

# Toward A Philosophy Of Continuing Education For Campus Ministry

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The purpose of this brief paper is to begin to delineate in outline form some of the topics for discussion and the issues involved in moving Southern Baptist campus ministry toward the development of a well-grounded, professionally-oriented approach to the largely undeveloped area of continuing education for campus ministers. It is my conviction that the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers (ASBCM), due to its voluntary professional base and commitment to fostering collegiality, is in a good position to provide leadership in the development of this area.

## **I. THE NATURE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR CAMPUS MINISTRY**

### **A. Tentative definition**

Continuing education for campus ministry may be defined as organized study (whether accredited, certified, or not) beyond the first professional degree in ministry undertaken with a view to enhancing the campus minister's personal and professional development in the practice of ministry.

### **B. Standards**

Standards for continuing education should be suggested through professional self-regulation in voluntary associations. One could point here to the American Medical Association, American Bar Association, or Lawyers Guild for models of such self-regulation in the medical and legal professions; or, alternatively, the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education and the American Association of Pastoral Counselors for models in hospital chaplaincy and pastoral counseling. These associations are not the employers of the professionals they involve (*i.e.*, they do not "hire or fire" doctors, lawyers, chaplains, and counse-

lors). Instead they are engaged in preparing standards for certification and continuing education which may or may not be adopted by the "powers that be" (e.g., state licensing boards, hospitals, legal firms, mental health centers).

### C. Guidelines

Similarly, the ASBCM should be involved in proposing some guidelines for continuing education for campus ministers. The very dichotomy that exists in the denominational terminology for this profession — viz., "campus ministers" or "student directors" — points to the need for some more universally recognized professional standards. Like the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, the Association of Mental Health Clergy, the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, and even the American Protestant Correctional Chaplains Association, the ASBCM should be involved in holding up the ideal of continuing professional training and practice for its constituency of specialized ministers.

## II. THE NEED FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

### A. Changes in higher education

The continually changing situation of American higher education mandates that the effective campus minister update his or her knowledge and keep abreast of new developments in the field of higher education, which shape the context of campus ministry. Affiliation with the American Association for Higher Education is here particularly recommended.

### B. Campus ministry methods and styles

The changing styles and methodologies of campus ministry, whether or not they are personally adopted by the campus minister, need to be understood and evaluated. These ministry methods and styles greatly influence the denominational, interdenominational, and student religious organizational climate in which the campus minister works.

### C. Young adult and adult development

Rapidly increasing knowledge in the areas of young adult and adult development requires that the effective campus minister understand the personal growth processes and struggles which students and faculty are experiencing, as well as his or her own development. Areas such as intellectual development (e.g., Perry), moral and ethical development (e.g., Kohlberg, Gilli-

gan), social and relational development (*e.g.*, Levenson), and faith development (*e.g.*, Fowler, Parks) provide a vital psychological base for campus ministry programming.

#### D. Situational demands

The campus minister should develop competence in new areas of ministry as the need for leadership in these areas emerges in the local situation. For example, suddenly a campus minister might see the need to develop his or her knowledge of the new religious cults, biomedical ethics, etc.

#### E. Theological rationale

The campus minister needs to develop a working theological rationale for ministry in his or her own particular setting. Such a practical theology of ministry, utilizing pastoral theology to integrate Biblical and theological understandings with the concrete ministry situation, will serve as a foundation and guide for the ministry. Professional ministry is far more than implementing any prepackaged program or "doing whatever comes to hand to do with all one's might." It requires a situation-specific theology of ministry.

### III. POSSIBLE MODELS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

#### A. Formal study

Such study may be related to a seminary, university, or some other institutional structure (*e.g.*, seminars, institutes). It may involve degree study (*e.g.*, D.Min., Th.M., Ph.D., additional Master's degree) or some form of accredited non-degree study.

#### B. The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) approach

This approach has been pioneered by American Baptists. A "Continuing Education Unit" is defined as "ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and a qualified instructor."<sup>1</sup> The extent of one's participation in certified continuing education experiences is recorded in decimals and multiples of this unit.

1. American Baptist Educational Ministries, "Continuing Education for Ministry," Valley Forge, Pa., pamphlet.

### **C. Special workshops and conferences**

#### *1. ASBCM sponsorship*

In exploring possibilities for developing such programming, ASBCM should consider co-sponsorship or, at least, consultation and liaison with the following groups:

a. Society for the Advancement of Continuing Education for Ministry (SACEM) — It is recommended that ASBCM consider institutional membership in this organization;

b. Association of Baptist Professors of Religion;

c. Seminary External Education Division and the continuing education programs of each of the individual Southern Baptist theological seminaries;

d. National Campus Ministry Association (NCMA);

e. Campus ministry groups from other denominations — Examples of these groups include the Lutheran Campus Ministry Association; the Episcopal Society for Ministry in Higher Education; Ministries in Education; and the Catholic Campus Ministry Association;

f. The Center for the Study of Campus Ministry at Valparaiso University.

#### *2. National Student Ministries sponsorship*

ASBCM should investigate possibilities for input and joint sponsorship (e.g., 1981 Director's National Workshop) of training opportunities for professional leadership.

#### *3. State student department sponsorship*

ASBCM should encourage state student departments to explore possibilities for more extensive joint regional training opportunities for campus ministers. Also, state student departments should consider continuing education opportunities as a constructive response to a campus minister's growth needs, indicated through performance evaluations and ministry supervision.

### **D. Organized peer group study**

Campus ministers can explore and facilitate opportunities for study among local ministers' groups. Also, study groups of campus ministers from different denominations working in the

same general ministry setting may prove profitable in terms of both education and collegiality.

**E. Organized self-study**

Two program resources which may be of assistance to campus ministers in this area are the Baptist Sunday School Board's Personal and Professional Growth Course (PPG) and the Seminary External Education Division's Continuing Education for Seminary Alumni (CESA) program. Also, Mark Rouch's *Competent Ministry: A Guide to Effective Continuing Education* (New York: Abingdon, 1974) offers some helpful guidance.