted instead to try to “fix” irreparable systems. You, however, have embraced a challenging but hopeful future. I therefore offer this report with gratitude for the tireless efforts and generous spirit of our staff, faculty, students, supporters and Board, all of whom encourage me to work, always, *Soli Deo Glori*.

David J. Lose
President, LTSP

Addendum #1 to President’s Report: *Themes for a Common Conversation about the ELCA Theological Education Network Conference of ELCA Seminary Leaders – July 29, 2016 (Draft)*

Church membership, attendance, and giving are declining across our church. The larger cultural, spiritual, and religious patterns at the root of these declines are pressing our institutions toward reform. Seminaries are navigating profound economic and systemic pressure, even as we address the need for breadth and diversity in theological education. The Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) has provided important research and recommendations that illumine many of these challenges and suggest strategies for moving forward. The call for reform in our theological education network, the rapidly changing cultural and economic landscape, and the unsustainable models of theological education around which our entire church leadership system is oriented (candidacy, assignment, rostering, etc.) have contributed to a volatile period of change and reform that theological schools must address. Along with our boards and other partners, the ELCA seminary leaders are committed to addressing the significant challenges before us and building a new approach to theological education that addresses the leadership needs of the world around us in a financially responsible way. We have met eight times during the past academic year. Recognizing the extreme complexities we face as individual schools and as a network of theological education, we have committed to a similar pattern in the coming year.

To date, we have engaged in a number of innovative initiatives at both structural and programmatic levels. Each of these initiatives is undertaken with the intention of addressing critical issues, such as mission effectiveness, financial sustainability, student debt, and the growing shortage of leaders. Examples of these initiatives include institutional partnerships of LTSS and Lenoir-Rhyne University; PLTS and California Lutheran University; and the reconfiguration of LTSG and LTSP. In addition to these structural initiatives, we are also developing programmatic initiatives, together and individually, that test new models of theological education for their effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Both structural and programmatic initiatives are helping us learn more about the way forward. Governance and partnerships create complexities but may also open new opportunities for strengthening a common theological enterprise. Examples of this include:

Enrollment and common application

Recognizing that our church has a widening gap between the number of pastors we need and the number of pastors we have, we pledge ourselves to initiatives that hold promise for increasing enrollment across the entire network, and are considering a common application process to reduce the complexity of entering into formal theological education.

Supporting varied forms of vocational service

We recognize that our changing church has a growing need for forms of theological education that can support and inform varied kinds of rostered leadership. We are agreed upon the need

to work cooperatively to develop training programs that will support the new Deacon roster and other forms of ministry.

Developing ethnic diversity among ELCA leaders

We commit ourselves to a shared vision that works with the whole church to increase the ethnic diversity of future leaders so that the face of our leadership reflects the rich human variety found in the church and the world today. Congruent with this, we share a commitment to promote antiracism training and work toward intercultural competency in the preparation of all leaders across the network of seminaries.

Spanish language MDiv and lay leadership training

We pledge continued effort toward the development of a Spanish language MDiv degree and development of lay leadership programs for the Latino/a church. This vision is built upon the growing need for the ELCA to address the burgeoning Latino/a population in the US and the understanding that while no seminary has the faculty to do this alone, together we do. Strong commitments have been made between the seminary presidents to explore and support this initiative and it is being highly encouraged by the Domestic Mission unit of the ELCA.

Commitment to our faculties

We acknowledge a sharp dilemma in our network of theological education. We both need to find ways to provide long term, continued support for our faculty members who are called to teaching ministries and need to consider the ways that tenure as presently configured may reduce the ability for seminaries to act fluidly within a changing context. Together, we will look at models of faculty support that seek to achieve greater flexibility and a redefinition of tenure in order for our seminaries to be fully responsive to the changing theological landscape, while honoring academic freedom and meeting accreditation standards.

Comparable faculty loads and compensation

In order to retain high-quality teaching faculty and deploy them nimbly and equitably across the network, comparable faculty loads and compensation must be developed. Insofar as possible (given that two seminaries are embedded within university systems), we will seek to establish more uniform teaching load expectations and compensation formulas, taking into consideration the programmatic circumstances of each seminary.

Sustainable student-to-faculty/staff ratios

We recognize that ELCA MDiv student enrollments at our eight schools are half the number they were two decades ago. Coupled with this decline, the per-graduate cost has undergone a comparable increase. This is despite overall reductions to faculty and staff across the network, and sometimes due to shifting staff roles not previously needed but now required. As a result, the aggregate cost of faculty and staff members across the network exceeds the financial capacity for its support. We therefore agree to seek ways to (1) share existing faculty and staff among our seminaries, and (2) use a collaborative and mutually consultative process for hiring any new faculty member within the network.

Sustainable PhD programs

We will explore the need for PhD level training within the ELCA and for its global church partners and seek to consider the number of seminaries conferring the degree. We will invite the ELCA Conference of Bishops into a conversation concerning the possibility of designating some portion of companion synod support for the purpose of PhD leadership education.

Global partnerships

We commit ourselves to thinking and imagining collaboratively in order to work with our global church partners in developing programs that will be of mutual benefit, providing the theologically formed leaders that we all need for our increasingly interconnected mission contexts.

Number and location of ELCA seminaries

We will enter into earnest conversation about the number and location of the eight (soon to be seven) seminaries, and pledge to support a new vision that could realign or move seminaries to best serve the church in the world that is unfolding. We acknowledge that the two mergers and one reconfiguration that have already been undertaken will bear upon the issue of future joint ventures and potential relocations.

We have deep collective history and tradition across our eight seminaries, and we pledge to employ these as resources toward a reimagined future for our schools. We are thankful to be part of a larger church body that includes invested partners. We need one another. We need you to be “with us,” supporting us not only through prayer, conversations, and financial commitment, but also by examining the ways in which your own institutions, areas of authority, and systems affect the health of theological education. Strengthening theological education cannot be an isolated enterprise, but must be part of a cooperative approach that asks hard questions and together takes on difficult challenges for the sake of the gospel. In addition to your partnership in analyzing and addressing systemic issues, we also request assistance from the wider church in creating, coordinating, and prioritizing a churchwide effort to identify and recruit a diverse cadre of new leaders. We believe this effort belongs to the whole church and can be most effectively accomplished with a comprehensive plan. Along with our governing boards, we affirm the value of an ecology of theological education and seek to strengthen it for the sake of our common commitment to God’s mission. We invite your ongoing partnership as we navigate the challenging circumstances ahead.

Rick Barger, Trinity

Michael Cooper-White, LTSG

Louise Johnson, Wartburg

David Lose, LTSP

James Nieman, LSTC [conference chair] Clay Schmit, LTSS/Lenoir-Rhyne

Robin Steinke, Luther

Brian Stein-Webber, PLTS/CLU

Addendum #2 to President’s Report: *Discussion Paper for ELCA Seminary Boards Proposed Seminary Alliance – September 30, 2016*

Background

The seminary presidents and chief administrative officers remain deeply committed to the sustainability of a robust Lutheran public witness for the sake of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We believe that this Lutheran public witness is vulnerable because of the weakening of institutional structures and connective tissue of this church. In order for us to leverage our common strengths, create a viable space for sharing the innovation and to take seriously our structural deficits we want to think with the church on what it would mean to form a common theological enterprise. We believe that what our churches face today are not crises of finances or demographics but rather of theological identity and witness. Our seminaries are distinctly positioned to engage these issues, but not if the schools themselves are struggling. Therefore, we are proposing a common enterprise to more robustly meet the pressing needs identified. This is in keeping

with recommendations of the TEAC process. Accordingly, we seminary leaders recommend discussion of the following proposal and outcomes:

Proposal

To revise the bylaws of the Eastern Cluster, which could function as an incorporated structural entity serving and governed by member seminaries and embedded schools. In essence we would become a “cluster of one” united by our common commitment to the flourishing of theological education. The reason for using the Eastern Cluster is the history of past and current grants which have been funneled through that corporate entity. In preparation for the unification of the Pennsylvania seminaries, the Eastern Cluster is already engaged in a revision of those bylaws; and the changes could be a more extensive rewriting if the seminaries and church support this initiative. A key matter would be to clarify the outcomes that such a common entity might provide.

Outcomes

- Collaborative entity for receiving grants to test experiments
- Collaborative entity to host faculty who can serve both the research needs and teaching needs across the church
- Collaborative entity for pedagogical and contextual learning experiments
- Collaborative entity for Spanish language resources
- Collaborative entity to coordinate our teaching and learning with our global partners
- Collaborative entity to support the leadership education of the global church
- Collaborative administrative functions

Key Questions

- In what ways might this strengthen our collective public witness?
- Are there unintended negative consequences that might outweigh the benefits?

Next Steps

- Boards and other stakeholders provide feedback through seminary leaders on commitment to pursue the idea
- Seminary presidents and CAO’s discuss feedback at upcoming meetings in order to inform the ECLS by spring of 2017 as it revises bylaws

Report of the Academic Dean

Challenges and Opportunities - Faculty

During the last six months, as a member of the Transition Team, I have been involved in intense and, at times, demanding conversations on various aspects of the United Lutheran Seminary, including questions regarding the curriculum and faculty needs. I recognize the anxiety and stress that my colleagues have experienced and appreciate their professionalism and graciousness throughout this process. Their commitment to the ongoing work of LTSP and their contribution to the visioning of the United Lutheran Seminary has been exemplary, even when personnel recommendations have had to be made. I look forward to continuing to work with this fine group of my colleagues and accompany them in journeys that may take them into retirement; into ongoing work in the consolidated school; into career discernment; and all kinds of life-decisions.

Challenges and Opportunities – Staff

The staff persons whose commitment, cooperation, and work ethic keep the academic programs of this seminary running are to be appreciated for the many things that they do. Much of their work is done quietly and thoroughly and I want to place on record my appreciation for their ongoing contributions to the life and work of our seminary, even as changes whirl all around us. While change is inevitable and necessary, I recognize the impact that this has on the lives and careers of our staff, and hope that the various measures in place to aid in the transition will prove helpful and supportive in the months ahead.

Ongoing work in collaboration with the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

As a member of the Educational Design and Curriculum Development work group, it has been good to work with President Lose, Associate Dean Wiseman, Dean Largen, and Dr Carlson to take into account how the academic programs in the United Lutheran Seminary can respond to the changing landscape of ecclesial realities in the country and beyond. Numerous studies have provided a mass of data as to how incorporating fresh and vital pedagogical insights and technological opportunities into the heart of theological education can make a difference, especially as we wrestle with the expectations regarding the competencies and skills needed today in word and sacrament, as well as word and service, ministries.

As we move forward (and as the United Lutheran Seminary faculty continues to meet), some of the tasks that need to be accomplished include the new MDiv curriculum; what this would mean for the other degree programs in terms of course offering and desired student learning outcomes; responding to the unified roster of the ELCA and training possibilities for those seeking this path of service; plans for all existing students in each degree program; working on the Faculty handbook; processing practical questions regarding two campuses and what this means for academic administration and faculty meetings, as well as committee work; discussing relationships with synods, candidacy committees, ecumenical partners, international agencies and institutions, in so far as this relates to the academic side of the new institution.

Associate Dean

Dr. Karyn L Wiseman, the Associate Dean, writes:

Over the past year I have lived into the role of Associate Dean of First Theological Degrees while a significant amount of transition was going on at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

However, I am proud of the progress we have made. Several items on my agenda have involved the Master of Arts programs, the Co-op Program, and the Distributive Learning Program, in addition to the MDiv program.

The MA programs at LSTP are in a period of transition as they were overseen by Dr. Jon Pahl for some time before coming into my scope of responsibility. The MA programs provide students a multitude of concentrations to match their academic and ministry interests. We are looking into expanding our partnerships to allow for additional concentrations (example: Princeton's Institute for Youth Ministry or Chestnut Hill College's Spiritual Direction program). We are also analyzing the Master of Arts in Public Leadership Program to streamline its course offerings here at LTSP in connection with the Temple courses our students take there with the Fox Business School and the School of Social Work. We are continuing to work on these programs.

The Co-op Program will graduate our first class of students in May 2017 and we are exceedingly proud of the progress we have made in placing students in more and more synods and sites. We started with a handful of students and now have 11 students placed in sites from NY to Virginia to Wisconsin and beyond. These students are pastoring solo churches, serving in staff situations, and merging congregations into parish configurations. These students meet weekly via our technological classroom and are growing in their understanding of immersive learning through this program. Nate Preisinger is a great help with this program.

I helped design and implement the DL Program at LTSP. We launched this fall and are seeing a steady increase in interest in this program in multiple locations. Many of our students came to campus for a one-week intensive Introduction to Public Theology course in August and were oriented to life in seminary. DL courses and instructors are being supported by our Educational Technologist, Alex Reid. We will continue to offer online courses in the new venture and look forward to helping more and more students live into their vocational call through this flexible and accessible program.

I have also worked with instructors on course schedules for the MDiv program and advise a number of students both officially and unofficially through my Associate Dean role. I appreciate the opportunity to work with Dean Jayakiran Sebastian in this capacity. I look forward to continuing to work throughout this year to enhance our programs and to engage in deeper relationships with our partners, our professors, and LTSP on these programs and others.

Registrar

René Diemer continues to efficiently and in a dedicated manner carry out the numerous tasks associated with the regular running of the programs and preparing for what is to come. She writes:

The registrar's office spent the summer months wrapping up the 2015-16 academic year (entering Spring/Summer grades, archiving the records of students who have completed studies, and tabulating full-year total headcounts); preparing for 2016-17 (developing the Catalog, running Fall/January registration and processing the records of incoming students), and providing consultation and data on demand to numerous other seminary offices. Attention now turns to preparing for Spring/Summer registration; submitting annual reports to various accreditors, and beginning whatever work it is possible to do relative to closing out LTSP and preparing for ULS.

In addition to this, she has responsibilities to accrediting agencies to provide data and statistics, and is a fount of information regarding trends that she has seen in our seminary over the last many years, including enrollment in various programs by major denominations, synods, and regions, students below and above 30, as well as ethnic backgrounds, and other important information.

One such example is our Full Time Equivalent figures:

Fall	MDiv*	MAR/MAPL	Grad School	All programs
2007	135.9	17.2	33.7	202.7
2008	122.6	10.7	32.8	181.3
2009	117.7	17.7	31.8	178.2
2010	114.9	23.1	27.6	174.7
2011	110.9	20.9	43.3	183.3
2012	105.9	17.1	42.3	174.5
2013	93.2	23.7	42.7	167.0
2014	88.5	18.4	34.7	141.6
2015**	93.0	22.3	36.7	152.0
2016	115.0	11.0	33.5	159.5

*MDiv count includes 4th-year and Affiliated interns

**In 2015 Fall included J-Term, generating higher numbers

Another one relates to the percentage of part-time students (noting again that * 2015 Fall included J-Term, leading to higher enrollment counts):

Fall	MDiv	MAR/MAPL
2007	36.7%	60.0%
2008	39.4%	82.6%
2009	41.0%	71.9%
2010	32.8%	65.9%
2011	33.8%	68.6%
2012	45.0%	77.4%
2013	56.4%	79.4%
2014	57.0%	71.4%
*2015	55.9%	66.7%
2016	47.5%	75.0%

Library

Following the retirement of Dr Karl Krueger, I have the oversight of the Library, and want to place on record my deep appreciation for the selfless and committed work of Ron Townsend and Sharon Baker. In a small way, we have tried to recognize their enhanced responsibilities, which include working with other library staff in the Eastern cluster. In the consolidated report to the Cluster presented on September 26th, it was noted how helpful Ron Townsend has been in terms of providing ongoing training support for staff at the other seminary libraries, and how Sharon Baker is part of a group working on streamlining Cluster loan procedures.

I'm also pleased that some of the evocative photographs that were taken as part of Dr Katie Day's "Faith on the Avenue" project are now displayed in the Library Connector, which has provided us with yet another opportunity to showcase the possibilities in the neighboring community as we strive to be a center to practice public theology.

Educational Technology

Thanks to the ongoing work and visioning of Kyle Barger and Alexandra Reid, we now have two new tech spaces on campus: the Library C Videoconferencing Classroom, and the Self-Service Recording Studio, both of which will prove to be very valuable assets as we incorporate new pedagogical models moving forward.

Kyle Barger and Alex Reid write:

Wifi Upgrade

As of the last board meeting, the installation of the new Wi-Fi hardware had just been completed. As we have moved into the new academic year, this upgrade has resulted in greatly improved network service for everyone on campus.

Moodlerooms unification and updates

One of our biggest projects this summer was to centralize all online course content for LTSP and LTSG courses on Moodlerooms. Previously, LTSG had used Moodlerooms, and LTSP operated our own Moodle server. The systems were very similar, but different enough to cause some confusion for those who were teaching or taking courses on both campuses.

In consultation with our colleagues at Gettysburg, it became clear that having everyone on both campuses using the same platform would simplify things as we move forward. We also felt that this was an obvious consolidation that would have to happen next summer anyway, and if we could complete it this year, we might be ahead of the game in this respect. Overall, things are going well, and most of the community has made the transition with a minimum of trouble.

We have also introduced some new online learning tools in order to maximize student engagement and interaction within online and hybrid courses. Voicethread, an interactive collaboration and sharing tool that enables users to add images, documents, and videos, and to which other users can add voice, text, audio file, or video comments, is currently being utilized in both first year and middler/senior courses. Both instructors and students have explored creative ways to replace the traditional asynchronous text-based discussion board with this new interactive tool. Diigo is a social bookmarking, research, and knowledge sharing tool created to mimic the ease of taking notes while providing a network for sharing and discovering information. Diigo is currently being used for collaborative annotation of complex readings and documents in order to share ideas and for course participants, along with the instructor, to gain a better understanding and new perspectives on the texts. Zoom, a cloud video conferencing software platform, is being used for synchronous small group discussions in advanced courses. These discussion groups give course participants the opportunity to delve deeper into course content with the guidance of the course instructor in a small group setting, all in real-time. Along with our existing Moodle activities, these will be important tools for making our online courses more interactive.

Remodeling of Library Classroom C and the Tappert Room

As part of the move of the IT offices into the second floor of the library, there were a couple things we wanted to address: a more dedicated space for videoconferencing, and a place for faculty and

others to make recordings for use in their classes. We have now set up Classroom C with two monitors and semi-permanently mounted cameras and microphones, for use with the Zoom Rooms videoconferencing system. Since the start of the fall semester, this room has been used for more videoconferences than the old equipment in the Board Room was in the ten years it was available. The Tappert Room has been set up as a self-service recording studio, with a camera suitable for recording the speaker seated at a desk, or behind a podium, with the option of a “green screen” background. Several faculty have already made use of it to produce material for their online courses. Thanks to our Educational Technologist, Dr. Alexandra Reid, for planning these spaces and researching the necessary hardware and software.

Student Database Information Sessions

LTSP and LTSG currently use two different student information databases, Empower and Education Edge respectively. We are working on scheduling presentations by both companies to give us their perspectives on where they are going with their products in the next few years and help us make the decision about which product the ULS should standardize on.

Student Learning Assessment

Rachel Zimmermann serves as the Faculty Assistant, Administrator of the Graduate School and as Student Learning Assessment Coordinator, and in respect to this last responsibility writes:

Last spring, we moved to using fully online course assessment forms, and are working to prepare reports that will be read and reviewed by the Dean, Area Chair and professor. This fall, I have sent out the ESQ (entering student questionnaire). This year, we will send out two batches of the ESQ in hopes of including any students who enter their programs in the spring. We are expecting about 45 participants this fall. In October, I will be the lead on a project for ATS, where we have selected LTSP to participate in a study of educational models. Our part of the study will have us gathering information on graduates- job titles, coworkers, education requirements for held positions, etc. I look forward to working with colleagues as we move forward with this.

Urban Theological Institute

The Director of the UTI, Dr Quintin Robertson reports:

The Urban Theological Institute (UTI) is an umbrella overseeing three programs: Degree Programs, Certificate Programs, and Public Programs.

Degree Programs: The UTI administers the Black Church Concentration in the MDiv degree program, the Black Church Specialization in the MAR degree program and the Black Church Focus in the STM and DMin advanced level degree programs.

Certificate Programs: The UTI administers the non-credit certificate programs in Church Leadership and Christian Ministry.

Public Programs: The UTI administers the Annual Preaching with Power (a forum on Black Preaching and Theology) and the Annual UTI Lecture and Worship Celebration. A banquet is added to the Annual UTI Lecture and Worship Celebration on every 5th year increment. Both public programs serve as springboards for recruitment and fundraising. This past semester (Fall 2015) the Urban Theological Institute celebrated its 35th anniversary.

Degree Programs (Black Church Studies): UTI Curriculum

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Number of Graduates</u>	<u>Enrolled First Professional Students</u>
2009-10	8	17 fall - 22 spring
2010-11	1	22 fall - 28 spring
2011-12	4	29 fall - 36 spring
2012-13	6	35 fall - 38 spring
2013-14	3	40 fall - 44 spring
2014-15	5	53 fall - 52 spring
2015-16	6	53 fall - 55 spring
2016-17		48 fall

Certificate Programs

The UTI Certificate Program in Church Leadership, including our site at St. Paul's Baptist Church in West Chester, PA, continues in its tenth year and the UTI Certificate in Christian Ministry continues in its sixth year.

<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2011-12</u>	<u>2012-13</u>	<u>2013-14</u>	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>
22	32	34	39	38	27	36	31

Public Programs

The 35th Annual *Preaching with Power and Black Theology Forum* (PWP2017) will be held on March 12-16. We surpassed our goal this year of \$25,000 by raising \$28,750 as April 15, 2016. A report will be given in April 2016 on the results of that year's event.

The 35th Anniversary of the UTI was celebrated on September 22, 2015 with our annual UTI Lecture and Worship Celebration and on October 23, 2015 with our gala banquet. The Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr. was the lecturer and preacher in September and The Rev. D. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr. was the banquet speaker.

	EC Morris Scholarship Endowment Fund	J Q Jackson Scholarship Endowment Fund	PWP Collections
2005		\$46,834	\$18,367
2006		\$66,725	\$18,424
2007		\$77,094	\$15,814
2008		\$82,297	\$17,389
2009		\$83,153	\$17,681
2010		\$94,130	\$18,605
2011		\$107,876	\$27,650
2012	\$10,525	\$129,107	\$32,275
2013	\$18,175	\$132,599	\$25,275
2014	\$23,916	\$146,819	\$24,875
2015	\$25,648	\$146,819*	\$27,450
2016	\$33,963	\$146,814*	\$31,900

* per Business Office no interest earned last or this year.

^ information as of June 30, 2016 distinguishing funds from the PWP Collection that will go into the Endowed and Restricted portions of the Scholarship Fund.

Jeremiah A. Wright, Sr. Chair Endowed Fund

July 2004	\$73,982	July 2005	\$129,539
July 2006	\$314,909	July 2007	\$439,305
July 2008	\$447,128	July 2009	\$404,233
July 2010	\$445,687	July 2011	\$503,552
July 2012	\$621,850	July 2013	\$650,041
July 2014	\$660,525	July 2015	\$718,990
Oct 2015	\$732,676	Jan. 2016	\$747,451
July 2016	\$721,909*		

**Collected \$16,518 (01/2015-06/2016), Interest Earned \$1,007 and Released \$27,508
Collected \$5,433 (07/2016-09/2016)*

Graduate Studies Report

Rachel Zimmermann, newly named as Administrator of the Graduate School, and Pastor Allison deforest, DMin Coordinator, assist me in the running of the Graduate School and I'm pleased that things are going smoothly so far. All files – STM, DMin, and PhD are being updated and students in each of these programs are being contacted afresh to see how we can best help them complete their degrees, or move forward into the next phase of their program.

Conclusion

The build-up to the 500th anniversary of commemorating events that took place in the small German town of Wittenberg has resulted in a flurry of publications and the organization of celebratory events all over the world. One of the gains for us as a theological community has been superb fresh translations of some of the foundational documents of the Reformation, including some of the most important writings of Martin Luther. Fortress Press is publishing a set of six-volumes entitled *The Annotated Luther*, four volumes of which are already out. It is a matter of pride that our own Professor Emeritus, Dr Tim Wengert, is one of the General Editors of this series. Dr Paul W. Robinson of Concordia Seminary in St Louis, the volume editor of the 3rd volume covering "Church and Sacraments" in his introduction writes: "Luther was not an easy or polite opponent, as these treatises demonstrate. Yet in every situation represented here, his passionate response was rooted in his radical understanding of the love of God in Christ Jesus and a fierce desire to make that gracious love real in the Christian assembly marked by word and sacrament in the lives of believers." (Paul W. Robinson, ed., *The Annotated Luther: Vol. 3 – Church and Sacraments* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), p. 6)

As we move forward in faith to the launch of the United Lutheran Seminary, it is my hope that we will be fired with the "fierce desire" to make that gracious love of God in Christ Jesus real in the lives of all whom we seek to serve, within the churches, within the communities of believers, and among all people of goodwill everywhere.

J. Jayakiran Sebastian

Dean of the Seminary and H. George Anderson Professor of Mission and Cultures

Report of the Chief Financial Officer

During the last six months, the Finance office has managed its slate of routine tasks, completed the annual year-end close, worked with the auditors on field-work, testing and follow up, and participated in several special projects.

The largest of these projects has been the various work done to optimize our property values as we move to a redevelopment of the Philadelphia campus through a combined series of transactions that would involve outright property sales, construction of new buildings, commercial leases, or operating partnerships. To assist us with the optimization effort, we have retained the services of U-3 Advisors, a local real estate consulting firm with experience in redeveloping higher education facilities. U-3 is near the end of their preliminary work which will result in some property valuations and economic impact assessments of various redevelopment scenarios. U-3's work has also been informed by the completion of the Partners for Sacred Places project which garnered significant community input and support regarding redevelopment possibilities. In addition to the work with consultants, I have continued to engage various developers in discussions about our future plans.

While work with the New School task forces was completed, there are new collaborative efforts underway to support the transition to ULS next year. Mariam Nowar has been named one of two co-leaders of Finance for ULS and in that role (with consultation from me) will help shape the integration of financial systems, standardized practices and financial policies.

The Library Connector Project was completed at dedicated in May 2016. The project came in right at budget (\$2.4MM), and will be a nice feature especially if we contract the campus down to the Brossman/Library/Chapel buildings.

In May, the Finance Office moved from Hagan to Brossman and is now located on the third floor. This move has improved the professionalism of our work areas, and put us closer to our colleagues that were already in Brossman.

In June, with the departure of David Grafton, I was given the responsibility to oversee the operations of Facilities and Security and Hospitality. The challenge there is to help Craig Eisenhard and his staff manage the many projects that arise with a small staff trying to manage the needs of just under 30 separate buildings. We are in the process of hiring a custodian/handyman to help us better focus on the perimeter properties, at least while we own them.

In July, we completed the consolidation of our investment portfolio under the new investment manager, Trillium. This included retiring the \$1.5MM demand note with Deutschebank, and replacing this with margin financing under Trillium/Charles Schwab.

In July, Lisa Jester (PT Accounts Payable Coordinator) left us to assume a full-time pastoral call. We are currently looking to hire a replacement. Student Emily Hamilton joined the staff in September as PT Receptionist and Hospitality Coordinator.

Respectfully Submitted,
John T. Heidgerd
Chief Financial Officer

Report of the Vice President for Advancement

Fundraising

3 Year Overview

This Year: \$2,822,492

Last Year: \$2,948,685

Two Years Ago: \$2,828,415

Total fundraising was approximately \$2.8 million, which remained within a relatively narrow range of about \$125,000 (4%), over the last three years. While reflective of a significant foundation of good will and financial support from our donors and constituents, as well as productive relationships established during prior decades, it also represents a potential source of volatility despite the apparent consistency, as the seminary has little control over the timing or amounts of these gifts.

As our advancement operations become more intentional and systematic we will be better able to project and manage these resources. While we celebrate the generosity of our donors to the work of the seminary we must also recognize the potential risk that exists within our fundraising program related to our dependence upon estates.

Annual Fund

3 Year Overview

This Year: \$741,154

Last Year: \$531,549

Two Years Ago: \$466,442

The Annual Fund (historically called the Leadership Fund at LTSP) had a goal of \$750,000 for FY 2015-2016, which represented an increase of 41% compared to last year and 61% compared to two years ago. This year's Annual Fund finished with \$741,154, just short of our goal and a significant increase over the prior two years. This success was primarily due to a generous challenge gift of \$100,000 provided by Bob and Janet Buescher for the Spring Appeal, which allowed us to finish our fiscal year with a strong final push. This year, we will be looking to expand both the number of donors participating in the challenge gift and increasing the total amount of our challenge gift to \$250,000.

Staffing

With the ongoing rebuilding and restructuring of the Office of Advancement, staffing has been a critical need. Advancement staffing had decreased to one individual, Kathie Afflerbach, Director of Donor Services, who manages our donor database, processes donor payments, facilitates the seminary's communications and interactions with donors, functions as the department's historian as well as our agent of institutional memory.

Building upon the solid foundation that Kathie provides, Advancement added three new staff members to fill positions that had remained open during the past six months. In March, Vincent Dent joined LTSP as Senior Major Gift Officer. Vince has more than 20 years of experience in non-profit and higher education fundraising, including positions as the Vice President for Advancement at Liberty Lutheran Services and Director of Major and Planned Gifts at East Stroudsburg University. In April, Karol Mason joined our team as Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Advancement and Director of Advancement Services. Karol has over 20 years of fundraising and communications experience in non-profit and higher education and was most recently the Associate Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations with the Philadelphia

Orchestra. In May, Yvonne Jones Lembo joined our team as an affiliate employee through the ELCA Foundation. A graduate of LTSP and former member of the advancement team at LTSP, Yvonne's experience with estate planning and planned gifts, as well as the significant resources and connections provided through the ELCA Foundation, has greatly strengthened our fundraising efforts.

Continuing Collaboration

A significant amount of time during the past six months has been devoted to collaboration with our colleagues at LTSG in Advancement and Communications, with productive interactions devoted to both learning about our respective institutions, seeking alignment between our operations and staffing, and exploring opportunities for even greater collaboration in the future. Recent developments include the formation of an administrative leadership team to begin charting a course for United Lutheran Seminary, and the announcement that I will serve as Senior Vice President for Advancement and Angela Zimmann will serve as Vice President for Advancement as members of the leadership team.

We are continuing our work with Tom Jolivette, consultant and Executive for Client Development with Kairos and Associates, who will return to complete his work with LTSG and LTSP in late October for the purpose of analyzing staff and operations and finalizing recommendations for advancement and communications to support and facilitate the efforts of United Lutheran Seminary.

2016-2017 Advancement Plan

For this fiscal year, our primary objectives are to realize our Annual Fund goal, which has increased to \$1,000,000, primarily to support the Full-Tuition Initiative, and prepare for the launch of United Lutheran Seminary. The outline below provides an overview of our goals and strategies, the most important of which may be the implementation of a campaign infrastructure to support United Lutheran Seminary and the Full-Tuition Initiative.

1. Annual Fund Goal - \$1,000,000
 - a. \$750,000 based upon budget projections
 - b. \$250,000 additional due to full-tuition initiative

2. Launch Annual Fund Leadership Circles to align with Gettysburg Seminary
 - a. Gold - \$5,000+
 - b. Silver - \$2,500 to \$4,999
 - c. Bronze - \$1,000 to \$2,499

3. Restructure Online Giving Opportunities
 - a. Provide opportunity on the website for recurring gifts of \$5, \$10, \$15, \$25, \$35, \$50 and \$100 levels
 - b. Incorporate giving levels into phonathon and direct mail appeals

4. Develop Full-Tuition Annual Fund Campaign
 - 1,257 donors
 - \$1 million per year
 - 3-year commitment
 - a. 2 @ \$100,000 = \$200,000
 - b. 5 @ \$50,000 = \$250,000
 - c. 10 @ \$10,000 = \$100,000
 - d. 20 @ \$5,000 = \$100,000

- e. 100 @ \$1,000 = \$100,000
- f. 200 @ \$500 = \$100,000
- g. 400 @ \$250 = \$100,000
- h. 500 @ \$100 = \$50,000

- 5. Develop Strategic Fundraising Program – Annual Fund, Major Gift, Planned Gift

- 6. Establish Presidential Fundraising Calendar
 - a. President’s Council
 - b. Berks County Event – Luther Crest
 - c. Fundraising programs associated with on-campus events
 - d. Individual appointments with major donors

- 7. Secure Challenge Donors for Spring Appeal - \$250,000

Respectfully Submitted,
Dennis Trotter
Vice President for Advancement

Report of the Vice President for Student Vocation and Formation

Admissions

I am very pleased with the work Rev. Nate Preisinger (Director of Admissions), Marlita Lee (Administrative Assistant), and Mercedes Lee (Admissions Counselor) did in this year of great transition and uncertainty. With 32 new MDiv students enrolling this fall, it was the largest group of those preparing for pastoral leadership in five years, and a 50% increase over last year.

	Fall 2015	Fall 2016
Master of Divinity	21	32
Master of Arts in Religion	5	1
Master of Arts in Public Leadership	3	0
Affiliate (ELCA Lutheran year)	2	2
Special student status	0	1
Theological Education for Emerging Ministry	0	2
Master of Sacred Theology	3	3
Doctor of Ministry	0	3
Doctor of Philosophy	2	0
Advance Graduate certificate	1	0
UTI certificate in Church Leadership (LTSP)	1	0
UTI certificate in Christian Ministry (LTSP)	2	3
UTI certificate in Church Leadership (SP's Baptist)	18	3

I would attribute the increased MDiv numbers to the following:

- 1) Better use of data to help drive decisions about allocation of budget and staffing, including determining which of our activities (individual campus visits, open houses, discernment events, joint ELCA seminary travel to other regions, attendance at conferences) has the greatest yield.
- 2) A highly attentive and available staff. Nate did less travel than has been the norm the last several years and so was more available to meet with student visitors, our highest yielding activity. We committed to following up with new inquiries by phone and email within 48 hours of their request for information, and after attending a conference for graduate school admissions professionals and discovering that nearly all of them use a Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) program to track and organize their contacts with prospective students, Nate quickly and efficiently set one up for us that has increased the quantity and quality of our contact with those in our data base.
- 3) The new Distributed Learning (DL) pathway to the MDiv. Our goal for this first year of the DL was 10; we enrolled 12 new students, a mixture of MDiv/Co-op (most from New England and Upstate NY synods) and straight DL (most from Metro NY and Upstate NY synods). Most of this first group were able to attend the *Intro to Public Theology* intensive in late August, which was a mixture of DL and residential students, and has already created a sense of camaraderie and given our far-flung DL students a group of touchstone colleagues here on campus.

The announcement of the new full tuition scholarships for ELCA students has created much interest from inquiries, caused a couple students to move from part-time to full-time status and did garner one new application for Fall 2016, but as yet we have not yet seen a great increase in applications that can be attributed to it. However, given the timing of the announcement (February) and the required positive entrance decision from a student's candidacy committee, we anticipate the new scholarship program to be a bigger influence Fall 2017.

Given that Nate was new to admissions this year and really only hit his stride midwinter/early spring, I expect continued growth in his recruitment results. Other new initiatives he's implemented include an increased social media presence (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, blog posts at voicesofpublictheology.wordpress.com) and more deliberate outreach to area campus ministry programs, with 15 being targeted for strengthened relationships in the next year. In the last month we have had several meetings in person and via technology with the admissions staff at Gettysburg as we begin to jointly recruit the class of 2017.

Financial Aid

We are excited to see how new financial aid policies will affect enrollment and support students engaged in theological education. Beginning Fall 2016, all students who are ELCA, full-time, residential (taking courses on campus) and making satisfactory progress with their candidacy committee were offered a full tuition scholarship (up to \$15,900). We had 34 students eligible for this, many of whom brought scholarship money with them from our churchwide, synodical and congregational partners that heavily supplemented our own LTSP resources. In addition, all others (non-ELCA and part-time ELCA students) had any gifts from congregations, synods or other judicatory bodies, or any other outside scholarship matched dollar-for-dollar up to full tuition. To date, we've had 18 students take advantage of this program (15 ELCA, 3 non-ELCA), and have given nearly \$17,000 in matching grants.

In late April we engaged Lisa Reichstein of Higher Education Assistance Group (HEAG) to do our federal student loan processing for Fall 2016/Spring 2017 and maintain our ongoing compliance with all state and federal agencies. Lisa has 30+ years of financial aid experience and has been a delight to work with, providing our students with excellent service, helping us navigate the places we fell behind in reporting and monitoring the previous year (monthly reporting of enrollment data to clearinghouse, outreach to those in default), and answering our many questions as we continue to have several LTSP staff also involved in the financial aid process. Contracting with HEAG has worked very well as a stop-gap measure, but I will continue to encourage the hiring of a permanent onsite staff for United Lutheran, as the cost of using consulting services is high, the process continues to require too much of my own involvement, and requires someone on campus to do a great deal of data entry, filing and follow up (Heidi Rodrick-Schnaath has been doing this and reports that June through September nearly half of her time was dedicated to financial aid).

Student Services

Rev. Heidi Rodrick-Schnaath, Director of Student Services, serves as LTSP's Title IX Coordinator, oversees the required anti-racism and professional ethics workshops, the spiritual formation component, new student orientation, campus housing assignments and is charged with making sure any students with disabilities get the accommodations they need to be successful academically. She is the primary contact for ELCA students going through the candidacy process, provides referrals for pastoral and mental health counseling as needed, and manages student discipline issues in collaboration with the Dean's office.

New initiatives in the student services area included assisting with our proposal for a sustainability grant through Lily's *Economic Challenges Facing Future Ministers* program, a second orientation session this fall

targeting our new Distributed Learning students, providing six hours of a newly designed professional ethics training to students enrolled in August's intensive course *Introduction to Public Theology*, and receiving additional Title IX training as one knowledgeable about the proper way to investigate allegations of Title IX violations.

As the seminary's liaison to the ELCA candidacy process, Heidi works with students and synodical and churchwide staff to monitor our students' progress through candidacy. Twenty years ago, the majority of students followed a fairly set path: two academic years, internship, followed with a senior academic year. This meant that the candidacy process was also pretty predictable. With the increase in capstone internships and the many new pathways to the MDiv, managing the candidacy process has become much more complex and time-consuming. It is Heidi's responsibility to work with each candidate and their committee to successfully navigate the process.

Enrollment, Student Support, and Candidacy working group

I am co-chairing this working group with Lauren Muratore of LTSG. Our original charge was to develop "teach out pathways" for students once the new curriculum was in place, however it quickly became apparent that this was a task better completed by the deans and registrars. Instead we turned our attention to a video highlighting the early development of what has now become our path toward United Lutheran Seminary, using presidents, deans and several students from each campus voicing their hopes for this new venture. Both campuses have formed student advisory panels, which will be used to illicit student input on the new curriculum and other topics as they arise. In addition, both campuses have hired a chaplain for the transition to be available to students, staff and faculty as we continue to experience both excitement and anxiety about what it means to become United Lutheran. We hired, on a contractual basis, Rev. Michael Edwards-Ronning, who serves a congregation in New Jersey part-time. Michael has been well received by the community, and throughout the summer the five hours a week he was on campus was regularly filled.

Transition Team

Thank you to presidents Lose and Cooper-White for the recommendation that I be part of the newly formed senior administrative team looking ahead to staffing and process as we become United Lutheran Seminary. There has been an initial meeting at which we looked at the org charts for both institutions and began to create a list of vital functions that need to be staffed in each of the areas we oversee. I have requested some preliminary data from colleagues at LTSG to help determine the staffing needs of admissions, financial aid and student services going forward.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Trina Johnsten
Vice President for Student Vocation and Formation

Report to Seminary Boards from the Domestic Mission Unit of the ELCA (Fall 2016)

New Advisory Committee of the Church Council Begins Its Work

My spring report focused on the final report and recommendations of the Theological Education Committee and the ELCA Church Council's response. To summarize, the Church Council affirmed TEAC's recommendations along with a set of implementing strategies developed by a workgroup made up of some members of the Church Council and TEAC. The Church Council then acted to implement TEAC's first recommendation, forming an advisory committee on theological education. It then assigned the new AC the tasks of (a) consulting leaders of key partners concerning what roles they can and should play in the implementation of TEAC' recommendations; (b) analyzing strategies and setting priorities; (c) developing a work plan, and (d) bringing proposed actions back to the Church Council.

The members of the Advisory Committee (see DM Exhibit A) met for the first time on July 22nd. The discussions that day quickly demonstrated that the committee members agree that theological education is crucial for the vitality and integrity of the ELCA's witness to the gospel. They are also keenly aware that in this time of rapid change, major challenges face both theological education and the church as a whole. They see that it is crucial for the whole church to focus attention and effort on improving both the sustainability and the fruitfulness of our shared work in theological education. Sobered by the spring ELCA Research and Evaluation report that clearly demonstrates that we have a real and growing need for more (and more diverse) new leaders well-prepared for service, the committee members agreed that even while we must move quickly to improve the financial sustainability of both schools and students, even more urgent is the need to step up our work in identifying, encouraging, preparing and supporting new leaders.

The AC has formed work groups to develop plans for initiatives that aim to:

- Increase vocational discernment among and recruitment of ethnic specific leaders
- Increase vocational discernment among and recruitment of young adult leaders
- Consider how both churchwide and synodical funding can best flow in a healthy, productive economy of theological education
- Improve seminary health and sustainability in ways that enable schools to focus more of their attention, staffing and budget directly on their educational work and less on infrastructure
- Improve and expand our communications with prospective learners and leaders, with those who can identify and encourage them, and with all who have a stake in what is happening and can happen to renew our work in theological education

As these workgroups develop their plans between now and spring, they will also be identifying criteria for assessing progress: evidence to seek, measures to take, targets to aim for. At their fall meeting, the seminary presidents began drafting assessment criteria of seminary health/sustainability at the level of individual schools, at the level of their relationships with each other with their other church partners, and at the level of how their work serves and/or burdens the students they enroll and the other learners they engage. As this work moves forward it will necessarily engage many more both inside and beyond the seminaries. It will be important to avoid letting assessment work grow so large and complicated that it reduces the attention and effort we give to doing those things worth assessing in the first place. But done well—and generating serious conversations within schools and among partners-- it could result not only in more effective efforts but also wider consensus about what the various partners need to be able to expect from each other.

Some Basic Seminary Statistics

The fact that seminaries have been working on assessment for a number of years now means that they have some wisdom to add to the Advisory Committee's deliberations on what valuable assessment looks like, on what some useful measures and targets might be.

Among the measures that have been taken and retaken year after year are those that outline and assess the shape, integrity and strength of the seminaries' finances. In the next few weeks, ELCA seminaries will complete their audits of the 2015-2016 fiscal year and it will be possible to add another year's data to basic financial sustainability trend lines. As soon as this next edition of the annual ELCA Theological Seminaries Comparative Report is complete, it will be shared as a resource for seminary administrators and boards and the Advisory Council.

The 2015-2016 report on ELCA seminary graduation statistics is now complete (see DM Exhibit B). The news is sobering as it shows that following a rebound in 2013-2014 from a very low number in the previous year, we have had two further declines. Over the same period the numbers of TEEM and MA graduates have also declined.

We also now have data on the student debt of ELCA M.Div students who graduated from our seminaries in 2014-2015 that we can compare with previous graduating classes. The news here is mixed. There are still too many seminarians graduating with levels of debt that will create real challenges. At the same time, you will see in this report that theological student debt (that is, the average debt that these borrowers accumulated during the course of their enrollment in seminary) leveled off and even declined after 2011. And controlling for inflation, it had declined 12% by 2015. At the same time, the average amount of undergraduate debt carried into seminary by those who had borrowed in college increased 14% when controlling for inflation over the last four years. The net effect has been essentially flat levels of total student debt per borrower since 2011.

Finally, we have been able to do some more specific demographic analysis of the 2015-2016 enrollment at ELCA seminaries, with particular attention to ethnicity. As Exhibit C shows, the enrollment of persons of color or primary language other than English has become a larger factor in total ELCA M.Div. enrollment over the past decade. At the same time, while their numbers are more variable year to year, our TEEM students bring higher percentages of diversity. Exhibit D shows our system-wide numbers and percentages of various groups (rather than simply "White" and "Persons of Color") and Exhibit E provides some school-by-school data. These tables and graphs, while they are still quite general, are an encouragement for the leadership circles of seminaries along with church and community partners to consider what we might learn each other's relative strengths and weaknesses, how we can dig deeper, what goals we should set, and how we can do more together.

Jonathan Strandjord
Director for Seminaries, Domestic Mission Unit, ELCA