

# CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTERS: A REPORT

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The following continuing education needs have been identified:

## I. Developments in the Academic Study of Religion

From my personal perspective, this concern is the most crucial. As a professor of religion, I often feel that what we are doing in the classroom is considered alien to the concerns of personal faith, the church, and, in this case, the life of the BSU. I do not view my own work that way, and I know that many of my colleagues do not either. Certainly, most Baptist Professors of Religion do not. Apart from our own feelings, however, there is a larger concern. One of the reasons that our denomination is experiencing the problems we now have is the commonly held, though mistaken, attitude that faith on the one hand and the academic study of religion on the other do not mix. Having been a campus minister, I know how easy it is to ignore this problem due to the heavy burden of counseling and programming. I also know how difficult it is to stay current in Bible, theology and church history studies — especially when we are not inspired by regular sermon preparation. As a result, we miss much that could be helpful to us and much that could be helpful in the formation of Southern Baptist church leaders. Several ways to deal with the problem are suggested:

### A. Participation in Pastor's Schools

Though geared to the pastoral ministry, these programs offer the opportunity to hear and learn from outstanding scholars in Bible, ethics, theology, etc. Many of them are

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low cost and some even provide vacation type opportunities for the family (which would also serve another need of many campus ministers).

1. It is suggested that ASBCM involve itself in whatever ways seem appropriate in encouraging state directors to give campus ministers more time, if not funds, to pursue such programs.
2. It is suggested that ASBCM give permission to its secretary to release the names and addresses of members to institutions which provide such programs so that they might receive information on the various pastors' schools. I have the addresses of a number of these programs, especially programs at Baptist colleges, and am willing to develop a wider list of such programs and make the appropriate contacts.

### B. Association with the Baptist Professors of Religion

It would be perhaps an ideal if our organizations could have a joint meeting but this is not a likely possibility since our meetings are scheduled to coincide with the SBC and theirs are scheduled to coincide with the American Academy of Religion meetings. After talking with a former president of this organization, I feel our groups could have a lot to share. In fact, a major segment of recent Baptist Professors' program deal with the relationship between faith and teaching. A Baptist Campus Minister could have been a helpful addition to that program.

1. It is suggested that a liaison committee between the two organizations be arranged so that we might be informed about each other's meetings and talk about common concerns, including the ways in which the Baptist Professors might help with the continuing education of campus ministers.
2. It is suggested that ASBCM members be informed about the existence of this organization and their publication, Perspectives. Membership in the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion is open to any interested person. I would be willing to see whether sample issues of Perspectives could be made available to the ASBCM members.

C. Programs which inform ASBCM members of academic developments.

1. It is suggested that a regular segment of the ABSCM program be given over to informing members of developments within certain academic disciplines. For example, one year we might hear from someone in the field of Bible, another year ethics, etc. Persons who do such presentations would be asked to give overviews and to supply reading lists which would include both introductory and more advanced material. The Baptist Professors might be helpful in providing names of persons to such programs.
2. National Student Ministries should be encouraged to include a segment like this in the Ridgecrest and Glorieta meetings for campus ministers.

#### D. In-Service Guidance Programs

This program of the Home Mission Board is directed toward persons who work with college students who are planning to enter ministry. Although a strong component of this program is supervised ministry internships, the yearly meetings of such directors are informative in a number of areas and some campus ministers may even like to engage in supervised ministry as a part of their work. Information is available from:

Mr. William E. Neptune, National Consultant  
In Service Guidance Program,  
Home Mission Board  
Coon Creek Acres  
Route 2, Box 30  
Eufaula, OK 74432

## II. Spiritual Development

It should be realized that continuing education for a minister of any kind involves spiritual growth.

### A. Information

1. It is suggested that reading lists on spiritual development be made available to ABSCM members.
2. It is suggested that one segment of an upcoming program be given over to this subject.

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### **B. Retreats and Other Training Programs**

1. It is suggested that someone be appointed to make a list of retreat centers and other facilities which provide appropriate spiritual direction.
2. It is suggested that campus ministers be informed of such centers and be encouraged to take part in such programs for their own benefit and the benefit of the students with whom they work.
3. It is suggested that state directors be encouraged to allow, if not fund or otherwise encourage, participation of Baptist Campus Ministers in such programs.

### **III. Clinical Pastoral Education**

Campus ministers and state directors should be made aware of the availability of summer CPE programs, some of which even provide a small stipend. These programs could provide very valuable counseling experience. A list of programs is available from:

Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.  
1549 Clairmont Road  
Suite 103  
Decatur, GA 30033