Pedagogical Possibilities: New Paradigms in Teaching for Ministry

Building Bridges in Theological Education for Hispanic Pastors

A paradigm for Hispanic Theological Education?
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Pedagogical Possibilities: New Paradigms in Teaching for Ministry
Building Bridges in Theological Education

- The need: Inaccessible education for pastors of fast-growing Latino churches
- Barriers: Language, finances, educational background, cultural, documents, theological, denominational.
- A solution: A Certificate in Hispanic Ministry
- The students: 45 city pastors from different denominations
- The result: Transformation in their pastoral practices and a positive impact at CTS
Listening Phase

- Consultations with 50 Latino pastors over one year
- Seven areas of special interest:
  1. Exegesis-Preaching Ephesians
  2. Exegesis-Preaching of the Old Testament
  3. Community Transformation
  4. Pastoral Counseling
  5. Theology for Ministry
  6. Leadership and Church Administration
  7. Worship-Preaching
- Two more courses would be added: (1) Marriage Enrichment Retreats (for pastor-students and their spouses); (2) Children and Youth Educational Ministries
Composition of Pilot Cohort 1

- Launched in the Fall of 2012
- 36 students graduated last May
- 65% male student body, 35 female pastors
- Diverse educational backgrounds and cultures
- Different denominations
- In average, their age is around the 40s
- Six groups organized according to academic background:
  - from no school at all to people with master degrees.
Cohort Structure

- Residential program
- Each course equivalent to a three-hour semester course
- Full transcript credit and advanced standing for qualifying students
- Accepted by Other Christian colleges in the city
Learning Methodologies

- Weekly Monday-night meetings for 12 weeks with local professor: Shared meal, group discussions, plenary sessions, dialogue, counseling case situations.
- Three full Saturdays plus three/four Monday nights with visiting professors
- Diverse ways of evaluation: Oral, written, group projects, ministry practices.
- The program is student centered.
Significant Characteristics

1. In Spanish
2. Culturally Relevant
3. Free
4. Pedagogically Innovative
5. Fully Accredited
6. Academically Robust
7. Integrating
8. Respectful of diverse theological traditions
Pilot Cohort 1 Results

1. Enrichment and empowerment of participating pastors and leaders
2. Unity and fellowship among the pastors
3. A learning community eager to continue learning, 10 going to do an Mdiv at CTS and 20 doing work at a Bachelor’s level with CHET (LA).

1. A broader ministry horizon
2. Formation of a selected number of advanced students that will be in the near future the leaders and teachers of coming generations
The Need Continues

- Another Hundred of potential participants
- At least 40 of the 71 additional congregations are likely to participate
- An estimated 77 candidates for CHM enrollment
Proposing Cohorts 2, 3 & 4

- Continue core program of CHM cohort model
- Develop enhancements for learning to cohort model
- Cultivate Pipelines of Continued Learning
Expected Outcomes

1. Transform the ministry of Hispanic pastors
2. Create a learning community
3. Change the life and ministry of pastors, churches and communities
4. Contribute to the formation of the next generation of leaders
5. Establish the foundations for a Ministry Center for Hispanic Leaders and Churches
6. Capture in the best digital format the rich content of the courses taught by professors of national renown
7. Evaluate and improve the program in light of its goals and outcomes
Multiplying the Talents

1. Strengthening Hispanic Theological Education within Calvin Theological Seminary: Institutionalizing the program

2. Serving Hispanic Theological Education beyond Calvin Theological Seminary:
   - Working collaboratively with AETH
   - Establishing an advisory council
   - Initiating a Resource center for minorities: Afro-American and Hispanics.
A Paradigm for Hispanic Theological Education?
Questions for Discussion

1. Think about the Hispanic presence in your city and the Challenges it represents for Church Ministry and Theological Education and Church Ministry

2. How feasible is the model presented in your own Institution?

3. Share some practices you know that respond to the Challenge of Theological Education for Spanish speaking peoples.
A Paradigm for Hispanic Theological Education?

Seven important characteristics:

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6. Academically Robust
7. Integrating
1. In Spanish

- In Spanish
- Taught by Latino scholars
2. Culturally Relevant

- Taught by Latino professors
- Experienced in the Latino context
3. Free

- Calvin Seminary
- Supported by local foundations
4. Pedagogically Innovative

- Diverse educational backgrounds
- Various ministry experiences
5. Fully Accredited

- Three credit hours for each course
- Advanced standing for students with a college degree
- Recognized by Christian Colleges in West Michigan and beyond (CHET in LA)
6. Academically Robust

- Qualified instructors
- High academic standards
7. Integrating

- Different denominations
- Diverse theological backgrounds
- Welcoming environment
Dr. Mariano Avila, NT Professor and Director of the Certificate in Hispanic Ministry at Calvin Seminary

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