



**E A R L H A M**  
**SCHOOL *of* RELIGION**

**Accreditation Review  
Self Study Report for  
Association of Theological Schools**

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228 College Avenue  
Richmond, IN 47374**



## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter One: Introduction to this Self-Study .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Preface .....	1
Involvement in Study .....	2
Conclusion.....	3
<b>Chapter Two: Institutional Issues and Concerns.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction.....	5
Purpose, Planning, And Evaluation .....	5
<i>Purpose.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Planning and Evaluation.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Institutional Integrity .....	12
Authority and Governance .....	14
Institutional Resources .....	16
<i>Human Resources .....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Financial Resources.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Institutional Advancement.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Physical Resources.....</i>	<i>21</i>
Conclusions .....	22
Looking ahead:.....	23
<b>Chapter Three: Teaching, Learning and Research.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Introduction.....	25
Teaching, Learning, and Research .....	25
<i>Background on Faculty.....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Faculty Review: Standardized .....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Faculty Involvement at ESR and Beyond.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Distributed Education and Faculty Experience.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Faculty Morale.....</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Faculty and Assessment .....</i>	<i>29</i>
Faculty And Programs/Areas Of Concentration/ Emphases.....	30
<i>The ESR Curriculum as It Functions Programmatically.....</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Faculty Oversight of Curriculum and Professional and Ecclesial Contributions.....</i>	<i>31</i>
Biblical Studies .....	31
Theological Studies.....	31
Peace and Justice Studies .....	32
Quaker Studies .....	32
Pastoral Care and Counseling .....	33
Pastoral Studies.....	34
Christian Spirituality .....	34
Teaching .....	35
Writing as Public Ministry .....	35
Field Education .....	35
Curriculum Review .....	36
<i>Christian Spirituality Program.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Comprehensive Seminar.....</i>	<i>37</i>
Library .....	38
<i>Overview, facilities, and administration .....</i>	<i>38</i>

<i>Library Collections</i> .....	39
<i>Contributions to Teaching, Learning, Research, and Curricular Development</i> .....	40
Financial Resources .....	41
Conclusions .....	42
Looking ahead.....	43
<b>Chapter Four: Educational Programs</b> .....	<b>45</b>
Introduction.....	45
Goals of the Theological Curriculum .....	45
<i>Foundational</i> .....	45
<i>Quaker Distinctives</i> .....	46
Degree Programs.....	46
<i>M.Div./M.Min.</i> .....	47
Basic Requirements of the M.Div./M.Min. (81 semester hours) .....	47
<i>Biblical Studies (12 hours)</i> .....	47
<i>Historical Studies (9 hours)</i> .....	47
<i>Theological Studies (9 hours)</i> .....	47
<i>Applied Theology Studies (21 hours)</i> .....	47
<i>Spirituality Studies (3 hours)</i> .....	48
<i>Peace and Justice Studies (3 hours)</i> .....	48
<i>Comprehensive Seminar (3 hours)</i> .....	48
<i>Electives (21 hours)</i> .....	48
Emphasis .....	48
<i>M.A. in Religion</i> .....	48
Basic Requirements of the M.A. in Religion (36 semester hours) .....	49
<i>Prerequisite Courses (0 hours)</i> .....	49
<i>Core Requirements (18 hours)</i> .....	49
Language Requirement and Research Skills.....	49
Oral Examination .....	50
Other Instructional Programs.....	50
<i>TRY</i> .....	50
<i>W.O.R.D. Sojourn</i> .....	50
On-going Curricular Assessment .....	50
<i>The French Lick Retreat</i> .....	52
Cross-Cultural Engagement .....	52
Student Recruitment, Admission, Services, and Placement.....	53
<i>Student Recruitment</i> .....	53
<i>Student Admission</i> .....	55
Regular Admission.....	55
Conditional Admission.....	55
Special Student.....	56
<i>Student Services</i> .....	56
<i>Tuition &amp; Fees</i> .....	58
<i>Student Placement</i> .....	58
Distance Education: <i>ESR Access</i> .....	59
<i>Educational Resources</i> .....	60
<i>Financial, Operational and Physical Resources</i> .....	61
<i>Relationship and Impact</i> .....	62
<i>Standards</i> .....	62
M.Div./M.Min.....	63
M.A. in Religion.....	63

Conclusion.....	64
Looking ahead.....	64
<b>Chapter Five: Conclusions.....</b>	<b>65</b>
Introduction.....	65
Summary of Chapter Conclusions.....	65
<i>Institutional Issues and Concerns</i> .....	65
<i>Teaching, Learning, and Research</i> .....	65
<i>Educational Programs</i> .....	66
“Looking Ahead:” Summary from the Chapters .....	66
<i>Institutional Issues and Concerns</i> .....	66
<i>Teaching, Learning, and Research</i> .....	67
<i>Educational Programs</i> .....	67
Further Conclusions—What We’ve Learned.....	68
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>71</b>



## Chapter One: Introduction to this Self-Study

### Preface

This self-study is a report indicating the many ways Earlham School of Religion puts into practice, into policy, and into perspective its missional self-understanding. The changing academic and cultural contexts in which we work and the dynamic nature of the ecclesial world with which we are engaged and in which our students will serve, require a commitment by theological seminaries to on-going discernment and careful self-evaluation. None of us involved in this work can afford to rest on laurels achieved in previous decades.

Since the last ATS self study report in 1996, Earlham School of Religion (ESR) has taken several important steps to understand and evaluate its work as a theological seminary, to better understand the needs and expectations of its constituents, and to expand accordingly its educational programs and administrative policies. The 1999 publication of *Among Friends: a Consultation with Friends About the Condition of Quakers in the U.S. Today*, marked an important moment in the seminary's interaction with key denominational constituents and it will be referred to often throughout this self-study. The results of this consultation underscored several opportunities for the seminary that were both consistent with the educational mission and responsive to denominational dynamics.

Most of the faculty, administration, and support staff in 2006 were not part of the ESR community in 1996. Each new member has brought his or her unique energy, scholarly interests, and spiritual insight to the school and is thereby enriching the overall seminary experience for students. The seminary community has taken advantage of these personnel changes and has considered this an opportune time to assess intentionally and reevaluate carefully programs, policies, and practices. Additionally, through such initiatives as the Pastor's Conference, the Spirituality Gathering, and the Traveling Ministries Program, the interests and talents of this faculty are being utilized to extend the work of the seminary into new and wider publics.

In 1996, ESR's partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary was in its infancy. Although hopes were high, no one knew precisely how our two seminaries would be affected by this daily interaction. Now, after a dozen years, ESR has made some curricular and administrative modifications that more fully utilize the resources of the partnership. For more than a decade, students and faculty have benefited from the seminaries' practical and concrete ecumenical environment, an environment that continues to provide challenging and rewarding contextual preparation for ecclesial ministry.

Ten years ago, "campus" was a more clearly identifiable concept than it is presently. All degree-seeking students took classes in Richmond and many of these students lived in the immediate area. Today, through *ESR Access*, the seminary's distributed education program, "Access students" are on the Richmond campus for short, two-week intensive periods, but they continue to live and study at their homes and nearer their places of ministry, locations such as Iowa, Idaho, Connecticut, Florida, and Sweden. Residential students are benefiting from the many intensive courses and on-line courses initially developed for the *ESR Access* program and that are now offered on campus. And, as will be evident later in this self-study, preparation for this distributed education program resulted in much rich and illuminating conversation and study about learning, teaching, and assessment.

Programmatic developments over the past several years have been consistent with the school's mission statement and with the unfolding of its implications in the face of changing educational and ecclesial realities:

Earlham School of Religion is a Christian graduate theological school in the Quaker tradition. ESR prepares women and men for leadership that empowers and for ministry that serves. This mission grows out of our Christian belief that God calls everyone to ministry. Using a transformative model of education, ESR encourages students to explore the intellectual, spiritual and practical dimensions of their calls to ministry.

The integrity of the seminary depends upon assessing the use and distribution of its varied resources in view of the school's mission. ESR is committed to this mission and understands it to be deeply rooted in a Friends theological vision of God, Church, and ministry.

As will be evident throughout this self-study, ESR has devoted much attention to a number of elements included in this mission since 1996; for example, preparation for leadership, the practice of theological education in the Quaker tradition, and how the transformative model of education, so vital to the overall pedagogical commitments of the seminary, can be meaningfully replicated in different educational delivery formats.

Chapters two through four of this self-study comprise the heart of this report. Chapter two, "Institutional Issues and Concerns," discusses major areas of the seminary's work: purpose, planning, and evaluation, institutional integrity, authority and governance, and institutional resources. These areas correspond to ATS standards: 1, 2, 8, and 9.

Chapter three of this self-study, "Teaching, Learning and Research," includes information concerning ESR's faculty, faculty development, faculty oversight of the seminary's area emphasis, curricular review processes, both completed and anticipated, and available library resources and policies. The topics delineated in this chapter correspond to ATS standards: 3, 5, and 6.

Chapter four of this self-study, "Educational Programs," discusses the goals of ESR's theological curriculum, expectations of the various degree and non-degree programs, institutional efforts in assessment, student issues such as recruitment, services, and placement, and the seminary's distance education program: *ESR Access*. The issues discussed in this chapter correspond to ATS standards: 4, 7, and 10.

### **Involvement in Study**

In preparation for this self-study, Jay Marshall, Dean of Earlham School of Religion, Stephanie Ford, Assistant Professor of Christian Spirituality, and David Johns, Associate Professor of Theology, attended ATS sponsored events, which included a January 2004 workshop in Pittsburgh, and a June 2004 biennial meeting in Pasadena. Four faculty members were appointed by the Dean to serve on the ATS Steering Committee. This steering committee was then divided into three subcommittees, each charged with gathering material covered in chapters two, three, and four: Lonnie Valentine, Professor of Peace Studies ("Institutional Issues and Concerns"), Stephanie Ford ("Teaching, Learning, and Research"), Steve Spyker, former Director of Information Technology ("Educational Programs"), and David Johns (Director of the study, first editor, and writer of "Educational Programs," following Steve Spyker's Spring 2005 resignation from the seminary).



At various stages during the composition of this document, a number of others were involved in substantive ways either as reader/critics: Tracy Crowe, Business Manager and Director of Student Services, Sue Axtell, Director of Admissions, and Phil Basiley, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Studies, or as editor: Tim Seid, Associate Dean of Distributed Learning.

Chapters of this document were distributed to the combined faculty (both teaching and administrative faculty) and, along with a student representative, they were discussed at length and in detail during three sessions of faculty meeting. A penultimate draft of this self-study report was distributed to and reviewed by the ESR faculty in March 2006. Next, the Board of Advisors reviewed a corrected draft in April 2006. A revised version of this report was then submitted to the Earlham Board of Trustees for their review and approval in June 2006. Thus, while the steering committee itself was representative of the entire faculty, the involvement of so many others assured diverse and characteristic voices in the process.

## **Conclusion**

In short, Earlham School of Religion welcomes this opportunity to review and to evaluate the many things that comprise this school's life and work, and in particular, the activities of the past ten years.

The Earlham School of Religion is a vibrant community in which to learn, live, work, and grow. In many ways, ESR is the same seminary it was in 1996 and the same seminary it was in 1960, the year of its founding. Those places of stability speak of fundamental commitments and convictions. However, ESR has changed considerably since its last ATS self-study and many of these changes will be discussed in this report. It is ESR's contention that these places of change illustrate the many ways the seminary attempts to listen, learn, and grow, and to be faithful to the vitally important work of theological education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Chapter Two: Institutional Issues and Concerns

### Introduction

Issues addressed in this chapter address ATS standards 1, 2, 8, and 9.

Earlham School of Religion (ESR) is a “Christian graduate theological school in the Quaker tradition.” Thus, the school is responsive to concerns in the wider Christian community, the community of theological scholarship and seminary education, and the Religious Society of Friends. The ethos of the school is further shaped by its status as part of Earlham College and its partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary in the work of theological education and ministry preparation. Together, these commitments and connections create a mission whose primary thrust is to serve Friends and those who value the ministerial emphases of Friends while also operating in a pluralistic environment and meeting the standards set by peers in accreditation.

### Purpose, Planning, And Evaluation

Since 1998, ESR has undertaken an intentional strategy to evaluate regularly the various functions of the school. Much of this work has been done at the level of clarifying and better articulating the seminary’s identity and purpose, both internally and externally. The result of this intentional strategy has been a more focused approach to constituent relations, institutional development, the necessary momentum for a strategic planning process, and general enthusiasm for enacting the seminary’s mission.

#### *Purpose*

As a living institution, ESR’s statement of mission has grown through the years in response to its changing role among various constituencies. However, the seminary has retained the core of its initial vision. Founding Dean, Wil Cooper, published *The ESR Story: a Quaker Dream Come True* for ESR’s twenty-fifth anniversary. By examining Cooper’s historical account and examining the seminary’s work since the book’s publication, it is possible to see a continuity of vision from the establishment of ESR to today. This vision continues to influence the institutional planning for the future.

According to Cooper’s account: ESR strives to be accountable to its mission in two ways: “first to the historic Quaker understanding of ministry, and secondly, to current needs in the Religious Society of Friends as they have been perceived.” This continues to be so and a response to these concerns has been evident in each Mission statement the seminary has adopted. Not surprisingly, there has been tension between the two concerns from time to time. As for the historic Quaker understanding of ministry, ESR understands that “Christ is the head of the Church and that all ministry should proceed from the spirit of Christ which can be present within, teaching us God’s will.” Thus, anyone involved in ministry preparation, including ESR, needs to “honor that authority and try to respond to it.” (Cooper, 27)

In Christ all are called to a universal ministry. All the faithful, regardless of calling or profession, are united in service to God. Some, however, God calls to “specialized ministries.” Friends developed this sense of a specialized call to ministry as a companion to the notion of ministry given to all believers. Robert Barclay in his *Apology* wrote that Friends “do believe that some have a more particular call to the work of the ministry and that

therefore they are especially equipped for that work by the Lord. We affirm that their work is to instruct, exhort, admonish, oversee and watch over their brethren more frequently and more particularly than the others. Something is more incumbent upon them than upon every common believer.” (Barclay, *Apology*, Freiday, ed., X.xxxvi, 215)

Regardless of form or context, all ministry according to Friends, is “called” ministry and springs forth from and is formed by the Spirit’s movement among the faithful. And yet, ESR’s mission is to assist men and women who are responding to God’s call to “specialized ministries.” This vision flows from Ephesians 4:11-12:

The gifts [Christ] gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (NRSV)

Over the years, the Earlham School of Religion has been aware of a tension between a more inclusive vision of universal ministry, and discerning what “specialized” ministries ESR can reasonably expect to form. This tension exists in the theology and practice of the wider Religious Society of Friends and is not peculiar to the seminary. As a result, throughout the school’s history, some Friends have claimed that ESR has focused too much on universal ministry and not enough on particular ministries, pastoral ministry, for example. At the same time, other Friends have charged that the school has too narrowly defined the ministries for which it attempts to equip students, and some Friends question the need for a seminary at all. This tension continues and it provides ample opportunity for institutional reflection on and modification of its mission and identity.

Since the last ATS review, the Mission Statement has been modified.

Earlham School of Religion is a Christian graduate theological school in the Quaker tradition. ESR prepares women and men for leadership that empowers and for ministry that serves. This mission grows out of our Christian belief that God calls everyone to ministry. Using a transformative model of education, ESR encourages students to explore the intellectual, spiritual and practical dimensions of their calls to ministry.

This statement was discussed and approved by faculty consensus (including both administrative and teaching faculty). It was then discussed with the ESR Board of Advisors and presented to the Earlham Board of Trustees who approved the statement in the fall of 2000.

To understand the significance of the changes made to the mission statement, here is the previous statement that had been guided the seminary since 1985:

The mission of the Earlham School of Religion as a Quaker theological school grows out of our belief that God calls every Christian to ministry. Earlham School of Religion prepares women and men of all branches of Friends and other traditions and faiths for leadership that empowers and equips the ministry of others. The school encourages students to explore the intellectual, spiritual and practical dimensions of their calls to ministry.

The present statement emphasizes the seminary’s Christian roots and its commitment to “transformative” education. The decision to articulate these features of the

seminary more clearly was based on a major consultation begun in December 1998. The results of this consultation were published as *Among Friends: a Consultation with Friends about the Condition of Quakers in the U.S. Today*. This study arose out of a desire to better understand the present condition of the Religious Society of Friends and to gauge the relationship of the seminary to the denomination. The ESR faculty, Board of Advisors and Earlham Trustees called for this consultation and appointed Crane MetaMarketing Ltd., of Atlanta, Georgia to undertake it. It was believed that the results of this study would make a significant contribution to denominational constituents as well as assist the seminary in institutional planning and evaluation. Three general questions were at the center of the national consultation:

1. What is the current situation of the Religious Society of Friends? What are the main strengths, and what are the main challenges before us at the present time?
2. More specifically, what is the situation with regard to leadership? Are we finding the leaders we need, and are they being prepared for leadership roles as well as they might be?
3. What are the potential contributions the Earlham School of religion can make to meet these needs and challenges in the preparation of leaders? (*Among Friends*, 1)

The modification of the mission statement was in response to feedback from constituents that the school needed greater clarity about its rootedness in the Christian tradition and greater clarity concerning the Quaker Christian assumptions of the seminary's educational approach. The consultants did not make specific recommendations for the strategic planning process. This results of the consultation provided invaluable data from constituents that helped the school understand major challenges facing Friends (and, consequently, the seminary attempting to serve Friends). However, the responses to weaknesses or challenges for Friends were organized under headings reflecting identity and ministry formation. "We don't know who we are," "Even if we knew, we couldn't tell people—or wouldn't," "We can't get along," "We're not what we used to be," "In fact, we may not be anything special at all," "We're out of touch," "And maybe we're not going anywhere." (*Among Friends*, 15-25) This data, in turn, was utilized in the June 2000 strategic plan that charted the school's current course. (See: Strategic Plan and discussion in this chapter under "Planning and Evaluation")

Since ESR is not a free-standing seminary, any strategic planning or assessment of identity must, of course, be made in view of the articulated identities of partner institutions. The seminary, as a graduate unit of Earlham, is well aware that its existence is necessarily related to the college's mission. The undergraduate college's Mission Statement reflects the Quaker roots of the institution as well as a commitment to educating the whole person. Over the years Earlham College and ESR have shared, for example, computing services, safety and maintenance services, teaching faculty, some administrative functions, and the extensive resources of Lilly Library. Yet, in addition to these very practical connections, the seminary's self-understanding resonates with that of the college.

The mission of Earlham College, an independent, residential college, is to provide the highest quality undergraduate education in the liberal arts, including the sciences, shaped by the distinctive perspectives of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). A basic faith of Friends is that all truth is God's truth; thus Earlham emphasizes: pursuit of truth, wherever that pursuit leads; lack of coercion, letting the evidence lead that search; respect for the

consciences of others; openness to new truth and therefore the willingness to search; veracity, rigorous integrity in dealing with the facts; application of what is known to improving our world.

To provide education of the highest quality with these emphases, Earlham's mission requires selection of an outstanding and caring faculty committed to creating an open, cooperative, learning environment. The College provides for the continuous support and development of this faculty.

The teaching-learning process at Earlham is shaped by a view of education as a process of awakening the "teacher within," so that our students will become lifelong learners. Students at Earlham are encouraged to be active, involved learners. The College provides extensive opportunities for students and faculty to interact with each other as persons, to learn from each other in a cooperative community, an important aspect of which is collaborative student/faculty research.

At Earlham College this education is carried on with a concern for the world in which we live and for improving human society. The College strives to educate morally sensitive leaders for future generations. Therefore Earlham stresses global education, peaceful resolution of conflict, equality of persons, and high moral standards of personal conduct.

Further enriching the life of the seminary is ESR's partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary, the Church of the Brethren Seminary. ESR and Bethany remain two distinct institutions; they have not merged and they have no intention of doing so. Yet the two schools share faculty, curricular offerings, some administrative functions, as well as other activities. Because of this partnership, ESR must be aware of, interact with, and largely be sympathetic to another institutional mission statement:

Bethany Theological Seminary as a graduate school and academy seeks to prepare people for Christian ministry and to educate those called as witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the cities and communities of the world.

Bethany's educational program bears witness to the beliefs, heritage, and practices of the Church of the Brethren in the context of the whole Christian tradition. Among its values and goals, Bethany Theological Seminary:

**Grounds its education** in the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of the world and in the acceptance of the New Testament as our guide to faith and practice.

**Features the historic Brethren testimonies** of community, peace, justice, reconciliation, service, and simplicity.

**Advocates a learning process** that grounds theological education in spiritual formation within the life and ministry of communities of faith.

**Affirms a style of education** that brings us into close relationships with congregations, the world-wide church, the peoples of the world, and God's creation.

**Seeks to equip the whole church** to better discern its faith and calling.  
Invites into the community persons of both genders, and of all races, nations,  
and confessions.

*Adopted by the Bethany Board of Trustees, November 1992*

As with Earlham College's Mission Statement, the Mission Statement of Bethany both complements and challenges ESR. Though much of the interaction between these three entities has been creative, there have been occasions when the mission of the School of Religion has been in tension with the College and with Bethany. The areas of tension can be anticipated in the respective Mission Statements; they continue the pull between the universal and specialized ministry.

For example, ESR does not offer the range of courses the College does. It simply cannot. On the hand, the College does not limit its understanding of Quakerism to ESR's Christian articulation of those roots. This tension is implicit in the ESR mission statement since worldwide many Friends today do not identify themselves as Christian. There was discussion within the faculty on this point as the new ESR Mission Statement was crafted. In response to this discussion and in an effort to more clearly articulate the seminary's identity, ESR developed the "Guiding Principles." (*ESR Catalog: 2004-2007*, 4) These principles make clear that, while rooted in the Christian tradition, the seminary values students from a wide range of confessional communities. On the other side of this tension is Bethany's Mission statement that confesses, "Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of the world." This statement is understood variously within the Bethany community, of course; nevertheless, it illustrates a place of tension in mission and theological vision wherein the two seminaries live.

At its best, the tensions resulting from the various mission statements generate vital engagement and dialogue across faith traditions. This stimulates students and faculty to question and develop their own faith and the theological expressions of their faith. Engagement with Earlham College means that religious truth claims are not accepted without challenge and critical reflection. Likewise, truth claims from the larger culture and the academic community itself are challenged by the Quaker tradition. When handled carefully, this kind of learning environment leads to spiritual growth, personal transformation, intellectual challenge, and practical preparation for ministry in a pluralistic world.

### ***Planning and Evaluation***

ESR has taken seriously the difficult report of the ATS visiting team in 1996 regarding institutional planning and evaluation. The 2000 focus visit provided an opportunity for the school to demonstrate its progress in these areas. With the 2000 visit, ESR demonstrated significant, if not impressive, progress in every area required by the 1996 report. In particular, attention was given to progress in systematic planning and in the creation of written, published policies.

Since the 2000 visit, ESR has continued to develop and implement those plans. At that time, the data from the National Consultation had just been utilized to develop a strategic plan for the institution.

This national consultation, *Among Friends*, was an extensive evaluation of perceived issues in the Religious Society of Friends. It also explored how Friends viewed ESR with

respect to those perceived issues. The following summarizes the conclusions of *Among Friends* (in regular text) and includes the seminary's planned responses (in **bold**):

ESR is and has been a place of profound spiritual deepening for those who attend, and especially for those who graduate. **Spiritual formation and transformative education will continue to anchor our programs.**

ESR should continue to serve a diverse spectrum of Friends. The seminary also needs to develop strategies (marketing/image) to assure that Quakers are aware that ESR serves a broad spectrum within the denomination. **We will continue to be a place of intersection for Friends of all traditions.**

ESR is not very visible among Quakers through the country and is often misunderstood by those who are aware of it. **We are committed to clarifying the seminary's mission so as to be more visible, more easily understood, and more available to constituents.**

Among Quakers across the country, ESR is seen as being out of touch with Monthly and Yearly Meetings. **We recognize the need for Quaker pastors and other leaders and commit to ministry formation grounded in Quaker ideals.**

ESR should consider ways for students to attend the seminary without needing to relocate to Richmond for three or four years. **We have developed ESR Access, low-residency distributed education program, in response to this concern. Through a combination of on-line courses and two-week intensive courses, non-resident students may benefit from an ESR education.**

There are considerable strengths within the Religious Society of Friends, and ESR should continue to be firmly and deeply grounded in these strengths. **We have every intention of approaching Christian theological education from a particularly Quaker perspective.**

American Quakerism is seriously divided. ESR must be committed to being a positive influence with regard to these issues and it must be prepared to work with others on their solution. **While we cannot resolve these issues single-handedly, ESR can be a community of dialogue, prayer and reflection as a means of assisting Friends who wish to move beyond these divisions. Though the first part of the consultation has been completed, the dialogue with our constituents and others will continue.**

The conclusions of the national consultation led to the development of a "repositioning plan," requested by the President and approved by the Board of Trustees, for which the Board released an additional 1% draw on endowment earnings for a period of five years. This five year "Strategic Plan" was finalized in June of 2000. (See: Appendix)

As it addressed the twin themes of communication and accountability, the plan called for a communication strategy. This strategy produced a new logo, tag line, view book, program style sheet, distributed learning brochure, newsletter design, and stationery design. Armed with new materials, ESR launched its own survey among prospective students to determine what forms of communication were most effective in cultivating their interest.



ESR also honed its communication strategies with the broader body of Friends. Not all communications with constituents are directly connected with fund raising. Some are informational, designed to engage and cultivate interest. Others are invitational, announcing opportunities for Friends to visit campus—for a conference, perhaps, or a lecture series, or for a particular peace forum. ESR's website, designed to appeal to those seeking to learn about ESR as well as those already part of ESR, is yet another example of the school's progress in this phase of institutional planning.

Not all communication between a seminary and its constituents is written. Thus, ESR faculty renewed their commitment to be visible and active among monthly and yearly meetings as a means of placing a living presence among Friends. This strategy acquired a sharp, new, coordinated edge in the launch of the *Traveling Ministries* program in 2005. This program offers workshops by ESR faculty to Friends meetings and churches at no charge to the host group. ESR realizes that it is best positioned to address the hunger for theological engagement evident among many Friends. Coupled with the realization that a strong Religious Society of Friends (rather than a debilitated one) will result in a stronger prospective student pool and donor base for ESR, this program is a valuable strategy. As ESR becomes more visible and familiar, it is more likely to be among the giving priorities of meetings and individuals.

From that important starting place of communication, ESR has now come to recognize the value of volunteer engagement. For a school such as ours, this is easily overlooked. However, engaged Friends become interested Friends. Interested Friends become informed Friends. Informed Friends more easily become advocates and donors. The primary vehicle for engagement had been the Board of Advisors, which represented Friends from most persuasions from around the country. However, this board was primarily a "meeting board" that listened to reports. ESR has worked to change Board expectations and levels of participation. Board meetings now identify issues ESR desires to discuss with its advisors. Reports are written, not presented orally. Instead, meetings are structured so that rich discussion occurs between ESR and some of its closest Friends. Additionally, these Friends are now accepting certain volunteer opportunities, including peer solicitation, mentoring of students, representation of ESR at events near their homes, to name a few.

A second group of volunteers has been created in eight groups around the country. These regional groups have a specific development function. They help determine funding priorities, identify new prospective donors, and involve themselves in peer-to-peer solicitation.

The 2000 strategic plan also called for greater accessibility to ESR as an educational resource. As ESR surveys the Religious Society of Friends, it realizes that many of the groups expected to provide leadership and resources toward the revitalization of Friends are, in fact, paralyzed by their own internal conflicts. As their health contributes directly to ESR's health, and as ESR's mission is intimately related to faith and ministry among Friends, the school's institutional planning concluded that the call for accessibility was, in reality, a call for the school to assume a greater role as a resource to Friends.

The centerpiece of ESR's response to accessibility has been the developing of a distributed learning program, *ESR Access*. This program will be discussed later in the report in chapter 4. However, it is important to note here that this strategic move to redraw the

boundaries of ESR's educational community to include those unable to relocate to Richmond has been a superb educational and public relations decision.

The aforementioned *Traveling Ministries* program is another instance of ESR's response to constituents' call for accessibility. This program is receiving a great response, and demand is requiring ESR to call upon alumni/ae and students to augment the faculty's availability.

Other new resources in response to this planning include the *Digital Quaker Collection*, a searchable, digital database of historic Quaker texts. Over 500 works including over 60,000 pages are available at no charge to those who wish to utilize these texts. ([esr.earlham.edu/dqc/](http://esr.earlham.edu/dqc/)) Additionally, ESR Publications, an imprint of Earlham Press, has released three books since 2004—all of which bear directly on the life and faith of Friends.

A similar planning process occurred in the area of development. The original strategic plan called for an increase in annual fund gifts—a challenge that has proven elusive. In the process of analyzing strategies and conversations with donors, ESR imagined a shift of focus. The school has charted a path toward a major gifts campaign. In so doing, it has stepped away from the traditional comprehensive campaign model, it has acknowledge the types of donors who support the school, and has accepted the current philanthropic philosophy that is cause-driven rather than loyalty-driven.

These examples demonstrate ESR's planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision of process related to institutional planning. It truly has become an ongoing, living process in the life of the institution.

### **Institutional Integrity**

In addition to the planning and evaluation process over the past six years, ESR has undertaken an extensive process of revision and expansion of policies and procedures, in consultation with ATS standards. The seminary now has a complete Policy Book that covers governance, admissions, financial aid, the *ESR Access* program, academics, faculty, community, and joint policies with Earlham College and Bethany Theological Seminary. (See: Policy Handbooks) Central to these is a Governance of ESR policy that places the institution within the larger Earlham context and situates the ESR faculty at the center of decision-making related to educational programming. The school has also revised, in consultation with students, the student handbook. The revised Student Guide to Earlham School of Religion includes an introduction to the ESR community, academic services, educational process, disability policy, procedures for student complaints, harassment policy, and sexual assault policy. (See: *A Student Guide to ESR: 2006-2007*)

Although the entire revision of policies was extensive, these policies were given special attention since the last self-study: harassment, sexual assault, student complaints, and disabilities.

Also of note are the Affirmative Action policies for student admissions and employment. These polices reflect ATS standards that require member institutions to enhance the participation of women and minorities. The school's policies exceed the required minimum of non-discrimination. ESR actively seeks to admit and employ women and minorities. ESR's student body has long been approximately 50% female; the combined full time teaching and administrative faculty has now reached 50% women. At the administrative level, the full-time Admissions Director, the Business Manager and the

Director of Academic Services are women, as are two part-time Development staff. At the teaching faculty level three of eight full-time members are women. One of these is the second most senior faculty member and is presently Clerk of Faculty.

Since the last self-study, ESR has instituted additional tuition scholarships for minority students, non-Quaker students, and international students. These scholarships have expanded opportunities for students, diversified the student body, and consequently enriched the seminary community. The student body is approximately one-third non-Quaker and has been for many years. ESR regularly admits minority and international students and at present has students from Columbia, Kenya, and Sweden.

ESR's tuition remains comparatively low, placing it near the top of peer institutions in affordability. (See: *ESR Fact Book: 2005*, "Peer Comparisons," E2) Since the last ATS review, ESR has monitored tuition costs provided in the ATS Fact Book, comparing itself to other seminaries in its geographical region (Anderson Theological Seminary, Christian Theological Seminary, Concordia Theological Seminary, and United Theological Seminary), other Friends institutions (Houston Graduate School and George Fox Evangelical Seminary) and other selected institutions (Bethany Theological Seminary, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, and Northern Baptist Theological Seminary). From this ATS data, ESR's tuition was ranked least expensive of these institutions in 1997, 1998 and 1999. In 2000, ESR moved to third and in 2001 to fourth of these eleven schools. In 2002, ESR returned to third most affordable.

In addition to maintaining low tuition, ESR has increased student scholarship assistance. Since the last review, ESR has increased its Cooper Scholarship program and added additional scholarships. Earlham School of Religion joined with Earlham College in a campaign called Investment in Friends Leadership in 1995-1998. The campaign raised \$1,392,404. Four new endowed student scholarships were established: the "Marshburn Family Scholarship" (market value June 30, 2005: \$136,338), with preference for students preparing for pastoral ministry among Friends, the "Nancy Kortepeter Mullen Scholarship" (market value June 30, 2005: \$222,148), an unrestricted scholarship awarded to any ESR student who embodies compassion and courage, the "Ethel Clark Starrett Scholarship" (market value June 30, 2005: \$757,025), available to any student, but particularly for African American students, and the "Carl and Eleanor Stempel Scholarship" (market value June 30, 2005: \$75,225), which is available for international students especially from the developing nations.

Currently, any Quaker student admitted to full-time study at ESR is eligible for a Cooper Scholarship. This scholarship covers two thirds of credits needed for the M.Div. and one half needed for the M.A. in Religion. Depending upon enrollment and available funds, this scholarship has also been awarded to non-Quaker students, including minority and international students. This generosity is possible in part due to scholarships endowed during the Investment in Friends Leadership campaign.

With low tuition and significant scholarship assistance, ESR students have had a low default rate since the last ATS visit. Since 1997, the loan default rate has been considerably lower than the national average. (See: Appendix) For example, in 1998 ESR had its highest student loan default rate, 4.5%. The national average for the same year was 6.9%. The combined three-year loan default rate has never exceeded 11.8%, well below the sanction rate of 25%.

In conclusion, since the last ATS review, ESR has made significant progress toward clarifying its mission, internally as well as externally. This provided momentum for a strategic plan that re-engaged its natural constituency without becoming exclusivist or sacrificing its institutional integrity. The conclusion of the Investment in Friends Leadership campaign increased our student scholarship assistance to all students, especially to Quaker students, the seminary's primary constituent for ministerial training. In addition, that campaign has strengthened the school's ability to support minority and international students. Revision of policies and procedures for faculty and students has resulted in institutional clarity of identity and purpose, increasing our ability to serve employees and students. New promotional materials self-disclose this identity and purpose. In concert with the strategic plan, they have positioned the school to better serve constituents at all levels, and they provide clearer institutional processes for self-evaluation.

### **Authority and Governance**

The opening paragraph of this chapter described a complex set of relationships that establish the context in which ESR operates. One significant component of that context is ESR's existence as part of Earlham College. The Earlham Board of Trustees established Earlham School of Religion in 1960. Since the seminary's founding, the Board of Trustees has remained the ultimate governing authority for school. However, in the regular operation of the school, governance is entrusted primarily to the faculty, administrative and teaching. No denominational body has direct authority over ESR. However, because Earlham is affiliated with Western Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends and Indiana Yearly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, these yearly meetings appoint six representatives each to the Earlham Board.

Earlham was initially founded as a boarding school that provided secondary education. From 1847 to 1881, it was owned and governed by Indiana Yearly Meeting. In 1859 the school became Earlham College. In 1880, Indiana and Western Yearly Meetings agreed to create a corporation that would own and govern the College. Earlham College was at that time incorporated separately from the Yearly Meetings, filing Articles of Incorporation with the Indiana Secretary of State on January 12, 1881. Formal ownership, governance and authority were relinquished to the new corporation.

Earlham is incorporated as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Indiana. Earlham's governance continues to be determined by Board of Trustees, as established by the Articles of Incorporation of 1881 along with subsequent amendments to these articles. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to exercise authority in governance, including all policies and procedures and financial issues. The Board is the ultimate legal authority over the operation of Earlham, including all activities of ESR. The President of Earlham is both the President of the College and the School of Religion. The Dean of the seminary is a Vice President of Earlham and reports to the President, who is responsible to the Board of Trustees. (See: Appendix)

The composition of the Board of Trustees is established by the Earlham by-laws. (See: Appendix) There are twenty-four members: six are appointed by Indiana Yearly Meeting, six are appointed by Western Yearly Meeting, four are elected by the Earlham Alumni Association, seven are at-large appointments, nominated by the Earlham Board of Trustees, though approved by Indiana and Western Yearly Meetings. The President is an *ex officio* member of the Board.

A few changes in the Earlham Board of Trustees bear directly on ESR. In 1990, the Earlham Board established a Mission Committee to attend particularly to the seminary (See: By-Laws of Earlham). This committee is composed of eight members of the Board of Trustees and meets directly with the Dean, other administrators, and the teaching faculty. This committee primarily considers matters related to the overall mission of the school and reports to the General Board.

(P)rior to the establishment of the Mission Committee, there had not been a process in place for the Earlham Board to become adequately informed of the School of Religion program, problems, and plans, and that in turn the School of Religion had not had a means of direct consultation with the Earlham Board. (Minute, Oct 25, 1990)

In addition to being a member of this Mission Committee, three board committees oversee the work of the Dean: Education, Finance, and Development. These changes have assured more adequate and comprehensive avenues of communication.

Apart from its overall governance by the Earlham Trustees, the single most important governance document is one titled *The Governance of ESR*, approved by faculty, the President, and the Board of Trustees in February 2001. (See: Appendix) This document provides greater clarity to ESR's organizational structure and governance than existed at the time of the last self-study. At the center of this document one finds the faculty authorized to develop and implement the educational program:

The Faculty for the purpose of the transaction of business shall consist of both the administrative and instructional personnel. The Faculty is authorized and empowered to prescribe courses of instruction, to adopt academic methods and to carry on all of the educational functions of the institution for the best interest thereof, except where the Board may take general or special action in reference thereto. The Faculty shall have oversight of the non-academic life on the College campus with such delegation of responsibility to committees or organizations from the Earlham community, including its student body, as is deemed appropriate.

With this authority granted, the ESR faculty makes decisions concerning curriculum and makes recommendations regarding staffing of the teaching faculty. They assess curricular programs and individual course offerings. Faculty recommend, initiate, and undertake programs for faculty development. Faculty are responsible for providing professional self-evaluation as well as participating in the periodic review of other members of the faculty. Faculty regularly assess student progress and, in cases of academic deficiency or breach of community standards, make appropriate recommendations to the Dean regarding disciplinary actions.

Academic freedom for ESR faculty is assumed and protected, as stated in the Governance document of 2001 and reiterated in the ESR Policy Book. (See: Academic Freedom and Responsibility) This Academic Freedom policy covers all Earlham teachers, both at the College and the School of Religion.

The ESR Faculty handbook applies in its entirety to the Earlham School of Religion faculty, both administrative and teaching faculty. In this handbook, all the rights, responsibilities, and benefits related to employment are specified.

ESR's concern for service to the Religious Society of Friends identifies another important set of stakeholders in the institution. To facilitate those relationships, ESR established a Board of Advisors. This Board of Advisors serves as a "channel of communication, in both directions, between the Earlham School of Religion and the wider world of Friends." (See: *Governance of ESR: 2001*) The Board of Advisors reflects the desire of the School and the Board of Trustees to nurture the connection between ESR and the Religious Society of Friends and also provides a formal structure through which the faculty and the Board of Trustees can hear concerns from Quaker constituents as they relate to ESR.

This Board's role is advisory and it is vital. "The advice and assistance of the Board of Advisors will be sought on matters relating to mission, program design, faculty searches, fundraising, student recruitment, placement and other matters at the request of the Dean, the President or the Board of Trustees."

As stakeholders in the institution, ESR students are not without voice in institutional planning and processes. "Students, faculty and staff participate jointly in shaping the life and affairs of the school." (*Student Guide to Earlham School of Religion: 2005-2006*, 11)

Formal interaction between students and the institution takes place in four ways: *First*, through Student Meeting for Business, which exists to consider issues that arise among students. Many of these concerns relate exclusively to students and are addressed satisfactorily there. The clerks of the Student Meeting for Business attend faculty meeting and regularly present student issues to the faculty as well as report on faculty meeting to Student Meeting for Business. (Faculty discuss sensitive issues, including individual students matters in 'executive session', which does not include the student representative.) *Second*, through student leadership on several standing committees: "Community Life Committee," "Finance Committee," "Nominating Committee," "Student Pastoral Care Team," and the "Spring Banquet Committee." *Third*, through two joint student/faculty standing committees, the "Worship Committee" and the "Common Meal Committee." *Finally*, through student representation on faculty search committees and other *ad hoc* committees, when appropriate. Students are also invited to send observers to Board of Trustee and Board of Advisor meetings. (See *Student Guide to Earlham School of Religion: 2005-2006*, 11-13)

## **Institutional Resources**

Earlham School of Religion devotes considerable energy toward developing its institutional resources. In this area, the seminary benefits substantially through its connection to Earlham College and its graduate school partner, Bethany Theological Seminary.

### ***Human Resources***

Earlham School of Religion has established a clear process for hiring employees. Faculty hiring is governed by the policy document contained in the ESR Faculty handbook. Staff hiring is conducted according to the Earlham Staff Handbook and in consultation with the Human Resources office at Earlham College.

Each process begins with a job description approved through the appropriate process. For teaching faculty hires, the Board of Advisors first approves the search itself. After conducting interviews, a faculty search committee recommends a candidate to the faculty who make a recommendation to the Dean (either approving or not approving the search committee's recommendation). The Dean carries the faculty's decision to the President.

For administrative faculty hires, the Dean oversees the development of job descriptions, in consultation with the President. The Dean appoints a candidate and reports this decision to the President. For staff hires, descriptions move from the Dean for approval to the College Human Resources Office for affirmative action checks, criminal background, and nepotism checks. Interview processes are outlined in hiring procedure documents.

Review processes are in place for all levels of employees. For hourly staff positions: annual reviews are coordinated by the Human Resources office and conducted by the employee's immediate supervisor. Results are shared with the employee and kept in his or her permanent employee file. For administrative faculty: the faculty handbook contains a self-evaluation document that is completed annually. This self-evaluation is shared with the Dean, who reviews the employee's job performance, professional development, and personal satisfaction. For teaching faculty: a review is conducted after his or her second year, followed by regular five-year reviews. This process, documented in the ESR Faculty Handbook, invites evaluative responses from colleagues, peers, students, and alumni/ae. Additionally, the Dean schedules an annual end-of-year conversation with each faculty member for an informal review of the past year.

Earlham School of Religion encourages professional development for its employees and makes funds available for this purpose. Full-time faculty members receive \$900 annually for professional development. Grants have been received in order to support larger professional development endeavors, for example, sabbatical support grants, funding for work on a commentary, language school, and further training on sexual ethics. ESR faculty have undertaken together several professional development activities. These have included: a two-week pilgrimage to historic Quaker sites in England (2001), a winter retreat devoted to evaluation and assessment of student learning (2004), workshops devoted to technology as a tool for theological teaching (2002-2003), and a cross-cultural immersion experience to Honduras (2006).

Since the last self-study and focused visit, the seminary has reviewed and revised its standing policies, and has drafted others as needed. In particular, the policy on academic freedom has been reaffirmed at all governance levels of the institution, as has the seminary's commitment to be an equal opportunity employer. The school reviewed and re-approved its policy on harassment. In consultation with the College, ESR determined that a sexual assault policy was also needed. This policy has been drafted and approved.

Necessary support processes at ESR come from several sources:

- Many human resources functions are provided by the Human Resources Office of Earlham College. This office provides verification of compliance with EOE commitments and handles paperwork for payroll, health insurance, and related processes.
- The Earlham Foundation manages ESR's portion of the endowment.
- The Earlham College Finance and Accounting departments oversee accounting and financial transactions, including an annual audit, conducted by BKD. ESR employs a Business Manager who oversees ESR's interests and provides quality control.
- Computing Services provides both Earlham College and ESR use of SCT Banner 7.x software, which conforms to NACUBO principles and procedures.
- The seminary has access to the College library collection and professional staff, and enjoys membership in the College's Athletics and Wellness Center.

Other services at ESR are strengthened due to the partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary. The two schools contribute equally to a shared Academic Services office, which provides registrar services as well as a variety of coordinating services for the partner schools. With the receipt of the Lilly Technology Grant in 1998, the partner schools created a new position and department devoted to Information Technology. That department has expanded to 1.5 FTE and now provides technical support for the two seminaries as well as maintenance of the seminary network. The seminaries annually review the cost allocation for these services. Currently costs for *academic computing* are shared equally; however, due to its larger administrative structure, Bethany contributes two thirds of the *administrative computing* expenses.

The ESR/Bethany partnership agreement defines these shared services and is reviewed biannually (See: Partnership Agreement). Occasionally, the agreement has been reevaluated with regard to shared services. When the seminary partnership began, the schools shared recruiting and admission functions. This strategy proved to be ill advised and was soon changed. Similarly, the two schools shared one business office. However, because of the connection to Earlham College, ESR determined that it did not require the full range of services that were provided by the shared office. The joint business office was dissolved in 2002 for the sake of administrative efficiency and fiscal responsibility.

Salary recommendations for teaching and administrative faculty are made by the Dean of ESR in consultation with the Vice President of Finance. Their recommendation is then presented to the President. ESR has chosen two indices that serve as benchmarks for faculty salaries, each of these is drawn from ATS data. One index refers to average compensation for faculty at schools for which the M.Div. is the highest degree offered; the second index relies upon salary data of schools selected for peer comparison. Earlham establishes hourly staff wages. In 2004, the College secured an outside auditor to review hourly job classifications and pay scales and has made adjustments as recommended.

### ***Financial Resources***

Three revenue streams support Earlham School of Religion: endowment income, tuition income, and annual gifts. Unrestricted income provides approximately 70% of the school's revenue, with tuition and annual fund providing 15% each. The school uses a 4.5% draw of a twelve month rolling-quarter average value from its endowment. (The Board of Trustees reviews the Endowment Spending rule periodically and the actual draw is approved at its June meeting in accordance with the rule itself). From 1996 to 2003, the rate was 4%. From 1999/2000 through 2003/2004, the Board of Trustees approved an additional 1% to support the ESR repositioning plan. At the February, 2003 meeting, the Board agreed to temporarily increase the rate to 4.5% to offset the stock market decline. Endowment income has increased by \$368,000, 88% in the ten years since 1996, mostly during the market boom of the late nineties. While the endowment has had more modest increases in the past few years, the endowment has returned to levels prior to 2000. Should this trend continue, the school projects more substantial increases in the next two years.

Tuition, ESR's second revenue stream, has remained steady, although not without some difficulty. Although ESR's student headcount has risen approximately 25%, the FTE count has declined, reflecting what appears to be a national trend: more applicants choose to study part-time and/or to commute to campus. Annual tuition increases of 4-5% have offset this declining student FTE. ESR's distributed learning program, *ESR Access*, is now



generating substantial tuition income. From 2002-2004, this program generated \$143,740. However, because *Access* was funded through designated, temporary monies this figure was not included in the general operating budget. In 2005, the Faculty and the Board of Trustees approved *ESR Access* as a permanent program. With that approval and the subsequent funding from the general operating budget, solid growth in this program is providing additional strength to the tuition revenue stream. The 2006-2007 revenue surplus projected from *ESR Access* is \$47,515. (See: Chapter 4, “Financial, Operational, and Physical Resources)

The third revenue stream is the annual fund. A review of annual fund income indicates that for twenty years, annual fund revenue has been between \$160,000 and \$200,000. In earlier years when the fund reached \$200,000, the school was utilizing unrestricted bequests in its annual fund. This practice has ceased and unrestricted bequests are directed to the endowment. The Annual Fund most recently topped \$200,000 in 2000-2001. In essence, Annual Fund results have been flat. This is an unsatisfying situation and has been addressed in a new development strategy outlined in ESR’s Case for Support (See: *ESR’s Case for Support*).

Total revenue has increased steadily from 1996 to 2005, 51% over ten years. The budgeting process has been fine-tuned over the past several years resulting in realistic projections in revenue changes. Over the past three years, ESR has operated with a modest cumulative budget operating surplus and \$111,000 cumulative cash flow surplus. The solid financial performance the seminary has enjoyed in recent years is the result of good investment strategies and careful institutional planning.

The financial market drop in 2000 created financial pressure on the school’s budget. While the seminary relies heavily upon its endowment, it has realized a cash flow surplus in each of but one of the past seven academic years. ESR’s difficult but successful management of budget pressures has been the result of careful cost management, but not to the neglect of physical plant maintenance. Recent major facility maintenance projects have included a new boiler, variable flow unit, and hard-water treatment system in the ESR Center. Both seminary buildings underwent a complete “face-lift” in 2002-2003 (wall paper, paint, carpet, furniture), and the Barclay Center’s HVAC systems have been improved by the replacement of two old units and an updated filter system.

Work begins in November for the following academic year’s budget. The Dean issues spending guidelines to department heads, who prepare three-year projected expense budgets. Over the next three months, the Dean, the Business Manager, and Earlham’s Vice President for Financial Affairs work together to develop a balanced budget and present it to the President. At each February Board of Trustees meeting, the Property and Finance Committee recommends a schedule of charges, compensation, and a projection of other anticipated expenses that could affect a balanced budget for the next fiscal year. From February through May the budget is modified and a full budget is presented for final approval to the Board at its spring meeting. At each Fall Board meeting, the Property and Finance Committee reports on the final actual performance of the previous fiscal year.

The Business Manager provides monthly reports to department heads and to the Dean outlining actual expenses in contrast to the approved budget. The Business Manager and the Dean closely review the entire budget each month in order to respond in a timely manner to unanticipated or unusual situations.

Much of this success is the result of deliberate institutional planning. As noted earlier, in June 1998, the ESR Faculty, Board of Advisors, and Board of Trustees approved a minute calling for a repositioning plan aimed at achieving stronger financial equilibrium. This was the initial motivation for the National Consultation and resulting strategic plan, referred to previously in this chapter. While the strategic plan primarily focused upon communication strategies and programming, this plan was developed to produce stronger constituent relationships, which would, in turn, strengthen the seminary's support base.

At a 2004 meeting of the Board of Trustees, ESR provided a report on the benchmarks that demonstrated satisfactory accomplishment of the repositioning goals, though dissatisfaction with Annual Fund performance. The Dean questioned the seminary's strategy of relying upon the annual fund as a mechanism for budget balancing. Consequently, a new development strategy has been designed to move the school toward a major gifts strategy utilizing a volunteer network and peer-to-peer solicitation for building restricted endowment. In short, the school has determined that a major gifts initiative that will endow existing programs and faculty positions central to its Quaker identity can reduce pressure on annual fund and tuition increases. This strategy is a deliberate shift from depending upon annual fund as a budget-balancing mechanism. It also charts a course slightly different than typical capital campaigns, believing that our donor base requires a different style of cultivation and stewardship. The Case for Support, approved by the Trustees in June 2005, describes this strategy and identifies priorities for the major gifts program. (See: *The Case for Support*, E7-E9) ESR is currently securing gifts to endow the Pastoral Studies and Christian Spirituality programs. Upon completion of these campaigns, the school will focus on the next appropriate major gifts priorities.

### ***Institutional Advancement***

ESR's \$32 million endowment is a testimony to the school's successful fundraising history and investment strategies. The most recent capital campaign was completed in 1998 and raised \$3.4 million. In 2001, the school received a \$1 million gift to endow its Ministry of Writing program. In most years, the school receives bequests of varying amounts. These funds are utilized as directed by the donor or, if no restrictions are provided, the funds are added to unrestricted endowment.

There are two significant challenges to the school's development initiatives. First, the donor base is small. This correlates directly with the size and decline of the seminary's parent denomination. Second, that small donor base is aging. No new generation of donors is emerging, since denomination loyalty is weaker than it once was and Quaker suspicion of theological education is as rampant as ever.

The recently adopted development strategy and Case for Support chart a plan that will easily occupy the next 4-5 years of philanthropic work and they hold the potential to build ESR's endowment. In so doing, the school intends to secure its financial future even if its donor base continues to shrink. The two positive factors ESR enjoys is a steady loyalty of the current donor base, and the fact that many of these donors are in a position to consider planned giving as one way of supporting the school. For most, this will be their largest gift to the school.

The current case identifies six major gift priorities that emerged from conversations with faculty, advisors, donors and trustees. They have been prioritized to create a manageable load for small development staff. When complete, a successful effort will total \$12 million to

the endowment, with \$10 million supporting current programs. At the current spending rate of 4.5%, this will add \$450,000 to the annual budget.

The immediate staff for this project is quite small, but this is partially offset by the school's connection with Earlham College. Sensing the probability of a revolving door in ESR's Development department, in 2002-03 the Dean attended Indiana University's Fund Raising School, completing their certification program. In 2003, the seminary moved its development office back into the seminary's administrative building, alongside other ESR faculty and staff. (In previous years, the ESR Director of Development had been housed within the College office of institutional advancement.)

With the 2005 departure of ESR's Director of Development, this department was restructured. Currently, the Dean oversees the development function of the seminary and is responsible for major gift cultivation and solicitation. A half-time position is dedicated to the annual fund campaign. Additional part-time staff support was added to provide prospect research and preparation of necessary promotional materials. Assistance for data entry and fund management, as well as planned giving, comes from the College.

With these staffing changes, office restructuring, and the creation of a new development strategy, the school initially focused on those closest to the heart of the institution. In 2001, faculty contributed less than \$1,000. In 2005, participation was 100% and gifts totaled in excess of \$10,000. Having achieved such substantial increase in this support, the Board of Advisors was challenged with a goal of 100% participation. In the most recent fiscal year, the school enjoyed 100% employee and Board of Advisor participation rate and a 95% Trustee participation rate. Currently, members of ESR's Board of Advisors are challenging the Trustees to match the giving of their peers. As those closest to the heart of the institution support the annual fund, they become credible advocates for the school in a volunteer capacity—a role many of them are embracing as they assist with the Major Gifts Initiative.

These changes represent the school's emerging philosophy of fundraising, one that is appropriate for a Quaker theological seminary. For ESR, the greatest potential for financial support does not lie with affluent alumni/ae, as is the case with the College. Neither does its greatest potential lie with denominational organizations, as is often the case in other theological seminaries. Instead, ESR's most ardent supporters are found among Friends who share the school's values and support its mission. These individuals are more loosely connected to the school than may be the case with other seminaries and, thus, require a different style of stewarding.

### *Physical Resources*

ESR is located on the northeast corner of the Earlham campus. Along with Bethany Theological Seminary and Earlham College's Newlin Center for Quaker Thought, ESR's two buildings form a seminary quad.

The Robert Barclay Center houses faculty and staff offices and was once the home of Elton Trueblood, a prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century Quaker leader. It was also home to some of the earliest ESR classes, even housing students on the upper floor. The building received a thorough renovation in the late 1980's and a significant face-lift in 2003. Each teaching faculty and administrative faculty member has a private office. Three administrative staff

employees have workstations in a shared reception area. All have PC's or laptop computers along with access to a T-1 connection, printers and photocopiers.

The ESR Center was completed in 1989 and replicates an historic Quaker meetinghouse. This building contains classrooms, computer labs, dining and food preparation facilities, worship space, a conference room, commuter lounge, a resource room, and two small reading/meditation rooms.

These two buildings contain adequate space for instruction, worship, and community activities, such as Common Meal, peace forum, and lectures. While office space is at a premium, accommodations are sufficient for the present size of the faculty and staff.

The school also rents one off-campus residence from Earlham College. The primary purpose for this is to house any International Cooper Scholarship students. If International students do not occupy all rooms other ESR students may lease space.

While the physical plant of ESR is relatively small in contrast to other seminaries, it is enhanced considerably by Earlham College and Bethany Theological Seminary. Our physical and financial relationship with Earlham College provides benefits such as these:

- Access to Lilly Library, a highly regarded teaching library
- Various student services facilities, such as the Runyan Center student union building, campus post office, food co-op, and the Earlham bookstore
- Many fine arts facilities, including Wilkinson Theatre and Goddard Auditorium
- The Earlham Athletics and Wellness Center
- Shared resources, such as Campus Safety and Security, computing hardware and software, grounds care
- Shared corporate overhead in Finance, Development, Board of Trustees and President's Office.

Likewise, the relationship with Bethany enriches the wealth of physical resources that support the educational enterprise, primarily in the form of classroom and community space. Between the two seminaries, there is sufficient space to handle emergency and short-term demands, special meetings and conferences.

The safety and accessibility of ESR facilities are secured through a closely monitored inspection and preventive maintenance schedule:

- Koorsen Protection Services – Sprinkler system in kitchen
- Koorsen Protection Services – Fire extinguishers
- Richmond, Indiana Fire Department – Exit lights, fire extinguishers, general safety
- Amco Elevators – ESR Center Elevator
- C.M. Contractors – Bi-annual HVAC system maintenance, filter change
- Cincinnati Insurance Companies – Boiler inspection
- GCS Service, Inc. – Bi-annual kitchen equipment inspection
- IKON Office Solutions, Inc – Copier inspections and repair

## **Conclusions**

Since the last self-study report of 1996, the seminary has done enormous work in the area of institutional planning. This is evident in such achievements as: the *Among Friends*

national consultation, which has illuminated for the seminary the present state of its key constituents; the strategic planning process and implementation, which has helped provide intentional direction for institutional efforts; the revision of important policies, which has been an important step in administrative integrity; the re-visioning of a major gifts strategy, which has examined realistically the character of the seminary, its constituents, and ways in which it can pursue institutional development with efficiency, contextual sensitivity, and with spiritual integrity; and the clarification of the school's mission and purpose, which has assisted the seminary make decisions based upon principle and not primarily upon expediency. At the same time, ESR's tuition has remained competitive, its physical resources have been maintained and enhanced, its students' financial needs have been addressed, and its faculty's development has been funded generously.

The seminary has long understood the challenges and opportunities implicit in its relationship to Earlham College; however, since 1996 it has become much more aware of what the challenges and opportunities are with respect to the partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary. ESR has a unique constellation of resources at its disposal (physical, financial, and human) and is becoming clearer about what stewardship of those resources means for a seminary dedicated to its parent denomination.

### **Looking ahead:**

While important work has begun, there is need for continued development of communication strategies. Some monthly and yearly meetings have partnered with the seminary through financial giving and through providing students. Others remain unaware or uncertain of what the seminary has to offer.

The *Traveling Ministries* Program, only in its first year, shows signs of much promise in several areas. A careful process of assessment needs to be developed in order that limited human resources are utilized in the most effective manner.

The Case for Support establishes a significantly new perspective and direction for the seminary's development work. The strategies it identifies are only beginning to be implemented and assessed.

Several items from the *Among Friends* consultation have been and are being addressed. However, other important issues remain. Developing strategies to address these denominational needs (the divided nature of Friends and the "out-of-touchness" with yearly meetings) will make a significant contribution to the seminary's denomination, it will increase the school's visibility, and it will further unfold the implications of the mission statement.

A careful study must be conducted of the phenomenon of increasing student headcount/decreasing FTE's and its overall effect on tuition, campus life, curricular offerings, and so on.



## Chapter Three: Teaching, Learning and Research

### Introduction

Issues addressed in this chapter reflect the concerns of ATS standards 3, 5, and 6.

Teaching, learning, and research are at the heart of ESR's daily efforts. The seminary is committed to providing the resources necessary to build a strong learning community. Solid programs and competent teaching faculty are critical, and regular assessment of these assures responsiveness to students, constituents, the Religious Society of Friends, and the wider Christian Church.

### Teaching, Learning, and Research

There are two classifications of faculty at Earlham School of Religion: teaching faculty and administrative faculty. These classifications differentiate function; however, there is occasionally overlap between the two. Both are directly involved in seminary governance and participate equally in faculty meeting, for example. Some administrative faculty teach, depending upon curricular needs and academic preparation. Dean Jay Marshall has taught courses in Old Testament and in Leadership. Steve Spyker, former Director of Information Technology (1998-2005), periodically taught, "Technology and Ministry." Tim Seid, Associate Dean of Distributed Learning, teaches courses in New Testament and inter-testamental studies. In 2004, the rank of Assistant Professor of New Testament (as 1/3 FTE) was added to Tim Seid's title in order to acknowledge his contribution to the seminary's academic program.

This section of the self-study is devoted to the specific classification of teaching faculty.

As it will be noted below, the ESR faculty has experienced significant turnover since 1996, due almost entirely to retirement. This provided the institution an opportunity to reflect upon how faculty design supported institutional purpose. If the seminary intends to play a substantial role in re-vitalizing its denomination, then a faculty is required who share that vision. If the seminary intends to be an excellent teaching facility, then it needs faculty who are, in fact, excellent teachers rather than simply researchers. Thus, ESR has sought to build a faculty of highly qualified persons who share the seminary's vision and who sense a particular call to this work in this context.

ESR has taken several steps to strengthen the position it offers to teaching faculty. First was the creation of the governance document described in Chapter 2. (See: *Governance of ESR*, C.a-f) This establishes the faculty's role in the life of the institution's operations.

Second was the strengthening of faculty salaries. In 1999, the President and Dean requested that the Earlham Board of Trustees adopt a set of indices as standards for median salaries of ESR's cohort group (as illustrated by ATS data). This raised the starting salaries of Assistant Professors and required small adjustments in the salaries of other ranks. Having achieved the level between these two indices, ESR's next challenge is to approach and match the upper index.

Third, ESR devotes time and resources to creating a sense of camaraderie and community among the faculty (evident in the joint faculty development activities mentioned

in the previous chapter). The investment in team-building has established a level of community among faculty that enables it to work well together, even on potentially contentious matters.

Finally, ESR assessed its committee structures in an effort to modify faculty administrative workload. An organizational practice frequently seen among Quakers involves all people in all decisions. Such a practice is neither efficient nor necessary. Therefore, in an effort to assure quality work while regulating workload, ESR identified those areas where multiple voices were absolutely necessary and those areas where one competent individual could be entrusted to act representatively.

Within this highly positive context, the ESR faculty operates.

### ***Background on Faculty***

A marked difference between the current self-study and the previous self-study is the composition of the teaching faculty. Only two of the present full-time teaching faculty were on the faculty in 1996: Lonnie Valentine and Nancy Bowen. The others have either retired or have left to pursue other opportunities. Consequently, since the last self-study, ESR has undertaken ten faculty searches and experienced nearly eighty percent turnover in faculty. This alone could have consumed all faculty energy and attention. However, during this period of enormous transition, ESR has done more than survive. It has strengthened existing programs, extended its influence and outreach into new areas, re-visioned its role in the Religious Society of Friends, sponsored a denominationally important consultation, and expanded into new markets, to name but a few.

In response to curricular needs, two full-time positions and one half-time have been added since 1996: full-time positions: Pastoral Studies, and Christian Spirituality; half-time: Writing.

As a Christian graduate theological school in the Quaker tradition, ESR has sought to attract faculty trained in a variety of schools who, nevertheless, maintain a commitment to Quaker scholarship or a commitment to a Quaker vision of education and ministry. For a seminary serving a small denomination, this task is challenging. Presently, the full-time teaching faculty includes **three women and five men**, five of whom are members of the Religious Society of Friends and hold a master's degrees from ESR. Nevertheless, three of these five hold doctorates from a variety of graduate schools (Emory University, Duquesne University, Vanderbilt University), and one is currently completing a doctorate at Ashland Theological Seminary. The remaining three non-Quaker faculty represent Baptist, United Methodist, and the Disciples of Christ (with degrees from Catholic University of America, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Vanderbilt University). Most faculty have had ministry experience in local meetings, churches, campus ministry, and the like, and six are either recorded ministers or ordained by their respective judicatories.

### ***Faculty Review: Standardized***

A copy of the Faculty Handbook is given to each faculty member at the time of their employment. This handbook contains the policies, rights and responsibilities, benefits, and other matters of employment. ESR does not follow the practice of granting tenure. Instead, full-time teaching faculty are evaluated for contract renewal in their second year of teaching, again in their fifth year, and every fifth year after that. Criteria for this process are clearly outlined in the Faculty Handbook.



A Faculty Review Committee, comprised of faculty peers, provides a written narrative about the faculty member under review. This narrative synthesizes evaluative materials submitted for this purpose by peers within ESR and beyond, current students, and alumni. It covers teaching effectiveness, advising and mentoring, professional development, participation in the ESR community and in the larger Religious Society of Friends, and growth in calling. The Faculty Review Committee presents its summary along with its recommendation to the Faculty Meeting where a collective recommendation is made by consensus. The Dean presents the faculty's recommendation to Earlham's President. "Final responsibility for the decision rests with the President and Board of Trustees but with the advice, consultation, and seeking of consensus with the Dean and ESR Faculty" (Faculty Handbook, 17). Procedures for faculty reduction due to financial exigency or discontinuance or reduction not mandated by financial exigency are clearly specified in the handbook (Faculty Handbook, 32-35).

This practice provides the security and academic freedom ordinarily associated with tenure, while also assuring an ongoing process of assessment and development. Yet, more than providing regular assessment of faculty performance for purposes of retention, this process benefits individual faculty by providing regular feedback for the purpose of professional development. Faculty under review make recommendations for their own ongoing professional development. The Faculty Review Committee, in its report, will often make specific recommendations for that person as well. In preparation for a review, recommendations from previous reviews provide benchmarks for evaluating development.

### ***Faculty Involvement at ESR and Beyond***

Full-time teaching faculty provide oversight for their respective program areas as part of their role in the life of the seminary community. This entails regular review of course offerings and occasionally recommending to the faculty new courses when necessary.

ESR faculty advise students. The Dean assigns new students to a faculty advisor based on the faculty's overall advising load. When a student determines his or her program emphasis, that student is assigned a faculty "mentor" in the appropriate discipline. Mentoring is not substantially different from the advising that faculty provide in a student's first year; however, mentoring may include prayerful guidance in vocation, discussion concerning possible field education direction, as well as assistance in planning the student's academic program.

There is a positive working relationship between teaching faculty and the Dean, and faculty generally agree that the Dean has done much to strengthen this relationship. He has streamlined faculty committee service and improved communication between his office and teaching faculty. The faculty is confident in the Dean's leadership, especially as that relates to the College, the joint partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary, and *ESR Access*.

Faculty are involved with wider Religious Society of Friends through attendance at Yearly Meetings, participation with Friends Association of Higher Education, Quaker Theological Discussion Group, outreach to Friends through on-campus conferences and gatherings (such as the Pastors Conference), the ESR Traveling Ministries Program, and attendance at Quaker-related events such as Friends General Conference (annually), Friends United Meeting Triennial sessions (Kenya, 2002; Iowa, 2005), and the Friends World Committee for Consultation 21<sup>st</sup> Triennial (New Zealand, 2004).

### *Distributed Education and Faculty Experience*

In 2001, the seminary launched *ESR Access*, a distributed education program. As discussed in the previous chapter, this program was developed in response to data gathered through the *Among Friends* consultation. In order to offer a program that resonates with ESR's vision of theological education and community life and that is consistent with the school's mission statement, *ESR Access* consists of both online courses and classroom intensive courses.

This program has generated considerable discussion among faculty concerning pedagogy, theological and spiritual formation, and the role of community in seminary education. It was *ESR Access* that precipitated these conversations; however, the conversations quickly extended into nearly every area of teaching, mission, and identity. Thus, when a faculty luncheon addressed the topic, 'technology and teaching,' faculty generally discovered new ways to think about learning in the classroom, not only in online delivery formats. In fact, this process generated much of the enthusiasm for understanding assessment with a goal of evaluating the entire seminary curriculum beginning Fall 2006.

Since no ESR faculty had experience teaching in such a program prior to *ESR Access*, much time has been devoted to faculty development. The seminary assisted in this process by offering development luncheons, workshops, and by purchasing and making available a number of books concerning distance education and online course design. Additionally, in the semester prior to teaching an online course for the first time, the Dean granted faculty a one-course reduction in order to develop the course and to consult with seminary computing staff and the Dean of Distributed Learning.

### *Faculty Morale*

Faculty morale is generally positive. Several factors may account for this. First, decision making in faculty governance is done through the "sense of the meeting." This Quaker process is empowering, allowing everyone to participate and have a substantial voice in decision making. Second, a process of regular standardized faculty review is in place. The process is in principle and in practice constructive and provides ample opportunity for professional growth and permits assessment from a wide variety of constituents. Third, the Dean's leadership is seen as confident, engaged, and competent. Faculty believe the Dean is supportive of various faculty initiative and ideas. Fourth, faculty are generally supportive of and interested in their colleagues' scholarly and professional endeavors and frequently offer collegial support and encouragement. Finally, two grant-funded travel/learning opportunities have boosted camaraderie while being substantial development and cross-cultural opportunities (England, 2001; Honduras, 2006).

Faculty development is encouraged and supported and this contributes significantly to morale. Faculty receive \$900.00 annually which may be used to support any number of development activities or purchases. The Dean regularly secures additional funds in order to support other faculty development projects. For example, the Carpenter Foundation of Philadelphia has granted ESR \$54,000 to date. These funds have already supported two sabbatical projects, research travel, language study, seminar attendance, presentation preparation, and doctoral studies.

Like many institutions of similar size, the ESR faculty can be spread thin with teaching, administrative responsibilities, student advising/mentoring, and public relations activities.

### *Faculty and Assessment*

Faculty are enthusiastic about excellence in teaching. Many interrelated components are necessary to assure this excellence. ESR recognizes that one vital component is a comprehensive commitment to meaningful assessment. For assessment to be meaningful the tools must be appropriate to that which is evaluated, it needs to evaluate matters of substance as well as form, and it must not compromise the integrity of the institution. In short, assessment cannot be an end in itself, rather it must function to assure that the ends of the institution (i.e., the mission) are fulfilled as responsibly and as competently as possible given the institution's resources and commitments.

ESR acknowledges in its regular practice that meaningful assessment includes a comprehensive process that includes assessment of *student learning*, *program* and *curriculum* assessment, and *institutional* assessment (including, but not limited to, assessment of employee effectiveness and programs for development). These processes are discussed in various and appropriate locations throughout this self-study (see especially, sections in this chapter: "Curriculum Review: Christian Spirituality Program," and "Curriculum Review: Comprehensive Seminar," and in Chapter 4, section, "On-Going Curricular Assessment," and "French Lick Retreat").

Since the arrival of Bethany Theological Seminary to the Earlham campus in fall 1994, ESR has used a *Credit/No-Credit* evaluation system (in order to be consistent with their long-standing practice). This system is part of the seminary's efforts to foster a cooperative rather than competitive learning community. In conjunction with submitting a Credit or No-Credit "grade" to the registrar at the end of each semester, teaching faculty write a summary narrative evaluation of each student's performance. This evaluation is given to the student and a copy is provided to the student's advisor and a copy kept in his or her official academic files.

In an Executive Session of Faculty (without the student representative in attendance) the entire faculty discusses first year students' progress at the end of the first semester. At the end of each academic year, faculty review the progress of each seminarian. If necessary, plans for intervention, advising, probation, or dismissal are developed.

As part of ESR's commitment to assessing curriculum, learning outcomes, and student achievement, the Dean sponsored a series of faculty lunches on assessment during the Spring and Fall semesters of 2003.

Drawing from a list of resources presented at a November 2002 ATS meeting on assessment, faculty each selected a text and, over the course of two semesters, facilitated discussions on the material. Eleanor Turk addressed the faculty at one of these luncheons. Dr. Turk, then Assistant Vice Chancellor for Assessment at Indiana University East, had considerable expertise in assessment. Not only were these discussions valuable in exploring assessment theory, they were immediately applicable to syllabus design and classroom teaching.

In Fall 2003, the conversation turned to the curriculum. The entire faculty discussed the question: "What are the types of experiences we want for our students, and are necessary

to produce the results we desire to see by graduation?” The process required thoughtful consideration of desired educational outcomes and the means by which the seminary may achieve those outcomes.

These initial conversations were followed by a three-day retreat on assessment in January 2004 at French Lick, Indiana. At this retreat, faculty reviewed its assessment work to that point and considered data on desired learning outcomes for ESR graduates that had been collected from various yearly meetings (See: Appendix). The faculty identified the means of assessment presently used to evaluate students throughout the curriculum, as well as the many ways faculty and the seminary as a whole are assessed (See: Appendix, “Acceptable Means of Assessment”). Faculty examined each program area to identify desired outcomes. As faculty discussed these learning outcomes, it was obvious that many outcomes were shared among the disciplines. It became clear that some outcomes were easier to assess than others; for example, “writing skills” seemed easier to assess than “ability to work with a variety of age groups,” or “ability to provide spiritual nurture.”

Through these valuable conversations, ESR faculty organized learning outcomes as they relate to curriculum design, and further evaluated and modified existing curricula as well as assessment approaches in relationship to these desired outcomes. In Spring 2005, the Field Education Committee began to ask how these outcomes factored in assessing students readiness for field education (a decision made by faculty consensus for each student entering the field education year). Faculty will soon conduct an extensive review of each program area. The review of the Christian Spirituality program in Spring 2002 and the assessment of learning within the *ESR Access* will provide a basis for developing models for future reviews of the seminary’s other programs.

## **Faculty And Programs/Areas Of Concentration/ Emphases**

### ***The ESR Curriculum as It Functions Programmatically***

With an eight person full-time teaching faculty, one-third of a teaching position purchased from Earlham College, an additional faculty FTE from adjuncts, and an expanded curriculum by virtue of its partnership with Bethany, ESR offers two degree programs. The M.A. in Religion degree is primarily an academic degree that prepares students for further graduate studies or for educational vocations such as teaching in secondary-level Quaker schools. M.A. students at ESR choose from four areas of concentration: Biblical Studies, Christian Theological Studies, Peace and Justice Studies, or Quaker Studies.

The M. Div./Min. degree is designed to equip graduates for a variety of ministries. Residential M.Div./Min. students choose one of seven areas of emphasis (identified during the second-year course Discernment of Call and Gifts). A cluster of courses is required for each ministry emphasis. Area emphases include: Pastoral Care and Counseling; Pastoral Ministry; Peace and Justice; Spirituality; Teaching; Unprogrammed Ministry; and Ministry of Writing.

These areas will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter along with their required distribution in the various degree programs. However, since ESR faculty relate to the curriculum through these areas of concentration and emphases, the topical approach below will delineate faculty roles and contributions as well as identify changes in faculty composition and curriculum design since the last self study. As will be evident, due to the

*ESR Access* program, all regular teaching faculty have been and continue to be involved in curriculum evaluation and redesign.

### ***Faculty Oversight of Curriculum and Professional and Ecclesial Contributions***

#### *Biblical Studies*

Course offerings and faculty leadership in biblical studies have been consistent since the last self-study. Old Testament Exegesis has been divided between BIST 301: Exegesis of the Prophets and Psalms and BIST 311: Exegesis of Biblical Narrative. In addition to the introductory course, Biblical Hebrew, and exegetical courses, upper level seminar courses such as Images of God in the OT, Women in the OT, The Prophets, and Wisdom Literature are regularly offered.

Nancy Bowen (1991) is [Associate Professor](#) of Old Testament Studies and holds the Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. She teaches required courses for both seminaries and was the first faculty member to design and teach an on-line *ESR Access* course (Fall 2001). She revised the advanced course in Wisdom Literature for the two-week intensive format. Nancy directs M.A. students concentrating in Biblical Studies, and she led a travel-study seminar to the Holy Land in January 2000.

Nancy's scholarly activities are substantial. She was contracted by Abingdon Press to write the volume on Ezekiel for its *Old Testament Commentaries*. In 2003, she co-edited a festschrift, *A God So Near: Essays in Biblical Theology in Honor of Patrick D. Miller*. In addition to presenting papers at academic conferences, Nancy has published a number of articles and book reviews since 1996, and has several other essays set for publication in collected works and commentaries. For six years Nancy co-chaired the Feminist Hermeneutics and the Bible program unit at SBL, a society in which she is active. She is ordained in the United Methodist Church and frequently offers workshops for the New Mexico Conference.

Tim Seid (2001) is Assistant Professor of New Testament Studies (as 1/3 FTE) and holds the Ph.D. from Brown University. When he joined the faculty in 2001 he was entrusted with developing the *ESR Access* program. He is ESR's Associate Dean of Distributed Learning. He brings to his work strong gifts in biblical studies, computer technology, as well as pastoral experience. In January 2004, he was named Assistant Professor of New Testament Studies to more accurately reflect his expanding contributions to the ESR's curriculum. Tim has taught: Postexilic Prophets; Pauline Psychagogy: Spiritual Formation and Pastoral Care in Early Christian Communities; and Hebrews. Tim regularly participates in Quaker conferences and SBL, and his scholarly efforts have focused on New Testament studies, early Quaker studies, and applied technology.

Biblical studies offerings are supplemented by Bethany faculty (Dan Ulrich, Rick Gardner, Steve Reid), ESR Dean, Jay Marshall, as well as adjunct and visiting professors.

#### *Theological Studies*

John Miller, former Professor of Theology, retired in 2000 after fifteen years of teaching and administrative work. During an interim year, Lonnie Valentine, Professor of Peace and Justice Studies, taught the core theology sequence (and continues to do so, as needed), along with Earlham College religion faculty. When ESR's new theologian joined the faculty, he added two new courses to the regular theology offerings: Theology and Worship, and Community Called Church.

David Johns (2001) is Associate Professor of Theology and holds the Ph.D. from Duquesne University. David came to ESR from Wilmington College where he taught religion and philosophy for four years. Prior to his service there, he taught for six years as an adjunct professor of religion at Malone College. In addition to teaching ESR's theology sequence, he teaches courses in Christianity and the religions, ecclesiology, and theology and worship. In Fall 2003, David offered Introduction to Theological Reflection for *ESR Access* in an on-line format, and he has redesigned and taught both Christian Ethics and Constructive Theology in the two-week intensive format for the *ESR Access* program. He has also served on Bethany M.A.Th. thesis committees.

David is active with the Quaker Theological Discussion Group and serves as an editorial advisor to its journal. He has served on the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches and in March 2003 hosted them at ESR. In 2004, David published, *Mysticism and Ethics in Friedrich von Hügel*. In addition to speaking and writing on theology, ethics, and ecumenism, David is studying creative writing and will add occasional support to ESR's writing program. He is a recorded Friends Minister.

Courses in theological studies are regularly taught by Bethany faculty (Dena Pence Franz, Scott Holland), Earlham College faculty (Mary Garman), and ESR professor Lonnie Valentine.

#### *Peace and Justice Studies*

Course offerings and faculty leadership in peace and justice have been consistent since the last self-study. A weekly Peace Forum supplements the regular curriculum.

Lonnie Valentine (1989) is Professor of Peace and Justice Studies and holds the Ph.D. from Emory University. As well as teaching Introduction to Peace and Justice, Lonnie teaches such courses as The Bible, Violence and Non-violence; Conflict Resolution; and The Spirituality of Peacemaking. Lonnie contributes regularly to the theology curriculum by teaching Constructive Theology, Christian Ethics, Liberation Theology, and Process Theology. Lonnie has redesigned two courses as on-line offerings for *ESR Access*, as well as restructuring the Conflict Resolution course as a two-week *ESR Access* intensive. Since a large number of ESR's M.A. students concentrate in Peace and Justice Studies, Lonnie has directed several thesis projects over the last ten years.

Lonnie is active in the wider Quaker world, speaking and writing on topics such as pacifism, conscientious objection, and process theology. In January 2004, Lonnie represented ESR at the Triennial meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation in New Zealand, where he spoke on the peace testimony.

Additional courses in peace studies are taught by Bethany faculty (Scott Holland).

#### *Quaker Studies*

Because of a generous gift to the seminary, ESR established an endowed chair of Quaker Studies in 1991. John Punshon was the first to hold this position. By the time of his retirement in 2001, this area of the curriculum had been expanded, strengthened, and it had gained significant attention among the seminary's constituents.

Stephen Angell (2001) is the Geraldine C. Leatherock Professor of Quaker Studies and holds the Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. He came to ESR from Florida A & M University where he had taught religion for eleven years. Prior to that position he had taught

in religion and church history at Hiram College for three years. Stephen has done considerable research and teaching in African American Christianity. In addition to teaching courses in Quakerism, he also teaches U.S. Church History and has recently designed an on-line version of that class, which includes lectures on DVD. He has designed and taught an online *ESR Access* version of Quaker Life, and has offered Quaker Spirituality, and Ministry Among Unprogrammed Friends as two-week intensives. Stephen also directs M.A. students whose concentration is Quaker Studies.

Stephen is active throughout the Religious Society of Friends. His contributions to Quaker scholarship are substantial, including articles, chapters, and reviews, as well as speaking engagements. Stephen has published two books on African-American religion and is under contract for a third. In October, 1999, he served as a consultant for a six-part documentary series, "This Far by Faith," and subsequently, was interviewed for the second segment, "God Is a Negro," which aired on radio nationwide in June, 2003.

Additional courses in Quaker studies are taught regularly by Earlham College faculty (Michael Birkel, Mary Garman) and adjunct and visiting professors.

#### *Pastoral Care and Counseling*

Pastoral Care and Counseling has undergone the most change in faculty leadership since the last self-study. After eighteen years on the faculty, Bill Ratliff retired in May 2003. Before his retirement, Bill published, *Out of the Silence*, a book reflecting the intersection of Quaker process and spirituality with pastoral care. He designed and taught Introduction to Pastoral Care as an on-line course for *ESR Access*; his Emergency Pastoral Care course was offered as an *ESR Access* intensive. Bill introduced a new course during his last year, Creative Use of Anger in Ministry. In response to community concerns about ministry to persons with addictions, an adjunct professor offered Spirituality and Addictions.

Michael Brenneis, an ordained Episcopalian, joined the faculty in the Fall of 2003. His extensive clinical expertise and scholarship contributed greatly to the life of the seminary. To ease the strain of his commute from the DC area, ESR experimented with a non-residential faculty arrangement for the academic year 2004-2005; however, Michael left ESR in May 2005. During his brief tenure Michael designed and taught a new course, Pastoral and Psychological Diagnosis.

While the quality of teaching has remained consistently high, transition in this area has been disruptive, particularly with regard to student advising. ESR is confident, however, that with the present appointment will come increased stability to this important area of the curriculum.

Jim Higginbotham (2005) is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling and holds the Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. He brings a rich background as a pastor, chaplain, pastoral counselor, and instructor to his work at ESR. In addition to having taught at a seminary in Nanjing, China, Jim is active with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) locally and regionally. He serves on the regional board of Church World Service and is active in the Society for Pastoral Theology. He provides advising to students exploring CPE. In Fall 2005, Jim redesigned and taught the course, Pastoral Care with Family Systems, as an on-line *ESR Access* offering. Jim is ordained with the Disciples of Christ.

### *Pastoral Studies*

In response to the needs of programmed Friends and recognizing the distinctive aspects of Quaker pastoral ministry, ESR now has full-time faculty oversight for Pastoral Studies. Pastoral Studies faculty provide courses in preaching, church administration, Christian education, missions, and the day-to-day work of the pastor.

Phil Baisley (1999) is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Studies and holds the M.Div. from Earlham School of Religion and is completing a D.Min from Ashland Theological Seminary. Phil's background in pastoral ministry is extensive and ongoing. He brings experience in Christian education and curriculum development. Phil has also been energetic in his contributions to the *ESR Access* curriculum, designing on-line versions of Work of the Pastor I and Introduction to Preaching and providing *ESR Access* intensive offerings in Work of the Pastor II and Christian Education.

Phil's doctoral research is focused on preparing students for Quaker pastoral ministry. He is active in various Quaker groups and regularly contributes to *Adult Friend/Teacher's Friend*. Phil coordinates the annual Pastors' Conference, an event that draws Quaker pastors and others to ESR for two days of lectures and discussions on ministry in the church. He is a recorded Friends Minister.

Additional courses in pastoral studies are offered by Bethany faculty (Dawn Wilhelm, Russell Haitch).

### *Christian Spirituality*

Throughout the 1980's and 1990's a number of spirituality courses were developed through the leadership of Alan Kolp and later, Margaret Benefiel. Since the 1988-90 catalog, all ESR students have been required to take the course, Spiritual Preparation for Ministry. Two national searches did not yield an appropriate candidate for an appointment in Christian Spirituality. So, in 1997, Ann Miller was appointed full time to the position. Ann had previously directed field education for ESR and taught spirituality courses part-time.

Ann made important contributions to the Spirituality curriculum: creating Individual Spiritual Direction and Group Spiritual Direction as semester-long courses; reinvigorating a rarely taught course, Christian Discipleship and Living in the Spirit; and redesigning the course on Prayer. She retired in December 2000.

Stephanie Ford (2000) is Assistant Professor of Christian Spirituality and holds the Ph.D. from The Catholic University of America. Stephanie has introduced two new courses, Spirituality and the Arts, and Spirituality and the Body. She redesigned Spiritual Preparation for Ministry for the *ESR Access* program and, in August 2001, she taught *ESR Access's* first two-week intensive course. Along with Lonnie Valentine, Stephanie helped conduct an extensive review of the Spirituality program during Spring 2002. This review will be discussed in detail below. In 2005, Stephanie began offering a two-week intensive version of Group Spiritual Direction for *ESR Access*.

In addition to completing a dissertation on Evelyn Underhill, Stephanie has published devotional materials and articles for a dictionary on spirituality. She has taught for the Upper Room Academy for Spiritual Formation and is writing a book on spiritual friendship that is under contract with the Upper Room. In 2001, Stephanie initiated an annual day-long spirituality gathering. This event has been well received and attracts Friends as well as ecumenical participants from Indiana and Ohio. Stephanie is an ordained Baptist.



### *Teaching*

Quakers have a long-standing commitment to education. With the proximity of Earlham College as well as the continuing need for Quaker educators in Friends primary and secondary schools and colleges nationwide, it makes sense for ESR to offer an emphasis in Teaching as ministry. No one faculty member directs this emphasis. Students pursuing this emphasis may choose one of two options: (1) take four courses as a concentration in a field that does not have a separate ministry emphasis at the seminary (Church History, Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament, or Theology); or (2) take four courses in an area that will provide foundation for the particular teaching ministry, determined in consultation with the faculty.

### *Writing as Public Ministry*

Early in its history, Friends regarded themselves as “publishers of truth,” and they emphasized writing of journals, tracts, and epistles as a witness to the Light Within. Thus, historically, writing has been considered a form of public ministry. Tom Mullen (former dean and faculty member) was responsible for initiating the study of writing at ESR. Students may choose as an emphasis, Writing as Public Ministry. This entails taking three writing courses in addition to core requirements. A number of students outside the emphasis elect to take one or more courses in writing as well. Tom continued to teach as an adjunct after his retirement. From 1997 to 2001, Brent Bill, ESR alum, pastor, and writer, served as adjunct instructor. From 2001 to 2005, Peter Anderson, ESR alum and writer, has provided adjunct instruction, along with Barbara Mays, former editor at Friends United Press.

Since 1990, a popular signature event has been the annual Ministry of Writing Colloquium, which draws writers nationwide to a weekend of presentations and workshops. The seminary initiated a year-long WORD Sojourn program in 2003, a year-long series of writing courses for non-degree-seeking students. That same year, ESR received a generous bequest of \$1 million to endow the Ministry of Writing program. A national search for a writing professor began in late Fall 2005.

[ ??? is ??? of Writing and holds the MFA/MA from ??? ]

Courses in this area are also taught by adjuncts (Barbara Mays, Peter Anderson, Barbara Cohen) and ESR professor, David Johns.

### *Field Education*

ESR provides one year of supervised Field Education experience for M.Div. students. Prior to field education, however, the seminary requires students take the course, Discernment of Calls and Gifts for Ministry, which places spiritual discernment of call at the heart of ministry preparation. After Ann Miller’s move to full-time teaching in Spirituality, Keith Esch, former ESR Director of Development, oversaw Field Direction for 1997-98 and Jim Bower, a retired Presbyterian clergy, served as interim Director of Field Education from 1998-2000.

Stephanie Crumley-Effinger (2000) is Director of Field Education and holds the M.Div. from Earlham School of Religion. Stephanie brings a wealth of experience concerning Quaker organizations, as well as an appreciation for the complexity of vocation discernment among programmed and unprogrammed Friends. Much of her career has been in campus ministry, four years at Wilmington College and fourteen at Earlham College. During her first two years at ESR, one-third of her appointment was as Director of Student

Services. In Fall 2003 this responsibility was transferred to Tracy Crowe, ESR Business Manager.

Stephanie has redesigned and taught the two central courses, Discernment of Call and Gifts and Field Education for Ministry, in the *ESR Access* program. In May 2004, Stephanie offered the discernment course in a two-week intensive format, and in the 2004-05 school year, she offered the first year-long on-line version of Field Education. Because an on-site visit from the Director is valuable to students, Stephanie visited each of the *ESR Access* students' field education sites, including one in Sweden.

Stephanie is very active in Quaker circles, including the Quaker Theological Discussion Group, Friends Association of Higher Education, and Friends Committee on National Legislation, and she frequently represents ESR at yearly meetings. Stephanie has written articles and devotional writings, and regularly attends meetings of the Association of Theological Field Educators. She is a Recorded Friends Minister.

## **Curriculum Review**

### ***Christian Spirituality Program***

In the Spring of 2002, the Dean, in consultation with the President of Earlham, called for a Study Committee to review the Christian Spirituality program. The history surrounding this curricular review is complex. The Christian Spirituality program had become established without a clear process of consensus among the governing bodies of ESR. Therefore, it was necessary to bring a thoughtful review of the program to the President of Earlham, the ESR Board of Advisors, and the Earlham Board of Trustees. Additionally, the President asked the seminary to consider whether a specific faculty position in Christian Spirituality was necessary since the ESR faculty as a whole textured their teaching with a concern for spirituality.

A Spirituality Program Study Committee was formed and gathered extensive data from a variety of sources including: a review of the history of the Spirituality program through past catalogs, ESR promotional materials, Board of Advisor/Trustee reports, ATS Self-Studies and Accreditation reports; interviews with two former ESR Deans, Wilmer Cooper and Tom Mullen; a review of ATS standards and publications related to spirituality in seminary curricula; a survey of students and alumni who had taken spirituality courses or pursued a Spirituality emphasis; a review of syllabi collected from Ann Miller and Stephanie Ford, 1998-2002; a review of the program by Donna Steffan, an experienced spiritual director and spiritual direction educator; review comments from John Westerhoff, seminary educator specializing in spiritual formation; a review of catalogs and materials from other seminaries nationwide that provide spirituality as an integral part of their curriculum; a summary of discussions by the Committee to determine issues that arose in reviewing the above materials; a summary by the Clerk of reflections on the relevance of spirituality to ESR curriculum and to the ESR community.

The Committee reported its findings to the faculty, along with the Dean and President.

There was a consensus among faculty and administration to continue the Christian Spirituality program and to maintain a full-time faculty member to provide oversight to the program. From a review of the collected data, it was clear that Spirituality as a separate discipline area was growing among seminaries, that ATS standards encouraged seminary

coursework in this curriculum area, and that ESR was consistent with its Quaker tradition and its mission. Questions and issues arose during the program review, which helped provide direction for curricular revision.

Based on data from students and alumni, as well as from review of other seminary curricula, this assessment was very favorable. Students and alumni offered course topic suggestions, some of which have been offered: *Spirituality and the Arts* (2003), and *Spirituality and the Body* (2005). Suggestions for the annual Spirituality Gathering have been pursued: *Engaging God in the Arts* (2003), *Praying with Our Bodies* (2004), *Listening to the Heart of Music* (2005), and *Spirituality and Ecology* (2006).

### ***Comprehensive Seminar***

The capstone course at ESR has been in place since the 1970's and has not differed in form or content from when it was first introduced. Ordinarily, students have taken Comprehensive Seminar during their final semester, and two faculty members have team-taught the course (one male and one female, ideally). With the beginning of *ESR Access* it was necessary to consider what the objectives of this course were and how these could be met in other delivery formats.

Previously, the faculty members teaching the course would design two questions for each student. The first question required the student to apply his/her program emphasis to a situation, such as teaching a seminar, or leading a workshop. Students were presented with their question and had one week to prepare. The second question involved an emergency situation in which the student would have to prepare to address the class within twenty-four hours after receiving their question. Students were expected to integrate material from their entire seminary career.

Faculty raised questions about this course occasionally. However, the questions came in earnest at French Lick when faculty attention was focused on curricular learning outcomes and later, when faculty considered how Comprehensive Seminar could be adapted for the *ESR Access* curriculum.

The main concern was that the current format did not adequately address the stated objective of evaluating students' integration of their seminary study. The format was too centered on performance (especially with question one), and crisis (question two), which is explored extensively in other courses. Second, students would often interpret the question from a particular area of their strength and miss critical points. (For example, in a crisis situation, a student might focus on crisis management and not address theological and biblical issues). This did not meet the stated objective of integration nor did it give faculty adequate opportunity to assess a student's competence in specific content areas.

In Fall 2003, Nancy Bowen and David Johns, faculty for the Spring 2003 and 2004 offering of Comprehensive Seminar, met to review the course and to consider innovations for the next semester's offering. The modified version of this course has been taught twice.

The current format begins with a general question given to the entire class: "What is the church and what is its mission in the world today?" Students must then address that question from eight angles: (1) personal context; (2) biblical studies; (3) historical studies; (4) theological studies; (5) denominational perspective; (6) cultural issues; (7) area emphasis; and (8) ministry/field education site. For each of these areas, each student presents a brief paper to the class and submits a copy to the faculty for assessment. One class session is devoted to

each of these angles. After the eight topics are explored, each student must then generate a specific question for himself or herself (subject to faculty approval/modification) and again he or she must address the question from the eight perspectives already mentioned. At the end of each question students provide a summary to the class.

The final aspect of the course, which was not part of the previous course design, requires students to submit a plan for continuing education, particularly addressing those areas assessed as weak through the semester's work. The present design more accurately meets the course's objectives, it is integrative, comprehensive, and it provides both the student and faculty clearer and more frequent opportunities to assess achievement.

These two evaluations have provided ESR faculty successful models for assessing both an entire curricular program (Christian Spirituality) and a specific course offering (Comprehensive Seminar). Faculty anticipate applying these models for future assessment of other program areas and course offerings.

## **Library**

A critical component in teaching, learning, and research at Earlham School of Religion is the Lilly Library.

### ***Overview, facilities, and administration***

Bethany Theological Seminary and the Earlham School of Religion are served by Earlham College's Lilly Library, located on the west edge of campus. In 1994, a formal agreement was established among the two seminaries and the Earlham Libraries to provide library services, collections, and staff for the seminaries (See: "Library Agreement"). Each seminary has its own budget line for library materials, and pays a one hundred percent surcharge on materials purchases to cover overhead such as cataloging, interlibrary loan, circulation, and binding. Each seminary also covers 17 percent of the salary and benefits of the person who functions as a theological librarian and liaison to the seminaries. As established in the agreement, the two seminaries have access to the full complement of library services and resources available to the College.

Lilly Library is a comfortable, air-conditioned, three-level facility, expanded in 1991, that houses theological, special, audio-visual, and general social sciences and humanities collections. The building is also home to Earlham Computing Services and the department of Instructional Technology and Media, which provides access and equipment for the use of sound and video recordings. The Postle Friends Collection and Archives has its own space and separate climate control within the building. There are four computer labs in Lilly: two available for general campus use (one of which is suitable as a teaching space), the third equipped for the editing of audio-visual files, and the fourth for staff training and faculty development. (Neither the Libraries nor Earlham Computing Services are involved in the administration of the computer lab in the ESR Common Building.) Equipment for the viewing and printing of microforms is also available. Open study spaces, small meeting rooms, individual carrels, and a wireless network are available throughout the building.

The Earlham Libraries are administered by Library Director and Coordinator of Information Services, Thomas Kirk. There is a professional staff of 6.8 FTE, and 5.2 FTE paraprofessional staff. Librarians at Earlham are classed as Administrative Faculty, and participate fully in College governance, in professional organizations, and have access to a variety of professional development opportunities and funds to support these activities. One

of the librarians, Christine Larson, who has a B.A. in Religion and has taken courses at ESR, has served as theological librarian to the seminaries since 1993. She participates in relevant committees at the seminaries, and some Joint Faculty meetings and faculty retreats. The Friends Collection and Archives, housing the Quaker-related research collections and Bethany's rare and special collections, is headed by Quaker historian Thomas Hamm. In early 2005, the Libraries were able to replace the retiring ¼-time Assistant Archivist with a full-time position, filling this new position with someone trained in archives management, thus complementing the skills already available in that facility.

Library matters among the three institutions are facilitated by a Joint Library Committee, consisting of one faculty member from ESR, one from Bethany, and the theological librarian. This committee, convened as needed, reviews issues related to the collection, major purchases or subscriptions, budget, services, and curriculum development.

### *Library Collections*

Bethany and ESR have access to a collection of 405,000 volumes, 980 print periodicals, 1,233 individual electronic periodicals, and approximately 17,000 serial titles in aggregated databases, covering all subjects taught in the College curriculum of 33 disciplinary and interdisciplinary majors. Of special note and value to theological research are works in philosophy, eastern religions, peace studies, history, social sciences, literature, and the general reference collection.

The theological collections are mostly integrated with other Lilly collections. They have been developed to support Master's level research since ESR was established in 1960. Development of this collection continues via selection by the theological librarian and members of the faculty, with a focus on supporting the programs and specific courses of Bethany and ESR. In 1998, the seminary faculties approved a collection development policy to articulate and guide the selection process.

Special collections related to the unique denominational identities of each seminary are developed in greater depth and their bibliographic control given thorough attention. The College funds the development of the Friends Collection, the third largest research collection for the Religious Society of Friends in North America. The Friends Collection is comprehensive, with an acquisitions policy that embraces all published Quaker materials. It also holds over 400 manuscript collections, focusing on Quakerism in the Midwest. Access to ESR's Digital Quaker Collection has been enhanced by adding links to individual works in the Libraries' online catalog.

Materials relating to the study of the Church of the Brethren are funded by Bethany and added to the general collections or Archives as appropriate. Bethany's Cassell Collection, named for Brethren book collector Abraham Harley Cassell, is one of the nation's outstanding collections of Pietist and Anabaptist literatures. Over the past several years, it has been cataloged, with approximately 95% of the collection now having full catalog records. In the summer of 2005, Bethany's Eberly Collection of hymnals was cataloged and moved to the Archives area.

The Earlham Libraries' electronic collections have expanded greatly in recent years. Since 2002, the seminaries have supported a subscription to ATLAS, a growing fulltext collection of theological journals. In addition to bibliographic and aggregate databases serving all disciplines taught at the College, including, of course, the ATLA Religion

Database, there are a variety of full-text journal collections and individual titles available online, including JSTOR, Project Muse, PsycArticles, and Lexis-Nexis, whose content serves the seminary programs. The Early English Books Online collection is available, with access through its database interface and through links in individual works' catalog records. The online catalog also provides access to over 5,000 NetLibrary electronic books, many of which are on theological or related subjects. The Libraries have recently begun subscribing to web versions of major reference works where possible, and will soon offer access to the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, the Encyclopedia of Religion, and other online titles of value to the seminary communities.

In the 2004-2005 academic year, the seminaries undertook a review of theological journal subscriptions, with special attention to individual titles' continuing relevance to the programs, and to format. As a result, the library will continue to receive paper issues of a number of titles judged to be needed in a current and browsable format, while expanding into a greater use of electronic versions, where available. The theological book collections are slowly undergoing a weeding process, led by the theological librarian, with review and input by faculty members.

Future considerations for managing and developing the collections will include a review of the collection development policy, as both seminaries have seen the addition of new faculty and revisions in curricula since the current one was written. While relevant electronic collections are currently about as good as they might be, given the kinds of products available to serve theological research, both seminaries must also continue to give thoughtful attention to new electronic research tools that might support the work of both residential and distance students in their programs.

### ***Contributions to Teaching, Learning, Research, and Curricular Development***

Central to the Earlham Libraries' mission and organizational culture is support of the educational endeavors of its user institutions, and the promotion of lifelong research skills for its students. To this end, the teaching and learning missions of Bethany, ESR, the College, and Earlham's M.A.T. program are a driving influence on all library activities. The Libraries support these educational missions through a variety of services, bibliographic instruction, and work with faculty.

Access to the Libraries' resources is facilitated and promoted by a variety of means. During the semester, the library is open 102 hours a week, and reference service is available for at least 45 hours a week. The Libraries' website provides information on hours, staff, and collections, and leads users to appropriate research tools and information. In addition to providing access to materials in our collections and beyond through an ExLibris online catalog and a variety of bibliographic databases, the library began using ExLibris "SFX" software in 2004 to enable easy and accurate access to information on holdings in the library and its electronic resources. Almost all electronic resources held by the Earlham Libraries are accessible to off-campus students and faculty via a proxy server. The Libraries offer InterLibrary Loan service to students and faculty for materials not available in our collections, and a Document Delivery service was begun in early 2004 for provide books and articles to those students living far from campus. There are no charges to students for these services.

The Earlham Libraries, awarded the ACRL Excellence in Academic Libraries Award in 2001, have long been known as a leader in bibliographic instruction and information

literacy in higher education. All professional staff participate in planning and carrying out course-integrated library instruction. The guiding principle of reference service in the Earlham Libraries is to further the students' independence and skills in doing research.

The theological librarian works with faculty and students at ESR and Bethany to support research, teaching, and learning. She communicates with faculty about research projects being assigned in courses, and offers bibliographic instruction as needed. She regularly provides such instruction in several courses in the required core, including Introduction to New Testament, and History of Christianity I & II, as well as in others. Instruction includes meeting with the class, demonstration of relevant tools, discussion of search strategies, and printed or web-based research guides. She is available for other assistance in person, and by phone and email. Students in online courses are provided a research guide and encouraged to make use of phone or email reference assistance. Preliminary results of the Earlham Libraries' 2005 administration of the LibQual survey indicate that seminary students and faculty find the reference service friendly and effective.

Every few years the Libraries' professional staff offer workshops to faculty, usually focused on the integration of electronic resources into research assignments. When appropriate, these workshops are open to seminary faculty; a few individuals have participated. In addition, the theological librarian occasionally offers presentations at faculty meetings on new resources and database features.

In addition to reference and instruction services, the theological librarian works indirectly to support Bethany's and ESR's educational and research activities. She provides library orientation to all new students. She has prepared web pages specifically for seminary students' needs in identifying and using resources. She advocates for the seminaries' interests in the development of library policies, services, and projects. She supports curricular development through meetings with individual faculty revising courses, and through participation in meetings to develop the Connections program.

The theological librarian and faculty members will continue to work to develop students' skills in finding, evaluating, and using appropriate information resources to meet the requirements of their courses, programs, and professional lives. This will require special attention in relation to students in the *ESR Access* and Bethany Connections programs. Although there are resources and services available to meet the remote students' needs, it seems more difficult to promote particular skills and resources, and to evaluate their use.

### **Financial Resources**

Bethany and ESR contribute equally to the salary and benefits of the theological librarian; each institution contributes 17%. Each seminary also contributes equally to the purchase of most library materials, and to the 100% surcharge on materials purchases. (There is no surcharge on the ATLAS digitized serials subscription.) Bethany also funds alone the purchase of, or subscription to, materials relating directly to study of the Church of the Brethren, usually about \$500 per year.

The table below shows the joint (shared) institutional expenditures on books and periodicals over the past ten years. The amounts in this table do not reflect the surcharge.

Fiscal year	Periodicals	Books	Total
95-96	\$6,639	\$14,694	\$21,333
96-97	\$8,024	\$20,638	\$28,662
97-98	\$8,491	\$13,095	\$21,586
98-99	\$6,938	\$13,817	\$20,755
99-00	\$7,470	\$14,195	\$21,665
00-01	\$7,823	\$ 9,063	\$16,886
01-02	\$8,501 \$1,216 (ATLAS)	\$ 8,745	\$18,462
02-03	\$9,211 \$1,435 (ATLAS)	\$16,749	\$27,395
03-04	\$9,630 \$1,560 (ATLAS)*	\$10,711	\$21,901
04-05	\$10,811 \$1,302 (ATLAS)*	\$11,975	\$24,088

\*In accounting errors, the library failed actually to charge the seminaries for ATLAS in these two years, so other accounting reports will not reflect these amounts.

In the 04-05 academic year, Bethany's library support expressed as a percentage of its overall educational and general budget was 1.3%. ESR's library support as a percentage of its overall educational and general budget during this same year was 2.5%. These percentages should be considered in the context of the seminaries' use of a library supported by the College at 4.9% of its total E&G for the 04-05 year.

Expenditures on books vary from year to year. Some of this is due to the variable timing of the Libraries' end-of-year accounting. However, it is also due to fluctuation in faculty participation in book selection. Regardless of the seminaries' budgeting for library materials, it is essential that teaching faculty continue to engage in book selection for their subject areas in order to maintain a rich and useful theological collection.

The development of electronic collections that provide new search possibilities and service to non-residential users may require a significant increase in financial support from both seminaries in coming years. Electronic texts are nearly essential for the directions being taken in ESR and Bethany's programs, and yet often duplicate titles already held and at a greater expense than the paper format. For example, the indispensable ATLAS digitized journal collection was 12% of the periodicals budget in the 04-05 year, yet we must still maintain current subscriptions to many of the titles it includes. Subscription to another invaluable electronic resource could take another annual and sizable bite out of the total funds available for library materials. The theological librarian and seminary faculties must be prepared for increased library costs due to the need for electronic texts and research tools.

## Conclusions

The seminary is satisfied with many dimensions of its work in the areas of teaching, learning, and research. Recruitment and hiring new faculty has consumed much time in recent years but it has resulted in a strong and creative faculty. Camaraderie and morale are robust making the ESR work and learning environment quite positive. Faculty are increasingly visible through publication, speaking engagements, and professional involvements, both within and beyond the Religious Society of Friends. Through the process of planning and implementing *ESR Access*, the seminary was reminded again of the excellent



educational partner it has in the Lily Library. The many serious discussions concerning teaching and learning that began because of *ESR Access* have continued and they have inspired much imagination and creativity. Additionally, the thorough assessment of the Christian Spirituality program yielded useful data and provided a usable model for larger-scale curricular assessment.

### **Looking ahead**

Work remains to be done in the area of curricular review. Many seminary programs, not to mention, individual courses, have not been subjected to a comprehensive review for decades. Faculty have committed to begin this process during Fall 2006, utilizing the model for assessment from the evaluation of the Christian Spirituality Program, the Comprehensive Seminar course, and the *ESR Access* program.

There is a need to stabilize the Pastoral Care and Counseling program after several years of disruption. Faculty and curriculum in this area are strong; however, because of the recent series of faculty turnovers and the critical importance of this program to the seminary's work, close attention must be given to its success and stability.

Faculty visibility (and thus, institutional visibility) has increased markedly since the last self-study in 1996, both within and beyond the Religious Society of Friends. This must continue, and it must be encouraged and funded, both as an institutional commitment to addressing the stated concerns of seminary constituents, as noted in the *Among Friends* national consultation, and as an expression of the seminary's expansive sense of "campus."

With the addition of ESR's first half-time faculty position in Writing, attention will need to be given to developing this program and integrating it more fully into the wider seminary life (field education, for example).



## Chapter Four: Educational Programs

### Introduction

Issues addressed in this chapter address ATS standards 4, 7, and 10.

It is in the seminary's educational programs where much of a student's formation takes place. It is also in the educational programs that the seminary expresses its unique character as well as reflects the concerns of the larger community of theological educators.

### Goals of the Theological Curriculum

#### *Foundational*

ESR fulfills its mission by meeting a set of specific educational goals that together cover a range of student learning objectives. These goals are met through the structure of the curriculum in general, the structure and design of individual courses, through the faculty's offering of specific courses, and through a regular process of course and program evaluation and revision. The overall educational environment is complemented through the experiences of worship and community life.

Simply put, the educational goal is preparation of students for ministry, but the process is much more complex than this. The educational pedagogy that underlies this goal is one which intends to be formational and transformational as mind, emotion and spirit are all engaged in the educational process. ESR is committed to a philosophy and pedagogy suited for adult education, believing that optimal learning occurs when teacher and student are motivated by the subject matter and engaged in a dialogical process.

The ESR faculty proceeds from this pedagogical commitment to envision the qualities and competencies it desires to see in its graduates. (See: Appendix, French Lick) It then designs a program and course structure that provides the experiences necessary to create a learning environment in which those qualities and competencies can be acquired or developed.

The seminary's Credo as well as its understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit and the educational community in a process of discernment further define the goals and structure of the theological curriculum. The seminary's Credo reflects its vision of theological education: "We hold that Christ is present, guiding and directing our lives, and that we can know and obey Christ's will." ESR believes that it is God who provides gifts for ministry. The seminary curriculum and programs assist students to discern those gifts, they provide the formal context in which these gifts are theologically considered, and they help nurture and strengthen those ministries.

The emphasis upon discernment in students' spiritual formation can be seen in the structure of the seminary's program itself. Degree candidacy in the M.Div/Min program is described in terms of "readiness for ministry." First year seminarians take the course, Spiritual Preparation for Ministry, which is an initial step in the process. Next, students take Discernment of Call and Gifts. It is in this course that students determine their program emphasis. After a student successfully completes these two courses, the Field Education Committee consults with him or her to discern readiness for ministry. The committee presents its recommendation concerning each student to the faculty for discussion and

approval or disapproval. When the faculty approves a student, that student is then admitted to field education. These three steps create, in effect, a continual emphasis on a student's discernment of call, gifts, and competency for ministry.

ESR maintains that growth in the whole person is necessary for those who will provide leadership in the Religious Society of Friends and in the wider Christian church. This growth requires subject mastery and skill development, but always in concert with a sensitivity to the movement of the Holy Spirit. The seminary's programs and teaching are holistic and designed to integrate spirituality, academic rigor, and practical application.

### ***Quaker Distinctives***

ESR's educational vision for its theological curriculum is further defined by the school's denominational heritage. Thus, key Quaker distinctives provide a particular imprint upon the theology, worship and ministry of the seminary.

**Spiritual Preparation** is a distinct mark and concern of Friends, and, therefore, of a Quaker seminary. Friends have traditionally been known for their reliance upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit and for their understanding that response to the Spirit leads to authentic ministry. ESR's educational programs cultivate spirituality through coursework on prayer, spiritual discipline, and examination of one's own spiritual resources.

**Quaker Studies** at ESR provide opportunities to study the movements and personalities that have shaped Friends' identity, faith, and culture. Degree-seeking or Occasional students may study, research, and write in the area of the history and thought of Quakerism. However, Quaker influence extends beyond course offering and contributes to the shape of the ESR educational experience, from forms of faculty and student governance, to communal activities, to worship. The effects of Friends' testimonies on simplicity, integrity, and equality are widely evident.

**Peace and Justice Studies** at ESR give a voice to Friends' concerns for social issues in an effort to put faith into practice. Past witnesses to peace, simplicity, integrity, and equality provide a solid foundation for engaging challenging social issues. Serious reflection and public discussion of these issues extends beyond the classroom into events that are open to the entire seminary community, such as the weekly Peace Forum luncheons. This Quaker distinctive unites theological studies with peace and justice concerns in an effort to discover how faith may be made real in a suffering world.

### **Degree Programs**

To achieve its educational mission, the seminary offers an 81 hour *Master of Divinity/Ministry* degree and the *Master of Arts in Religion*, a 36 hour degree program. Two non-degree programs, TRY and WORD Sojourn, extend this educational mission to students who may not wish to pursue a traditional degree.

Through *ESR Access*, the seminary offers its program to students unable to relocate to Richmond for the residential education program (residential students, however, may also take *ESR Access* courses). Students can earn either the Master of Divinity/Ministry or the Master of Arts degree through *ESR Access*.

There are some who are interested in taking only one or two seminary courses, or who perhaps want to take more but are not interested in earning a degree. Consistent with ESR's Quaker understanding of universal ministry, these students are encouraged to pursue

their interests and explore their callings. While this is an enrollment status and not a program, these students are officially classified as *Occasional Students*. Occasional students may take up to two courses per semester.

### ***M.Div./M.Min.***

The Master of Divinity and Master of Ministry degrees are equivalent degrees, the later being a distinct nomenclature utilized by ESR and preferred by some students concerned with the former's presumptuousness. (ATS granted full accreditation to the *M.Min* in June of 1975. In January 1997 with reaccreditation, ATS voted to recognize the M.Min. as non-standard nomenclature that had been approved previously by the COA as an appropriate alternative to the M.Div.)

This degree is designed to help equip students for a variety of ministries, including (but not limited to): pastoral ministry, Friends meeting secretary, counseling, chaplaincy, religious education, campus ministry, spiritual direction, and peace and justice ministries. The Master of Divinity/Master of Ministry program allows students to focus their degree. Their program is formed by the choice of ministry emphasis, which includes a cluster of emphasis specific courses, and in the choice of Field Education experience. (see below)

#### *Basic Requirements of the M.Div./M.Min. (81 semester hours)*

##### Biblical Studies (12 hours)

Introductory courses in Old Testament and New Testament are required. In addition, students take at least two 300-level courses Biblical studies courses. One of these will be an advanced seminar in either Old Testament or New Testament studies. The other will be a course in exegetical theory and practice. Although not required for graduation, Biblical Hebrew and Greek are offered on alternating years.

##### Historical Studies (9 hours)

Course work covering two of three major periods of church history provides the required foundational introduction to this field. Students take two of the following three courses: *History of Christianity I*, *History of Christianity II*, or *U.S. Church History*. Quaker students take one additional course in Quaker history to fulfill this requirement. Students from other denominations must satisfy this requirement and are advised to do so in consultation with their advisor and denominational body. This may be fulfilled, for example, by an independent study or a transfer course in their denomination's history and polity.

##### Theological Studies (9 hours)

All students take a three course sequence in theology. *Introduction to Theological Reflection* is usually taken in the first year of study. Students also take *Christian Ethics*, usually in their second year. The third course requirement is *Constructive Theology*. This course provides an opportunity for students to construct their own systematic theology, and is ordinarily taken in the final year.

##### Applied Theology Studies (21 hours)

A number of learning opportunities exist in this area of the curriculum: pastoral studies, pastoral care, ministry of writing, and religious education courses, for example. Six hours are taken prior to Field Education. A third course, which relates to the student's ministry emphasis, is taken during Field Education.

ESR advocates “gift-based” ministry and designs its program to assist students discern those gifts. *Discernment of Call and Gifts for Ministry*, normally taken during a student’s third semester, assists in that process.

A critical component of the M.Div./M.Min. program is the Field Education program. Students admitted to candidacy in this degree program develop a supervised ministry setting in which they exercise and further develop their gifts for ministry. Included in this process is participation in a year-long, nine-semester-hour Field Education for Ministry seminar where students use the case study method to engage in group learning as they reflect upon the ministry experiences of fellow classmates.

#### Spirituality Studies (3 hours)

All M.Div./M.Min. students are required to take *Spiritual Preparation for Ministry*, preferably during their first semester. This course addresses issues of spiritual formation helpful to students beginning seminary education and provides a forum for students to process their first-semester seminary experience. Additional spirituality courses are available to students with an interest in this ministry.

#### Peace and Justice Studies (3 hours)

Peace and justice studies have deep roots in the Quaker tradition and in ESR’s curriculum. All students take the *Introduction to Peace and Justice Studies* (PJST 101) or an advanced 300-level PJST course.

#### Comprehensive Seminar (3 hours)

During the final semester, seniors in the M.Div./M.Min. program take *Comprehensive Seminar*. In this capstone course students demonstrate competency in the several areas of their seminary training. Students are required to be integrative, analytical, and creative.

#### Electives (21 hours)

Elective courses permit students to take courses that fulfill the requirements of their chosen ministry emphasis and to take courses of particular interest to the student.

#### *Emphasis*

At the conclusion of the required discernment course, students select one of eight emphases as their ministry focus (pastoral care and counseling, pastoral studies, spirituality, teaching, writing, peace and justice, Quaker studies, ministry among unprogrammed Friends). A cluster of courses is required for each ministry emphasis, and becomes part of a student’s required program of study once a particular emphasis has been selected. At present, *ESR Access* students do not at this time have the option to select an emphasis in their program since it would require making available numerous elective courses. More importantly, however, ESR faculty adopted a “competency in ministry” approach to this program rather than an “emphasis” approach. Thus, each faculty member contributes those courses considered most important for ministry preparation.

### ***M.A. in Religion***

The M.A. in Religion is an academic degree and equips students for ministries in teaching and research, such as teaching in Friends secondary schools, or as preparation for

Ph.D. study. Students in the M.A. program may concentrate in one of four areas: Biblical Studies, Christian Theology, Quaker Studies, or Peace and Justice Studies.

*Basic Requirements of the M.A. in Religion (36 semester hours)*

Beyond prerequisite courses, students must complete thirty-six semester hours of work, which includes nine hours on the thesis project. In addition, a research language may be required.

Prerequisite Courses (0 hours)

Students must demonstrate competency in theology, and Old Testament and New Testament before taking advanced courses. The student may do this in any of three ways: transfer of credit from another accredited graduate school or seminary, taking the introductory courses at ESR, or passing a proficiency exam in each of the subject areas.

Core Requirements (18 hours)

*Biblical Studies (6 hours)*

These courses must be advanced Biblical courses, at the 300 level. At least one of them must be a course in exegetical theory and practice.

*Theological Studies (6 hours)*

These courses must be advanced theology courses, at the 300 level, one of which must be Constructive Theology.

*Historical Studies (6 hours)*

These will be chosen from among the following three major periods of church history: History of Christianity I, History of Christianity II, or U.S.A. Church History.

Thesis (9 hours)

Upon the completion of fifteen semester hours, the student petitions the faculty for the appointment of an M.A. Guidance Committee and presents a thesis proposal. Approval of the thesis and the appointment of such a committee by the faculty constitute admission to degree candidacy. The thesis project may take one of two forms: it may be a major thesis project, or three separate but related papers that together form a single monograph.

*Area of Concentration (9 semester hours)*

At the time of petitioning the faculty for an M.A. Guidance Committee, students choose a concentration: Biblical Studies, Christian Theology Studies, Quaker Studies, or Peace and Justice Studies.

*Language Requirement and Research Skills*

Students in Biblical Studies must demonstrate reading proficiency in Hebrew or Greek. Those in the Theological Studies area of concentration must show reading competence in an appropriate research language, normally German, French, Spanish, or Latin. In other areas, such as Quaker Studies or Peace and Justice Studies, faculty may waive the language requirement. However, faculty may require certain competencies in research skills.

*Oral Examination*

Students take a comprehensive oral examination that focuses on the student's general knowledge and understanding of the major field of emphasis and on the student's particular research.

**Other Instructional Programs*****TRY***

T.R.Y. is a one-year experience designed to give the participants an introduction to various areas of theological education while allowing the flexibility to pursue particular interests. It offers a formal setting in which issues of vocation and ministry, of theological inquiry and spiritual growth can be explored. All T.R.Y. students are assigned to a single faculty advisor. The school encourages T.R.Y. students to pursue their particular interests, but all T.R.Y. students will take the following foundational courses: Spiritual Preparation for Ministry, Introduction to Theological Reflection, History and Literature of the New Testament, and either History and Literature of the Old Testament or Church History.

T.R.Y. does not require additional administrative effort beyond that a regular degree-seeking student, although meetings with faculty advisors may be given to discernment. T.R.Y. is a one-year program; however, a number of students who enter the seminary through this program apply to a regular degree program. (See: Appendix)

***W.O.R.D. Sojourn***

W.O.R.D. Sojourn is a one-year program for students interested in exploring writing as a form of public ministry. Students have access to four courses focusing on writing as ministry (Aspects of Writing as Christian Ministry, Writing For Publication, Writing for Ministry Seminar, Writing Seminar). Students may also participate in the annual Ministry of Writing Colloquium and the biweekly Writers' Forum.

**On-going Curricular Assessment**

The theological curriculum is organic and grows out of the seminary's mission. The curriculum is modified regularly based upon student need, faculty interest, analysis of assessment data, faculty deliberation, and wider theological and ecclesial concerns. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness, curricular appropriateness, and learning objectives have all been practiced in some form since the seminary's beginning. However, in recent years faculty discussions have indicated a desire to be more intentional in this evaluation.

There was some concern expressed that assessment *qua* assessment would be unable to measure the intangibles of theological education believed to be important. In addition, it was feared that assessment would be driven primarily by educational trends and accreditation demands, and thus be a formality disconnected from the lived practice of this seminary.

Yet, growing enthusiasm about effective teaching gave rise to initiatives that helped focus attention toward on-going processes for assessment. Some of these initiatives have been minor and undertaken by self-selected individuals. Others have been quite significant and have affected the entire faculty. The seminary recognizes that it is still in the process of developing strategies for meaningful assessment and for implementing necessary changes based upon assessment data. Nevertheless, the following examples provide an indication of steps taken thus far.



By Fall 2001, several new persons had joined the ESR faculty (see chapter three). There was a brief reexamination of each program in connection to each faculty hiring. As the seminary prepared a new institutional catalogue (2001-2004), each faculty was asked to review course offerings in his or her area. Some descriptions were revised, some courses deleted, and others added. This process resulted in a catalogue that more accurately reflects the actual curriculum.

In 2002, teaching faculty evaluated his or her courses in relation to the 100, 200, 300 level numbering system. This evaluation was about more than merely numeration of courses. It specifically asked about continuing the school's commitment to a program in which introductory prerequisites provided foundations for 300 level courses, about what role, if any, 200 level courses had in such a structure, and what courses could be offered in on-line and intensive formats without sacrificing the quality of the learning experience. Decisions were being made concerning *ESR Access* and it was necessary to determine which courses (and at what level) faculty thought appropriate to offer in various delivery platforms (i.e., intensive format, on-line format).

In order to intelligently engage processes and literature of which faculty were only marginally acquainted, a series of luncheons were scheduled during the academic year 2002-2003. These luncheons were attended by teaching faculty and administrative faculty. At each session, one faculty member made a presentation based upon a key work in the area of teaching and assessment, summarizing the work for colleagues and facilitating a discussion on pertinent issues.

In preparation for a comprehensive curricular review, the ESR faculty undertook an extensive review of the Christian Spirituality program in 2002, including the curriculum. This process included surveying alum and current students, soliciting critique from external reviewers, and having a thorough discussion based upon this data. As part of this review, faculty examined available course offerings, staffing, and the program's role in the overall theological curriculum. While this process evaluated only one area of the seminary curriculum, it will serve as a basis for developing models for further assessment.

Another example of the on-going review of the theological curriculum is the Comprehensive Seminar course (ATST 390). This course, along with Constructive Theology, functions as a capstone course and is ordinarily taken in a seminarian's final semester (or, final two semesters for *ESR Access* students). Comprehensive Seminar was reviewed initially for two reasons. First, as *ESR Access* was assessed faculty needed to consider how this pivotal course could be best structured for distance learning. Second, there was no institutional memory of the course ever being other than it presently was. For some time, faculty teaching the seminar had expressed misgivings about whether, as structured, the course adequately served the school's curricular objectives.

Two teaching faculty revised the course in conjunction with the recently articulated institutional learning objectives, they team taught the course for two years, they developed a survey instrument for students in the course, and they then presented their findings to the entire faculty for deliberation. The first on-line version of this course will be taught in the academic year, 2006-2007.

### ***The French Lick Retreat***

From January 18-22, 2004, ESR faculty met at the French Lick Springs Resort in French Lick, Indiana for a comprehensive working retreat on assessment and learning objectives. This retreat represented the seminary's first major effort to explore these issues at length.

Faculty brought to this retreat a copy of their course objectives (as indicated on syllabi) along with an analysis of how these objectives contributed to the learning outcomes of the overall seminary program.

A list of *Acceptable Means of Assessment* was compiled that identified those assessment tools that could, with integrity to the institutional mission, be employed at this seminary. (See: Appendix)

Although faculty have begun evaluating their own course syllabi against the learning objectives identified at this retreat, a number of the results from the French Lick discussions remain in preliminary stages of integration. However, a significant achievement of this retreat is the *Revised Outcomes* for both the Master of Divinity/Ministry and the Master of Arts in Religion degrees. This is a revision of a longer list of outcomes by curricular areas. For both degree programs outcomes are categorized under: *Knowledge Outcomes*, *Formational Outcomes*, and *Skills Outcomes*. Since the Divinity/Ministry degree requires students to declare a specific emphasis, this degree also includes has a category of *Emphasis Outcomes*. (See: Appendix)

For ESR, the results of this retreat are significant, as it is the first time the faculty named and agreed to specific learning objectives for the curriculum. The mystic fog of theological education lifted noticeably and the faculty now have better accountability for the types of learning objectives that must be identified in coursework and utilized in evaluation of student learning and faculty teaching. This work has been tabled temporarily due to the demands of the self-study on a small faculty such as ESR's. However, this topic will be revisited during the curricular review process that will begin Fall 2006.

### **Cross-Cultural Engagement**

A further example of the organic nature the theological curriculum and how self-assessment is affecting ESR is evident in the recent discussions concerning cross-cultural engagement. While these discussions are still preliminary and inconclusive, it is important to mention them here. Not only do these discussions indicate important opportunities for the seminary, they indicate a growing commitment of this seminary community.

The faculty's cross-cultural immersion experience to Honduras in January 2006 was funded by a grant from the Carpenter Foundation of Philadelphia. Participants spent one week in Spanish language school, lived with Honduran host families, toured several cultural sites, met with Friends leaders, and heard a number of lectures on Central American history, culture, economics, religion, and so forth. The Honduras trip had four major objectives:

1. to build camaraderie and community among the seventeen participants
2. to initiate contact with Quaker leaders in Central America (particularly Honduras and Guatemala) and to explore how ESR might become a partner in leadership preparation

3. to explore what possibilities exist for cross-cultural exchange in the ESR curriculum (in preparation for the curriculum review scheduled to begin Fall semester 2006)
4. to expose as many faculty and staff as possible to an actual cross-cultural immersion in order to add experiential substance to the upcoming discussions mentioned in objective 3.

All that might finally emerge from this experience is yet to be seen or to be fully developed. However, the following have already occurred:

1. An Earlham Board of Trustee member has committed monies to fund one student and one faculty cross-cultural exchange (with the possibility of additional funding after assessing the benefits of these first two exchanges)
  - In January 2006, a *Request for Proposals* was issued to ESR students for cross-cultural projects requiring funding.
  - Three proposals were received in response to this *RFP* and each was reviewed by the seminary faculty and by the program's benefactor.
  - In March 2006, the student award was announced publicly: a first-year student's proposal to study in Tanzania during Fall semester 2006.
  - In response to a request from Honduran Quaker leaders and funded by the above mentioned Trustee, the seminary's Pastoral Studies professor **will spend two weeks** in Honduras conducting meetings with Friends leaders.
2. ESR's professor of theology has continued Spanish language study in Richmond since returning and **will travel** to Honduras in June/July 2006 for three weeks to continue immersion language study and to meet with Honduran Friends leaders. He plans to spend at least two months of his Spring 2007 sabbatical in Honduras as well.
3. ESR's dean continues study of the Spanish language, concentrating on writing as well as speaking. He has also begun exploratory conversations with constituents about possible Friends writings that could be translated into Spanish.

Further developments in cross-cultural exchanges await assessment of the projects already underway. Concerning students: the faculty will be interested in assessing how a student's educational experience is enhanced and expanded and how their understanding of vocation is affected because of their projects. The seminary will also be interested in how the wider student body is affected due to the projects of their faculty instructors. Concerning faculty: the faculty will be interested in assessing how a colleague's teaching is enhanced and expanded due to his or her experience (for example, the inclusion of cross-cultural texts and/or themes in courses, etc.).

## **Student Recruitment, Admission, Services, and Placement**

### ***Student Recruitment***

ESR strives in its official recruitment and admissions policies and in its actual practice to operate according to the Mission Statement of the seminary and according to its Guiding Principles.

A wide variety of *promotional materials* are used in ESR's recruitment efforts. These include the catalogue, view book, brochures, program and area specific fliers, seminary website, and so on. These materials are revised periodically and website resources are updated frequently. The catalogue is the seminary's principal document of record in which courses,

policies, scholarships, and various co-curricular opportunities are announced. Additionally, ESR's Mission Statement and Guiding Principles are prominently displayed in the catalogue.

Promotional materials state clearly the seminary's mission and often relate the promoted program to some aspect of the mission and/or the seminary's theology of ministry and confessional identity. For example, in a brochure promoting ESR's peace and justice area emphasis: "Peace with justice is more than a frequent Biblical theme and proclamation. It is a vital part of the heritage within the Religious Society of Friends...[this] program is an integral part of the curriculum at ESR."

A wide variety of *promotional practices* are used in ESR's recruitment efforts in order to attract a diverse student population. These include presence at graduate school fairs, advertising in various media (print, web, radio), a link to the *Christianity Today Seminary Guide* website, gradschools.com, and so on. In 2003 the web became ESR's major source of referrals, with the *Christianity Today Seminary Guide* being a major source for international inquiries. Advertising is carefully targeted to markets receptive to ESR's distinct missional identity. At the same time, however, each year approximately one third of the Admissions office's advertising budget is earmarked for experimental locations. This is done in order to cultivate new markets and expand the seminary's exposure. As feedback is solicited from prospective students, ESR continues to redirect its advertising budget to those sources that actually yielding students.

Consistent with ESR's vision of being "a source of leadership and a resource for renewal among the larger body of Friends" and the emphasis upon "preparing student for ministry in the manner of Friends," ESR works hard to send representatives to many Quaker Yearly Meetings sessions. These representatives may be official Admission's Office staff, teaching or administrative faculty, students, or alumni/ae. When possible, these representatives offer substantive workshops or presentations, since these are more effective than are purely self-promotional presentations.

An important and very practical *promotional practice* in ESR's recruitment efforts is the AHA staff. AHA's, *Admission and Hospitality Associates*, are specially trained ESR students who work under the supervision of the Director of Admissions. AHA's assist the seminary's recruitment efforts by making phone calls and mailing information to prospective students. One of their most vital functions is to arrange the details of campus visits. In part, this peer connection provides an important student perspective in the process. ESR consistently receives feedback that reinforces the quality of this experience as offered, and the importance of this hospitality in the decision-making of prospective students.

In the interest of integrity, ESR surveys annually each incoming student to determine whether the seminary's representation of itself (in promotional materials and practices) is consistent with their experience of the school following New Student Orientation events. Question number nine on this survey reads: "Are your initial experiences at ESR consistent with the image you obtained in our written text and the contacts you had with faculty/staff/students before orientation?" New students have overwhelmingly confirmed the fair representation of the seminary in its promotional materials and institutional representation. (See: Appendix: Student Profiles)

### *Student Admission*

ESR accepts and follows federally mandated anti-discrimination statements in its admissions decisions and practices. In addition, as stated in “Other ESR Policies and Procedures,” C.1., Admissions Policy: “the School moves beyond this minimal statement and affirms its commitment to equality of opportunity for all individuals who desire the type of theological education offered within the context of the School’s mission statement. Furthermore, since ESR is committed to maintaining its Quaker identity, it will aggressively seek candidates who are Quaker and ecumenical students who are in congruence with Quaker testimonies.”

Applications for admission are reviewed by a three-member admissions committee that consists of one teaching faculty, the dean, and the director of admissions. This committee reviews carefully all application materials. Transcripts, for example, are evaluated not only for the applicant’s GPA, but also on the breadth of pre-seminary studies undertaken. The seminary catalogue delineates what is regarded as a well-rounded undergraduate education: “English language and literature, history, philosophy, natural sciences, social sciences, the fine arts and music, Biblical and modern languages and religion.” In addition to these areas of academic preparation, ESR recognizes that the overall educational environment is affected by the character and drive of its students. “More important for success in seminary than specific backgrounds, however, is the student’s demonstrated capacity for creative learning, self-discipline and the pursuit of excellence.” (*ESR Catalog: 2004-2007*, 21)

Since ESR offers both degree and non-degree programs, the objectives and criteria specific to each are stated clearly in the seminary catalogue.

In order to determine a prospective student’s academic readiness for graduate study, criteria for regular admission have been established. As stated in the seminary catalogue they include: a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, and “personal and vocational objectives compatible with the mission of ESR.” (*ESR Catalog: 2004-2007*, 57) Applications from prospective students are evaluated on the quality of previous academic work (undergraduate and graduate, if applicable), ordinarily determined by GPA, articulation of ministry objectives, written essays, references, and interviews with Admissions Committee.

ESR’s vision of God’s call to ministry as well as its commitment to equality are informed by its parent denomination. Consequently, the seminary strives to make the educational and discernment experience available to a variety of persons of varied academic preparedness. Without compromising academic excellence in instruction and expectation, ESR offers three categories of admission:

#### *Regular Admission*

“Those holding a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university and who hold personal and vocational objectives compatible with the mission of ESR may apply.” (C.1.a)

#### *Conditional Admission*

“Non MA in Religion applicants whose qualifications for admission have deficiencies may be admitted to the M Div/M Min degree program “conditionally” under an agreement in which the student addresses these deficiencies, [if] ...the Admissions Committee believes

the applicant can make up while working on the ESR degree. In considering such applications, the Committee will give special weight to one or more of the following: members of the Religious Society of Friends; and persons committed to a vision of ministry consonant with that held by ESR.” (C.1.b)

### *Special Student*

Non MA in Religion applicants who, because of their special circumstances, do not hold a baccalaureate degree may be admitted to the M Div/M Min degree program as a “special student.” Each of these students will be reviewed annually. If the special student makes academic progress at ESR and satisfies the Admissions Committee’s stipulations in the student’s letter of admission, the school will admit the student formally into a regular degree program. ESR can admit only a small number of special students, according to ATS guidelines. (C.1.c)

*Special student* status is often considered for those who are not degree seeking.

## ***Student Services***

Each matriculating student receives *A Student Guide to ESR* (student handbook) during Orientation. The most recent version of the Student Guide is also available on the ESR website. This handbook includes introductory material, academic policies and procedures, as well as the seminary’s policies on grievance, appeal, harassment, sexual assault, and student records. The handbook prominently displays ESR’s Mission Statement, Guiding Principles, and Credo.

During new student orientation activities the Orientation Committee, consisting of the Business Manager, Director of Student Services, Director of Recruiting and Admissions and Director of Academic Services. The Director of Student Services publicly reviews the Handbook with new students, and identifies key points of each policy. Students are then given the responsibility to familiarize themselves with all policies.

Each year, new students are surveyed about the content and value of orientation. The Orientation Committee considers all recommendations when planning subsequent orientations. On several occasions throughout the first year, the Director of Students Services meets with first-year students as well as graduating students to respond to questions, comments, problems and recommendations. This office functions to connect students to the range of services and opportunities available in the both the Earlham and greater Richmond community.

The Director of Student Services attends most meetings of the student governance body, Student Meeting for Worship for Business (SMB).

Presently, the position of Director of Students Services is linked to the position of Business Manager thus combining in one office many of the services not altogether unrelated. From 2002-2003, the Field Education faculty member also served as the Director of Student Services. Professional development funds are being used to strengthen this newly combined position. Special attention is being given to International Student Services, as ESR is recruiting and admitting an increasing number of students from other countries due to the *ESR Access* program.

According to ESR's policy, the Director of Student Services consults with any student who provides documentation of disability and recommendations for accommodations. In April 2001, the ESR and Bethany faculties approved the "Joint Policy Concerning Students with Disabilities." (*Faculty Handbook*, G.3) This policy was written not only to comply with IDEA and ADA regulations, but also to ground the disability practices in the seminary's institutional mission and theological vision.

ESR administrators have an "open door" policy and are often available to meet with students without an appointment. Administrative faculty meet on a regular basis to share information, discuss opportunities related both to specific student issues and to larger seminary policies and procedures. Given the student body size, staff persons are aware of the responsibilities of each person and can offer students consistent, reliable information.

The seminary is clearer today than it was ten years ago about the need to balance student and institutional needs. ESR provides many services for students and yet realizes that as an educational institution, it cannot duplicate some services that are better provided elsewhere. Thus, the seminary makes every effort to inform students of both those services available at and through the seminary itself and what services are available in the wider Richmond community. Although this is so, the faculty is still learning how to best discern when a student's issues require patient faculty deliberation and when they require the attention of other professionals. The *Student Guide to ESR* enumerates the seminary's recommendations for "Care of Body, Mind, and Spirit," including spiritual direction, pastoral care, counseling, and mental health services. The seminary maintains current information on licensed counselors and therapists. (*Student Guide to ESR: 2005-2006*, 8-10)

With regard to students' records, ESR complies with and is committed to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). A summary of FERPA and the rights it protects is printed each year in the Student Handbook under the heading "Student Education Records Policy."

Records for current students are housed in secure cabinets in the office of the Director of Academic Affairs. When a student graduates or otherwise leaves the seminary their records are archived. ESR maintains a well-ventilated archive facility wherein confidential student records (admissions materials, summary course evaluations, transcripts, et al.) are stored in secured, fireproof file cabinets.

As a service to students and in the interest of full and fair disclosure, ESR regularly publishes its requirements for all academic programs in the seminary catalogue (21-31). Since the catalogue is published only periodically (recent catalogues, for example, have been dated: 2001-2004 and 2004-2007), this information is also available on the seminary website (updated frequently) and in the student handbook as well (updated annually). This information includes details concerning registration, cross-registration, incompletes, evaluation processes, leaves of absence, and so forth.

In addition, each semester ESR students receive an updated "academic inventory." These inventories, a copy of which is provided to the student's academic advisor, indicate all requirements for the student's specific program along with an updated notation of courses completed.

### *Tuition & Fees*

It has been ESR's commitment to keep tuition in the fourth quartile of ATS-affiliated institutions. The Dean reviews this annually and the Board of Trustees discusses and approves modest tuition increases, usually 4-5% per year. (See: *ESR Fact Book* and ATS reports) Annual Fund contributions and institutional endowment earnings offset required tuition revenue

Financial aid is calculated according to guidelines and restrictions in the Federal Student Aid Handbook. The seminary is concerned about the rising level of student debt and makes efforts to educate students about the long-term ramifications of excessive debt. Additionally, the Dean's office tracks data concerning student loan indebtedness. (See: Appendix)

ESR offers full tuition scholarships to most (75% in 2004-05) full-time, degree-seeking residential students, for 54 of the 81 credits required for graduation. Need-based scholarships of 20-40% of tuition are provided for the final 27 credits to those who qualify and to others who do not receive full tuition scholarships.

In order to make a seminary education affordable to underrepresented populations (and to increase student body diversity) ESR offers both the *International Cooper Scholarship* and the *Minority Student Cooper Scholarship* each year. The first may be awarded to "Quaker students from outside the US, with a preference to those affirming an intention to serve the Religious Society of Friends as pastors." (04-07 catalogue, 68) This scholarship covers tuition, fees, and provides a living stipend for up to three years. The second provides full tuition for up to two years for "African-American or Hispanic member of a Christian denomination, with preference to those affirming an intention to serve as pastors." (*ESR Catalog: 2004-2007*, 68)

ESR's institutional development priority is to cultivate major gifts to fund endowments for several programs rather than to fund individual scholarships. It is the institution's contention that while a scholarship assists one student an endowed program helps the entire ESR community by lowering operating costs, which in turn enables the seminary to keep tuition low.

In October 1999, ESR approved the "Policy and Procedures for Student Complaints." This document is printed in its entirety and is made available to the seminary community in both the student handbook and the faculty handbook. Pre-formal processes are identified, a formal complaint procedure is outlined, as are procedures for hearings and the appellate process. Complaints which may be mediated through these processes may include *harassment* (sexual or otherwise), *academic complaints* (including plagiarism, grade contestation, failure to meet ATS standards, field education site complaints, et al.), or *other grievances* (relational conflict, substance abuse, misconduct, et al.).

### *Student Placement*

A number of services and opportunities exist at ESR that assist students in the transition from seminary life to the next step in their lives.

ESR maintains current files that list local and national job vacancies in a wide variety of ministry contexts. Additionally, because of ESR's reputation, a number of ecclesial bodies and social service agencies regularly contact the seminary seeking suitable candidates.



Because of the judicatory structure of the Religious Society of Friends, Quaker students studying at ESR are not ordinarily under the care of a ministerial credentialing body. Thus, the structural relationships customary to seminarians in many seminaries do not exist for ESR's Quaker students. However, Yearly Meeting superintendents are regularly invited to campus in order to become acquainted with the seminary's programs and with students (potential candidates). In this way, the seminary is developing an informal network with placement possibilities.

ESR students benefit from the Earlham College Service Learning and Career Development Center. This office maintains files on employment opportunities, mentor programs, graduate schools, internships, and grant availability. Printed guides as well as evening workshops are available on topics such as interviewing and resume writing. If students post their resume on the Center's website it will be accessible to employers via an extensive national recruiting network.

Each year students are invited to attend an on-campus clergy-tax seminar to acquaint them with the tax implications of ministry careers.

In response to student requests, the Director of Student Services hosted an on-campus Job Fair in October 2005, a first for the seminary. The fair included informational and strategy sessions, and presentations from recent graduates about careers as pastors, chaplains, and ministry outside the workplace. Approximately ten employers were on hand to speak with students about opportunities with their organization. This event was evaluated by the hosting office and will be repeated annually. An annual CPE Day is held to assist student find placements and contacts for residencies.

### **Distance Education: *ESR Access***

The initiation of a distance-learning program at ESR grows directly out of the seminary's mission:

Earlham School of Religion is a Christian graduate theological school in the Quaker tradition. ESR prepares women and men for leadership that empowers and for ministry that serves. This mission grows out of our Christian belief that God calls everyone to ministry. Using a transformative model of education, ESR encourages students to explore the intellectual, spiritual, and practical dimensions of their calls to ministry.

As a means of fulfilling this mission, ESR has created a distance-learning model that incorporates a distinctly Quaker theological education into a format that serves Friends and others for whom relocation to Richmond is impossible or undesirable.

ESR undertook this initiative as a direct result of national consultation in 1998 sponsored by the seminary (*Among Friends*). In that consultation, two major themes surfaced: communication and accessibility. With regards to accessibility, constituents requested that the school make its educational programs more accessible to non-traditional students and to persons already serving in ministry.

ESR surveyed 3000 persons whose names were drawn from the school's prospective student, alumni/ae, and monthly meeting databases. There were 329 responses, or an 11% return rate. Of those, 50% indicated interest in obtaining an ESR degree with a minimum residency requirement. 74% owned a computer with at least 56k modem access. 24%

indicated financial aid was unnecessary or unimportant. 76 of 329 respondents were Friends pastors who lacked seminary education.

Since the seminary was founded primarily to serve the Religious Society of Friends has adopted a mission to prepare women and men for ministry in the manner of Friends, this request was clearly within the bounds of our institutional purpose and responsibility.

Following the National Consultation, ESR created a strategic plan that provides guidance for institutional priorities. One component of that plan was the creation of a distance-learning program. *ESR Access* requires 81 semester hours to complete, as does the residential program. It combines three online courses with three two-week residential intensives per year. At a pace of six courses annually, the program requires five years to complete. Fifty percent of the coursework is available online and fifty percent is available in face-to-face classroom settings. At least 2/3 of these two-week intensives occur on the Richmond campus. In this way, the program meets the one-year residency requirement.

After considerable deliberation and experimentation, the faculty chose to deliver introductory courses in the on-line format. These courses are generally content driven, and the idea of offering a graduate introduction to a subject such as the New Testament in two weeks seemed unwise, if not impossible. These introductory courses provide a foundation of knowledge and learning that allows upper level seminars to succeed in a two-week intensive.

The faculty evaluates the program's efficiency and effectiveness annually and has made modifications to the original plan. For the first three years of the program, a full course load included two online courses and four intensives. However, student feedback resulted in replacing one intensive with a third online course.

### ***Educational Resources***

Several converging factors have made it possible for ESR to enter this area of educational delivery:

The Lilly technology grant, while not explicitly for distance education, allowed faculty to become technologically proficient. They learned appropriate pedagogical strategies utilizing technologies that were transferable to distance education. During this grant period, network capacity and infrastructure was developed to support a distance learning initiative.

Work on assessment strategies for theological education allowed the faculty to become conversant with teaching and evaluative strategies that ensure the quality of these courses and program meet the expectations of the larger M. Div. program.

In preparation for *ESR Access*, the seminary took several steps to support this program without weakening the traditional programs.

- The number of teaching faculty was increased from six to eight. By expanding the faculty, it was possible for each to contribute an online course and an intensive course to the program. A network of qualified adjuncts was assembled to support the additional number of courses offered through the two-week intensive format.
- 2/3 of intensives courses are scheduled to serve both our residential and our distance-learning students. By doing so, course overloads are avoided and regular faculty remain *ESR Access's* primary instructors. It also provides points of contact and integration with the residential student body.

- The position of *Associate Dean of Distributed Learning* was created. This individual helps faculty with course design. He also provides the first round of user support to distance learning students. Since undertaking this position, Tim Seid further strengthened his abilities in this area by completing the *Certification in Distance Learning Administration* from the State University of West Georgia in 2003.
- A half-time position was added to the Seminary Computing Office to provide network maintenance and tech support.
- The office of Academic Services created web registration procedures as well as electronic versions of all forms students may need for academic related matters.
- The seminary initiated the Digital Quaker Collection, a full text, searchable digital database of 538 Quaker works from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. This resource further strengthens the research capabilities of distance learning students in the area of Quaker studies.

In addition to these proactive steps, the resources of Earlham's Lilly Library are vital to the success of *ESR Access*. Lilly Library has fifty-seven computer databases available. A number of these are full text articles and books for theological research. By means of a proxy server, these resources are available to distance learning students. In addition, the library has instituted a document delivery service by which research materials are mailed to distance learning students. Finally, the seminary has library user agreements with select libraries in areas in which there may be a concentration of students.

Students may contact the seminary's Director of Student Services by phone or email to address matters related to student life that may not be appropriately addressed by instructors or advisors.

From the beginning of the *ESR Access* program, the seminary has gathered data from each course to evaluate the quality of learning occurring in these courses. In fact, even before ESR's March 2004 petition to ATS requesting preliminary approval of a degree program, the seminary conducted comprehensive assessment of the preliminary and experimental courses to determine whether learning objectives were met. The data gathered has included course evaluations by students *and* by the faculty teaching the course.

### ***Financial, Operational and Physical Resources***

Earlham Trustees approved a temporary 1% draw from the school's endowment to underwrite the school's strategic plan costs. A portion of these funds financed the first three years of *ESR Access*. Much of the infrastructure necessary for such a program already existed for the residential program. Advertising was incorporated into the recruitment ad plan at no additional cost. The bulk of expenses above and beyond the regular budget, are limited to funding the associate dean position and payment to adjunct faculty.

As the table below indicates, after four years into the program, tuition funds over 100% of program costs. *ESR Access* student scholarships and/or institutional technology are a priority in the seminary's current Major Gifts Initiative. With the 2005-2006 academic year, the seminary began offering a 25% tuition scholarship to degree seeking *ESR Access* students.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-2006 Projected
<b>Income</b>	\$41,898	\$38,462	\$63,380	\$52,447	125,780
<b>Expense</b>	\$92,364	\$94,636	\$87,481	\$47,124	76,713
<b>Total</b>	<\$50,466>	<\$56,174>	<\$24,101>	\$5,323	49,067

### ***Relationship and Impact***

*ESR Access* operates in a manner consistent with the expectations of the seminary's residential degree programs. In this delivery system, faculty and administration approach education holistically.

From the beginning of the program faculty engaged the question of how one creates a learning community at a distance. Spiritual formation remains a core feature of the program, along with an emphasis on discerning and refining call and gifts to ministry. Classical theological disciplines form a foundation of knowledge that supports critical theological reflection and growing self-awareness. Research, analysis, and integration are standard expectations. Like the residential program, the *ESR Access* curriculum positions introductory courses as prerequisites to upper level seminars so that students are prepared for a deeper learning experience in upper level courses. A generous selection of applied courses forms a pool from which students select the necessary electives. Any combination of these electives, along with the required courses, provides the set of learning opportunities and experiences needed to create the context in which competency in ministry can develop.

Initial worries that a distance program would erode the applicant pool for the residential program or undermine the quality of an ESR education have proven unmerited. The faculty has succeeded in breaking the mold that defined ESR course delivery for over forty years. By permitting residential students to take a limited number of online courses and by utilizing intensives as courses intentionally serving both student populations, the seminary has achieved a comfortable integration of programs.

### ***Standards***

ESR is approved to award two degrees: the M.Div./M.Min. and the M.A. in Religion. The courses offered in *ESR Access* meet ATS standards for each of these programs. For example:

In a theological school, the overarching goal is the development of theological understanding, that is, aptitude for theological reflection and wisdom pertaining to responsible life of faith. Comprehended in this overarching goal are others such as deepening spiritual awareness, growing in moral sensibility and character, gaining an intellectual grasp of the tradition of a faith community, and acquiring the abilities requisite to the exercise of ministry in that community. These goals, and the processes and practices leading to their attainment, are normally intimately interwoven and should not be separated from one another. (ATS Standards, 4.1.1)

Additionally, the following statements of purpose and goals guide the seminary's planning and evaluation:

*M.Div./M.Min.*

The basic purpose of the M. Div. is to “prepare persons for ordained ministry and for general pastoral and leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings.” (A.1.0)

“The goals an institution adopts for an M.Div. degree should take into account: knowledge of the religious heritage; understanding of the cultural context; growth in spiritual depth and moral integrity; and capacity for ministerial and public leadership.” (A.2.0)

**Concerning Content:** The *ESR Access* curriculum closely resembles the residential 81-hour M.Div. program, although fewer electives are available. This curriculum includes introductory and upper level courses in the classical disciplines in the same proportion as the residential program, thus satisfying the standard of religious heritage. A gateway course in spiritual formation, a discernment of call and gifts course, plus electives provide adequate attention to spiritual formation. Matters of cultural context and globalization are addressed in the requirements of various courses, such as Biblical Exegesis or Peace and Justice studies. Students choose ten of fifteen courses that best suit their interests in ministry. These, along with a Field Education experience, meet the standards for capacity for ministerial and public leadership.

Discussion groups, collaborative projects, face-to-face interaction and worship during the two-week intensives have thus far proven quite sufficient to create a high quality learning community.

**Concerning Location:** 50% of this work can be completed online. At least 27 hours, equivalent to one year, is completed on the ESR campus during two-week intensives. The initial program design included offering courses at off campus occasional sites either by regular teaching faculty or by adjunct faculty. However, this was expensive and ineffective. Enrollment in these courses was low and did not attract as many area Occasional Students as anticipated. Presently *ESR Access* intensive courses are offered on the Richmond campus. In addition to the economic benefits, this has increased the interaction between *ESR Access* students and residential students, it has made available an increased number of intensive courses for residential students, and it has reduced the seminary’s dependency upon adjunct faculty.

**Concerning Duration:** An M.Div./M.Min. completed through *ESR Access* will normally require five years.

*M.A. in Religion*

The purpose is to “provide a basic understanding of theological disciplines for further graduate study or for general educational purposes.” (E.1.0)

The goals an institution adopts for these degree programs should include the attainment of survey knowledge of various theological disciplines, or focused knowledge in a specific discipline, or interdisciplinary knowledge. (E.2.0)

As with the 36 hour (45 if prerequisites are not satisfied) residential M.A., this version of the degree requires demonstrated competency in biblical studies and theology. This may be done by successfully completing a proficiency exam, by transfer of satisfactory graduate credit, or by taking the introductory courses at ESR. Six hours of upper level course work is then required in biblical studies, church history and theology. All of these may be

satisfied from the pool of courses offered within the *ESR Access* curriculum. In addition, nine hours of work in are required in an area of concentration. To satisfy these nine hours, students propose to the faculty an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that may include appropriate course from the *ESR Access* curriculum, approved independent studies, or appropriate transfers of courses from other institutions. These courses provide learning and research opportunities that prepare the student for the final nine hours of the program during which a thesis is written. Submission of a thesis and oral exam are required at the culmination of the degree program.

An M.A. in Religion completed through *ESR Access* will normally require three years.

## **Conclusion**

Many features of ESR's educational programs are working well and are appropriate for the school. The curriculum and program are similar enough to those of other theological seminaries to justify offering the standard and widely recognized professional and academic degrees: the M.Div./M.Min. and the M.A. At the same time, the curriculum and programs offered feature elements particular to ESR's identity and mission, such as the emphasis on Quaker distinctives and the Ministry of Writing Program. There is a clear relationship between the curriculum and the school's mission and credo, thus satisfying an important criterion: institutional integrity. Important steps have been taken over the years in the area of assessment in order to integrate it more into the on-going life of the seminary. Concurrently, there has been a concerted effort to educate faculty in this area. Student placement services, while not yet at a level where the seminary is satisfied, has, nevertheless, grown considerably since 1996. In that self-study report, no attention was given to this important area. Additionally, *ESR Access* has demonstrated its importance to the ESR educational ministry. In terms of number of students, quality of education, and economic viability, this program is exceeding expectations.

## **Looking ahead**

*ESR Access* must be further refined and integrated more seamlessly into the total life of the seminary. For example, community is a shared institutional value at ESR. While significant antidotal evidence exists to believe that community indeed is formed in this program, there remains the challenge to better integrate the *ESR Access* students with those of the residential community. Additionally, faculty development must continue in the area of distance and on-line pedagogy and the institutional infrastructure will need to be evaluated frequently as this program grows.

ESR's understanding of "campus" continues to expand and it is challenged not only by *ESR Access*, but also through the *Traveling Ministries* program. The seminary must assess carefully which of the many opportunities available to it are consistent with its mission and how far it can reasonably and responsibly stretch given its resources, human and financial.

The curriculum review, which is scheduled to begin Fall 2006, must proceed with care comprehensiveness, and expeditiousness. Good models and much enthusiasm are in place for this process; however, there is much work to be done. Because the composition of teaching loads have been affected by the *ESR Access* program, requiring each faculty to contribute at least one course to the curriculum, it is more important than ever that the curriculum reflect realistically the available human resources, address the real needs of students, and embody what is absolutely necessary for a vibrant theological education.

## Chapter Five: Conclusions

### Introduction

A report of the magnitude of this self-study will necessarily illuminate both the positive features of an institution and areas that need improvement, modification, or more diligent attention. At the beginning of this self-study process, the ESR faculty expressed hope that the final report would be positive enough to articulate well those things about which they are understandably proud, and honest enough to name areas where more work must be done. This hope was not only in order to offer a balanced presentation to ATS for its assessment of the seminary, but also for the benefit of the seminary itself, to enumerate major achievements of the past ten years and to establish a proposal for institutional efforts over the next five years.

This report has sought to provide such a balanced self-assessment, internally for the seminary, and externally for our accrediting peers.

### Summary of Chapter Conclusions

#### *Institutional Issues and Concerns*

Since 1996, the seminary has taken considerable strides in the area of institutional planning. For example:

- Initiated *Among Friends* national consultation
- Reassessed the school's relationship to the Religious Society of Friends
- Developed strategic plan process
- Implemented five-year strategic plan
- Introduced a comprehensive program of marketing and external communications
- Clarified the seminary's governance structure
- Revised several important policies
- Re-visioned a major gifts strategy for institutional development
- Clarified the school's mission and purpose

#### *Teaching, Learning, and Research*

Since the previous self-study report ESR has done much in the areas of teaching, learning, and research. For example:

- Recruited and hired an almost completely new faculty
- Focused on camaraderie, morale and community building among faculty
- Solicited grant monies to provide additional funding for faculty development
- Provided faculty cross-cultural development opportunities
- Conducted extensive assessment of Christian Spirituality program
- Assessed and revised the Comprehensive Seminar course
- Created the Digital Quaker Collection
- Cooperated with library staff in assuring adequate resources for *ESR Access*

### *Educational Programs*

Since 1996's self-study, ESR has given considerable attention to its various educational programs and services. For example:

- Assured a clear relationship between curriculum and mission
- Worked to integrate assessment more fully into the seminary
- Educated faculty in the practices of assessment
- Formulated learning outcomes for degree programs
- Strengthened student placement services
- Strengthened student services
- Designed and implemented *ESR Access*
- Created position of Associate Dean of Distributed Education
- Created a Seminary Computing Services office to support the emerging use of technology in theological education

### **“Looking Ahead:” Summary from the Chapters**

#### *Institutional Issues and Concerns*

- Continue developing communication strategies
 

This work remains important for at least two reasons. From the perspective of student recruitment, prospective students increasingly find us in the virtual world. Strategic communication through this medium will play an increasingly important role in student recruitment. Secondly, though we have progressed greatly in our relationships with constituents, we can never assume this work is complete. Continual communication is necessary for sustained engagement.
- Develop more fully the new *Traveling Ministries* and assess the program
 

Initial feedback suggests this is a strategic gem with reciprocal value. We will need to analyze the evaluations and devise follow-up conversations to further develop this work.
- More fully implement and assess the Case for Support
 

Our institutional family has approved this Case for Support. We continue to build a culture of philanthropy throughout our institution. Moving outward, we are only beginning to enter the phase of identifying key prospects and soliciting major gifts. We have a solid network created to assist this work, but it remains an enormous undertaking for a school of our size.
- Address other issues from *Among Friends* (divided nature of Friends, “out-of-touchness” with yearly meetings)
 

Some of the problems raised can be addressed through increased communication and visibility among our constituents. Some of the problems, however, are part of the larger denominational culture and not easily solved. However, giving attention to these matters seems a reasonable and responsible way for a denominational seminary to participate in the life of the denomination itself.
- Study the effect of increasing headcount/decreasing FTE's



This noticeable trend in theological education has implications for community involvement and investment in the learning process. We will need to be attentive to how this type of student population can be most meaningfully engaged in a learning process that intends to be formative and transformative, and requires certain commitments to community participation it is to work well.

### ***Teaching, Learning, and Research***

- Implement a comprehensive curriculum review (programs and courses)  
Our faculty has high confidence in our current curriculum. However, for many years it has been virtually unchanged except for the addition of new courses. With new faculty, the addition of *ESR Access*, and the synergy from the assessment work, we are eager to consider how to strengthen our formational education model in light of new personnel, technologies, and commitments.
- Strengthen and stabilize the Pastoral Care and Counseling program  
We believe this will be achieved easily enough with stability in the faculty position.
- Encourage and support faculty visibility through publication, speaking, service  
This will be achieved through continued funding of professional development (through the regular budget and through external grants), and the growth of speaking networks such as *Traveling Ministries*.
- Develop and integrate more fully the Ministry of Writing program  
We anticipate that much programmatic integration will occur as a result of hiring our first faculty member who is dedicated solely to teaching creative writing and directing what has become for ESR, a signature program.

### ***Educational Programs***

- Refine *ESR Access* as a program and integrate it more fully into the total seminary life  
The general configuration of this program works well and intersects with the residential program at key junctures. As the program grows, we expect to consider further refinements to this program.
- Continue providing faculty development in creative pedagogy  
During the initial transition to the *ESR Access* program and in preparation for faculty conversations about assessment, various “themed luncheons” were held that were, in fact, development “in-services.” We anticipate continuing these sessions on a periodic basis.
- Attend to any infrastructure strains resulting from *ESR Access* expansion  
We have learned much about distributed education and have made a number of institutional modifications in order to more effectively participate in this form of education. As much as we may anticipate the institutional modifications required for this program, and indeed for any of our academic programs, there are inevitable surprises that were unforeseen. On-line and distributed educational programs, such as *ESR Access*, are still in their infancy and need to be monitored carefully and

assessed frequently. We will need to give careful attention to the seminary infrastructure as it responds to our growing educational commitments.

- Assess how far the expanding “campus” of ESR can realistically grow given available resources (financial, human)

It is tempting to be swept up in the excitement of the “what-is-possible” in the rapidly changing educational landscape and to try every new technology or every experimental method, or to respond enthusiastically to all external interest expressed in our seminary and our programs. While we remain open to exploring seriously the many opportunities presented to us (directly or indirectly), and while we remain committed to experimentation and change, we plan to evaluate these in connection to our clarified sense of institutional mission and purpose and with a realistic assessment of our available resources.

### **Further Conclusions—What We’ve Learned**

A great deal has been learned since 1996 and this self-study process has illuminated much of this. Not the least of which, we marvel at how much work has been done in a relatively short period of time. Significant changes, not merely cosmetic, changes of substance, have been made in personnel, programs, institutional vision and priorities, communication strategies, and constituent relationships. While the convictions and commitments that characterize our seminary remain firmly intact, much of how the seminary interacts, internally and externally, and how the school functions on a day-to-day basis looks quite different than it did ten years ago.

Through vigorous and challenging conversations on assessment and learning, we have learned that it is possible to de-mystify the process of theological education and, as a faculty, to discern real, concrete, measurable objectives that can be articulated and agreed upon. This process has opened the seminary immeasurably to asking questions about teaching effectiveness, student learning, and the role of the theological seminary in ministerial and leadership formation. Admittedly, there is much more work for us to do in this area; however, the steps taken thus far are the steps that will make everything else possible.

Through the process of clarifying existing policies and adding ones overlooked, we’ve learned that everyone in the seminary community benefits from this clarity and administrative diligence. Careful attention to policy is not bureaucratic fixation; on the contrary, it is a concrete expression of honoring and attending to the other.

We’ve learned that good institutional planning contributes to institutional success and efficiency. This is simple, responsible stewardship and is important regardless of the institution’s size. This is all the more the case for smaller institutions, such as ESR, where resources are limited and occasionally spread thin. It is even more critical to plan thoughtfully, with attention to the school’s mission, assess honestly, and modify as thoroughly as necessary whenever necessary.

We’ve learned again the value of real collaborative work, and we’ve seen its effect in many of the issues raised throughout this self-study. ESR is involved in a wide array of collaborative relationships, some of which we are only beginning to understand. Earlham College, Bethany Theological Seminary, the students, faculty, and administrations of these two institutions, form the immediate collaborative contexts wherein ESR functions.

However, others collaborations exist which are vital; for instance, the collaboration evident among the seminary and its Board of Advisors is inspiring.

And one final collaborative effort ...

We've learned that our parent denomination needs us more than we were aware. This has come somewhat as a surprise. In the past, the seminary's relationship with some of its constituent yearly meetings was, at best, ambivalent or ambiguous. However, since 1996 it has become clearer that there is significant interest in ESR among many yearly meetings and a sincere desire to benefit from what the seminary offers. As effort has been made to be more accessible and more visible to constituents, there have appeared more places of resonance than was once assumed. Additionally, in the process of learning that our denomination needs us more than we were aware, we have discovered that this seminary needs the denomination more than we have ever been aware and more than we have ever admitted.

The more effort ESR exerts in clarifying its mission and purpose, the more the seminary discovers that it runs along a track parallel to and in sympathy with the denomination, the Religious Society of Friends. This is as it should be. We are learning that we are partners in a shared work that includes us, but that is also much larger than our seminary alone. Our role in this work, and it is a role we accept enthusiastically and one we desire to explore as thoroughly as possible, is to prepare women and men for "leadership that empowers and for ministry that serves."



## Appendices