

THE CHALLENGE OF EVALUATING CLERGY EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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Introduction

The International Course of Study Advisory Committee [1] of the Church of the Nazarene (ICOSAC) has been involved for over six years in fulfilling its *Manual* mandated task of validating curricula used to prepare clergy for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. In fact, the committee has validated over 90 different curricula as fulfilling the educational requirements for ordination under the guidelines contained in eight regional sourcebooks. Regional sourcebooks are reviewed diligently to be sure they follow the process described in the *Manual* and *International Sourcebook on Ordination*.

Since beginning the validation process, ICOSAC members have voiced a nagging question: How does one know students are learning what they need to begin ministry from validated curricula?

Now that educational programs are in place, we need to begin evaluating their effectiveness. This does not mean that we have not made the best judgments about curricula based on our collective experience as educators but we have matured to the point that we should be looking at program effectiveness from a more systematic, objective, research basis. Subjective evaluations of programs and methods have served us reasonably well in the past. Now, we need to look more objectively at the whole system of education.

ICOSAC members and others rightly have pointed to the need for a defined, intentional link between intended outcomes, learning activities, and assessment items. This intentional link establishes an atmosphere of continuous evaluation and accountability within each curriculum. As regional Course of Study Advisory Committees (COSACs) and ICOSAC have reviewed submitted curricula, members have intuitively looked for these links. We have compared the stated outcomes to sourcebook ability statements [2] to be sure all were addressed. We have checked learning activities and assignments to see if we believed there is a reasonable opportunity for students to acquire defined abilities. And, we have looked for opportunities for instructors to find evidence that students were learning.

Two additional concepts have been used to relieve our nagging questions. The first is the required partnership between local congregations and the educational provider. And, the second is that educators are responsible to prepare students and the church is responsible to ordain. Some of us, including me, have been willing to yield to the tyranny of the immediate to "get pastors trained" because the principle responsibility of evaluating candidates is given to districts (ministerial studies and credential boards) by the *Manual*. As students are ministering in local churches and being evaluated by district credential boards, a much richer environment for evaluation exists than in a classroom, module or educational program. Observing a student's performance in real-life settings produces a more accurate appraisal of ability than a contrived classroom setting. Mentioning these two concepts raises more questions: Do internship supervisors know how to evaluate and help students ministering in local churches? What is our responsibility in preparing district board members to fulfill their task of evaluating ordination candidates? How can we develop and sustain an ongoing training program for district board members who rotate on and off district boards?

These concepts do not negate the educator's responsibility to evaluate student learning during the teaching-learning process but they do change the purpose of the evaluation. During the teaching-learning process the purpose of evaluation is to improve student learning. District boards are responsible for overall evaluation of a candidate's readiness for ordination.

The church is now involved in providing educational activities for clergy that encompass the full range of educational levels, delivery systems, languages and cultures. How effective are these educational activities in preparing men and women to begin ministry? Do the educational programs match student needs and learning preferences? Are the programs appropriately designed to meet the culture and context of the students? Are church leaders satisfied with the educational preparation of their ministers? Are congregations satisfied with the educational preparation and abilities of their ministers? Does this whole validation-education system work? Do we have enough research to know when, where and how to implement an effective clergy education program?

The Church of the Nazarene is approaching her 100th anniversary. God has called men and women to be leaders in the Nazarene Church throughout her history. The Nazarene world has grown from a single church in Los Angeles, California to a denomination with thousands of churches in over 150 countries of the world. The contextual needs of the church are diverse to say the least. Have we learned to effectively prepare men and women to minister in these diverse contexts through the next decade not just the previous decade? Since the God we serve is "the same yesterday, today and forever" some things will be stable but preparing clergy to serve in the context of today's and tomorrow's church may be like hitting a moving target!

The objective of this article is to stimulate a dialogue among educators and church leaders about effective ways to prepare Nazarene clergy that is based on objective evaluation and research principles rather than subjective evaluation.

1. Evaluation in Outcome-based Education

Fifty years ago Ralph Tyler, an educational psychologist, suggested that any educational program should answer four simple questions.

1. Why? What needs exist?
2. What? What are the program's objectives?
3. How? How will you accomplish these objectives?
4. How will you know? (Gottman & Clasen, 1972, p. 9)

Evaluation models for educational programs have proliferated and been refined over the last fifty years but they all seek to answer these four basic questions.

A. An outcome-based definition of the course of study.

The Breckenridge Consultations (1989-1997) in the Church of the Nazarene worked to answer Tyler's questions 1 and 2.

1. Why? Participants recognized discrepancies between expected performance and actual performance of beginning ministers. They determined that there was a need to close the gap between expectations and reality and that it could be done by changing the educational process. Closing the gap became the goal for a re-designed course of study for ordination.

Breckenridge participants began to describe the desired results or outcomes of the course of study rather than the content to include in the course of study. When faced with any challenge our first tendency is to ask ourselves, "Where have I encountered this situation before and how did I respond in the past?" For fourteen years I worked with medical professions who were involved in teaching new students how to perform surgery. Medical doctors always required interns to learn to do surgical procedures with primitive hand-tools even when better, more efficient, power equipment was available and had proven to be safer for patients. When I asked the surgeons why they had interns learn the old methods when newer methods were available the surgeons said, "I had to do it that way in the beginning so everyone should have to learn to do it the same way." When I hear criticism of the current course of study from district board members, the criticism often begins with "When I was studying for ministry, I had to take a course (you fill in the name). How can anyone be ready for ministry if they haven't taken that course?" These attitudes indicate a design which concentrates on "inputs" into the program design rather than "outcomes" of the program.

The Breckenridge definition of the course of study listed outcomes of the educational process rather than the subjects or content that should be covered in the course of study. Part of the wisdom of an outcome-based definition was that it allows adaptation of the instruction to meet student learning styles and preferences, cultural variations in ministry practice, and ever-changing ministry contexts of the expanding church.

2. What? Four curricular areas outline the specific outcomes of the course of study. These are the familiar 4-Cs: content, competency, character, and context (*Manual*, ¶424.3). Within each of these areas, expected abilities (demonstrable outcomes) of graduates were listed. When I first came to headquarters in January 2000, the USA and Spanish *Sourcebooks* contained identical sets of abilities that graduates were to be able to demonstrate as they *began* ministry. These lists have been refined and regrouped but essentially remain unchanged in 2008.

The ability statements were distributed and educational providers (colleges, universities, seminaries, districts, etc.) were invited to submit curricula for validation through regional COSACs and ICOSAC. The educational provider was not told what content needed to be covered in the curriculum but they were required to show how their curriculum contributed to the acquisition of ministerial abilities listed in the *Sourcebook*. Some educational providers "got it" and some just went through the steps and retrofit existing programs never understanding the paradigm shift of an outcome-based model. They missed the radical implication of this model—that some student might be able to demonstrate all listed abilities without completing any of the prescribed curricula.

B. Implementing the outcome-based definition

3. How? Educational providers began submitting educational plans to help students acquire the course of study abilities. The regional COSACs reviewed the submissions in light of their regional *Sourcebook* and recommended many to ICOSAC for validation. Some of the validated programs also had placed on them more rigid tertiary academic requirements so that a degree (or diploma) could be granted by a college, university or seminary. These academic requirements were not part of the Breckenridge or *Manual* definition although some began to creep into the *International Sourcebook* and regional *Sourcebooks*, indicating biases of professional educators among the writers.

I have been part of the ICOSAC discussions since its inception and believe I understand why we are where we are today in terms of validation requirements. My personal bias is that in first-world nations where secular educational systems are well-established that a college degree should be a requirement for ordination. My involvement in quality reviews of IBOE schools has also made me realize that at this time in history requiring a college degree for ordination would put an unrealistic burden on God called men and women in some contexts. I believe everyone involved in the discussion wants to provide the highest quality ministerial preparation possible. Our system allows for variation in answering the How question so that we can adapt the instructional process to meet the needs of individuals and ministry contexts.

The goal of ministerial education is to prepare women and men to a level that we can reasonably expect them to succeed in their first ministry assignments. There is no prescribed list of content courses, textbooks to read, or instructional delivery systems to endure. But, there is a set of abilities in the areas of content, competency, character and context that students must be able to demonstrate to *begin* ministry.

The need described in Question 1 was to close the gap between expected and actual performance for beginning ministers. Question 2 is answered by the list of abilities that define a Nazarene minister and represent the outcomes of educational preparation. Suggested answers to Question 3 are given by professional educators as they submit educational programs designed for specific cultures, contexts and targeted groups of students.

C. Developing an atmosphere of evaluation

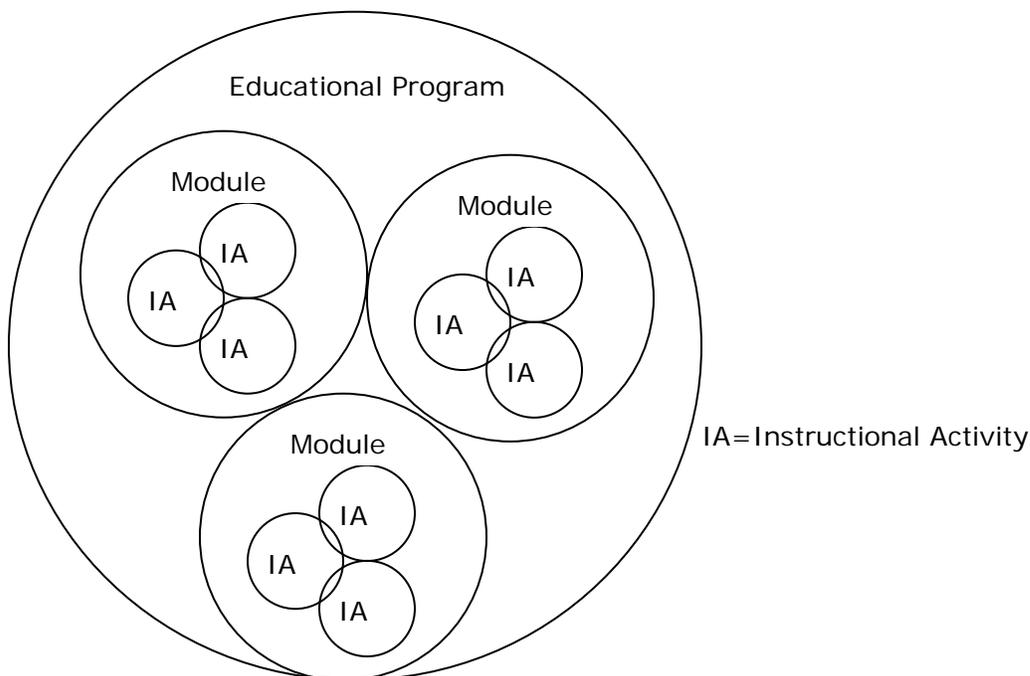
4. How will you know? Perhaps the most simplistic way to answer Question 4: How will you know? would be to observe that there was no gap between the expected and actual performance of a student in his or her first ministry assignment. But, as usual, simplistic answers raise many other questions—is there a cause and effect relationship between the instruction provided and the student's performance? Are the abilities (outcomes) the correct abilities to assure successfully closing the gap? Do the abilities really describe the "ideal" Nazarene minister? What were the unintended outcomes of the educational program? Whose expectations were met? Church leader's expectations? The congregation's? The church board's? The minister's? The educator's? The community's? Where does success or failure happen?

When I was in teacher education classes my professors challenged us with the idea that a student's failure to learn was a failure of the instruction to match the student's needs, learning style, motivation and readiness, not the failure of the student. The professors talked to us about mastery learning, the educational philosophy that the student should be able to master material (content, competency, etc.) at the 100% level given the proper instructional activities and instructional time. The *Manual* (2005) definition of the course of study does not specify how well a minister should be able to demonstrate a given ability. This apparent short-coming is another area of flexibility within the definition that allows for different ministerial contexts in the Church of the Nazarene.

After I had been teaching for about ten years, and had seen hundreds of students in a myriad of instructional settings and with varied learning outcomes, I came to the conclusion that there is "no such thing as teaching." All we can do is design environments in which others can learn. It is possible to design great learning environments but without the active participation of the learner the environment does not produce learning.

A module or course is a set of learning activities designed to facilitate student acquisition of specific abilities. When I design and facilitate learning activities my goal is that every student will learn 100% of the material. My purpose within the learning activity is to facilitate student learning. I evaluate the effectiveness of the learning activities based on the actual learning that results. In other words, the first level of evaluation in any educational program is assessing learning from each learning activity. It is not necessary to stop every learning activity to formally assess resultant learning but the instructor must intentionally look for evidence of learning in his or her student's responses. Adjusting the activity as needed to facilitate learning must be the instructor's highest priority. The instructor is a facilitator of learning, not a source of knowledge. This priority forces the instructor to function in an atmosphere of evaluation, an atmosphere that makes him or her accountable to the students and to the quality of the learning process. Making himself or herself accountable encourages students to accept the idea that they are also accountable to participate in the learning process.

Watching student responses during learning activities and adjusting the learning activity is just the first step in educational evaluation. It answers a basic question and its companion question: Are students learning? And, What are students learning? At the module level we can assess student learning over many learning activities and begin to answer: Are students able to demonstrate abilities this module is intended to produce? And, what changes should be made to the module to improve student learning? Extend this to the program level and we gain insight into the larger questions: Has the gap between expected and actual performance in ministry closed?



So, Question 4 must be asked many times within this atmosphere of evaluation. How will you know students are learning during instructional activities? How will you know a module helps students acquire intended abilities? How will you know the educational program closes the gap between expected and actual performance in the first ministry assignment? The

type of data required to answer each question is different. So is the way you collect the required data. In each case you must define the evidence you will accept that the intended outcomes have been met.

D. Gathering evidence of student learning

Evaluation of outcome-based education programs should be based on observable evidence. One area of evidence that is critical to the evaluation process is evidence of student learning. The outcome-based definition of the course of study gives us ability statements that can be converted into measurable statements. The measurable statements will indicate: who will perform a behavior, under what conditions, to what degree. We assume in the case of student learning, that “who” refers to the student. The behavior to be observed is the one described in the ability statement. The conditions under which we will observe the behavior and the criteria by which we will measure performance of the behavior are not specified and must be determined for the context where the student will minister.

When educators think about measuring student learning their thoughts usually go first to some type of paper-pencil examination. We have become pretty good at asking questions and reading student responses. We have also discovered that the written examination is efficient at gathering some evidence (maybe, evidence of learning) in a relatively short period of time—usually a class period. We have even come to accept that this written examination is a *good* way to measure student learning. After all, we took written examinations to show how much we learned, so it must work.

One condition we might use in our measurable objective is that the student will “respond on a written examination.” We might even add the criteria that on this written examination the student will answer “8 out of 10 questions correctly.”

What about evidence of learning *content abilities*? A written examination may be a good way to collect data on content abilities. We can develop objective questions for our exam or formulate essay questions that ask students to demonstrate the abilities. But in a narrative or visual culture it might be better to have students tell the story of the key persons of the Old Testament rather than have them write the story on paper. Or, you might have them develop a series of pictures that illustrate the relationships and contributions of each O.T. person to our understanding of God.

How would you gather evidence of a person’s *competency*? You might have them role-play different scenarios that allow them to demonstrate their competency. Better yet, put them in real ministry assignments that require them to use the abilities and observe their performance.

Theater actors have demonstrated over thousands of years that *character* is difficult to assess over short periods of time—a single encounter, a single play or even a few days. Observing people in a variety of life-situations over an extended period of time may be the only accurate way to assess character, character growth and maturation.

Understanding of *context* may be measured like content but until you see how a person adapts to a specific ministry context you may not have a good picture of her or his working mastery of the impact context makes on ministry.

In this section I am not trying to answer the question, How will you know? but to point out that we must determine for each student and context the evidence we will accept for a

student's demonstration of abilities (outcomes). I am also suggesting that we need to look beyond traditional paper-pencil examinations to measure student learning.

E. Who should conduct evaluations?

Student Learning. Let's begin with the smallest unit of the instructional process—a learning activity. The instructor is the logical person to evaluate student learning during the learning activity. Observe the students, their body language, oral responses, etc. Even if you are lecturing, periodically ask questions that require students to respond to the material. Even rhetorical questions change the flow of the monologue and require a listener to respond to the question in his or her own mind. Do you really attend to a long speech without your mind wandering?

As the instructor, what do you do with your assessment that students are *not* learning from a particular learning activity? You probably intervene, adjust the activity or choose an alternative learning-teaching method. When you assign homework you expect students to complete the homework. Assigning homework should be done for the purpose of extending the learning process beyond the limits of the class period. When you assign homework you should also collect it, review it in a timely manner, provide written comments that help improve student learning, and return it by the next class period. The act of teaching contains an inherent responsibility to evaluate whether students are learning.

Even at the module level the teacher is responsible for assessing student learning. As described earlier, this does not necessarily mean giving a written final examination. The cumulative data from observing students in classroom learning activities or online responses to posted messages, reviewing homework assignments, module projects, and oral and written presentations provide information on which to judge whether students are learning.

My educational experience has been in American settings where instructors independently develop evaluation methods for her or his courses. I confess to experiencing mixed emotions when my colleagues describe the British system of examinations with external review of final examinations and marks. I suppose that within the British system instructors are more comfortable with scrutiny by third-party supervisors and colleagues. Since clergy education really belongs to the whole church, we should seriously examine collaborative ways of assessing student learning.

Curriculum and Instruction Students should also be involved in evaluating an instructor's performance and a module's relevance and effectiveness. Systematic ways of gathering student feedback following a module should be developed and used to improve the teaching-learning process. Those responsible for maintaining the module's content and methods need this feedback and educational providers need ways to determine the effectiveness of instructors.

The whole course of study curriculum can be judged effective if graduates are able to demonstrate intended abilities in ministry settings. Gathering data to evaluate the whole curriculum will require cooperation by educational providers, district boards of ministry (or ministerial studies and credentials boards), pastors, and church congregations. District Ministerial Studies Boards are not able to recommend a student to the credentials board until they have assessed whether a student has learned enough to have a reasonable expectation that he or she will succeed in his or her ministry assignment.

Readiness for Ordination The answer to who should evaluate a student's readiness for ordination is a simple one. The *Manual* gives this responsibility to the District Ministerial Credentials Board or the District Board of Ministry and the District Assembly. The district board should never delegate this responsibility to another group or individual. However, district boards make this decision in many ways and with varying degrees of success. The church needs to provide guidelines for making this judgment and help train board members to evaluate readiness for ordination.

Evaluation of student learning, program effectiveness, and readiness for ordination are activities that must be intentional in order to create an atmosphere of evaluation in clergy education. It requires a collaborative effort by many groups within the church who intentionally communicate about evaluation goals, procedures and results.

II. Student Learning and Formative Evaluation

In an outcome-based definition of curricula, one obvious way to answer Tyler's Question Four: How will we know? is to look at the intended outcomes from a module (course, lesson, instructional activity) and the actual outcomes that students demonstrate. If actual outcomes are substantially the same as intended outcomes, we would say that the instructional activities were effective. This is the basic model I will use in unpacking an evaluation process for the course of study. [3]

Evaluation can be used for many types of decisions. For instance, Cronbach (1963) identified three uses for evaluation:

1. course-improvement or formative decisions. Evaluation for course improvement involves gathering information that will be useful in deciding which aspects of a course can and should be improved.
2. decisions about individual students. Evaluation aimed at decisions about individual students consists of gathering information to be used in assessing student abilities or in the grading, grouping, or selection of individual students.
3. administrative regulation or summative decisions. Evaluation of administrative regulation is directed toward assessing the merit of schools, curricula, materials, teachers, etc.

Formative evaluation is the process of determining actual outcomes then, analyzing and adjusting learning activities to improve student learning. [4] If the intended and actual outcomes are not substantially the same, the learning activities were not effective for some reason. Perhaps, the learning activities did not match the student's learning style or the student did not have the pre-requisite knowledge and skills needed to benefit from the learning activities. Maybe, the context of the learning activities was so foreign to the student that learning was impossible. If the learning activity did not produce the desired outcomes, then an adjustment must be made in the learning activity. (Posner & Rudnitsky, 2001, 199)

It is also important to note that there may be unintended outcomes of student participation in a learning activity. These side effects may have as much influence on the student's future performance as the intended outcomes. Evaluation of actual outcomes must examine both intended and unintended outcomes of the module or course. (See: Posner & Rudnitsky, pp. 195-199)

A. Gathering Evidence of Student Learning

As you have been reading it should have become obvious that evaluative decisions about the course of study will require gathering evidence of student learning. Indeed, outcomes are to be demonstrated by students following their participation in learning activities to show that they have learned.

Your evaluation plan should answer whether you are evaluating the results of the learning activity or other incidental events that influenced the student. It is possible that students already were able to demonstrate abilities your course or module was trying to develop in the students prior to participating in the course or module. Consider carefully whether you need to test students' ability before *and* after the instruction to see if the instruction had the desired educational results.

Outside of schools, people are more typically assessed in terms of their success in accomplishing tasks necessary for carrying out their work, for example the persuasiveness of a speech, the effectiveness of a ministry plan, the workmanship in a carefully crafted cabinet, or the successful diagnosis of a disease. That is, outside of schools people rely on more "authentic" means of assessment.

Ultimately, the most authentic means of assessing our students will be how they minister to real people. As we design instruments and strategies to gather evidence of student learning we must avoid the problem of triviality inherent in traditional assessment in schools by using methods that place the ministry problem and tasks in real-world contexts. Multiple-choice instruments will not measure the ability level we want our students to demonstrate. Essays, case studies, role-playing are three examples of assessment methods in which students can demonstrate their integration, understanding and application of desired abilities. (See: Posner & Rudnitsky, pp. 190-195)

According to our outcome-definition of the course of study, learning falls into three areas:

1. What the student will be (character),
2. What the student knows (content), and
3. What the student can do (competency).

The student is also expected to understand and adapt to his or her specific ministry context. The components of each of these areas that were considered highly important were further described by ministry abilities or intended outcomes of the curriculum.

The act of stating over 100 ministry abilities in the course of study can lead one to view the educational process as developing fragmented, isolated "skills" that add up to being a minister. But, one defined ability interacts with and relates to other abilities in ways that inform how ministry is carried out within the ministry context. Experience, spiritual maturity, and the work of the Holy Spirit can not be discounted in performing acts of ministry. Knowledge, character, and competency are three interlocking skill-sets through which the Holy Spirit can affect ministry.

Within the Modular Course of Study curriculum, several modules may contribute to the acquisition of a single ministry ability. This is due to the interrelatedness of abilities. A student may require completion of the whole course of study in order to adequately demonstrate acquisition of some abilities.

The first task for the educator-evaluator is to specify a set of behaviors that together will constitute evidence that a student has acquired each intended outcome of the module or course. Memorizing facts, like the major people of the Old Testament and their family trees,

may not show an understanding of how God reveals himself through his interaction with each of those people or the relevance of Old Testament stories to the people in your church. True understanding of cognitive information implies the ability to use and apply the information in new ways and in new contexts. In this example, evidence of the ability might require the student to write or tell the story of three major Old Testament people, how God revealed himself to that person, and how their story relates to people today.

Look over Posner & Rudnitsky, "Gathering Evidence on Main Effects," pages 184-190 for treatments of different types of abilities. Content abilities are "cognitions." Character abilities are related to "affects." And, competency abilities are like "cognitive skills."

B. Setting acceptable standards for level of performance

The second task is to specify how well a student must perform a given ability to have successfully demonstrated acquisition. The level of performance will vary depending on the ministry context, culture and expectations of the people involved. Establishing an acceptable standard will require collaboration between educators, church leaders and congregations where these ministers will serve.

A useful method for determining level of performance is developing a Grading Guide or *rubric*. Rubrics help make assessing subjective material, like essays or sermons, more objective. Examples of grading guides are available in the Modular Course of Study student guide for *Communicating with Spoken and Written Language* (<http://www.nazarenepastor.org/clergyeducation/ModGuides/tabid/69/default.asp>). Grading Guides are shown on pages 37, 52, 54, 66, 81, 114. Note how the instructor has defined the key areas to be covered in each assignment and also the criteria used to judge each key area.

C. Improving instruction

Evidence of student learning is needed to make decisions about which learning activities of a module are successfully helping students develop defined ministry abilities and which learning activities need to be improved. If students are learning at an acceptable level, leave that activity as it is for the present and put your energy into improving other activities of the module.

When students are not learning you need to improve the specific learning activity related to that ability. Identifying the problem within the learning activity may be complex. Here are some things to look at as you analyze the activity and contemplate needed changes.

- Does the activity match the characteristics of the learner? Is the activity age appropriate? Is the activity set in the proper cultural context? Do students have previous experience with this type of learning activity? Does the teaching style match the student's learning style? [5]
- Do students possess the needed prerequisite skills to learn from the activity? Is the reading level (and language) appropriate? Are there enabling skills that students need to master the new ability?
- Were students motivated to learn this ability? Does the learning activity adequately represent the importance of learning the ability? Is the ability related to successful ministry? Is the ability trivial?
- Did the instructor and student follow the intended steps for completing the learning activity? Were there outside distractions that interrupted learning?

When you have identified the changes that are needed in a learning activity, you can modify or substitute for the activity and re-teach it. Gather evidence of learning after the second attempt and see if learning improved.

D. Purpose of Gathering Evidence of Student Learning

In addition to improving instruction, there are three traditional reasons for an instructor to grade (or mark) student assignments and examinations. The first is that assignments and examinations are ways of extending the learning activity beyond the time constraints of the classroom. As a student prepares for an examination or completes an assignment, that assignment or preparation is opportunity to learning. Assignments should not be trivial or "busy-work" but they should be seen to be as important as time spent in face-to-face meetings between student and instructor. Assignments and examinations help communicate to the instructor what students have learned and to the students how well they are learning.

If an instructor gives an assignment, he or she is obligated to return the assignment to the student in a timely manner with helpful comments to correct, emphasize critical points, and in general, increase student learning.

The second reason to provide grades or marks on assignments and examinations is that the assignments and examinations provide evidence of student learning that can be compared with some external standard. Within the Church of the Nazarene each region or district has a performance standard for those beginning ministry. Credential and studies boards generally understand the standard even when it is difficult for members to articulate. The members can usually review a minister's performance and say if that performance meets an acceptable standard for ministry.

The third reason to provide grades or marks for learning is so that students can be ranked according to their performance. This reason is really an economic one. If there are more students available than there are posts to fill, then you would want to place the best student in each position according to their ability to minister.

Of these three reasons to grade student performance on assignments and examinations, the most critical is the first. We should be doing everything at our disposal to help students reach their full capacity to answer God's call on their lives.

III. Student Learning and Summative Evaluation

Part II. Student Learning and Formative Evaluation showed how formative evaluation could be employed to assess student learning for the purpose of improving instruction and enhancing learning. Formative evaluation applies to smaller pieces of a larger whole. It seems reasonable that if one improves each of the pieces that the whole will improve. This may be the case but just evaluating individual pieces will miss the inter-relatedness of the various parts and the results of the complete educational experience.

This idea reminds me of the term *gestalt*. Gestalt comes from a branch of German psychology which affirms that yours or my response to every situation "is a complete and unanalyzable whole rather than a sum of the responses to specific elements in the situation." (Guralnik, 1986) The concept of gestalt is usually stated as "the whole is greater

than the sum of its parts.” Summative evaluation looks at the whole experience of the course of study rather than its parts.

A. Summative Evaluation in Curriculum Design

One example of summative evaluation in the course of study is the validation process of the regional Course of Study Advisory Committee (COSAC) and the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC). Educational providers submit a curriculum, an educational plan, to COSAC that they believe meets the Regional *Sourcebook* standards for educational preparation for ordination. COSAC conducts a summative evaluation of the plan by comparing the curriculum to the *Sourcebook* standard and evaluating whether the curriculum, taken as a whole, meets the standard. In this case, COSAC has not looked at student learning but performed an administrative task of determining if the submitted curriculum meets the *scope* of an established standard.

Summative evaluation can assist the curriculum designer in additional ways. When designing an individual module or course, the designer may specify certain assumptions about prerequisite skills, knowledge or experience that the student should possess before engaging in the module. The designer is not concerned with how the student obtained the prerequisite knowledge or skills, just that he or she has them. Looking at the curriculum as a whole rather than as individual modules allows the designer to specify a preferred *sequence* for modules that will ensure that students take the modules in the optimal order to enhance overall learning.

Additionally, the designer can assess where different modules address the same intended learning outcomes creating redundancy that increases learning time (and maybe even saps some of the passion for ministry from students). When curriculum designers were putting together the Modular Course of Study one reader asked if we had eliminated the overlap in the modules. This would have reduced the total instructional time required for a student to complete the course of study. If the Modular Course of Study were offered in a controlled environment with predictable student entry and exit points, this might have been possible. Since the order students took the modules could not be controlled, designers could not assume students had the prerequisite knowledge and skills needed for new learning. So, they had to dedicate some of the module time to provide prerequisite learning. Designers also felt it was important to group some intended learning outcomes together so that students would understand the interaction and relationship among those outcomes rather than seeing them only in isolation. Looking at the curriculum as a whole allowed the designers to make these types of *scope*, *sequence* and *optimizing* decisions, intentionally.

B. Student Learning and Summative Evaluation

Student learning is the goal of the course of study. In Section II, this author presented ideas for collecting evidence of student learning for instructional activities. Similar methods can serve as evidence of learning at the module or course level as well. One idea that you may want to keep in mind is that student learning should include much more than simple reiteration of learned facts. For summative assessment you should be looking for evidence of a student’s facility to apply knowledge when challenged with real-life situations. Do students have the ability to synthesize knowledge from different fields or combine various skills to help meet real life challenges? Summative (final) examinations for a module might present students with realistic case studies to address, ask them to participate in role-playing, or write essays to answer four questions from the 4-Cs: What did you learn in this

module? What competencies has this module helped you develop? Give examples of how this module has changed your character and helped you grow spiritually. How has this module helped you understand, interpret and work within your ministry context?

Summative evaluation also takes place at the end of the course of study when a District Board of Ministry or District Ministerial Credentials Board assesses a candidate's readiness for ordination. In addition to educational preparation and ministry experience, the board is required to assess the candidate's character and spiritual maturity before recommending him or her for ordination. This is the true moment of summative evaluation for all preparation for ordination. The responsibility for this evaluation is given to the church not the educational provider. It is appropriate that summative evaluation be conducted by the Church since it is the Church that ordains.

There must be open, two-way communication between the Church and educational providers to insure that the course of study is relevant to today's ministry context and students are educationally prepared to minister. The *Sourcebook* requires that the educational provider partner with the local Church to direct students in ministerial practices and competency development. In most validated programs this involves a concentrated supervised ministry experience in a local church. In many cases the student will spend up to 12 months in internship under the supervision of a local pastor.

While this supervised ministry experience is critical to a student's educational preparation, it does not end the need for the Church to work with educational providers to establish and update intended learning outcomes for the educational program. In most regions and the USA the Course of Study Advisory Committee includes educators, pastors and district church leaders who review curricula and the outcomes for those curricula found in the regional *Sourcebook*.

When I was in my doctoral program I was required to take a comprehensive examination at the end of my coursework. The exam was designed by three professors who wrote questions requiring me to synthesize the course material I had studied and apply it to real-world problems. This was an attempt on their part to determine what I had learned, how I saw the relatedness of different fields of knowledge, and how my study would inform me as I encountered new situations. Other professions have similar entrance examinations. In law, an attorney must pass the bar. In medicine, a physician must pass a medical board review.

Although it may have merit, at this point I am not convinced that the Church of the Nazarene should have a standard ordination examination that all ministers must pass, like lawyers and physicians. As I visit different parts of the Nazarene world, I have seen effective ministers serving in a broad range of contexts that have varying educational expectations for ministers. Some education and ordination standards vary with the context of the district in which a person is ordained. This makes a "standard examination" difficult to design. However, I believe that a Nazarene minister's ordination credential should be recognized anywhere in the denomination regardless of the district (or region) where he or she was ordained.

Summative evaluation is the tool to gather evidence of student learning. It can be used as evidence by a district board to show a candidate is ready for ordination. The student learning data for all graduates of a particular curriculum can also be pooled to show the effectiveness of the curriculum.

IV. Program Evaluation

Conducting summative evaluation is useful in making decisions that extend beyond curriculum to encompass the whole educational enterprise. Institutional administrators (or district administrators) must make missional, economic, and academic decisions about programs as well as assessing if students are learning. Are students learning the “right” things? Are students learning what is needed to prepare them for ministry? Are students entering effective pastoral and ministry leadership positions following graduation? Is this educational program more valuable than another? Are there enough students engaged in the program to warrant its continuation? Are qualified teachers available and willing to participate? Are there more cost-effective ways to prepare students for ministry? Are church leaders and congregations satisfied with the graduates?

Whether you are an educational provider that only offers a clergy preparation program or an academic institution in which clergy preparation is only one of many programs, program assessment can provide needed information on which decisions about the overall program can be made. Program evaluation also helps communicate the relative value of your program to constituents and stakeholders.

A. Academic Freedom and Accountability

In “ancient” history, as you know, most education was done on-the-job. Children learned to work around the home caring for animals and food crops; preparing meals and making clothing. Fathers and mothers passed on their knowledge to their children and humankind survived. If a family wanted to expand their skills, parents would “apprentice” their children to a craftsman. The craftsman would agree to feed and clothe the child and teach them the craft. The apprenticeship program was not always kind to the students but it was a form of education that prepared them to learn a new trade.

When the Body of Human Knowledge expanded beyond the skills needed for basic survival, people began to seek out scholars who were willing to take them on as students. The students became disciples of the scholar and the scholars were paid by the student/parent/benefactor for teaching. As the number of scholars and students increased further, some scholars banded together and hired managers to care for the logistical details of the learning activities. Thus, the first universities emerged. Since the university was a consortium or federation of scholars who were each recognized experts in their field, the scholar made decisions about what should be taught to students—the idea of “academic freedom” was born. Academic freedom is the freedom of a teacher or student to hold and express views without fear of arbitrary interference by officials. (Guralnik, 1986) This carried over to today’s universities where curriculum decisions are generally made by a vote of the university faculty.

Contemporary universities are much more complex than early universities because more than one scholar-professor is involved in determining what a student should learn. In fact, the faculty as a whole has determined that there is certain “general knowledge” that all graduates of the institution should study. These “general education” programs belong to the whole faculty and form a core curriculum for every university graduate.

There are also groups of universities that have joined together and agreed on educational standards by which they will operate the universities allowing students to transfer work from one university to another. And, by upholding the agreed standards universities recognize the academic degrees granted by their sister universities. These groups are often

called accrediting associations. In some countries, the government will create a regulatory arm to establish educational standards and oversee compliance with those standards by universities. When evaluating educational programs, it is important to distinguish between academic standards that exist because of accreditation and operation of the university and guild or professional requirements imposed by the church or other professional organizations that are external to the university.

So, what about academic freedom? When the classroom door closes does the professor have autonomy within the classroom? The answer is yes and no. If the professor were living in the “ancient” days, when the professor-scholar acted alone to teach students, the professor-scholar was the only authority for what was taught, how it was taught, and whether or not students learned. With the move to a university structure the professor-scholar is still recognized as a content expert for his or her chosen field of study. But, when one joins any group there is an implicit (and often explicit) agreement to abide by the rules of the group. In contemporary universities that means the professor is assigned to teach courses that have been approved by the department or university faculty. In other words, the course belongs to the department and the university, not just to the professor. The professor is accountable to the faculty to follow the catalog course description and syllabus, meet at a specified time, submit grades (or marks) to the university registrar, and submit to administrative and student evaluations. This accountability is the trade-off for being part of the university. The university, in turn, supplies a place to meet students, enrolls students, compensates the professor for his or her work, and maintains student records.

I have a dear friend who has taught at a Nazarene university for over 25 years. Of all the Nazarenes I know, I have never had reason to doubt his integrity, commitment to Christ, or his testimony of God’s saving and sanctifying grace. He is a respected scholar within the academy, who acts with integrity within a spirit of love for his students, the Church of the Nazarene, the university and his colleagues. Yet, he is currently under unwarranted attack by a narrow segment of the Church that represents a dissenting viewpoint to a book he wrote to describe how his field of scholarship is compatible with his Christian faith. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene is not adequate protection from this attack (See *Manual* ¶903.8). [6] Even attempts to engage theologians, university administrators and other church-persons in *pre-publication* dialogue did not offer academic protection.

This illustrates that while academic freedom may not be dead, a professor-scholar must be deeply conscious of the multitude of people-groups who hold a stake in the educational process in which the professor is engaged. The professor is no longer accountable to the academy and students only, but to the university, the church and their stakeholders as well.

B. Accountability to Stakeholders

So, who are these stakeholders and what role do they play in clergy preparation? Since this section appears under the section on Academic Freedom and Accountability, I will try to describe the answer to this question from the viewpoint of the professor-scholar, the teacher. There will be times where it is also appropriate to talk about the collective accountability to stakeholders of all faculties within an institution or pastor-teachers serving as an educational provider for a district.

The Academy The professor-scholar has an innate curiosity and interest in his or her field of study. This God-given interest motivates the professor-scholar to spend years digging deeply into the field to discover truth, naturally revealed through understanding of that body of knowledge. The professor-scholar is accountable to the professional academy to

pursue knowledge using the best research tools and models available and to represent and teach that knowledge honestly and with integrity. When teaching students or writing for field professionals or laity, the professor-scholar is accountable to be current and accurate, imparting that learned truth to students and readers.

The Christian professor-scholar is also accountable to his or her faith as he or she discovers more about God's revelation through the natural world. The Christian professor-scholar continuously examines how faith is informing learning and learning is informing faith. When learning seems to challenge faith, the professor-scholar can live with the ambiguity, understanding that learning is not yet complete.

Students The student is a stakeholder to whom the teacher is accountable. The teacher presents a course syllabus to students, which constitutes a contract between the teacher and his or her students. The syllabus informs students about the content to be learned, assignments to be completed, requirements to be fulfilled, assessment procedures and standards. The teacher has selected from all available options the most important content and learning methodologies based on the teacher's knowledge and experience. In courses or modules intended to prepare students for Christian ministry, the teacher is saying that the course material and activities will help the student develop the knowledge, skills and character students need for effective Christian ministry. The teacher is accountable to students to prepare to teach every session, to mark and comment on each student's homework in a timely manner, to faithfully observe learning activities, to facilitate learning as needed, and to record and communicate grades to the registrar. The teacher is also accountable to his or her colleagues in the academic discipline, to be current and accurate when imparting knowledge to students.

The learning contract also makes the student accountable to the teacher. The student must be actively engaged in the learning activities, prepare for each class, complete homework and submit to learning assessment. Both teacher and student must fulfill their part of the contract to optimize the learning opportunity.

Educational Provider The Nazarene higher education system includes 56 universities, colleges, and seminaries, as well as, institutional extension programs and clergy training programs operated by Nazarene districts. Each of these entities is an educational provider in the clergy education system of the Church. Each teacher is accountable to his or her sponsoring educational provider to provide a high quality educational experience for students that is at the appropriate academic level. In many cases, the teacher is also accountable to external accrediting associations through their sponsoring institution.

The teacher is always accountable to the educational provider to provide instruction and content that has academic integrity and supports the values and mission of the educational provider. For this reason the educational provider must clearly define and communicate its values and mission.

Stakeholders Who Pay the Bill: Parents and Students In most cases the stakeholder paying the bill for a student's education will be the student, his or her parents or family. Parents and families send their children, their most precious possessions, to our schools; no, they entrust their children to our schools with the expectation that they will be developed in a Christian environment and prepared to be thinking, mature, self-supporting, contributing members of society and the church. Most parents will honestly admit that the home from which students come and the student's personal decisions have more to do with the eventual outcome than the school, but parents will always dream and some will try to blame the school or particular teachers when they are disappointed by the way their

children turn out. Teachers must recognize their accountability to parents and honor the trust placed in them by parents.

Stakeholders Who Pay the Bill: The Church For clergy education in World Mission, the bulk of educational funds come from the Church of the Nazarene through the World Mission structure. In fact, the Church of the Nazarene subsidizes all of her higher education work through local church education allocations or World Evangelism Fund. All stakeholders who pay the educational bill deserve to receive value for their investment and therefore every teacher is accountable to these stakeholders.

Stakeholder Expectations Beyond the 4-Cs The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene defines an ordination course of study curriculum in terms of four words that begin with the letter C: *content* to be learned, *competencies* to be mastered, *character* to grow into, and *context* of ministry to understand. Student ability in these 4-Cs can be facilitated in an academic setting. But, the Church imposes other expectations on the teacher and educational provider. Even when the educational provider has a comprehensive program of majors, the Church believes that the missional priority should be first, preparing men and women for ordained ministry and then, preparing missionally-minded, Christian laity in other fields of study.

The Church also expects that graduates will have specialized knowledge and skills to minister within a specific geographic area or region. As an example, in North America pastors usually do not need to address the social issue of polygamy, since polygamy is against the laws of the United States, Canada and Mexico. In many African and Middle-Eastern countries a pastor would need this special skill since polygamy is socially acceptable. The *Manual* expects the ordination course of study to adapt to specific needs of ministers in different cultures and contexts.

The Church adheres to a Wesleyan-Armenian theology that was deeply influenced the 19th Century Anglo Holiness Movement in Great Britain and the United States. The Church expects its educational providers to adhere to its doctrine and provide theological and doctrinal coherency and continuity within the Church. The value in education vs. training is that training may be indoctrination where graduates can speak the doctrine while through education students can study and analyze the doctrine until graduates can speak the doctrine from deep understanding and ownership of the doctrine.

Scripture, our tradition, and reasoned study are wonderful parts of education, but within our Wesleyan tradition, the Church also expects graduates to experience our doctrine through a transforming encounter with the Holy Spirit. These four elements—Holy Scripture, tradition, reason and experience—provide the “seal of personal ownership” of Nazarene doctrine and are the only way the doctrine will be preserved in a living form.

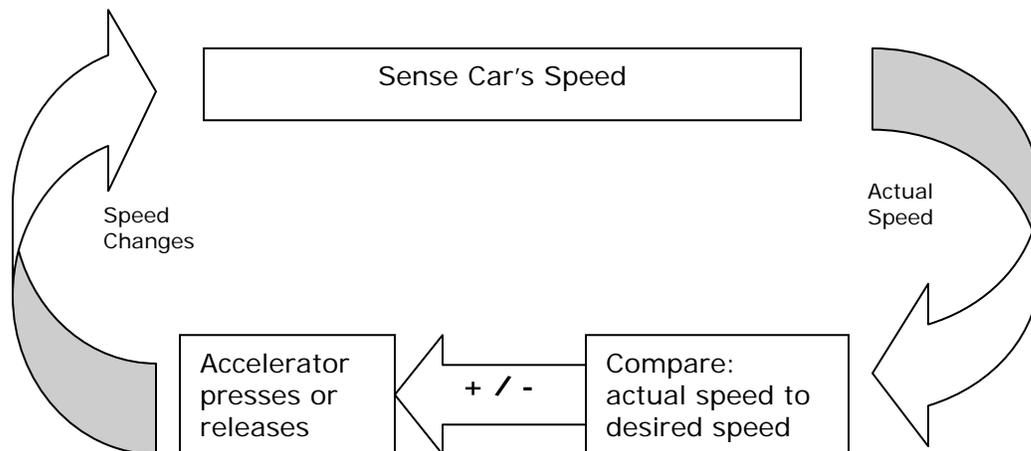
The Church is a consumer of the end-product of education, the graduates. Graduates fill ministry positions in the church including leadership roles. The Church of the Nazarene will be shaped by her pastors and leaders. So, the Church relies on her educational providers to prepare leaders who honor her past, minister in her present, dream and then lead her into the future. Teachers are accountable to the Church to educate men and women who truly understand and own our doctrine; men and women who with the help of the Holy Spirit will apply our theology in this changing world to transform it into the Kingdom of God.

C. Program Evaluation and Feedback Loops

Did you ever drive a car with cruise-control? Cruise-control is a feature of some cars where the speed of the car can be established and the car will continue at that speed without the driver pressing on the accelerator. Cruise-control can take much of the strain out of driving long distances. I heard a story about a traffic policeman who came upon a mangled recreational vehicle, a home on wheels. The driver was sitting on the ground beside his wrecked vehicle, just shaking his head. The policeman asked the driver what had happened and the man replied, "I just bought this RV and this is my first trip. I got hungry, put the RV on cruise-control and went back to the kitchen to make a sandwich." Cruise-control still requires attention.

Cruise-control is an example of an electro-mechanical feedback loop. Once the required speed of your car is set, a sensor continuously monitors the cars speed. If the car slows because of wind or a hill, the sensor sends a signal to the cars accelerator to give the engine more gasoline causing the car to speed up. If the car starts down a hill and exceeds the desired speed, the sensor causes the accelerator to give the engine less gasoline slowing the car. Continuous monitoring by the sensor keeps the car moving at the desired speed. This is called a feedback loop because the sensor sends information it gathers to the accelerator, the accelerator responds according to the information it receives and the sensor monitors the change in speed, sends information to the accelerator, the accelerator responds according to the information . . . over and over again.

Fig. 1: Cruise-control feedback loop:



Another example of a feedback loop is central air conditioning and heating units that maintain a constant temperature in a home. In medicine, patients can be taught to reduce physical stress by actually controlling their own heart rate. A sensor can be attached to the patient's chest to give a continuous reading of his or her heart rate. By watching the sensor's read-out and concentrating, the patient can eventually learn to lower the speed at which the heart is beating. Then, during times of stress, which cause an elevated heart rate, the patient can slow it to help relieve stress.

What do these electro-mechanical and bio-feedback loops have to do with program evaluation?

Why are feedback loops important? Feedback loops are methods of evaluating a condition, making adjustments, and seeing if the adjustment produced the desired effect.

The Church of the Nazarene has defined educational requirements for ordination and educational providers have responded by creating programs that are believed to meet those requirements. Once graduates of the program are in ministry, the Church can judge whether or not their definition and the educator's program is producing the type of minister for which the Church had hoped.

I've visited some districts where the feedback loop is open. District superintendents, district board members, church boards, and/or laity say, "Pastor (insert a name) just isn't ready to lead this congregation. (He or She) just doesn't know how to (fill in the blank). Why should we support (put in the school's name)? It just can't provide the kind of pastors we need in our churches." After hearing these types of statements I ask if anyone has talked with the school about what the Church is seeing. Usually, the answer is "No, it wouldn't do any good." Or "No, they live in an 'ivory tower' and don't want to hear what we think." This is an example of an open feedback loop. The church is failing to give the school critical information that can lead to improvements in the educational program and the school is giving churches the impression that they are *the only* educational authority and are not interested in the needs of the church.

Closing the Feedback Loop In the cruise-control example, if the flow of information is interrupted at any point then the system fails and shuts down. The same is true in clergy education. When schools and churches do not communicate the system fails and often, it shuts down. For the educational programs to succeed, communication pathways between the church and the school must be intentionally created and maintained.

No meaningful adjustment to the educational program can be made until the Church *feeds* information about the graduate's ministry performance *back* to the educational provider.

D. Gathering Feedback for Program Evaluation

Educational providers can use a variety of feedback sources to improve clergy education programs. This section contains a list of potential feedback sources and comment on a few ideas. The list is not intended to be exhaustive but only suggestive.

Students Earlier in this paper I talked about assessing student learning to improve learning activities, modules and curricula. Students remain a good source of information for course improvement. Interviewing students individually or in groups can also reveal important information, like how the students feel about what they are learning (4-Cs), how they are learning (individual learning styles and preferences) or their hopes and fears about future ministry (confidence and attitude). Students can also be pretty good sources of information about relative skills of teachers within the program.

Graduates Once students graduate from the educational program and enter ministry they are an excellent source of feedback. Short surveys can be used one year post-graduation to discover if graduates have found work in Christian ministry, the types of jobs they have, if those jobs are related to Christian ministry. For those who are in ministry, what ministry tasks are they able to do well? What tasks did they struggle with that they needed to do? What should be added (or subtracted) from the educational program?

To be most useful, you may wish to repeat the survey after the graduates have been in ministry for 3-5 years. The graduate's perspective on and understanding of Christian ministry will change during this time and the comparison of survey results to the earlier survey should be instructive.

District Superintendents and District Ministry Boards Educational providers prepare candidates for ordination but the Church ordains. Ordination is a privilege, not a right. The decision to ordain, to wait, or not ordain is the responsibility of the District Board of Ministry or the District Ministerial Credentials Board. Members of these boards must interview candidates, assess their character and abilities and make recommendations to the District Superintendent, District Assembly and Jurisdictional General Superintendent. Board members hold a wealth of information about ordination candidates that can be useful to the educational provider for improving education. These members could be surveyed but would probably respond better to face to face meetings with representatives of the educational provider.

District leaders may have additional concerns than student learning. I have heard some superintendents say that they must have district educational programs because if they send students to a Nazarene campus, they won't come home after graduation. The district may have paid for the student's education and feel that he or she was obligated to come back and pastor on the sponsoring district. These types of expectations need to be clearly communicated to the student before he or she accepts financial support. And, the consequences of not returning (perhaps, repaying the debt) need to also be spelled out in writing. Perhaps, the district needs to conduct a self-evaluation to determine why students are not excited about returning.

Church Congregations There is probably no group that is more qualified to judge the performance of a pastor than his or her congregation. Members of the congregation understand the congregation's expectations, the pastor's areas of competence, and areas of challenge. Survey church board members or a representative set of the congregation on the first year of the pastor's service, and on a 3-5 year sequence.

E. Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is a type of summative evaluation. It takes place after an educational program is in place, operating and producing graduates. Ultimately, decisions made at this point will require that the program be left as-is, adjusted according to feedback, or discontinued in favor of an alternate program. Information for making decisions comes from a variety of sources through feedback loops with students, graduates, church leaders and congregations.

Feedback does not occur spontaneously but must be intentional and systematic. One time communication is ineffective in producing and monitoring effective change in educational programs. Just like our cruise-control example, if the accelerator is told to decrease or increase the speed of the car and the feedback loop is broken, the car will just continue to slow until it stops or speed up until it crashes. Continuous monitoring of graduates needs to be maintained and communication needs to continue between the church and school so that the education program can be improved.

The educational provider and the church should consider establishing a representative advisory group of church leaders, DSs, district board members, pastors, and laity that meet on a regular schedule to discuss the educational program.

The educational provider must also remember that feedback needs to come full circle; it needs to be 360° feedback. Send reports back to the groups who provide feedback. Tell them what you have learned and how you are using the information to adjust the

educational program. They will be more willing to answer your surveys and give you feedback if they expect to see changes and understand how their feedback is making a difference. Consider them important members of your educational team. They are.

Summary

The Church of the Nazarene conducts ministry in over 150 countries of the world. There is not one context in which that ministry takes place but there is a rich tapestry of contexts and cultures in which God is using the Church to minister to people He loves. Preparing men and women, who God has called to lead these ministries, requires a variety of educational methodologies delivered at various educational levels and utilizing various deliver systems.

The Church of the Nazarene has defined educational preparation for ordination in outcome terms. This definition opens the possibility of varying the curriculum to meet the course of study definition, meet the local needs of the ministry context and meet individual needs of ministers-in-training. For quality control of ministerial preparation the Church instituted a curriculum validation procedure through international and regional sourcebooks overseen by regional Course of Study Advisory Committees (COSAC) and the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC).

This paper used Tyler's Questions as an outline for the application of evaluation principles to validated curricula in the Nazarene course of study for ordination. It describes ways in which evaluation can be used to assess student learning, provide formative information to improve instruction, make summative evaluations about a whole program and determine overall value of continuing or discontinuing an educational program.

In the discussion, the author attempted to show the value of performing each of the different types of evaluation. He also identified various stakeholders in the education of church leaders and described the importance of being accountable to each.

Decisions about what to teach and how to teach have often been made using the best judgment of experienced educators. The Church of the Nazarene has been preparing men and women for ordination for the past 100 years. It is time to gather and analyze evaluative data from the various programs and use that data in making educational decisions. The Church of the Nazarene needs to foster an atmosphere of evaluation and mutual accountability among its leaders, educators, future clergy, and constituents that will insure high quality minister-leaders to serve in God's church and Kingdom.

Notes

- [1] The author has been an *ex-officio* member of the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC) since its inception in 2002. Before 2002, the USA had a Course of Study Advisory Committee that worked with Clergy Services, Church of the Nazarene to oversee educational preparation for ordination. Clergy Services developed the first *International Sourcebook on Ordination* that guided the creation of a *Regional Sourcebook on Ordination* in each of the World Mission Regions, Canada, and the USA. Each regional *Sourcebook* is reviewed and approved by ICOSAC and the General Board, Church of the Nazarene. Since the author is an ICOSAC member, this article will use first person narrative.
- [2] The required course of study for ordination is defined by a list of abilities a candidate must possess in order to be considered for ordination. These abilities define the intended outcomes of a curriculum that prepares men and women for ordained ministry in the Church of the Nazarene. For further information about the outcome-based definition of the course of study, see M. Vail. "Outcome Based Ministerial Preparation—A Case Study," *Didache – Faithful Teaching*, Vol. 2, No. 1. (An online magazine), 2002.
http://didache.nts.edu/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=283&Itemid=
- [3] At the 2001 Grove City seminar on Curriculum Development for the Modular Course of Study, this author distributed a reference textbook, Posner, G. J. and A. H. Rudnitsky. *Course Design: A Guide to Curriculum Development for Teachers, Sixth Edition*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc. 2001. Much of this discussion is taken from Chapter 8: Planning a Course Evaluation.
- [4] Cronbach and Scriven disagree about the most important aspect of evaluation. Cronbach stresses that evaluation to improve instruction (formative decisions) contributes more toward improving education than the other uses of evaluation. Scriven points out that decisions on the merit or worth of a course (summative decisions) are as important in improving education as decisions aimed at course improvement. I will address summative decisions in another segment of this paper.
- [5] One of the best summaries of research on student learning was written in 1976. While a great deal of research has been conducted since 1976, this book is foundational to understanding how individual differences affect learning. Bloom, Benjamin S. *Human Characteristics and School Learning*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976.
- [6] "903.8. Creation," *Manual: Church of the Nazarene, 2005-2009*. Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Publishing House. 2005.
 The Church of the Nazarene believes in the biblical account of creation ("In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . ."—Genesis 1:1). We oppose any godless interpretation of the origin of the universe and of humankind. However, the church accepts as valid all scientifically verifiable discoveries in geology and other natural phenomena, for we firmly believe that God is the Creator. (Articles I. 1., V. 5.1, VII.) (2005)

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