

ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND ITS ALUMNI “METACOMMUNITY”

by

Michael C. Voigts

For many years, Asbury Seminary relied fundraising and student recruitment for alumni engagement. This resulted in only what alumni could do for Asbury, and not what Asbury could do for alumni. The outcome was low administrative expectations for alumni engagement and overall support of the seminary.

This study based alumni engagement initiatives by the seminary on actual alumni desires. It utilized an Internet, self-administered survey to understand the basic relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni. This new understanding can help Asbury Seminary unleash the deep affection that alumni have towards the seminary, providing mutual benefits to both the institution and to alumni themselves.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Background of the Study

Asbury Theological Seminary is a unique institution. Like many seminaries, Asbury offers graduate degrees in theological, missiological, and advanced Christian leadership and provides necessary course work for the fulfillment of several denominational ordination requirements. Yet, for students and alumni, Asbury has a much deeper significance. Asbury Seminary is known around the world for being a place where God intersects the lives of individuals in a powerful way in the midst of theological education.

Asbury Seminary students speak of their education as being an “experience.” The close community on campus, support networks, and opportunities (in both structured and unexpected settings) provide an education of the self as well as of God. Curriculum alone cannot generate such experiences. Many formational opportunities exist outside of the classroom in the general campus community.

Since graduation from Asbury in 1993, I have remained active in the life of the seminary. I assisted the Admissions office in recruiting students in my area, attended Ministers’ Conference every other year, supported the seminary through the Alumni Phonathon, and implemented an alumni gathering during my United Methodist annual conference session (although only three alumni of Asbury Seminary served in my conference). In 1999, the president of the Asbury Seminary Alumni Board of Directors asked me to serve a three-year term. I was surprised. I was not a pastor of a megachurch. I had not given a substantial amount of financial contributions. I was simply the pastor of

a growing rural church in central Texas.

While I enjoyed my service on the Alumni Board, I began to question its existence. The charter gave it no administrative authority. Despite the absence of a full-time Alumni Director at the seminary, the Alumni Board could make no decisions regarding alumni affairs. It existed simply as an advisory body.

To my further surprise, in January 2001 I was asked to consider serving the seminary as the Director of Alumni and Church Development. This newly created position was designed to engage alumni and local churches in the life of the seminary. After considerable prayer and conversations with seminary officials and friends, I decided to accept the position, which I assumed in April 2001.

Understanding the Problem

For the most part, the alumni of Asbury Seminary feel a strong affection for their alma mater. Yet, in many ways the seminary has not been able to channel this devotion for the enhancement of the institution.

The Role of Alumni in the Life

of Universities and Seminaries

Despite the similarity of being graduates of institutions, the roles of alumni in the life of universities and seminaries have major differences.

Financial. Asbury Seminary exists to serve at least two primary functions. First, it educates women and men of the Christian faith who desire to achieve one or more educational degrees. Second, Asbury Seminary exists to serve the Church by training these women and men for Christian leadership. With these two functions in mind, Asbury's presence in the lives of its students does not end when they graduate. Asbury

Seminary exists for the education and training of persons. This training, correctly understood as including academic and professional training, including guidance in spiritual maturity, is never complete. Asbury's graduates, like all persons, are lifelong students.

For many years the Asbury Seminary-alumni relationship has not been consistent with the alumni's life as students. Asbury Seminary, like most institutions of higher education, has maintained a relationship with its alumni that has focused on two primary issues: the alumni's ability to support the institution financially and the alumni's ability to recruit new students.

Since Asbury's alumni are primarily pastors of small to mid-sized congregations, their fiscal year giving, while important, has never constituted more than 16 percent of the seminary's overall donor giving. This figure is similar to other nondenominational, stand-alone seminaries in the United States and Canada (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Alumni Giving (Unrestricted Gifts) between Asbury Theological Seminary and the Association of Theological Schools' Seminary Member Institutions

	Asbury Seminary		Assoc. of Theol. Schools	
	Ave. Gift	% of Total Giving	Ave. Gift	% of Total Giving
94-95	61.30	15	75.20	7
95-96	65.10	15	65.60	6
96-97	61.90	11	69.50	6
97-98	69.80	12	73.70	6
98-99	71.20	8	74.10	6
99-00	85.70	9	82.60	7
00-01	78.90	10	89.30	8

In the past, Asbury Seminary has followed the traditional seminary model of alumni development, centering its alumni programs on financial giving, whether to the annual fund of the seminary or in alumni estate planning. While many students of Asbury Seminary experience profound spiritual growth in their lives during their time in the Asbury community, upon graduation they experience a transformation in their connection with the seminary from a spiritual connection to a financial one.

Student recruitment. With regard to student enrollment, over 90 percent of students come to Asbury due to the influence of one or more of Asbury's alumni. Graduates have a strong desire to see the Asbury alumni presence expanded in the world. They desire colleagues in ministry who have had the same experience they did as students at Asbury. In some ways, this desire to recruit prospective students may have a self-centered quality to it. Asbury alumni do not want to be alone in ministry. They desire fellowship and community with those who have similar theological and ideological beliefs as their own.

The Seminary's Relationship with the Church

Seminaries, by the very nature of their curriculum, have a distinct relationship with the Church. Rather than existing merely for the sake of academic progression, seminaries serve the Church by training those who would serve in the Church. In many ways, seminaries and local congregations have symbiotic relationships. Seminaries in their current structure cannot exist without denominational ordination requirements and the need for ministerial training. Local congregations, primarily those with a denominational relationship, need seminaries to provide pastors with adequate training that will enable the churches to grow.

University versus Seminary Alumni Relationships

As an institution that trains men and women for Christian ministry, Asbury Seminary does not merely exist as an institute of higher education and learning. Instead, it is grounded securely within the realm of the Church. This placement suggests that Asbury Seminary should pursue a notably different relationship with its graduates than simply viewing them as a means of acquiring financial contributions and new students. Many colleges and universities administer their alumni activities through a Board of Directors who serve to disseminate information and encourage financial giving to the institution.

Although temptingly simple, seminaries should not model their alumni developmental programs after the collegiate or university paradigm. For both universities and seminaries, the lowest common denominator for their alumni is a commitment to the school. This commitment may manifest itself through nationally known athletics, respected scientific research, or a desire to see spiritual change in society. The difference, however, is how the institutions' alumni express this commitment.

The extent of commitment universities receive from their alumni is through financial contributions and student referrals in order to further the work of the institution. This desire may come from an emotional connection with the institution. The commitment from seminary alumni, however, may have its roots in a spiritual connection. Seminary alumni may view their lifelong connection with the seminary not merely to increase the sphere of the institution but as having an impact on the spiritual state of the world. The motivation is ministry. The two types of institutions ultimately have different purposes for existence and exist within different realms of society.

Universities have a horizontal relationship with their alumni. Seminaries and their alumni have a vertical, or God-focused, relationship.

Asbury Seminary desires to serve the whole people of God—not just the training of those pursuing ordained ministry but also the training of the laity, who desire deeper involvement in Christian leadership. For the alumni of Asbury Seminary, the current seminary-alumni relationship paradigm does not adequately serve or represent either the seminary or the alumni.

A Scriptural Perspective

The primary biblical foundations for seminary alumni development are not based on an original methodology but rather on the fundamental underpinnings of basic discipleship and spiritual development. Many pastors and church leaders maintain that in their own ministries, the act of discipling individuals in their spiritual growth will naturally encourage them to have a lasting influence on other individuals, their own communities of faith, and the work of the Church as a whole, including an increase in their financial gifts.

With regard to the work of the seminary, the work of the alumni office has the same basic initiatives as that of a local church. When a seminary encourages alumni in their spiritual lives, this may foster a desire for the alumni to deepen their financial and time commitments to the seminary, which will result in the seminary's ability to train more women and men for Christian leadership.

Old Testament

The Hebraic community of the Old Testament understood the concept of community—even community with those in their historical past. The people of Israel had

no definitive concept of community until the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. Their understanding of themselves was in relation to their understanding of Yahweh. The ideal was to create a faith community, or a kingdom of priests (Exod. 19:6). In many ways, the alumni of Asbury Seminary are themselves a faith community in service to God and humanity. While they do not necessarily follow a covenantal law, they have shared desires regarding ministry, evangelism, and spiritual growth.

Through the oral tradition, the people of Israel had a rich identity with those in antiquity. Despite persecution, retribution, and even apostasy, the people of Israel remained fixed on their identity as the people of Yahweh. In their worship, a major focus was the remembrance of Yahweh's work in their past. Psalm 68 is a remembrance of Yahweh's deeds that bound the people together in unity of spirit and purpose.

Even after the destruction of Jerusalem, the scattering of the people throughout the ancient Near East, and the dissolution of their very understanding of Yahweh and their very identity, the people continued to understand themselves in light of Yahweh's work in human history (Ps. 74). At that juncture in Israel's existence, the past was all they had for hope. Despite the eventual reconstruction of Jerusalem and rebuilding of the temple under Nehemiah and Ezra, the people still made comparisons to the triumphs of the past. In a sense, their community included those who had gone before them.

New Testament

In New Testament times and beyond, the dispersal of the Jewish people around the known world was not enough to disintegrate their understanding of community. Their traditions and their past maintained their understanding of this identity. As Yahweh's chosen people, they saw themselves as a people with a long history of exclusive rights in

the world. Yahweh chose them alone to bring the world to faith. Their history with Yahweh was rich and glorious, and, despite their disobedience in the past, they were still the chosen people.

This community ideal helped to form and bind together the early Christians who remained faithful to their community despite frequent challenges and persecutions. In Matthew 10:22, Jesus explains that the disciples' allegiance to him would bring about persecutions. They were to persist, however, because their community of faith was worth the risks.

While the concept of a "seminary" is not found in Scripture, in a general understanding, one can compare Jesus' relationship with his disciples to a seminary experience. God called persons to follow Jesus for a set period, learn from his teaching, pattern their lives to his, and then leave for ministry in the world. The Latin term for seminary, *seminarium*, refers to a plantation, or nursery, where young plants find nurture and care. Once the plants are grown, they are sold and then replanted in other places. This understanding of a seminary has profound analogous insights for seminary alumni.

The early Christian community was a close community known for, among other things, a sense of *koinonia*, or fellowship. In Acts 2:42, a description of the early Christians shows a powerful sense of mutual identity and purpose. Rather than a concrete, or establishment aspect of fellowship, this *koinonia* represented a spiritual commonality that bound the early Christian believers together.

The Apostle Paul writes extensively about the importance of Christian community and love. As a Pharisee, he may have witnessed this community in the early Jerusalem church (Acts 2:43-47). While Paul never ministered to the alumni of a theological

seminary, he did spend a considerable amount of time mentoring and nurturing early Christians in the churches he established throughout the Roman Empire. For example, in 1 Corinthians 15:58-16:4, Paul writes about the need for enthusiasm in the Lord's work and then provides instructions for how to receive the weekly ministry offering. Another example of this Pauline method of combining financial stewardship with spiritual growth is found in 2 Corinthians 8:1-15. In Philippians 4:10-19, Paul weaves the thread of financial giving into the whole fabric of Christian spirituality. Financial giving is not separate from one's spirituality; it is a result of spiritual growth. Other examples are found in 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9 (hard work and dedication) and Titus 1:11 (warning of those Christians who ask for money without providing sound spiritual teaching).

Paul encouraged a holistic spirituality that encompassed both internal and external expressions of Christian living. Inward personal commitment to Christ followed by outward expressions of love toward others creates a life patterned after Christ. Seminaries, which exist to train Christian leaders, have an opportunity to provide the same holistic ministries to their alumni. These ministries may, in turn, have lasting effects not only on the institution but also on the world.

An Approach Grounded in History

From the earliest Christian history, the understanding of Christian fellowship, or community, has been noticed not only by those inside the Church but also by those observing the Church with objective eyes. Authorities in the Roman Empire understood early Christians as having a deep love and charity towards others, which came from a deep commitment in their religious beliefs.

The Early Church Concept of Community

Born in Carthage in AD 150, Tertullian became a leader in the early Christian movement. He was one of the first Christians to embrace Latin as the language of choice for communication and used the language to communicate with Roman authorities.

Apologeticus is Tertullian's attempt to rationalize the existence of the Christian community within Roman society. He describes Christian community as one in which persons are readily willing to die for one another. Tertullian's description of a century-old Christian community is strikingly similar to the description of the Church in Acts 2. Not yet burdened by institutional hierarchy, the Church remained a movement not burdened by structure but freed for changing society through love and Christ like example.

Like Tertullian, Irenaeus of Lyons stressed the residence of the Spirit of God in the Church community. According to Irenaeus, the true test of a heresy is whether God's Spirit works in and through a given community.

Through the writings of Dorotheos of Gaza and Augustine, the early Church saw a movement in Christian understanding that in community, and not individualism, persons grow closer to God. Irenaeus and others held that the truth of God abides in the community of Christians. This community is not defined by organization structure and institutionalism but by the evidence of the Spirit of God. Christian community for the early Christians was a vital aspect of their existence. Not having the complete Scriptures or formulated doctrines, this Christian movement had each other for support and accountability, particularly in times of Roman persecution.

Bernard of Clairvaux

In the middle ages, Bernard of Clairvaux established a new, austere form of the

Christian life. The Cistercians became the catalyst for rapid renewal in the Church. By adhering to a strict form of disciplined life, the Cistercians felt camaraderie with one another from the various monasteries where they lived. Bernard was quick to advise those who desired to enter the Cistercian way of life that Cistercians were different from Benedictines. In a letter to the Archbishop of York, who desired to move to a Cistercian monastery, Bernard writes with a bit of pride that he is not sure the archbishop could endure the lack of food, harsh climate, or hard work of the Cistercian life (Letters 244).

Bernard's desire was to see renewal not in spite of the institutional Church but through it. Christian community was the basis for individual life and spiritual growth. The magnitude of his correspondence to fellow monks, secular princes, laypersons, and those in other monastic orders are a clear indication of his desire to maintain the spirit of close Christian community despite the vastness of the borders of the global Church. In actuality, his desire was to maintain the centrality of a loving, unified Christian community (Sermons on the Song 104).

John Wesley

During the Methodist renewal in eighteenth-century England, the early Methodists had a tightly knit supportive community, despite being scattered around the British Isles. John Wesley writes that in their "love feasts," at which Methodists gathered for food and fellowship, "we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with 'meat that perisheth,' but with 'that which endureth to everlasting life'" (8: 259).

Clearly, the Methodists had a commitment of faith and life that knit them closely together. The formation and lay leadership of the class leaders proved an effective means to provide discipleship for the new Methodists. Wesley's relationship with these class

leaders was as important as the class meetings themselves. This mutual submission to a higher way of life gave light to some hardships for the Methodists, but these hardships merely supported in a more secure way the Methodists' resolve.

The Methodist movement in nineteenth-century America was as swift as in Britain, but the rigidity of denominational institutionalism soon replaced the structured community of Wesley's small groups. Methodism swept across the quickly expanding nation but soon became mired in denominational structure and systems. The implication of this new understanding for Methodism is that today, many United Methodists feel more connected by structure and polity than by an identity grounded in the foundations of Christian community.

An Approach Grounded in Literature

A congregational approach to seminary alumni development is a new progression in the advancement of higher seminary education. While articles and essays regarding university development are plentiful, no major reference category exists for seminary alumni development. Current literature relating to alumni development of both universities and seminaries are, in large, amalgamated into a single category. Many similarities still exist between university and seminary alumni development, and gleaning insights from university alumni models can serve as a very effective way to meet the needs of seminaries and their alumni by contextualizing higher educational research.

Institutional development professionals are beginning to acknowledge a differentiation between universities and seminaries. For example, Nancy Willson, Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education, has seen at least three major differences between alumni

development of universities and seminaries: constituencies, priorities, and donor recognition (6-7). Colleges and seminaries have significant internal differences, as well.

The importance of alumni involvement beyond finances and new students is being recognized in many forms of higher education. Universities and seminaries may glean insights from each other, but following each other's methodology can result in miscommunicating with one's own constituency base.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand both the actual and desired relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity. Until Asbury Seminary can understand the actual perception that its alumni have of the seminary, Asbury will be unable to move alumni towards the desired relationship with its alumni.

The Guiding Research Questions

Three questions formed the basis for the parameters of this study.

Research Question #1

How do alumni currently perceive their relationship with Asbury Seminary?

Research Question #2

What is the desired reality of the relationship between the alumni metacommunity and Asbury Seminary?

Research Question #3

What factors might help to explain the actual and desired realities of the relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity?

Definition of Terms

In this study, one principal term was used with a specific understanding of its

meaning.

A *community* is a body of individuals who live in close proximity to one another and who have a common sense of identity.

In contrast to “community,” a *metacommunity* refers to a modified form of traditional community that materializes (in this study) post graduation when students become part of the Asbury alumni community. The alumni community is a *metacommunity* due to at least two factors. First, since alumni are spread throughout the world, they do not exist in a traditional understanding of community but exist via the Internet, e-mail, occasional gatherings, and in an overall state of camaraderie with others who have gone through an Asbury educational experience. Second, they exist in a state of community that is “after” (*meta*) their initial campus understanding of community.

The Project

Since this project originated in my role as the Director of Alumni and Church Development at Asbury Theological Seminary, a brief description of the background work of the Alumni Office before and during this project is relevant.

Background

This project actually began in the summer of 2001 when the seminary administration agreed to disband the Alumni Board of Directors in favor of a model that would more adequately serve the needs of both the alumni and the seminary. The development of that model was my task.

The Alumni Leadership Team is the result of my discernment. Rather than an administrative board structure of organization, this team is comprised of twenty to twenty-five alumni leaders, geographically based, who serve as “representatives” of

alumni in their regions. They are responsible for keeping the alumni in their areas connected with the seminary and each other through a variety of means. The most important aspect of this team is the training, or discipleship, of other alumni (see Appendix A). Each Team member finds five alumni in his/her area and develops a relationship with them (creating the Regional Leadership Team), training them in the mission, vision, and objectives of the Alumni Leadership Team. In turn, Regional Leadership Team members find and mentor five alumni each (Local Network Team). This discipleship model determines the success of the Alumni Leadership Team approach. The entire body of alumni involved in this structure comprises the Alumni Leadership Community. My involvement in the lives of those in the Alumni Leadership Community determines the success of the discipleship model.

After recruiting individuals from specific locations around the United States (see Appendix B), the Team began with a summit in February 2003 with the twenty members of the Alumni Leadership Team (ALT). The goal was to build community and provide an understanding of their mission, vision, and objectives (MVO) for the ALT (see Appendix C). To everyone's amazement, the team bonded during the opening dinner, providing one piece of evidence to the theory of the existence of an Asbury Seminary metacommunity. Following the summit, at which team members were given the opportunity to help create the mission, vision, and objectives, I gave them a goal sheet (see Appendix D). They were to set their own goals, to which I would keep them accountable.

Project Description

The basis of this project involved the development of the Alumni Leadership Team model as a foundation for redefining the seminary's understanding of its

relationship with its alumni. If Asbury Seminary is to have a relationship with its alumni markedly different from the relationship that the alumni have with their undergraduate institution, the pattern of administration must model this new endeavor. Furthermore, the development of the alumni leaders must represent the type of relationship the seminary envisions with the entire alumni body. To facilitate this model, I envision a comprehensive cultivation process, including both corporate and one-on-one meetings. The schedule includes two meetings annually with the Alumni Leadership Team members and an event in the future for both the Alumni Leadership Team and the Regional Support Team. Financially, this structure is an expensive undertaking, but the rewards will far exceed a monetary return.

In addition, the cultivation process includes regular correspondence from me to the Alumni Leadership Team members through e-mail, phone calls, personal visits, and quarterly newsletters. My relationship with the ALT members is an important aspect of this initiative. They must feel connected and empowered to fulfill their roles.

Dynamics of the Study

This project involved the following dynamics:

1. Intentional training of alumni by alumni themselves through an administrative structure based on a discipleship paradigm;
2. Developing mutual spiritual accountability and support through alumni connecting with each other;
3. Educating alumni to use their influence as Christian leaders to introduce potential donors to the seminary;
4. Empowering of alumni to refer prospective students to the seminary and

maintaining relationships with prospective students during their seminary experience; and,

5. Encouraging the seminary to maintain a healthy relationship with its alumni, including them in the life and community of the seminary.

The alumni developmental method described in this project was bold, unconventional, untested, and extremely demanding to implement initially; however, the approach was quite fundamental and imperative. With the increasing number of parachurch organizations offering courses in leadership development, evangelization tools, and the like, seminaries must maintain a fresh relationship with alumni to keep them engaged.

This congregational approach to seminary alumni development is an answer to the financial needs of many seminaries in the world today. If the seminary focuses on developing alumni financial support, it will obtain alumni financial support. If the seminary centers on the spiritual life of its alumni, however, the seminary will acquire from its alumni much more than finances. The seminary will become a partner in their very lives and ministry, forming a global metacommunity that will do more than merely represent the seminary. This alumni metacommunity has the potential to serve as a catalyst that can influence the Church in the world.

Subjects

The subjects of this project were the 3,155 of the 8,303 alumni of Asbury Seminary living in the United States for whom the seminary has valid e-mail addresses. These alumni live in all fifty states and serve in over forty denominations. Nearly 56 percent of them are in active ministry.

Means of Instrumentation

The study required the use of one researcher-designed, Web-based questionnaire (see Appendix E). I sent an e-mail invitation to complete the questionnaire to the 3,100 Asbury Seminary alumni with valid e-mail addresses. This instrument was used to understand the alumni-perceived relationship with Asbury Seminary postgraduation as compared with that of their undergraduate institution. It provided both quantitative and qualitative data.

Importance of the Study

The importance of theological education extends far beyond the attaining of and awarding of degrees. Asbury Seminary exists to train women and men for leadership in the global Church. The relationship that Asbury Seminary has with its graduates long after they receive their degrees may have a lasting influence on their ministries, as well. A reciprocal relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni is mutually beneficial. Developing a model to facilitate this relationship is a fundamental aspect of this project.

This project may be beneficial not only to Asbury Seminary and its alumni but to other seminaries as well. The elementary understanding of the role of a seminary implies a relationship with that seminary's alumni that maintains a primarily spiritual relationship. A seminary that follows a traditional college/university alumni paradigm may not have a relationship with its alumni to its fullest capacity. This study has the potential to become a preliminary model for all seminaries, which may have a lasting impact on the Church around the world.

Overview of the Proposal

Chapter 2 explores relevant foundations in literature and reflects on significant

themes in Scripture, the history of Western Christianity, and current alumni development models in higher education and nonprofit institutions.

Chapter 3 explicates the procedures of the study, including delineating the Web-based survey instrument, providing detail regarding the means of data collection, and identifying the data analysis methodology.

Chapter 4 reports the findings of the Web-based survey instrument and answers the research questions.

Chapter 5 presents a summary and conclusion of the study, including the practical applications of the findings for other seminary institutions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A leading university president made a bold statement. He stated emphatically that the alumni of his institution are more than just important to his school. More than any other of the university's constituencies, alumni represent the overall nature, spirit, and tradition of the school (Dolbert 22). Administrators in higher education know the importance of their institution's alumni. Having once spent several years heavily absorbed into the institutional culture, alumni know the institution like few others, and many feel a connection to their alma mater that translates into financial and volunteer commitments.

While universities create community among their alumni in various ways, athletics is the most binding form of university community in the United States, particularly among the larger institutions. A recent study has shown that Americans spend 2.55 billion dollars in collegiate sports apparel annually (George). On average, 18 percent of the overall athletic budgets of NCAA Division 1-A schools comes from alumni (Fulks 34). A winning team can create greater financial support for an institution's overall operational budget.

The question for Asbury Seminary is how to create a healthy metacommunity among its alumni. Asbury Seminary obviously does not have an athletic program or dominant apparel market. One could assume that the Asbury alumni already have a deep commitment to the seminary and a desire to see positive change in the Church and the world through the ministries of Asbury. Unfortunately, this motivation may not be enough to engage Asbury Seminary alumni in the life of the seminary. Since athletics is

not the aspect of Asbury Seminary that binds alumni together, the question as to the real alumni connection to Asbury is fundamental. Finding the fundamental characteristic about Asbury that motivates alumni to stay connected to each other and to the seminary is paramount to building an alumni infrastructure that will benefit Asbury, the alumni themselves, and the global Church.

The purpose of this study was to understand both the actual and desired relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity. This chapter reviews a biblical/theological foundation for the study. It begins with a biblical foundation, moves toward a foundation in historic Western Christianity, and then concludes with recent trends in higher education in the United States.

Biblical Foundations

The primary biblical and theological foundations for a congregational approach to seminary alumni development are not based on an original methodology but rather on the fundamental underpinnings of basic discipleship and spiritual development. Many pastors and church leaders maintain that in their own ministries, encouraging individuals in their spiritual growth will naturally encourage them to have a lasting influence on other individuals, their own communities of faith, and the work of the Church as a whole.

Old Testament Concepts of Community

The covenant between God and God's people began with Abram in Genesis 15, in which God promised Abram that he would be the father of a great nation. Throughout the Old Testament, the people of Israel experience joy and much heartache yet continue to view themselves as the people of God, even when they fail to live as people of God. They are scattered across the ancient Near East, yet they have a rooted identity and history that

binds them together.

A kingdom of priests. Although in God's mind the people of Israel are already God's chosen people (Exod. 4:22), not until the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai does Israel have a definitive understanding of God's relationship with them. Israel is to be God's kingdom on earth—manifested by their spiritual commitment and not by military or political might (Exod. 19:4-6). This faith community includes two spheres: (1) Israel's treasured position or their unique status before God by grace and (2) Israel's call to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, which is their vocation in the world.

This passage from Exodus 19 serves as the foundation for God's relationship with Israel. It begins with God's grace (v. 4), in which God alone is the sustainer and redeemer of God's people. Before they had a knowledge of God, God provided the means for freedom. This freedom was not merely a physical release from Egyptian slavery but a spiritual freedom in which they were freed from themselves and given the ability to worship God. With regard to the alumni of Asbury Seminary, the grace of God moves in their lives in ways they cannot perceive at the given moment. Both life experiences and personal moments of illumination work together as God's process of preparing them conveniently for their life calling.

In Exodus 19:5a, God calls Israel to obey and serve God alone by keeping their end of the covenant between God and the people. If verse 4 is the cause, then verse 5 is the effect (Hamilton 193). Divine love is a cause for humanity's response. This calling of God to Israel demands an answer. Israel must make a choice whether or not to accept the covenant, knowing the implications of their decision.

In 19:5b, God gives Israel their exclusive identity: By following the covenant,

they will become God's treasured possession. Rather than basing their identity in being a people with great monumental cities, the core of their self-understanding is that they are the treasure of God. This identity alone will bind the people together and bring definition to the understanding of the meaning and nature of their community.

Many pastors enter the ministry in lieu of promising careers. To be a follower of Christ is their identity. Seminary provides the means for these persons to deepen this self-understanding. Upon graduation, their commitment to the understanding of being called by God is tested as they enter a world that in many ways does not understand them.

Exodus 19:6 describes the priestly and holy vocation of Israel. If the people of Israel expected to establish a political kingdom upon leaving Egypt, this aspect of the covenant redefined their definition of "kingdom." To be solely focused on seeking God and drawing others to God is not a task of a selected few; it is a task of the whole people of God. Holiness is not merely a quality but a relationship with Yahweh (Von Rad 205). They are to represent God to the nations by their commitment to God's covenant with Israel.

In many ways, Exodus 19:4-6 serves as a paradigm for the alumni metacommunity. Many students and alumni speak of the "Asbury experience." My understanding of this phrase is defined as a theological education in which students' minds and hearts are stretched and formed to the image of God and whose lives are bound to one another through community. This student experience at Asbury is, in many ways, a covenant that forges a bond among alumni, regardless of the year of their graduation. The vocation of those who attend Asbury, in an ideological sense, is connected to Asbury's mission "to prepare and send forth a well-trained, sanctified,

Spirit-filled, evangelistic ministry to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world” (Asbury Theological Seminary). Students choose to attend Asbury for several reasons, and despite the known financial and geographic volatility, they come.

A common identity. Through the establishment of a political kingdom, riches beyond measure, and the loss of everything including the eventual destruction of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, the people of Israel remained fixed on their identity as the people of God. They remembered the deeds of God in their psalms, as in Psalms 68, 105-106, and 114.

Psalm 79 may have been written following the destruction of Jerusalem. From captivity, the psalmist recounts the hand of God guiding the people. The psalmist still refers to Israel as the people of God and the sheep of God’s pasture (v. 13). Despite the destruction of their homeland given to them by God, the annihilation of the holy temple, their centuries–old understanding about God, and their captivity in a foreign, pagan nation, they still have an identity as God’s people because they still had the Scriptures (Rutgers 20).

Upon return from captivity, the prayer of the Levites in Nehemiah 9:16-37 provides a review of Israel’s holy history for the postexilic community in Jerusalem. This prayer details the faithfulness of God and affirms the reality of God’s covenant with the people of Israel. They are a community based not on geographical and political power but on a covenant with God. Following Yahweh outwardly was preferred to an inner commitment (Bright 440). While their supra-emphasis on following every aspect of the covenant eventually led them to Phariseism, the Levitic intention was to recommit the people to the Yahwistic covenant. They were a minority in the world and had no power.

Yet, in the postexilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah, a pride existed that bound the people together (Smith-Christopher 145). As a minority people, this lack of power and influence gave the Jews a sense of satisfaction. They were God's holy people, regardless of their plight. The seemingly negative aspects of their situation became a positive situation for they were God's chosen in the world (Hasel 395-402).

The Jews during the intertestamental period seem to have ventured beyond the realm of Judah. Upwards of 100,000 Jews lived in Egypt, probably captured by Ptolemy I in 312 BC. During this period, more Jews may have lived outside of Judah than in the homeland, and rather than Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek became the common language of the Diaspora Jews (Bright 415). In spite of the scattering of the people, the meshing of cultures, and the disintegrating of their geographically-based identity, the Jews retained their identity. The Diaspora Jews became active in the foreign cultures, immersing themselves in the local economies while maintaining their sense of identity (Parkes 10-11).

The alumni of Asbury Seminary have a common bond in the "Asbury experience," despite their "diaspora" to places around the world. While this dispersion hardly parallels the community of Israel, it does provide a framework for this study. Asbury alumni may not find the ground for their community in a geographic location (due to its three campuses in Kentucky, Florida, and on the Internet) or even in the same course work. What binds them together is the commitment to come to Asbury and the reality of God's work in their lives while they are students.

New Testament Concepts of Community

God has created persons for community, and only in community is humanity

authentically complete (Scroggs 39). If this notion is true, then the New Testament provides a clear and complete description of the ideals of this Christian community.

Jesus and his disciples. From their calling until Jesus' death, the disciples were engaged in the first understandings of life in Christian community. Jesus' life and teachings modeled to the disciples how Christian believers were to live with one another. Jesus did not establish an organization of believers but rather taught how persons should live together under the new kingdom of God (Hanson 395). The Matthean version of the Sermon on the Mount deals extensively with human relationships and community. Jesus does not present new laws but merely provides fulfillment and true understanding of the Mosaic Law. He teaches how residents of his new kingdom should live with and act towards one another in community:

- 5:13-16 Charity and good deeds,
- 5:21-26 Feelings towards others,
- 5:31-32 Marriage relationships,
- 5:33-37 Honor and verbal commitments to others,
- 5:38-42 Retribution/Revenge,
- 5:43-47 Loving one's enemies,
- 6:1-4 Providing to the needy, and
- 7:1-5 Condemning others.

The three years of Jesus' ministry had a preparatory purpose (Ladd 181). As Messiah for the people of Israel, Jesus was preparing humanity for the kingdom of God. As rabbi and teacher for the disciples, Jesus was preparing them for leadership in this new kingdom (Mark 9:30-31). This leadership would include persecutions and challenges

unlike anything they had yet experienced in life (Matt. 10:22). They were to persevere, however, because the message and salvific nature of Jesus' presence in the world were worth the sacrifice.

Not unlike Jesus' ministry with the disciples, a seminary experience prepares students for leadership in the Church. Persons are called by God, choose to accept the call, and then enter a period of training for three to four years, leaving their former lives behind them. Within that training are experiences that stretch students and test their commitment to their calling. Graduation is merely a symbolic way for students to enter the role of leadership in the Church. The model below is a simplistic way to demonstrate this relationship.

Jesus' Disciples

1. Called (John 1:43)
2. Spent three years with Jesus
3. Commitment tested (Luke 22:54-62)
4. "Go into all the world" (Matt. 28:19)

Modern Seminary Students

1. Expressed a "calling"
2. Three to four years training
3. Call and abilities tested in seminary
4. Ministry leadership around the world

The disciples' community with Jesus, similar to the time seminary students are enrolled in classes, was merely a time of grounding and preparation. The real work of building Christian community came after Jesus' death and resurrection. For students, graduation is the pivotal time.

The concept of Christian *koinonia* in the New Testament. In the earliest references of the Christian movement following Christ's resurrection, the believers are together. Acts 1:14 records that the believers are huddled together for prayer. What seems to be a time of intermission between events in their lives is instead a crucial time for these believers. The bond forged during these forty days between the resurrection of Christ and Pentecost would serve to keep the fledgling Church solidified during times of

expansion and disagreements.

The concept of *koinonia* is an important aspect of the New Testament Church. The term *koinonia* regards sharing with someone in a common interest and forming a close, intimate bond. While this is not the primary task of the New Testament Church, it does have an important role in the fulfillment of the Church's commission. Not only did the new Christians experience fellowship with one another, but they also had fellowship with Christ, who had bound himself to humanity by enduring the cross (Oden 447). This mutual identity with Christ forged a close bond among the earliest Christians, which gave them confidence and assurance to complete the task of spreading the message of Jesus.

The first post-resurrection usage of *koinonia* is found in Acts 2:42, immediately following the Pentecost experience. The linking of teaching and fellowship in this verse is important for it combines both the rational and the affective natures of community formation. This is an important aspect of the formative days of the early Church for unless a strong community existed among the believers, the Church could not exist (Horrell and Tuckett 286).

Paul's use of *koinonia* is expansive. He refers to the partnership and fellowship among Christians (Phil. 1:5; Gal. 2:9). He also refers to the *koinonia* of the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16), the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:13), and the sharing of one's faith (Phil. 6). In Paul, *koinonia* takes on an interchangeable relationship between the Church and God. In a trinitarian understanding, a natural association exists between the oneness of the trinitarian God and the oneness of the Church's relationship with God and each other (Fiddes 86). While individual acceptance of the faith is necessary for salvation, that faith is manifest through mutual fellowship with the Church

and with God.

Asbury Seminary alumni have the shared experience of an Asbury education. In my travels to visit alumni and speak at retreats and other gatherings, the Asbury *koinonia* is a real entity. A bond exists when alumni of Asbury Seminary gather that is not present in other Christian gatherings. Cultivating and nurturing that bond to further the work of the seminary should be a major task of the alumni office. This is something alumni professionals can create; it simply exists. God has used Asbury Seminary to create a powerful *koinonia* among ministry leaders. It only needs a methodical focus to harness it for the glory of God.

Seminary alumni offices cannot simply provide encouragement for graduates. Institutions have financial needs that must be met. By promoting *koinonia* among alumni, a loyalty to the seminary, which includes financial and other commitments, will result.

The apostle Paul and holistic expressions of community. In his correspondence with the church in Corinth, one of Paul's desires is to establish in the Corinthian psyche that they are the people of God, in direct succession to the people of Old Testament Israel (Adewuya 194). His intention is to create in their hearts and minds that they are part of a much larger family of God's people. While they are in community with ancient Israel, their responsibility is not to the Jewish Law but to the revealed truth of Christ incarnate. Living holy, set-apart lives is a covenantal model that Gentiles can follow to live in relationship with God. Christianity is not a singularly focused or personal faith but one based on community (Horrell and Tuckett 286). This communal holiness extends to all areas of one's life as every aspect of the Christian's life is based on faith in Christ.

Paul did not separate faith and finances. He saw the giving of one's resources as a

natural response to God working in one's life. In 1 Corinthians 15:58-16:4, Paul encourages the Christians of Corinth to be enthusiastic about the Lord's work and then exhorts them to send a financial offering to the Christians in Jerusalem.

In 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Paul uses the example of the churches in Macedonia to encourage the same Corinthian church to increase their financial giving. Since God has worked in their lives, they should demonstrate their faithfulness by supporting the Jerusalem Church.

Paul begins by describing the giving habits of the struggling, yet financially generous, church in Macedonia. This congregation of believers, despite enduring very difficult situations, dedicated themselves to the Lord (v. 5). Paul follows in verses 6-8 by explaining to the wealthy Corinthian church that he has sent Titus to them to encourage the Corinthians to increase their financial giving. This church excels in many ways yet is lacking in their financial generosity. Paul then uses the example of Jesus himself who gave his life (v. 9). He concludes with a brief exhortation (vv. 10-15) of the spiritual rationale and practical means of giving. In these fifteen verses, Paul has left a powerful example of the rationale for financial giving. He uses (1) a common illustration, (2) a third person to foster accountability, (3) Jesus as a means of fostering motivating "guilt" or responsibility, and (4) a spiritual and practical explanation for the giving of their own material resources.

This model from Paul can serve as a structure for seminary alumni appeals for financial involvement. Simply asking for alumni financial support does not represent a *koinonia* approach to alumni development (Jeavons and Basinger 93). Ministry to alumni must be the primary goal of seminary fundraising for seminaries lie within the realm of

the universal Church.

In Philippians 4:10-19, Paul expands this teaching by weaving the thread of financial giving into the whole fabric of Christian spirituality. Financial giving is not separate from spirituality; it is a result of spiritual growth. Paul has peace about every life situation (vv. 12-13) because he has given every part of his life to Christ and thus depends upon Christ for his every need. In their continued financial support, the Philippian church has become Christ's instruments.

While a seminary's alumni serve under no obligation to the institution (unlike Paul, who was an authority in the early Church), seminaries can learn much about institutional advancement by following the biblical model of Paul. For those whom he disciplined, Paul encouraged a holistic spirituality that encompassed both internal and external expressions of Christian living. Seminaries, which exist to train Christian leaders, have an opportunity to provide this same Paulistic expression of both internal and external (spiritual and material) ministries to their alumni, ministries that may have lasting effects not only on the institution but also on the world.

Historical Foundations

As the Christian community became established as a recognizable religious movement, community among the Christians became even more important as Roman persecution tried to quash the growing Christian movement. As the Church gained prominence, community became more structured and institutionalized. This growth provided problems of its own as the freshness of the Acts 2 *koinonia* had, in many ways, led to both spiritual and communal staleness.

The Early Church

Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 140-c. 202) was a major contributor to the early Church. Irenaeus is famous for his anti-Gnostic work, Against Heresies. He was also pivotal in the formation of the structure of the early Church. Irenaeus believed that the structure of community was essential to maintain order in the midst of heresies. While he stressed order, he also believed that the Spirit of God does not reside in institutions but in and through the persons in the Christian community (Lawson 254). Irenaeus writes, “For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God, there the Church and every grace” (III.3.1). Clearly, the center of the Christian experience for Irenaeus was the community of the Church, not institutional organization or individual spiritual isolationism.

Tertullian, born in AD 150, became a leader in the early Christian movement. He was one of the first Christians to embrace Latin as the language of choice for communication and used the language to communicate with Roman authorities. Tertullian’s *Apologeticus* is his attempt to rationalize the existence of the Christian community within Roman society. This work offers insight as to how the Roman culture viewed the Christian community. Through his eyes, Tertullian offers a glimpse into the nuances of the community of early Christians. He describes the Christian community to the Roman magistrates as being “a society with a common religious feeling, unity of discipline, a common bond of hope” (Apology XXXIX.2). He describes Christian community as one that prays for the Emperor and other Roman leaders, reads the sacred writings of Scripture, and possesses such unity and bondedness that persons willingly share with those who have need. Those in the community are readily willing to die for

one another. He quotes a pagan who, upon seeing Christians interact with one another, says, “Look how they love one another” (XXXIX.7).

Tertullian’s description of a century-old Christian community is strikingly similar to the description of the Church in Acts 2. Not yet burdened by institutional hierarchy, the Church remained a movement freed for changing society through love and Christlike example. The reality of the Christian community is not on earth but in heaven (On Baptism 15). An alumni community bound by hierarchy and organization may not engage the hearts of seminary graduates as does a system that stresses the uniqueness and commonality of the alumni metacommunity.

Augustine (c. 352-c. 410), the great theologian of the Church, held high regard for the importance of community. At times in his life, Augustine found himself unable to trust his own desires so he realized the importance of those in the Church around him. He discovered that people can be joined fully to each other due to their relationship with God (Dixon 166).

In his opus The City of God, Augustine defines the Church as centering on the love of God, not the love of self. It does not glorify itself or its accomplishments but rather glorifies God (632). For Augustine, the center of the Church is not the Church or the work that the Church does in the world. The center of the Church is God. The love of God is the focus of the Church’s task. Neglecting to have God at the forefront of the Church’s work is to fail in the Church’s task in the world.

Focusing on what alumni can do for the seminary is to miss the purpose of the seminary. Loving them and engaging them for the sake of their own walk with Christ is the best way for seminaries to relate to their alumni. The education of Christians,

according to Augustine, should lead them from an earthly knowledge to a heavenly knowledge (X.14). As a primary means of training ministry leaders for the Church, seminaries' activities with their constituents should reflect this Christian character. Their relationship with alumni is an extension of the seminary educational experience. How seminaries relate to their alumni will, to some extent, influence the way alumni view the purpose of the seminary for their lives and for the general Church.

Dorotheos of Gaza (c. 500-c. 560) is a little-known Church leader in the sixth century who, although followed closely the teachings of the desert fathers, preferred a milder ascetic Christian community than did the monastics in Egypt. Dorotheos echoed Augustine and believed that individual Christians cannot grow closer to God without first growing closer to each other. Likewise, Christians cannot grow closer to each other without first growing closer to God (138).

Persons can glean insights into God's heart through relationships with others. As they grow in Christ together, they grow closer to one another. The objective of the Alumni Leadership Team is to function without a complex bureaucratic structure intentionally so as not to stifle creativity and malleability. This model also fosters ownership and learning opportunities among those on the team. While structure does exist, the central focus of the Alumni Leadership Team is spiritual community and accountability.

The Middle Ages—Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) encompassed the European Church of the twelfth century within himself (James 11). A planter of faith communities, a fervent preacher, a defender of orthodoxy, a mediator in world politics, a counselor to popes, and

yet a simple monk, Bernard longed to see Christ's rule in the world extend and deepen.

Bernard offers this study a lesson in leadership. To create a new relationship paradigm for Asbury Seminary and its alumni, leadership must play an important role. In a time when new books on leadership emerge each week, the idea of wandering back in time nearly nine hundred years for insight into direction for the modern Church seems illogical. Yet, in Bernard the modern leader can glean tremendous insights into the implications of leadership that extend far beyond the limits of one's own ministry. For Bernard, the effectiveness of the global Church was dependent upon the quality of its leaders at all levels, for the Church depended upon faithful individuals to achieve its purposes.

Bernard loved the Church. For him, the Church was the place where persons met Christ, found their home in God, and lived by the Spirit. He could not imagine spiritual growth or ecclesiastical reform outside the Church. To him, that could lead easily to heresy. While Bernard believed the most effective way to grow in God's grace was in the safety of the monastery, he did not maintain that monastic life was essential for salvation. The goal of those called ("converted") to the monastic life was to promote the salvation of the world into God's image (McGuire 72). The monastic life had a unique and important place in the Church, but it was not the essence of the Church (Bernard, Letters 81).

Bernard and leadership through Cistercian pride. The Cistercians in Bernard's day were a new force in monasticism. As the leader of the movement, Bernard's goal was to see Cistercian monasteries spring up all across Europe. Several orders existed, such as the Benedictines, the Cluniacs, and the Canons. Bernard believed that the monastic life in

Clairvaux was the safest and most cultivating place for someone to become like Christ (James 76). Competition among the orders was strong as monks would, from time to time, switch houses, to the dismay of their abbots.

The Cistercians were the more austere form of monasticism of the day, and only the most dedicated could endure. Despite the ascetic disciplines and hardships, the Cistercian renewal movement was the fastest growing monastic order in twelfth-century Europe. Monastics simply wanted to be identified with Bernard. His personality, though at times extremely emotional, was engaging. People wanted to be with him because he was so sure of himself (McGuire 19). Throughout his letters, Bernard reminds his Cistercian leaders that they are the most dedicated, the most grace filled, the most loving, and the order most dear to Christ's heart. This pride brought a unity among Cistercians during rapid expansion of new communities. Bernard was the unifying force. He did not, however, allow the Cistercian communities to rest in their pride but constantly challenged them to maintain their high level of spiritual dedication (Sermons on Conversion 72).

In a general sense, the alumni of Asbury Seminary possess a similar sense of pride. Many of Asbury's graduates are proud of their Asbury education. Many believe Asbury is among a few seminaries in the nation that provide a Wesleyan, evangelical education with a high view of Scripture. A shared "Asbury experience" is a real presence in the metacommunity of Asbury Seminary alumni. Bernard was able to channel Cistercian pride to achieve his dual purposes of furthering the work of the Order and encouraging the members of the order to grow in their love for Christ. To reach alumni effectively for the sake of both Asbury and alumni themselves, Asbury Seminary must follow Bernard's example in the development of the Cistercian order.

Bernard and leadership through the development of persons. To accomplish all that he did, and in lieu of his constant physical struggles and illnesses, Bernard had a tremendous support network around him. He was not afraid to delegate. In his letters, Bernard often appears to be harsh. In fact, the spiritual life of his recipients was Bernard's chief concern (Letters 24). He saw potential in persons, and through challenging them, he hoped to test their mettle (128).

Bernard expected much from those he placed in leadership and was extremely careful only to promote persons whom he knew would maintain the Cistercian ideal (LeClerq 38-39). Once in leadership, he maintained close communication with them and expected them to maintain close communication with him, as well.

In one instance, Bernard promoted a monk of Clairvaux named Rainald to serve as abbot of a new monastery. In his desire to cultivate this new leader, Bernard writes several letters to him with advice and counsel (Letters 103-08). When Bernard does not hear from Rainald, he chides him: "I beg you no longer to hide from me all that is happening to you, lest your very efforts to spare me make me more uneasy" (108).

Communication in the twenty-first century is much easier than it was in Bernard's day, yet the task of developing leaders through constant interaction with them has remained the same. In the cultivation of the alumni metacommunity, the alumni office must find ways to stay in regular, scheduled communication with alumni that is diverse in nature. Not only does this communication keep them close to the seminary, but it also allows the alumni office to identify potential leaders. Through publications, e-mail, phone calls, and personal visits, this contact demonstrates to the alumni the importance of their connection with Asbury Seminary.

Bernard and leadership by setting the standard. Bernard did not ask his followers to live a life he was not living. In fact, as he traveled throughout Europe, Bernard sometimes longed for the Clairvaux cloister and the simple monastic lifestyle and to cease from intermediating in worldly affairs (Letters 81). Forming himself to the image of Christ was his primary concern. Bernard recognized that self-knowledge is not a vice to be avoided, but celebrated. In his sermons on Psalm 91, Bernard expands this understanding:

The soul should know itself and be conscious of the truth about itself. For, unless I am mistaken, a man cannot easily be misled by someone who praises him during his lifetime, and thus become top-lofty, if he carefully examines himself in the light of truth.” (Sermons on Conversion 145)

Bernard used the compass of real-world human experiences as the basis for his understanding of human love for God. He expected those around him to follow his example. Clairvaux was the standard that its daughter houses should follow (Letters 220).

As Asbury Seminary relates with its alumni, it should consider the lessons from Bernard and be the institution that sets the standard for church leadership and evangelical, Wesleyan teaching. The implications of this influence comes from the type of materials the seminary publishes, the nature of alumni gatherings and retreats, and the character of the personal communication the seminary has with its alumni metacommunity. Bernard lived nearly a millennium ago in a different culture and within a dissimilar theological and ecclesial setting than contemporary America, yet modern leaders find applicable insights in his life and teaching, even for seminary alumni offices.

The Methodist Renewal—John Wesley

Like the Cistercians under Bernard, the early Methodists in England felt a sense of pride that they had committed themselves to a greater devotion to growing in Christ

than others in society. What John Wesley and the early Methodists offer to this discussion is the relationship Wesley had with his class leaders.

As a renewal movement and not an established Church, the Methodists relied heavily upon lay leadership. As the Methodist movement began to grow, Wesley realized the need for organizing the new Methodist Christians in a disciplined way under laypersons who had a solid Christian commitment and the potential for leadership. Wesley developed a highly structured system he called the United Societies. Groups of people met regularly for structured accountability at various stages of austerity. Wesley rejected the understanding held by the leaders of the Moravian volunteer spiritual communities (as well as those within the Roman Catholic monastic tradition) that spiritual growth and community were relegated only to those who had escaped the realities of everyday life. For Wesley, true spiritual growth took place in the real world with others who understood the veracity of temptation (Knight 140).

Appointed class leaders. In organizing leaders for these classes, Wesley appointed persons who had no other qualifications other than sense and honesty (2: 48). Although Wesley autocratically made the appointments himself, he sought counsel, made the appointments public, and seemed to have solid judgment in making the appointments (Henderson 148). Wesley's intent was for them to take the weekly collections and to "watch over the souls of their brethren" (13: 259). Perhaps even more than Wesley himself, the role of the class leader was the most important figure in early Methodism (Collins 184). Wesley chose to keep their oversight to himself. Wesley's delegation of responsibility and sharing of Methodist leadership was open for criticism by others, but this style of leadership gave rise to the overwhelming success of the movement

(Henderson 145).

The members of the Alumni Leadership Team are, in a limited sense, similar to the class leaders. They are not elected but chosen by the alumni director. Each team leader is given a set of goals for accountability. On occasion they receive a visit from the alumni director, who checks on their progress and offers pastoral support. While the alumni office has no direct authority over these voluntary alumni leaders, neither did Wesley have complete control over his class leaders. They were voluntary leaders who heard the call of God (and Wesley) to serve in that role.

The success of this new alumni engagement model depends, in large part, on the effectiveness of the Alumni Leadership Team members. They are an extension of the holistic approach of the Alumni Office. They have the capacity to influence, as Wesley attempted to do in the class meetings, a development of one's whole lifestyle and not merely the development of an alum's relationship with the seminary (Harper 308).

Class leader accountability. As the class leaders made reports to Wesley as to the spiritual progress of their members, Wesley responded with advice and counsel. On occasion, Wesley would examine the classes to ensure that the leaders were providing solid spiritual leadership. Accounts of these visits occur frequently in his journal, so one may argue that he spent more time in this activity than perhaps any other specific work, apart from reading, writing, and preaching (Dean 292). While these frequent visits to the classes were important, a number of the class leaders resisted the Methodist leader's examinations, discipline, and level of accountability (Watson, Class Leaders 29).

Wesley knew that not every class leader was effective, but his desire was to inspire the poor leaders and give them a chance. His decision was to allow the poor

leaders attend the class meetings of the effective ones so they could see them in action and learn (Dean 233-34). The importance of the class meetings to the Methodist movement was immense. The guidance from the class leaders to those who attended was no less important.

Not a perfect system. Wesley knew that the class meetings were not perfect. Accounts of class meeting recklessness and other problems are scattered through Wesley's writings (Rack 241). Wesley understood these problems, and was open to suggestions on how to make the class meetings more effective (8: 254). This openness demonstrates a maturity in Wesley's leadership in knowing that the best ideas come from consensus and multiple views. Wesley had a strong personality and will but was sensitive enough to understand the grace of God speaking through others.

No human enterprise is without weaknesses. The new engagement process for the Alumni Leadership Team is certainly not a perfect system. The discipleship aspect of the team loosely follows Wesley's United Societies system (applicable for a Wesleyan-Methodist seminary). Like Wesley, who was open to comments regarding its effectiveness, the seminary can allow God to speak through the members of the team. Mistakes will occur, and ALT members will not provide perfect leadership. However, compromise in the members' intent must never waiver, as it should not for any person who calls him or herself a disciple of Jesus (Watson, Covenant 11).

Wesley offers Asbury Seminary a framework for alumni relationship development and engagement in terms of focus and structure. Maintaining a balance between becoming too rigid and legalistic in this structure and not providing enough structure requires experimentation. Focusing on alumni spiritual development, through

various forms of communication and contact, motivates alumni to stay connected with the seminary. It also gives confidence to alumni to connect other persons with the seminary.

Foundations in Contemporary Studies

A foundation in the rich history and traditions of the Christian faith provides a framework for the design of a new method for engaging the alumni of Asbury Seminary. Most seminaries continue to follow traditional models of alumni relations, which stress alumni administrative structures, financial giving by the alumni, and the recruitment of students. Some seminaries take pride in this great tradition (Vendettuoli 110). As seminaries face new challenges in a rapidly changing world, the question of how to maintain institutional traditions while offering a fresh approach is a task that must be addressed.

The Trinitarian Relationship between Local Churches, Seminaries, and Seminary Alumni

Seminaries and local churches need each other; they live in a mutual relationship. Seminaries provide training for local churches. Local churches raise up women and men who feel a call of God on their lives and who desire seminary training. Yet this relationship is not complete without a third member in this relationship: seminary alumni. As Figure 1 demonstrates, this forms a trinitarian model.

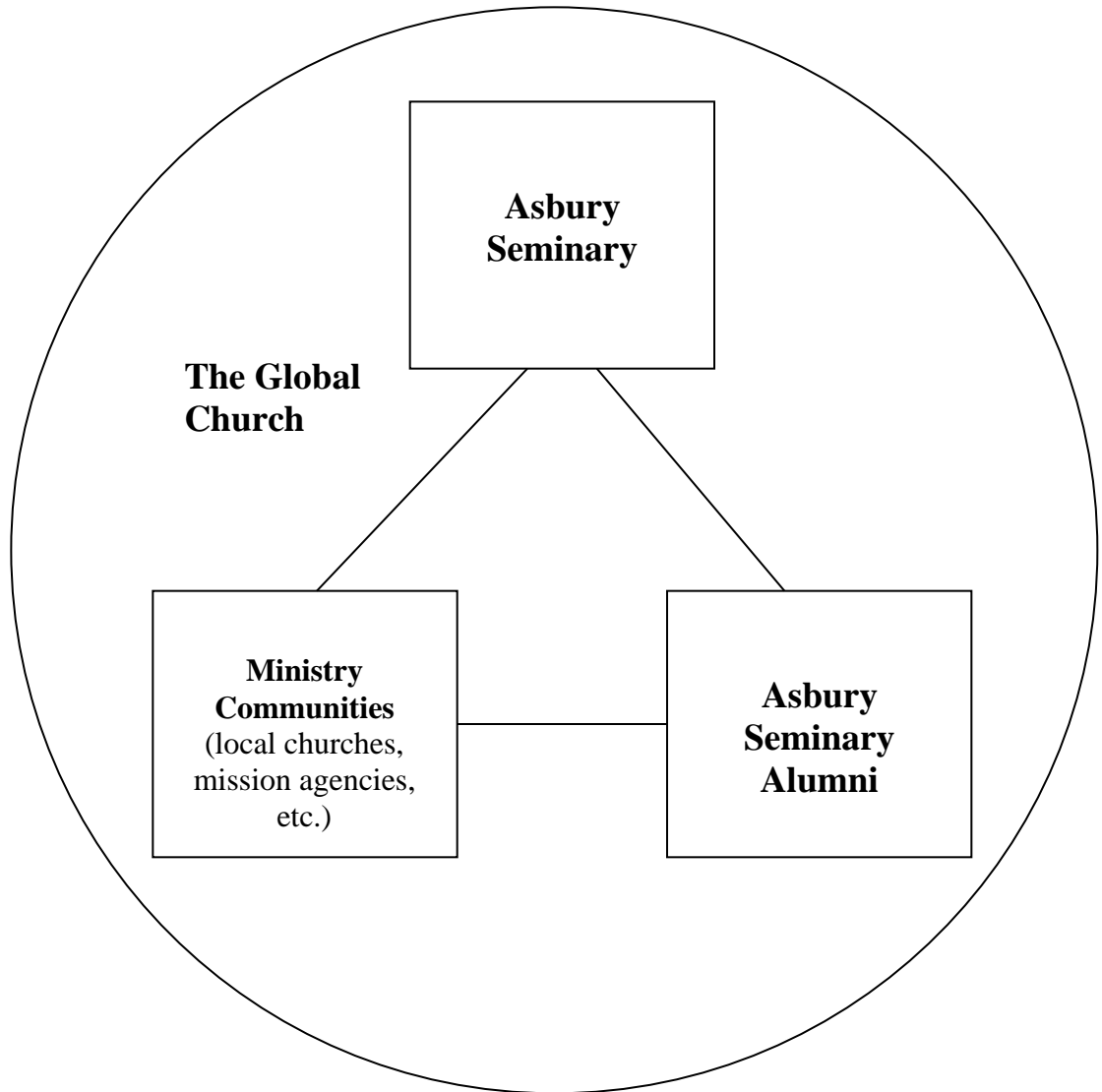


Figure 1. A trinitarian model demonstrating the relationship between Asbury Seminary, ministry communities, and local churches

Asbury Seminary cannot attain actualization without both ministry communities and its alumni. Ministry communities provide students, individual donors, and places for seminary graduates to serve. Alumni encourage prospective students to attend seminary, introduce potential donors to the seminary, and stay connected to the seminary for continuing education and postgraduate degree opportunities. Similarly, ministry

communities cannot attain actualization without alumni or the seminaries that train them. Seminary-trained pastors have spiritual and theological depth that helps to guide and lead congregations into missional fulfillment. Finally, seminary alumni cannot attain actualization without the seminary that trains them or the ministry communities where they can serve. Their calling is to guide and lead individuals in the Global Church. They receive training to execute this call from God through completion of a seminary education.

Removing any one of the three components of this model causes a structural breakdown in the Global Church. They stand alone, yet together, in a symbiotic relationship. Tension between these three certainly exists, particularly with regard to the necessity of any of the individual entities. Each of the three is essential to the other.

Colleges versus Seminaries

A congregational approach to seminary alumni development is a new progression in the advancement of higher seminary education. Not surprisingly, literature specifically dealing with seminary alumni development is limited. While articles and essays regarding university development are plentiful, no major reference category exists for seminary alumni development. Current literature relating to alumni development of both universities and seminaries are, in large, amalgamated into a single category. Many similarities still exist between university and seminary alumni development, however. Gleaning insights from university alumni models can serve as a very effective way to meet the needs of seminaries and their alumni by contextualizing higher educational research.

Differentiating colleges from seminaries is beginning to be acknowledged by

institutional development professionals. Differences in constituencies, priorities, and donor recognition methods result in communities that need distinct cultivation (Willson 6-7). Colleges and seminaries also have significant internal differences. Gleaning insights from each other is helpful, but following each other's methodology can result in miscommunicating with one's own constituency base.

The primary purposes of most seminary alumni offices in North America revolve around alumni financial support, student recruitment, and representing the seminary to laity. Nevertheless, current studies in alumni relations for both universities and seminaries seem to focus around two primary ideas: communication and relationship development. An institution cannot engage an alumni constituency base without first possessing the capacity to communicate with the alumni. Conversely, without effective communication, a relationship cannot occur. This idea is elementary but primary in associating with alumni. The communicative aspect of alumni relations is straightforward. Developing relationships with them, however, is more complex.

Alumni already know the institution from which they graduated. Graduation does not, and should not, mark the end of students' relationships with their school. All that has changed is their status, from that of student to alum. As one university president shares, "Alumni are full and continuing members of the . . . community" (Fredrick 7).

Issues in alumni relations. Rapid changes in society have influenced the way seminaries and colleges relate to their alumni. Technology, the escalation of second-career students, the increase of continuing education and seminar options, a rise in institutional skepticism, and the fluctuation of the American economy have caused alumni professionals to reevaluate their alumni engagement models. Institutions cannot

simply ask for financial gifts and expect a positive response. They must find ways to ensure that their institution stands out among the various opportunities facing their graduates.

The classification of alumni. An interesting study by the University of Michigan's Alumni Association has shown that in the rapidly changing atmosphere of higher education today in which so many are second-career students, grouping alumni by class year is not the most effective way to classify them (Scully, "Many Faces" 17). Persons in their twenties are now educational cohorts with those in their forties or fifties. Despite their same graduation year, these two age groups will have different views regarding a relationship with their alma mater.

Like the University of Michigan's Alumni Association, the Texas A&M University Association of Former Students has shown that classifying alumni by age, regardless of graduation year, is a more effective means of communicating with the entire constituency (Scully, "When Graduates" 20). This segmentation allows for a multifaceted approach for different generational types. For example, assuming every alumnus who graduated in the past ten years has an e-mail address is completely different than focusing on e-mail for graduates aged thirty-five and younger.

The issue of dues. Baylor University has found that while alumni who graduated in the 1940s and 1950s cherish a dues-based membership in a formal "Alumni Association," most of their younger alumni do not care about this type of institutional relationship (Kabat 36). Nevertheless, the University of Houston believes that without a dues-based membership, institutions are missing an important source of revenue. Benefits for alumni who pay dues are on a scaled basis determined by the amount of dues paid

(Scalzo 26). Most seminaries do not have a dues-based membership program. Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS), however, as a part of its alumni office, has established the Association for Evangelical Ministers, which is given prominent location on the seminary's Web site. Membership in this annual dues-based association is available only to DTS graduates who commit to moral and theological accountability, who are in some aspect of full-time ministry and who desire to further the ministry of Dallas Theological Seminary.

Communication with alumni. With the diversity of communicative methods available today, a comprehensive communicational approach to alumni, including print, e-mail, telephone contacts, personal visits, chat rooms, online bulletin boards, retreats, and both formal and informal dinners, are a much more effective way to communicate with alumni in today's complex world. Increasingly, alumni professionals need competence in both marketing and technology skills to maintain a fresh, engaging relationship with their alumni.

To maintain such a relationship with alumni, assessing their needs, their desire for a seminary relationship, and their life situation is fundamental. Many seminaries engage in annual alumni surveys to assess alumni needs; nevertheless, whether or not these surveys convey the attitudes of the alumni is not a given. The higher the cooperation rate of a survey, the more confident an alumni office can be of the accurateness of the results. Campbell Research states that while a 1 percent return of a mailed alumni survey seems like a favorable response, it is not nearly a high enough cooperation rate for the data to reflect alumni attitudes accurately (Campbell Research).

Surveying alumni via the telephone may be a more preferable method as it

provides a more personal approach to the survey method; however, the proliferation of the telemarketing industry may have given this approach some setbacks. One way that Asbury Seminary can utilize a telephone survey is through its annual Alumni Phonathon. While the telephone calls during this event must remain as brief as possible, asking one or two questions might provide some useful information.

Another alumni needs assessment vehicle that is gaining popularity is the “town hall meeting.” These gatherings of alumni offer face-to-face encounters with members of the institution and their alumni. Often headlined by the seminary or university president or a known faculty member, these events can create a remarkable amount of momentum for alumni engagement. Town hall meetings are “taking a slice of campus life to alumni- wherever they may be” (Harris 21). These “road shows,” as alumni officers call them, are successful when a clearly defined list of guidelines is followed: have a definitive purpose, keep it simple, host it in a special place, feature compelling people, and take students along (21). Local alumni must be involved in all facets of the event along with some guidelines and guarantees that a certain number of alumni will attend. These events also allow seminary representatives to hear from alumni what their desires are for the institution.

A changing goal. Increasingly, developmental professionals are realizing that financial goals are not the absolute desired outcome for alumni involvement. Even secular universities are realizing that alumni involvement is far deeper than financial commitments. Paul Schervish of Boston College believes in a behavioral approach to alumni development. Schervish calls his model the “inclination approach,” which assumes that people want to have a purpose when they give (Pope 25). This purpose

stems from something deep within them: their core values and beliefs. This purpose originates in a person's inner life, which has been virtually ignored by nonprofit organizations. Meeting the needs of a person's inner life is the core value behind a congregational approach to seminary alumni development. George Gallup believes that fundraisers have ignored the inner life of donors since 80 percent of people who are committed to charitable work are highly religious.

In a 2001 alumni research project by for Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, researchers found that alumni who financially support a Christian college are more likely to credit the college with helping them develop a sense of purpose in life (6). When alumni believe that a seminary has met certain purposeful needs in their lives, they will be more inclined to give to that seminary. Keith Brant, the executive director of the UCLA Alumni Association, argues that alumni giving should not be the measure of success for an alumni program. Brant states, "If an alumni relations program is measured only in terms of giving, then it's not really alumni relations that's being measured—it's donor cultivation" (24).

The phonathon experiment. The Asbury Seminary Alumni Phonathon, held each January, is an interesting example in the changing methods of the Alumni Office. In past years, the goal of the Phonathon was to raise as many pledges as possible and then use a series of mailings to encourage alumni to fulfill their pledge.

In January 2002, the Asbury Seminary alumni office tried an experiment. The goal of the Phonathon was for the student workers to pray with the alumni. Whether or not an alum made a pledge or not was not the issue. The goal was to pray. Following the

Phonathon, the office mailed no pledge reminder letters to alumni, just a letter thanking them for their pledge.

The office repeated this method for the 2003 Phonathon. The results were extraordinary. From 1983-2001, the seminary received between 40-60 percent of pledges made. In 2002, the first year of the prayer focus, alumni fulfilled 91 percent of their pledges. In the first three months following the 2003 Phonathon, the seminary received nearly 65 percent of pledges made. Figure 2 provides a graphic depiction of this phenomenon.

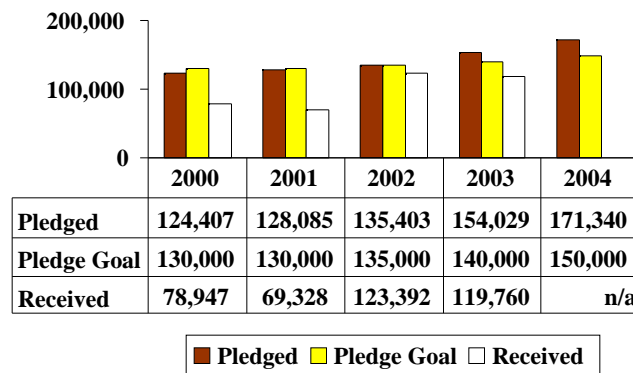


Figure 2. Asbury Seminary alumni phonathon statistics, 2000-2004.

In addition to the increase in alumni pledges fulfilled, the seminary also saw an increase in the average gift (see Figure 3).

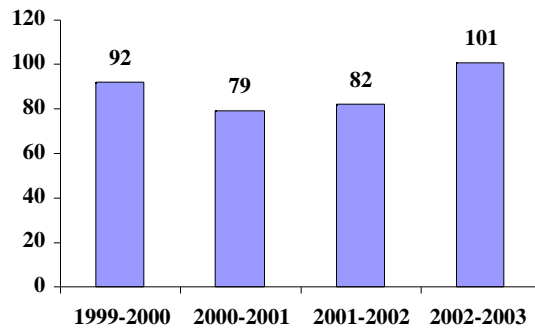


Figure 3. Average Asbury Seminary alumni gift, 2000-2003.

Structure of alumni leadership. With the major changes in the Asbury Seminary alumni office in the recent years, the need for long-range planning and organization is needed more than ever. While involving alumni themselves in the structuring of the alumni programs seems advantageous, Carolyn Manning of Stanford University says that alumni “are not really interested in how you get it done; what they’re interested in is maintaining contact with their school” (qtd. in Kabat 38). Governing bodies of an alumni association are not the primary interest of alumni. Many of them desire to know that their alma mater still cares about them as a person. How the school does that is irrelevant.

In a recent publication of alumni studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the authors share how the alumni association of MIT engages in periodic long-range planning to assess both alumni and institutional needs. MIT assesses needs for specific institutional projects that alumni desire to support (Pettit and Hilton 24). Alumni themselves, and not the institutional administrators, are at the heart of the programming.

Seminary Alumni Relations and the Unique Needs of Ministry Leaders

As a seminary, Asbury trains students for ministry leadership in the Church as pastors, teachers, missionaries, evangelists, Christian educators, and other vital leadership positions. In redefining the relationship paradigm between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity, the unique needs of pastoral and ministry leaders must be addressed in order to engage Asbury's graduates to the greatest extent.

Nothing that a seminary alumni office can do will have as many long-lasting effects than caring for the whole needs of its alumni (London). Ministry leaders respond best to ministries and organizations that care for them.

The need for community. A recent study found that 70 percent of clergy members have no close friends (Wells). In his report, Bob Wells records that Pulpit and Pew Research has shown that only 32 percent of clergy members report that they never feel lonely. For pastors, who make up the majority of Asbury Seminary's alumni, their understanding of community may be in the relationships they have within their denominational structure. Denominational community is usually very structured and organized. It also is simply an idealistic community for those in this "community" are many times very guarded with one another. Pastors who rely on these relationships may hide from the "deep wells of feeling that stir within them" (Allen 256). Ignoring one's life experience only leads to temptation and the possibility of transgression. Pastors must have an outlet for the sharing of their souls. Many times, required denominational relationships are not the best places for pastors to share their inner needs and struggles with one another.

Henri Nouwen states that “community is not an organization; community is a way of living” (83). Designing a new structure for the leadership of the Asbury Seminary alumni metacommunity may look right and have the best of intentions, but community does not exist on paper. It must come from the alumni themselves. The alumni office can only serve as the vehicle for the metacommunity to stay connected with one another. They must have a desire for *koinonia* for the term to have real meaning and purpose in their lives. In a trinitarian understanding, community with one another is a reflection of the unity and community of the triune God (Migliore 22). Despite different roles in the Church, each person has a unique place in the fellowship of believers. Isolationism hinders persons from experiencing the wholeness of the Christian life and is contrary to the very nature of God.

Community formation for pastors differs from that of laypersons. In one sense, pastors need community with other pastors. Pastors share common experiences and life stresses. Many pastors are lonely (Russell, Peplau, and Cutrong 472-80). For many, difficulty arises in finding others with whom to share their lives. While their spouses can serve as persons of support for them, studies have shown that clergy marriages suffer greater stresses than the marriages of laypersons (Warner 125-31).

Many times members of the clergy need the type of care they provide to persons in their congregation (Wagner 228). Studies in clergy support groups have demonstrated an increase in clergy effectiveness and overall life satisfaction for those who attend regularly (Kelly 26). Many pastoral needs can only be met by peers who share the same basic struggles in life. The structure and level of organization of these meetings generally have no effect on the level of effectiveness of the support groups. Simply meeting with

other ministry peers is enough (Madara and Peterson 219). In fact, a leaderless approach to clergy support groups may be more beneficial to the participants than engaging the services of a professional helper (Wagner 229).

Due to the various tasks of the ordained person, their formation of community is grounded in their role in the local church. Life and vocational fulfillment, especially by those who believe God has called them to ministry, is not complete outside of the ministry community in which they serve. As persons called by God, pastors need the community of their ministry for fulfillment and their own sense of spiritual well-being.

William Willimon argues that the spiritual formation of the pastor must take place within her or his ministering community because the pastor's function is sacramental, corporate, and ecclesial (37). The sense of one's call is to minister in community. One study shows that pastors who feel comfortable enough sharing their lives with those in their churches or ministries have a 30 percent greater chance of avoiding ministerial burnout (Whetham 126). Many pastors do not trust their parishioners, however, and with recent public scandals involving members of the clergy, laypersons may remain comfortably distant from their pastors.

Conclusions

This brief study of the Judeo-Christian understanding of community cannot possibly provide new insights to the field. From the Old and New Testaments, through the history of Western Christianity to contemporary studies in both secular and religious higher education, the same theme emanates: community strengthens when focused around a common goal or ideal.

The needs of seminary graduates are unique. As persons called by God for

ministry, they function not dissimilarly to God's call in Exodus 6 to represent God as a "kingdom of priests." In their community of faith, Asbury Seminary alumni should have a relationship with the seminary that is consistent with their experience as students. The community has modified (thus creating an alumni metacommunity), but the relationship should be congruent. One Pace Study demonstrated that a holistic model for seminary students, a student experience that encompasses multidimensions of their humanness, actually reduces the amount of pastoral stress upon graduation (Harbaugh 101). Taken a step further, a holistic approach to Asbury Seminary's alumni development may re-create in the hearts and minds of Asbury's graduates their experience as students.

The Asbury Seminary alumni office personnel has spent the past eighteen months listening to alumni, researching other seminaries, and consulting with nationally known Christian leaders to understand the fundamentals of building an effective, long-range alumni program. What developed as a result of the study is the concept of the Alumni Leadership Team. It encompasses a holistic approach to the alumni development and will serve as an effective model for Asbury Seminary for many years to come.

CHAPTER 3

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Reviewing the Problem and the Purpose of the Study

Finding a proper alumni engagement system for Asbury Seminary necessitates the use of an instrument to gauge the sentiments and priorities towards the seminary by its graduates.

The Problem

For many years, Asbury Seminary has relied upon a traditional model of alumni development that a majority of higher education institutions also follow. For the unique ministries that Asbury Seminary provides the Church and the world, this model does not engage alumni to the broadest extent possible. Students of Asbury Seminary receive a dynamic educational experience. Upon graduation, they should expect to receive a similar, if somewhat altered, experience with the seminary. Financial contributions and the recruitment of new students are examples of how alumni can support the seminary, but this paradigm represents a singular, or noncorrelated relationship. It also does not take into account and utilize the strong sense of community that exists among the student body.

The Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand both the actual and desired relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity. The foundation for this study is the seminary's holistic approach to alumni development, which serves to encourage the whole needs of both the alumni and the seminary. This congregational approach sees alumni not as constituents but as members of a faith metacommunity who

exist for mutual edification, training, and spiritual support.

The Guiding Research Questions

To guide this study, three research questions provided parameters and focus.

Research Question #1

How do alumni currently perceive their relationship with Asbury Seminary?

Asbury Seminary cannot assume that its alumni desire to have a relationship with the seminary. Some individuals may view the institution as a temporary place to receive specific training, obtain a degree, and/or fulfill denominational requirements for ordained ministry. To these persons, the seminary may not have a lasting place in their spiritual and vocational lives.

As an institution founded, in part, to bring renewal to mainline denominations through the training of spiritual leaders, those who attend Asbury generally have the same desire for Christian and societal regeneration. This shared desire may serve as a reason for the heightened awareness of community on the Asbury campuses. Persons who visit the campuses regularly comment on the distinctive sense of community that exists. Since vocational ministry is a sometimes-lonely profession, the assumption that alumni desire a lifelong connection with Asbury is reasonable.

Understanding the type of relationship that the Asbury Seminary alumni metacommunity desires to have with the seminary is essential to knowing how best to engage them in seminary activities. With the many parachurch organizations, mission agencies, and other ministries in the Church today, Asbury Seminary must find its place in the lives of its alumni. What needs do alumni have that Asbury can fulfill? In what capacities do alumni think that they can serve the seminary, and in what capacities will

they serve the seminary? The answers to these questions are a baseline for interacting with the alumni metacommunity. Without finding specific answers to these questions, alumni engagement will be limited at best.

Research Question #2

What is the desired reality of the relationship between the alumni metacommunity and Asbury Seminary?

Simply because individuals are alumni of Asbury Seminary does not assume they have the same understanding or needs regarding a relationship with the seminary. Businesses do not use the same marketing techniques to sell their products to both teenagers and retirees. They customize their approach to appeal to various constituencies. This segmentation is a common practice among development and marketing professionals.

The question for this study is to find how best to segment the alumni of Asbury Seminary to foster the most dynamic relationship possible for each segmentation group. Understanding the various life and vocational situations of the alumni will assist in the cultivation of the metacommunity. Should Asbury Seminary group alumni by class year, vocation, denomination, age, and/or geographic location? The instrument for this study provided data to assist in the development of the solution.

Research Question #3

What factors might help to explain the actual and desired realities of the relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity?

The formation of the Alumni Leadership Team was a pivotal moment in the relationship of Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity. The Alumni Leadership

Team exists to provide an alumni link with the seminary with regard to communication, continuing education, potential donor cultivation, and alumni edification. The personnel of the alumni office serve as means of resources, motivation, and strategy. In a sense, the Alumni Director becomes a modified “coach” to the members of the Alumni Leadership Team.

Discerning how to maintain team member motivation and purposefulness becomes the guiding principle in the Alumni Leadership Team model. If the Alumni Leadership Team serves as the catalyst for the implementation of a new understanding of the Asbury Seminary alumni as a metacommunity, maintaining a dynamic relationship with each team member is essential.

Description of the Project

In order to redefine and evaluate the Asbury Seminary and alumni metacommunity relationship paradigm, the project involved a researcher-designed instrument gauging qualitative and quantitative data from the 3,100 alumni with valid e-mail addresses. Since the Alumni Leadership Team is an integral aspect of the development of the alumni metacommunity, the results of the survey provided helpful information for the members of the Alumni Leadership Team in their task of engaging the alumni in their areas.

Asbury Seminary Alumni Demographics

According to the Asbury Seminary database, 8,659 alumni of Asbury Seminary are currently living in twenty-three of the twenty-four time zones around the world. As Table 2 demonstrates, more than 8,300 of these alumni live in the United States.

Table 2. Geographical Location of Asbury Seminary Alumni (N=8,659)

Location	n	%
United States	8,303	96
Non-United States	356	4

With regard to the earned degrees of Asbury Seminary alumni, most have earned the Master of Divinity degree. Table 3 shows the degree breakdown.

Table 3. Degree Breakdown of Asbury Seminary Alumni (N=8,659)

	n		n
Master of Divinity	5,646	One degree	6,681
Master of Arts	808	Two degrees	246
Doctor of Ministry	305	Three degrees	20
Master of Theology	142		
Doctor of Missiology	37		
Ph.D.	9		
No degree listed	1,712		

While Asbury Seminary alumni are serving in more than 135 denominations worldwide, the top ten denominational affiliations comprise a majority of the alumni. In Chapter 4, Table 7 illustrates the top ten denominational groups in the United States with which Asbury's alumni are affiliated.

Comparison of Alumni with and without a Seminary-Known E-Mail Address

The data retrieved from this survey will assist Asbury Seminary in its overall engagement and ministry to alumni. Therefore, the validity of this data is imperative.

Since I retrieved this data exclusively from alumni with a “Seminary known e-mail address” (SNEA), the importance of comparing data from the SNEA alumni and the non-SNEA alumni ascertains the validity of the survey data and whether or not the alumni who took the survey represent the whole of Asbury Seminary alumni.

Financial gifts are a dependable indicator of one’s support of an institution. Regarding alumni of Asbury Seminary, one’s support of the seminary, regardless of the amount of their gift, is a variable used by those in the alumni office in recruiting alumni for volunteer positions. Table 4 demonstrates the financial giving of alumni with an SNEA and of those without an SNEA.

Table 4. E-Mail Comparison of Financial Gifts from Asbury Seminary Alumni

	# Alumni	# Gifts	%
Alumni without an SNEA	5148	791	15.4
Alumni with an SNEA	3155	814	25.9

Table 4 clearly indicates that alumni who have maintained their e-mail addresses with the seminary have a higher rate of giving to the seminary. To demonstrate this in even further detail, Table 5 shows a comparison of alumni giving by those who do and do not have an e-mail address registered with the seminary, listed by denomination.

Table 5. FY 01-02 Denominational Giving by Alumni with and without a Registered E-Mail Address with Asbury Seminary

	No E-mail Address			E-mail Address		
	n	# Gifts	%	n	# Gifts	%
Assemblies of God	43	5	11.6	18	5	27.8
Christian/Missionary All	131	15	11.4	69	17	24.6
Church of God-Anderson	49	4	8.2	34	6	17.6
Free Methodist	618	104	16.9	321	81	25.2
Friends (Quaker)	51	7	13.8	14	6	42.9
Interdenominational	217	31	14.3	107	30	28
Nazarene	112	7	6.2	72	13	18
Presbyterian	63	5	7.9	22	4	18.2
United Methodist	2647	460	17.4	1926	550	28.6
Wesleyan	342	56	16.3	176	30	17
Other	875	97	11.1	396	72	18.2

As the data illustrates, alumni who have given e-mail addresses to the seminary, even if the e-mail address is not currently valid, have a higher degree of supporting the seminary than those who do not have e-mail addresses registered with the seminary. The consistency of this increase in giving remains steady across denominational lines, even though the alumni of some denominations do not rely upon e-mail as heavily as others.

Instrumentation

The use of an Internet, self-administered survey provided the means to finding answers to the research questions.

Internet, Self-Administered Survey

The researcher-designed instrument for the alumni was an Internet self-administered, quantitative, one-shot case study survey utilizing survey software (see Appendix E). It consisted of forty questions, divided into four sections (Preliminary

Information, Asbury Seminary Alumni Relations, Asbury Seminary and the Undergraduate Institution, and Alumni Leadership Team). The survey consisted of nominal rating scales, categories, yes and no questions, comparatives, and open-ended responses. The software tabulates the statistical analysis automatically. The software program utilized was StatPac Web Survey Software (StatPac).

To all 3,100 Asbury Seminary alumni with seminary known e-mail addresses, I sent an e-mail inviting them to participate in the survey (see Appendix F).

After two weeks, I sent a second e-mail to those who did not complete the survey. If, after another two weeks, persons still did not complete the survey, I sent, through regular postal mail, a business-sized envelope that included a letter of introduction and a brightly colored, yellow postcard. It gave them specific instructions on how to complete the Internet, self-administered survey (see Appendix G).

The Validity of Internet, Self-Administered Surveys

The use of a Web-based instrument is becoming increasingly popular among researchers. In the past, many have feared the validity of such instruments due to the limiting nature of Web access to complete the survey. One study reports that nearly 54 percent of Americans have access to the Internet (U. S. Dept. of Commerce). Another study shows the figure at 59 percent (Nua). While rural areas have seen a slower growth in Internet expansion, the number of rural Internet users is now approaching the national average (U. S. Dept. of Commerce). For this study, the identified subjects are graduates of Asbury Theological Seminary, who have at least a master's degree. According to a recent study, 83 percent of those with college or graduate degrees have access to the Internet (Pew, "Internet Access"). The Pew Internet and American Life Project also

reports that 72 percent of spiritual leaders use the Internet for educational resources (“Spiritual Leaders”). In lieu of these statistics, sampling concerns regarding representativeness of this project’s survey with Asbury Seminary’s graduates should be minimized (Simsek and Veiga 222).

Researchers have discovered numerous benefits of Internet, self-administered surveys, particularly within controlled population samples. Cost, response rate, data collection speed and accuracy of reporting, and the overall engagement of the responder are advantages of using these types of surveys (Simsek and Veiga 220). One organization regularly receives a 39 percent response rate for its online surveys (Barnes).

Regarding sampling errors, particularly multiple sending of a survey by an individual, researchers have shown that the risk of errors from an Internet, self-administered survey may be no greater than that of a paper survey (Stanton and Rogelberg 203-05). For example, inadvertent multiple responding (i.e., hitting the “enter” key more than once) can be avoided with carefully worded instructions at the end of the survey.

The Feasibility of Utilizing an Internet,

Self-Administered Survey

Offering an Internet, self-administered survey to Asbury’s alumni limits the number of alumni who can participate. The seminary database does not include all alumni with valid e-mail addresses. The database contains the e-mail information only for those who have given their e-mail addresses to the seminary. A factor relating to the effectiveness of the Internet, self-administered survey is whether or not the e-mail addresses in the seminary’s database represents a cross section of alumni.

Currently, 8,258 accurate alumni records exist in the seminary's database, representing 96 percent of the alumni. In 2003, the average age of Asbury Seminary's alumni was fifty. The average age of alumni with an Asbury-known e-mail address was forty-six. The close proximity of these numbers indicates that the alumni e-mail information in the seminary's database is a good representation of the entire alumni population. Currently, Asbury Seminary has a valid e-mail address for 37 percent of its alumni (see Table 6).

Table 6. Total Alumni by Age Compared to Alumni with a Seminary-Known E-Mail Address

Age	n	# with E-mail Address	%
66 +	1224	242	20
56-65	1067	357	33
46-55	2245	866	39
36-45	1773	852	48
-- to 35	1081	556	51
Unknown	868	170	20

Development of the Survey for This Project

In October 2001, I designed a survey for use in gleaning information from Asbury's alumni as part of the overall alumni office activities. The survey focused on the attitudes of the alumni towards the seminary, specifically regarding their impression of the mailings and other communicative correspondence from the seminary. I hoped to discern the perceived worth the alumni believed the seminary had for them.

Two faculty members from Asbury Seminary, Tom Tumblin and Leslie Andrews, reviewed the survey and provided helpful feedback. Due to a leadership transition in the

Advancement Office, I did not use the survey.

As the Alumni Leadership Team became a reality and the probability of this project became apparent, I decided to modify the survey slightly. The survey now focused on the similarities and contrasts the alumni had with both their undergraduate institution and Asbury Seminary. I tested the survey with the members of the Alumni Leadership Team to gauge the duration of the survey, its readability, and the appropriateness for its purpose. I understood that the Alumni Leadership Team members were not able to provide accurate responses for the final section of the survey, which regards the Alumni Leadership Team itself.

Data Collection and Analysis

The Internet survey software is able to collect and tabulate the survey data immediately as individuals complete the survey. A running tabulation is available during the survey-taking process. Tabulation by the software also minimizes tabulation errors. The software reports a confidential list of participants to let me know who has taken the survey.

The validity of software to tabulate and analyze data is only as accurate as the preparation of the data and the measurement method (Wiersma 337). This survey is structured in a methodical, straightforward method. The online format, while not necessarily a reliable method for all studies, is appropriate for Asbury Seminary alumni since a majority of them have access to the Internet.

Variables

One variable in this study is the holistic approach to seminary alumni development and the knowledge individual alumni have of this approach. Another

variable is the spiritual/vocational growth in the lives of the members of the Asbury Seminary alumni metacommunity. Alumni are in various stages of spiritual, emotional, and mental stages so their responses to the questions in the survey will vary. This study takes into consideration the variable of the experience, either positive or negative, that individuals had as students at either Asbury Seminary or their undergraduate institutions. This factor may influence the validity of the survey although the satisfaction of Asbury students is important information for the seminary administration and its accrediting agencies.

Conclusions

While this study assists the work of the Asbury Seminary alumni office, it may also provide useful information for other seminaries as well. As seminaries strive to maintain close contact with their graduates, they should not make assumptions about their alumni without first taking time to understand both the needs and the desires alumni have regarding a relationship with the seminary. Equally important is how these needs and desires of alumni relate to the ideals an institution has for its alumni.

While the Alumni Leadership Team is already in process and the initiatives of the alumni office are in place, the results of this Internet, self-administered survey provide details for the adjustment of the minutiae of the alumni office programs. This slight adjustment is not a minor change for even a slight alteration in trajectory can cause a major change in course.

The results of the online survey are reported in detail in Chapter 4. A summary of the entire project is the focus of Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to understand both the actual and desired relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity. Before the seminary can develop its desired relationship with its alumni, which includes the formation of the Alumni Leadership Community, Asbury must first understand the actual relationship that its alumni have with the institution.

Three research questions guided this study. What is the current, or actual, reality of the relationship between the alumni metacommunity and Asbury Seminary? What is the desired reality of the relationship between the alumni metacommunity and Asbury Seminary? What factors might help to explain the actual and desired realities of the relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni metacommunity?

To answer these research questions, this chapter is organized first by understanding the validity of the instrument, examining relevant data from the survey, and finally addressing the specific research questions in lieu of the whole of survey data.

Response Rate

Since only 592 of 8,659 total global alumni completed the survey (6.8 percent), establishing the validity of the instrument is crucial if this data is going to be of use to the seminary. As I reported in Chapter 3, The Design of the Study, a majority of Americans with graduate degrees have access to the Internet and use the Internet on a regular basis. While only 6.8 percent of Asbury alumni completed the survey, the data of the respondents themselves show a remarkable similarity to the 93.2 percent of alumni who did not complete the survey.

Generalizability

One aspect of the validity of the instrument results regards the representation of the respondents to the whole of the Asbury Seminary alumni. The importance of this comparison is a major indicator of the soundness of the survey data.

Denominational Affiliation of All Alumni

versus Alumni Respondents

One issue that would taint validity is whether or not the survey respondents compared denominationally with the whole of United States alumni. As Table 7 demonstrates, the denominational breakdown of all United States alumni and the alumni respondents are indeed quite similar.

Table 7. Comparison of Denominational Affiliation between All United States Alumni and Alumni Respondents

Top 10 Denominations	All U.S. Alumni (N=8,303)		Survey Respondents (N=592)	
	n	%	n	%
Assembly of God	61	0.7	3	0.5
Christian/Missionary All.	200	2.4	10	1.6
Church of God, Anderson	83	1	8	1.4
Free Methodist Church	939	11.3	47	7.9
Friends (Quaker)	65	0.78	3	0.5
Interdenominational	324	3.9	30	5
Nazarene	184	2.2	15	2.5
Presbyterian	85	1	6	1
United Methodist Church	4573	55	385	65
Wesleyan Church	518	6.2	28	4.7
Total	7032		535	
Not Listed	1271	15.3	57	9.6

The largest percentage difference is with United Methodist alumni. The other

denominations represented by respondents, however, compare quite similarly to the overall data of United States alumni, suggesting a balanced denominational representation of respondents.

Geographical Comparison of United States Alumni and Alumni Respondents

Asbury Seminary has alumni in all fifty United States. The alumni office breaks these states into regions, based on the United Methodist jurisdictional structure (see Appendix B). For the survey data to be reliable, the respondents should represent the whole of United States alumni in geographical location. Table 10 shows the comparison between the two alumni groups.

Table 8. Geographical Comparison of Survey Respondents and All United States Alumni

Geographical Location	All U.S. Alumni (N=8,303)		Survey Respondents (N=592)	
	n	%	n	%
North Central U.S.	2344	28.2	147	24.8
North East U.S.	1019	12.2	73	12.3
South Central U.S.	1121	13.5	94	15.9
South East U.S.	3140	37.8	217	36.6
West	679	8.1	47	7.9
No Response			14	2.3

The similarity of these two tables displays a remarkable representation of respondents for the whole of United States alumni. The largest inconsistency is in the North Central United States, with a variance of only 3.4 percent.

Comparison of Graduation Year of All

United States Alumni and Alumni Respondents

Asbury Seminary currently has 8,303 alumni living in the United States. Of these, 988 are records with no graduation date listed. One aspect of the validity of the survey data regards the percentage of the respondents' class year to that of the total number of alumni living in the United States. Table 9 reports this comparison.

Table 9. Comparison of Graduation Year of Respondents and All United States Alumni

Graduation Year	All U.S. Alumni (N=8,303)		Survey Respondents (N=592)	
	n	%	n	%
1943-1953	380	4.5	14	2.3
1954-1963	540	5.4	19	3.2
1964-1973	883	10.6	53	8.9
1974-1983	1643	19.8	105	17.7
1984-1993	1800	21.6	157	26.5
1994-2003	2120	25.5	244	41.2

As the data reveals, a higher percentage of the decade-grouped alumni took the survey than the percentage of all United States alumni. The most significant variance is in the decade 1994-2003.

The Survey Process

I sent an e-mail invitation to complete a thirty-eight question Web-based survey to all 3,155 Asbury Seminary alumni in the United States with an SNEA. Of those addresses, 1,343 were either corrupted or outdated addresses. The number of alumni who actually received an invitation to complete the survey was 1,812, which makes up the total population for the study.

Exactly one week following the initial invitation, I sent an e-mail "Thank You" note to the same group of alumni with a reminder that the online survey was still

available (see Appendix G). Two weeks later, the data was retrieved from the StatPac software. The number of alumni who completed the survey was 592, or 33 percent of the invited alumni population, as Table 10 illustrates.

Table 10. Breakdown of Alumni Taking the Web-Based Survey

	n	%
Alumni with an E-mail address	3155	
Corrupted addresses	1343	
Total alumni who received the survey invitation(N)	1812	
Alumni who completed the survey (n)	592	33

Since the respondents completed the survey anonymously, and because the second invitation to complete the survey was sent to the same 1,812 persons, regardless of their participation, I sorted through the responses and removed thirteen that were obviously duplicates.

Alumni Perceptions of Asbury Seminary

The data from the survey was divided into six sections, each representing a specific area in the relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni. Of the 592 respondents, 572 (96 percent) agreed or strongly agreed when asked if their experience as an Asbury Seminary student was a positive one (Question 4). More than 80 percent (475) responded the same way regarding their undergraduate institution. In Question 8 of the survey, which regards alumni opinion of Asbury since graduation, 322 of the 592

respondents indicated that it had increased (54.3 percent). Interestingly, 37 percent of alumni indicated a neutral opinion of their changing view towards the seminary.

Question 13 asked the respondents how important Asbury Seminary is to their life and ministry. Overall, sixty percent of alumni indicated that Asbury plays either a very important or important role in their lives and ministries. Nearly 25 percent marked “neutral,” which may indicate that either Asbury has a negligible role in their postgraduation lives or else they did not understand the question. Only fifteen percent indicated that Asbury does not play an important role in either their life or ministry.

Nearly 65 percent of alumni feel that Asbury Seminary cares about their spiritual life (Question 6). Only 5 percent disagreed with this notion. Whether this result is due to the holistic objectives of the alumni office over the past few years (spiritual, relational, vocational, financial) or whether this sense comes from a long-term commitment is undetermined. Nevertheless, when asked to respond as to whether Asbury’s primary desire is that alumni give financially (Question 7), 47 percent responded that they either strongly agree or agree. More than 21 percent of alumni disagreed with the statement.

The key data from the alumni survey regarding alumni’s perception of Asbury’s relationship with them was found in Question 5 of the survey, which asked the question, “What is Asbury Seminary’s primary interest in alumni relations?” The data from this question is reported in Table 11.

Table 11. Alumni Perception of Asbury Seminary’s Relationship with Them

	n	%
Biblical/Theological Development	16	2.7
Continuing Education	147	24.8
Spiritual Life of Alumni	64	10.8
Fundraising	340	57.4
New Student Recruitment	23	3.9
No Response	2	0.3

As Table 11 demonstrates, a majority of alumni think that Asbury's primary interest in alumni relations regards fundraising. This figure is more than thirty percentage points higher than the second-highest response on continuing education. A difference exists between the data in Question 7 of the survey and Question 5. When asked an open-ended question, as in Question 7, 47 percent responded that fundraising is the most important interest the seminary has of alumni. When given a set of options from which to choose, however, the issue of fundraising as primary increased by ten percentage points.

A similar phenomenon occurred with the data from Question 6 (reported above) in which 65 percent of respondents reported that Asbury cares about their spiritual life. In Question 5, only 10 percent indicated that the spiritual life of alumni was Asbury's primary concern. Perhaps the distinction is in the fact that while Asbury cares about the spiritual life of alumni, the alumni's spiritual life is not the seminary's primary concern.

Also interesting is that only 10 percent of respondents indicated that the recruitment of students is Asbury's primary interest in alumni, yet consistently more than 90 percent of new students indicate they came to Asbury due to the influence of one or more alumni.

Asbury Seminary as Worthy of Alumni's Time

Questions in the survey regarding this aspect of the relationship that alumni have with the seminary is extensive. Since a goal of the alumni office includes encouraging alumni to serve the seminary with their time, taking time to read seminary publications, recruiting students, and utilizing Asbury's continuing educational opportunities, understanding alumni attitudes towards the use of their time is key to alumni engagement.

Question 38 asked the respondents if they would be willing to serve Asbury Seminary with their time. A total of 52 percent responded "yes," and 44 percent responded "no." That more than half of the respondents were open to this idea is positive news to the seminary administration. If the survey respondents do indeed provide reliable data for the whole of Asbury Seminary alumni, then having half of the alumni metacommunity open to volunteer service for the seminary provides many opportunities for alumni engagement.

In Question 31 of the survey, 76 percent of alumni reported that Asbury keeps them connected to the seminary with magazines and other publications. When asked in Question 9 about their reaction to seminary publications, 25 percent of respondents indicated that they read and respond to alumni mailings. Yet, only 5 percent specified that when they receive a publication from the seminary they discard it without reading. This is a very low figure and may demonstrate that alumni have a desire to stay informed and connected with the seminary.

The formation of the Alumni Leadership Community was designed, in part, to encourage alumni fellowship with one another. Question 10 addressed this issue: "How many times in the past three years have you met with other Asbury Seminary alumni for

fellowship?” The results are shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Frequency of Alumni Fellowship in Past Three Years

	n	%
11 or More Times	70	11.8
6-10 Times	74	12.5
1-5 Times	277	46.7
Never	171	28.9

While this graph does not take graduation year into effect, it does indicate that nearly half of the respondents meet with other alumni about once each year. The 29 percent that have never met with other alumni for fellowship is troubling, for the “Asbury Community,” which is evident many times when alumni meet with one another, is missing from the lives of these alumni.

Perhaps the opportunity to meet with other alumni for fellowship has not had the structure alumni need. When asked if they would be open to attending an Asbury retreat in their area (Question 16), nearly 75 percent of alumni indicated that they would be very willing or willing. Only 10 percent responded that they would not be open to such a gathering.

Not surprising for an online survey, 80 percent of respondents indicated that using the Internet as a means to stay in touch with other alumni is important to them (Question 22). Interesting is that this question does not refer to alumni using the Internet as a means of staying in touch with Asbury Seminary but with other Asbury Seminary alumni. The alumni office has not pursued this area with significance. Instead, the seminary has

focused on inviting alumni to access the seminary's Web sites as a means of keeping alumni engaged with the seminary, not with other alumni.

Asbury Seminary as Worthy of Alumni's Finances

Since a majority of alumni believe that Asbury's primary interest in alumni regards alumni financial giving, establishing how alumni view financial giving to the seminary is equally important. Question 17 asks the respondents to reply to the following statement: "I consider Asbury Seminary to be a ministry worthy of my financial and local church support." Slightly more than 75 percent affirm that they either agree or strongly agree with the statement, while 21 percent marked "Neutral."

When asked about the number of gifts they have given to the seminary in the past three years (Question 10), 57 percent responded that they have given one to five times, and 37 percent indicated they have not given to the seminary at any time. Although 75 percent agree that Asbury is worthy of their financial gifts, 37 percent have never made a gift to the seminary. For some reason, these alumni are not being properly motivated to give. They believe in the work of the seminary, yet for one or more reasons, they have not given.

Desired Relationships between Asbury Seminary and Its Alumni Metacommunity

Like most seminaries, Asbury Seminary has long desired a relationship with alumni that would benefit the institution. However, meeting the needs of alumni is a new concept in seminary alumni development.

Asbury Seminary and the Local Church

Engaging local churches has long been a goal of the seminary, but the number of churches who include Asbury in their local budgets has never exceeded more than a few

dozen. Student scholarship support is a much more likely reason for local churches to support the seminary. Local churches are also the impetus for student recruitment by alumni. Perhaps the greatest financial value to the seminary from local churches is not the churches themselves, but laypeople within the local churches. This survey provided the seminary with the first alumni opinions on local church involvement, including local church laypersons.

Not surprisingly, 95 percent of alumni indicated that they do not include Asbury Seminary in their local church budgets (Question 18). Yet more than 56 percent indicated that they have spoken with laypersons about Asbury Seminary (Question 19). When asked if they have encouraged one or more persons to attend Asbury Seminary in the past three years, 77 percent responded affirmatively.

Asbury Seminary and Personal/Vocational Development

For many years, Asbury Seminary has attempted to keep alumni involved with the seminary through the annual Ministers' (now Ministry) Conference, Asbury Online Institute, and other Continuing Education opportunities. This survey contained several questions dealing specifically with this issue and alumni openness and history with the opportunities offered by the seminary.

As a preliminary question (and as reported above), respondents were asked how important Asbury Seminary is to their life and ministry (Question 13). The data shows that 61 percent indicated that Asbury has an important place in their lives. A total of 67 percent responded that having a stronger relationship with Asbury Seminary would assist them in their personal/spiritual development (Question 14). Question 15 referenced Asbury's ability to assist alumni in the development of practical ministry tools. More

than 70 percent indicated positively that a stronger relationship with the seminary would help them develop practical tools for ministry. These are positive responses for the seminary, as the data seems to indicate that a majority of alumni desire to utilize Asbury's resources for the developmental benefits they offer.

Question 23 addressed the specifics of which Asbury's resources alumni have utilized. Respondents had the opportunity to mark more than one resource. Table 13 reports the findings.

Table 13. Asbury Seminary Resources Utilized by Respondents

Resource	n	%
AOI	140	23.6
Beeson Institute	68	11.4
Ministry Conference	269	45.4
Other	103	17.3
None	53	8.9

Ministry Conference was clearly the most utilized by the respondents. Asbury Online Institute (AOI) has struggled in the past to obtain paying memberships, yet 23 percent of the respondents have utilized its contents (without regard to membership). That "None" is below 10 percent is positive for it demonstrates that a vast majority of respondents believe that Asbury Seminary has resources that are beneficial to them.

The most complicated and extensive question to tabulate (yet the most beneficial, since multiple responses could be identified most easily) was the free-response Question 24. The question asked the respondents to identify their top five resources for personal and professional development. To tabulate the responses, I focused on the first item listed

in the five, since research has shown that that the first item listed by respondents in a random list is usually their primary response (Sonoma). I grouped the data three ways. First, I organized it by category. I found thirteen recurring responses in the data. Table 14 demonstrates the Categorical Organization of the responses.

Table 14. Top Resource for Personal and Professional Development Organized by Category

Category	n	%
AOI	6	1
Beeson Institute	9	1.5
Books	64	10.8
Denominational Resources	33	5.6
Doctoral Programs	11	1.9
Internet	14	2.4
Magazines/Journals	24	4.1
Ministry Conference	13	2.2
No Response	127	21.4
None	11	1.9
Parachurch Conferences	104	17.6
Personal Bible Study	141	23.8
Relationships with Others	35	5.9

Other than personal Bible study, parachurch conferences are the primary source for the personal and vocational development of the respondents. This data is not surprising since the rise of parachurch ministries have become so prevalent over the past several years. Either the respondents did not understand the question, they did not know how to type the responses in the field provided, or the data is reliable, but 23 percent cited “none” or else did not respond to the question.

The second way I organized this data was by source. For the purposes of this study, I grouped them by whether or not they were Asbury Seminary related. Table 15 shows this organization.

Table 15. Top Resource for Personal and Professional Development Organized by Source

Source	n
ATS Related	35
Non-ATS Related	419
No Response	127
None	11

Only 6 percent of alumni (35 of 592 alumni) utilize an Asbury Seminary resource as their primary means of personal and vocational development. This detail is somewhat disheartening since the seminary has made tremendous efforts to offer alumni and other pastors developmental opportunities. The draw of parachurch conferences has perhaps served as “competitors” for the continuing education resources of pastors.

The final way I organized this data was by community. Table 16 demonstrates this association.

Table 16. Top Resource for Personal and Professional Development Organized by Community

Community	n
Corporate	205
Independent	249
No Response	127
None	11

The fact that these two organizational fields are so close numerically is interesting. That a slight majority of respondents believe they need only personal Bible study, prayer, and online and printed materials for their personal/vocational development may demonstrate the increasingly individualistic nature of ministry in North America. Given that the respondents are graduates of Asbury Seminary, which both stresses and demonstrates the need of community by the very experience that encompasses an Asbury education, the isolation of ministry leaders continues to be an issue that needs resolution.

For Asbury Seminary to stay relevant to the personal and vocational needs of its alumni, the development of resources that will become the graduates' primary source is imperative. The more exposure the alumni have to continuing education resources from Asbury, the more Asbury will become part of their ongoing lives and ministries. This ideal will only help in the area of raising necessary resources for the seminary, as alumni learn to trust the seminary with members of their churches and with their own financial gifts.

Summary of Significant Findings

1. The Internet and e-mail are becoming increasingly popular tools for ministry leaders to stay connected with each other and to increase their ministry development.

2. The alumni of Asbury Seminary have positive feelings toward the seminary but have not been adequately led by the advancement/alumni office in the importance of their continued involvement with the seminary.

3. Alumni have a desire for mutual fellowship and enrichment but need strong, centralized leadership to offer opportunities at the local/regional level.

4. Current continuing education opportunities by the seminary are not appealing to the needs of most of Asbury's alumni as alumni are turning to parachurch ministry conferences for their primary source of vocational and personal development.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This project originated with a need to understand the Asbury Seminary alumni metacommunity as the newly established Alumni Leadership Community began to take form. In recent history, the seminary has not asked alumni how they feel towards the seminary. The seminary's understanding of alumni attitudes toward the seminary was based on assumptions rather than real data. Data received from senior student exit surveys prove that a majority of students who attend Asbury Seminary have a positive experience while students. The assumption has been that since Asbury students generally have a positive experience, those positive feelings toward the seminary will continue in their status as alumni.

This project began following the development of the Alumni Leadership Team, a system of alumni engagement that replaced the Alumni Board of Directors in 2001. Since the primary goal of the Alumni Leadership Team was to keep alumni connected with the seminary and each other, the first step of that process was to understand the relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni.

An e-mail invitation to complete an online survey was sent to 3,155 alumni. Of these e-invitations, 1,812 actually received the information. The number of alumni who completed the survey was 592. The survey was designed to understand the relationship that alumni have with the seminary, including alumni attitudes towards the seminary and the alumni's perceived understanding of the seminary's attitude towards them.

The foundation for this project was based on the concept of community in both biblical and post-biblical history. Exodus 19:6, which defines God's purpose for Israel as

that of existing as a faith community, or “kingdom of priests” is expanded in Jesus’ three-year journey with his disciples, whom he was training to lead the new Christian faith community after his departure from the earth. The early Church’s emphasis on *koinonia*, or fellowship, is woven throughout the Apostle Paul’s epistles.

The Pauline emphasis of holistic spirituality, or a faith based on both internal and external expressions of Christian living continued in the writings of major early Christian leaders such as Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Dorotheos. These early Christian leaders asserted that apart from fellowship and mutual accountability and support, Christians cannot grow effectively in their lives as disciples of Jesus. The concept of the established Church was new to these Christians, as institutionalism had not yet flourished.

In the Middle Ages, Bernard of Clairvaux understood Christian community as the basis for individual life and spiritual growth. For Bernard, spiritual growth could not exist outside of the established Church. It is through the relationships with others, both peers and leaders, that one can become like Christ.

The British renewal movement of John Wesley, in which Wesley sought renewal both inside and apart from the established Church, the aspect of small groups took hold, in which class members held each other accountable for Christian living. Individualism was not a Christian ideal for Wesley, who believed that Christians kept each other on the right path towards sanctified living.

Contemporary seminary advancement theories borrow much from the strategies of colleges and universities for the development of their alumni. Recent writers, such as Jeavons and Basinger, have seen the importance of treating fundraising as ministry, although this method is not exclusively for seminary advancement. The needs of

seminary graduates are unique. Simply borrowing methods from other institutions (even other seminaries) does not address the needs of a specific seminary's alumni.

Asbury Seminary students and graduates attest to the strong aspect of community that encompasses a major portion of the Asbury education. A continuation of this Asbury community in the lives of alumni could have the potential to foster a continued and growing relationship between Asbury Seminary and its alumni.

Major Findings

This study demonstrates that in many ways Asbury Seminary has not adequately cultivated or nurtured its alumni, taking their needs into account in the attempted alumni/seminary relationship development. For many years, Asbury followed the pattern of most seminaries. Alumni were useful to the seminary for support of the annual fund, endowments, and the recruitment of students.

The Use of E-Mail

The use of the Internet and e-mail is an aspect of Asbury alumni relations that has not been developed to its full potential. The Asbury Online Institute (AOI) is a useful resource for pastors, but it does not provide basic news information about the seminary. More than 30 percent of alumni who received an invitation to complete the survey did so. Nearly 26 percent of alumni responded in the survey that when receiving a mailing from the seminary they read and respond. For the alumni who have active e-mail addresses with the seminary, e-mail is an effective way to reach them. The use of e-mail is common among all age groups of Asbury alumni as indicated by the survey respondents who reliably represented the whole of the alumni community.

To maintain freshness in the relationship with its alumni metacommunity, Asbury must find unique ways to communicate with them. With the large number of parachurch and other ministries in North America, each with their own newsletters and mailings, the use of a graphically rich, HTML e-newsletter is an option that could set Asbury apart from the daily stack of publications arriving regularly to alumni. Not only is the cost must less than traditional publications (five cents per e-mail compared to fifty cents or more), but the information also arrives almost immediately to the receiver's computer. Breaking news from campus, links to live seminary chapels, regional alumni activities, and other information can be personalized easily for alumni based on demographics.

A drawback to this approach is the ever-present reality of changing e-mail addresses. Asbury Seminary made an attempt to alleviate this problem by providing every graduate a permanent Asbury e-mail address, but alumni have been hesitant in activating their accounts. Two reasons cited were the necessity for a primary, third-party means to access the Internet, and the lack of interest in having a second or third e-mail account.

The necessity for effective communication is vital to a relationship between a seminary and its alumni. Every method of correspondence communicates something, whether positively or negatively. An e-mail sent to alumni communicates that Asbury is using the most current means possible to reach its alumni. It also sends a message that if they are not using e-mail in their local ministries, they are missing an effective tool.

Alumni Attitudes toward Asbury Seminary

The survey data indicates that Asbury alumni have positive feelings toward the seminary, but they are confused as to the seminary's motivations towards having a

relationship with them. For many years alumni received countless appeals in the mail for financial contributions. Student scholarships, annual budget needs, estate planning, and other appeals regularly appeared in alumni mailboxes around the United States. The annual Alumni Phonathon was a one-on-one contact with the seminary, and had fundraising as its singular purpose.

A balance did not exist between the financial and the spiritual regarding alumni communication materials. As students, alumni received both academic and spiritual training. As alumni, the relationship with the seminary turned to financial matters. No sense of congruence existed between the two aspects of their relationship with Asbury Seminary.

Recent enhancements to the annual Alumni Phonathon, which have focused on prayer and ministry, have led to record-breaking financial pledges by alumni in the past three years. Alumni know that Asbury is in need of their financial support, but the Advancement Office must continue to stress relationship with alumni over proactive financial solicitations. A clear majority of survey respondents indicated their willingness to serve Asbury with their time, yet they are confused as to whether or not Asbury desires their time.

Many of Asbury's alumni are in full-time ministry. A majority of those are pastors. In order to communicate effectively with these alumni, the seminary must continue to use congregational language and relationship models in alumni relations. Clearly, Asbury Seminary is not a local congregation. Yet for more than eighty years the seminary has trained men and women to serve in local congregations. Congregational development and individual discipleship begins with relationship—a horizontal

relationship with others that results in a vertical relationship with God. In recent years, the Asbury Advancement Office has made a needed transformation in this direction, focusing on the spiritual lives of donors. Ministry to alumni (and donors) as an end in itself will result in a greater commitment of alumni to the seminary. Merely using ministry as a means to an end (financial gifts) can lead to the temptation of manipulating ministry to increase financial giving.

In Romans 12:9, Paul exhorts his readers to ensure that their love for one another is sincere, without pretense. Both alumni and donors are able to discern sincerity from artificiality. All ministries have a motive. For example, one might feed the homeless in order that they will one day follow Christ. Vacation Bible School is a means to the end of children having a greater appreciation for the Scriptures. Using ministry to raise needed dollars for an institution is manipulation only if the ministry is self-focused. Introducing wealthy people to a seminary so they will give is a different agenda than introducing them to the seminary so they might be blessed by the many ministries the seminary offers the world.

The situation is tenuous with integrity and sincerity found only in the hearts and minds of the administrators of the institution. Ministry as a means to an end (fundraising) is quite different than ministry as an end in itself. Praying with alumni during a Phonathon call in order to evoke a financial pledge is a different motive than simply praying for alumni without expectation of a financial gift.

The guiding question is whether or not ministry and fundraising are mutually exclusive. The Advancement Office at Asbury Seminary is committed to ministering to the donors of the seminary. The internal motivation of the seminary administrators,

however, is fundamental to ensuring that this ministry is not a pretense for raising necessary funds for the seminary. Fundraising in itself is necessary. Garnishing it with ministry only enriches the fundraising experience. To avoid contradicting the Romans 12:9 exhortation, however, administrators must beware from understanding ministry as simply a method to increase donor revenue.

The 2004 Alumni Phonathon had no financial goal. Our student callers simply phoned alumni, asked for prayer requests, prayed with them, updated their contact information (particularly e-mail), and let them know of the \$1 million Asbury Challenge matching gift. The result was a pledge total of more than \$170,000, the highest in Asbury Phonathon history. Had the student callers known a financial goal, that information would have biased every call in a financial direction, which was not the stated reason for the calls.

Alumni must know that their importance to Asbury is far greater than what they can give. They have influence over members of their congregations who would be blessed by giving to Asbury. They can recruit students for the seminary, establish regional scholarships, attend continuing education events, and create local alumni networks in their geographical region. In past years, the Advancement Office, by the very nature of mailings to alumni, have trained alumni that the way they can support the seminary is through the establishment of endowment funds, life insurance beneficiaries, scholarship support, trusts, and annual fund gifts.

Most Asbury students receive far more than an education from Asbury. The seminary becomes a vehicle for substantial spiritual growth and insight. If Asbury desires to have this same effect on students once they become alumni, the Advancement Office

must continue to develop resources for alumni that have nothing to do with finances, trusting that through this relationship-building God will move the hearts of the alumni to increase their own financial gifts and introduce potential donors to the seminary. This ideal will come when the relationship the seminary has with alumni is congruent with their relationship with Asbury when they were students. The survey data shows that more than 50 percent of alumni have spoken with laypersons about Asbury Seminary. The more alumni feel connected to the seminary, the greater this percentage will become.

In the past year, Asbury Seminary began hosting major donor weekends at fine retreat centers and resorts. The goal of these events is to allow potential donors to “experience” Asbury for an extended weekend. Worship, student and alumni testimonies, and teaching from members of the seminary faculty make these weekends more like spiritual retreats than fundraising events. Inviting alumni to attend allows them to experience these events for themselves. Hopefully, they will gain a desire for their own church members to attend future events. Having alumni at these events also provides potential donors with “real, live” examples of what the seminary produces—alumni.

Alumni Fellowship

The survey data clearly indicates that alumni have a desire for fellowship. Nearly 75 percent of respondents indicated their openness to attending a spiritual retreat in their area. Nearly 80 percent expressed a desire to stay connected to other alumni via the Internet; however, more than 75 percent of survey respondents indicated that in the past three years they have met with other alumni no more than five times.

Clearly, alumni fellowship does not just happen. Alumni need centralized leadership in the organization of fellowship events. This leadership may not need to come

from the seminary itself. In 2001, the alumni office scheduled a luncheon in Indianapolis for alumni. As the alumni director, I located a graduate to help schedule the event, and we mailed invitations to nearly one hundred alumni. We met at a local church; only three graduates attended. When we made follow up calls to those who did not attend, a majority of the alumni said that since the seminary scheduled the luncheon, they assumed it was a fund-raising event. Recent alumni Vision-Sharing Fellowships have had the same low attendance. Perhaps alumni fellowships that do not publicly involve the alumni office would attract more alumni. As the alumni office continues to emphasize a holistic approach to alumni development, alumni will not assume every seminary function is a fund-raising event.

As the data demonstrates, Asbury alumni have a desire to stay connected with one another. Transforming this desire into a reality is the goal. Creating networks of alumni at the local/regional level will not only provide opportunities for the alumni to feel connected to other ministry colleagues but also mobilize alumni with a common goal of supporting the seminary. Several small victories build momentum. Informing alumni of what other alumni groups are doing will help create greater momentum.

Bernard of Clairvaux exhorted those in his religious tradition to stay connected with one another through letters. If he did not hear from one of the Abbots he supervised for an extended period of time, he wrote that individual a letter, chastising him for isolationism (Letters 108).

Continuing Education Opportunities

For many years, Asbury focused on Ministers' Conference (now Ministry Conference) as its primary continuing education forum for alumni. The development of

AOI and the Beeson Institute took continuing education to a new level and attracted younger alumni. Nevertheless, as data from the alumni survey indicates, Asbury alumni are going elsewhere for their primary continuing education opportunities.

If the formation of continuing education opportunities for alumni is not a major priority of the seminary, then this information should not be of concern. The information gleaned from the survey respondents, however, indicates that for alumni that are utilizing corporate opportunities for continued vocational and spiritual training, a majority relies upon non-seminary events as their primary resource.

The re-formation of Ministers' Conference in recent past years may encourage more younger alumni to attend in the future. The "graying" of Ministers' Conference has been a concern for years. Offering seminars that appeal to younger alumni can help begin an "annual tradition" of attending every year.

Since the number of survey respondents who prefer independent sources of spiritual and vocational renewal is slightly higher than the respondents who prefer corporate sources, the seminary has an opportunity to provide resources specifically for them. Opportunities such as AOI, a valuable well of information, might offer Bible studies and devotionals online. These items, while not necessarily required continuing education criteria, are areas that respondents indicated are important to them.

The Alumni Leadership Community

Based on the data from the survey, the Alumni Leadership Community (ALC) can address many of the issues raised by alumni. The twenty-two members of the Alumni Leadership Team (ALT) serve as volunteer representatives of the seminary for their state or region. Their goal is to provide leadership to fulfill the six ALT objectives (see

Appendix C). The alumni office measures their success through a quarterly goals report (see Appendix D). Supporting them is the Regional Leadership Team (RLT), a network of three to five alumni that work with each of the ALT members. Together these two groups comprise the Alumni Leadership Community (ALC).

Under the leadership of the ALT, the ALC members are essentially extensions of the seminary alumni office around the nation. Rather than performing the tasks of an Alumni Board of Directors, the ALC is a grassroots network of alumni who desire to see the advancement of Asbury Seminary and ministry to its alumni.

The ALC offers local and regional leadership and networking for alumni fellowships, retreats, donor cultivation, student recruitment, and scholarship support. Each ALC member has a network of alumni working together to achieve the ALT purposes. By focusing attention primarily on the members of the ALC, the alumni office staff can best utilize time and resources for alumni who have a genuine desire to further the ministries of the seminary. In a local congregation, pastors focus their energies on those who most desire to be involved in the life of the church. The same principle is at work with the ALC, only on a much larger level.

Implications of the Findings for the Life of the Seminary and Alumni

Institutional change is difficult to achieve, but small enhancements to major initiatives can have a dramatic effect. Take, for instance, the Alumni Phonathon. Prior to 2001, prayer was not emphasized. The purpose of the calls was to raise financial support from alumni. In 2001, the emphasis turned to prayer as the primary impetus for the calls. Financial support from alumni was still solicited, but the attempt was to broaden the

seminary's relationship with alumni. An augmentation to a necessary function of the alumni office resulted with significant financial increase from Asbury's alumni.

Alumni Segmentation

Marketers stress the importance of corporations understanding their customers. In some ways, the product being sold is Asbury's ministry to the world, which includes resources for alumni. How Asbury relates to its alumni "customers" will determine where they will "shop." As the seminary expands on multiple campuses and with increased enrollment, the number of alumni the seminary produces will increase, as well.

Segmentation of the alumni metacommunity is the most effective way to communicate with them. Golden Grads (fifty year grads) desire a relationship with Asbury that is markedly different from that of a young rural pastor, who desires a relationship with Asbury that is different from a youth pastor in a suburban megachurch. Simply referring to Asbury alumni as Asbury alumni will not suffice in the modern North American consumer-minded culture.

Multiple publications are one aspect of this approach. For example, some alumni prefer e-newsletters, while other alumni prefer printed materials. Live-streaming chapel from the Internet might appeal to some alumni, while others would prefer a cassette tape. In a multimedia society, Asbury must stay current with segmented, multiple ways of communication with its alumni metacommunity.

Segmentation has existed in the Bible since the division of God's people into tribes during the Exodus. Jesus used segmentation when he used illustrations that were appropriate for each audience who heard him. The Apostle Paul used the model of segmentation in his own ministry, as well. He writes in 1 Corinthians 9:22 that in order to

reach the various demographic groups in the Roman world he became “all things to all people, so that by all possible means I might save some.” Segmentation is a logical way to increase the opportunity for effective communication.

Experiential Continuity

Asbury alumni are generally proud of their experiences as students. Their education was far more than academic pursuits. As students at Asbury, many encountered God in unique ways. In many instances, the spiritual enrichment of their Asbury experience as students was more meaningful to their lives than the academics they learned. Many of these spiritual insights came from the classroom.

Finding postgraduate continuity with their student relationship at Asbury is necessary for Asbury to continue having a prominent place in the lives of alumni. To accomplish this goal, the seminary must find ways to market itself both to prospective students and to alumni that Asbury Seminary is far more than merely a place to receive a degree. It is a lifelong, mutually benefiting relationship.

Asbury Seminary can no longer assume that alumni desire to have a mutual relationship with the institution. Asbury must vie with other ministries that desire the attention, financial support, and time of Asbury’s alumni. This terminology may not be a popular notion in the Church, as we should not compete against one another (1 Cor. 1:10-17), but Asbury is just one of many sources of continuing education, local church extended ministry support, and ministry resources that pastors encounter each week. Asbury cannot simply assume that alumni will naturally utilize its many resources for ministry.

Contributions to Other Seminaries

Many seminaries in North America are struggling. Support from alumni and major donors is critical. While not all seminaries have a sense of experiential learning like Asbury, this study can assist them in cultivating their own alumni metacommunities.

The idea is very simple, and hardly original. Seminaries, in their theological, spiritual, and vocational nature, must find the distinguishing characteristic that makes them unique from other seminaries and continue that attribute from student to alumni. For Asbury, it is the understanding of community. For other seminaries, it may manifest itself in social justice, theological introspection, sacramental identity, or biblical inerrancy. Seminary alumni, unlike many undergraduate alumni (particularly secular university alumni) choose their seminary based on that institution's ideology or identity. Continuing that relationship from student to alumni will form a metacommunity.

All seminaries must understand their alumni in order to communicate effectively with them. This is a simple premise, yet it is sometimes lost in the world of educational institutionalism. The Alumni Leadership Community is Asbury Seminary's answer to this dilemma. Other seminaries must examine their own alumni engagement model, perhaps taking it to an extreme like Asbury and retiring the Alumni Board model.

Too many seminaries base their alumni relations model on a secular university model. As presented in Chapter 1, seminaries ultimately lie not in the realm of the academy but in the Church. A seminary's relationship with alumni that is Christocentric will be more successful, ultimately, than simply asking for and receiving monetary gifts. Modern seminary advancement theories, based on models that were successful thirty

years ago, are not able to meet the growing needs and demands of today's seminary alumni.

Traditional appeal letters, the time-tested method, are too often lost in stacks of similar letters from other ministries. Appeal letters may be attractive to older alumni, but the younger alumni are the ones in need of cultivation. Many retired seminary alumni are accustomed to giving on a regular basis and expect appeal letters. Young alumni have a distrust of these types of letters so seminaries must develop alternative methods of communication and alumni education, including e-mail, Internet chat rooms and bulletin boards, and DVDs.

Limitations of the Study

As this study concluded, several limitations emerged. For example, being able to compare respondent attitudes in relation to their geographic location would have added interesting information. This goal could have been accomplished with the data at hand, but the large number of respondents would have made this task cumbersome.

Some survey questions did not explicitly relate to the study's purpose, including several questions that dealt with alumni relationships with their undergraduate institution. At least one question, Question 22, seemed unnecessary for it asks users of an online survey if they are interested in using the Internet to stay connected with other alumni.

Tabulation of the data from Question 24, listing the top five resources for personal and professional development, would have been simplified if an additional question immediately followed: "Of the five you listed in Question 24, which is your primary resource for personal and professional development?" Comparing data from the Alumni

Leadership Team (pretest) with the data from the alumni respondents would have been interesting.

Another interesting survey question would have been the alumni's reasons for attending Asbury over another seminary. This response would have helped the seminary understand which areas to emphasize in alumni cultivation.

Segmenting the e-mail invitation geographically could have provided interesting results, which might have changed the data to some degree. Sending a segmented e-mail invitation would have been an easy task.

Perhaps the greatest limitation regarding the data from the survey was that many of the questions did not force the respondents to answer, offering instead the option to answer "Neutral." Similar to this issue was a limitation in the construction of the survey itself, which should have forced respondents to answer a question and not merely skip it. Eliminating such a limitation would have avoided the nonresponses, which could have affected the data.

Unexpected Findings

Three aspects of the survey data surprised me. First, I expected the percentage of respondents who have spoken with laypersons about Asbury Seminary to be considerably lower than 56 percent. This information is encouraging for the Advancement Office. The second unexpected conclusion regards the seminary's continuing education opportunities for alumni. I expected more alumni to place high value on Asbury's continuing education opportunities. The data revealed instead that the respondents primarily look elsewhere for their professional and personal development. Yet, a majority of the respondents indicated

that a stronger relationship with Asbury would help with both their personal/spiritual development and their practical ministry tools.

Conclusions

The alumni of Asbury Seminary share a unique bond. Most refer to their time at Asbury with references such as “experience” instead of “education.” Relating to these alumni both for what the seminary can do for them and for what they can do for the seminary must be harmonious with their student relationship with Asbury.

Alumni relations must remain holistic. They must encompass the whole of who alumni are spiritually, vocationally, emotionally, relationally, and financially. Most alumni understand the financial needs of an institution; however, placing a majority of the communication on financial solicitations sends a message to alumni that they are only worth as much to the seminary as they can give. Focusing on the whole of the alumni—vocational, spiritual, communal, financial—gives balance to Asbury’s alumni relationship. It parallels, to some extent, the foci of a pastor in his or her congregational setting. Holistic ministry encompasses all of what makes individuals who they are. This paradigm results in individual discipleship, which makes the body of Christ function at full capacity. The alumni metacommunity of Asbury Seminary can provide more support to the seminary than just financial. They can be its global ambassadors, which is a far greater gift than simply writing a check.

Christ desires that Christians become his ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20). As ambassadors for Asbury Seminary, its alumni reach into places yet unknown by the seminary and make it known. Ambassadors give the gift of personal testimony combined with an excitement that stems only from a transformed life. This is the greatest gift

alumni can give Asbury Seminary. By representing Christ to those whom they serve, they are representing the seminary that provided ministerial training and the opportunity for them to encounter God. Simply encouraging alumni to be what God called them to be and to remember the story of how God met them as Asbury students is the primary task of an alumni office with a congregational vision. The goal is for alumni to give more than a financial gift. It is asking them to respond to Asbury because God met them while they were students. For this to become a reality, the alumni office must first know the desires, dreams, and hearts of its alumni.

POSTSCRIPT

Since the conclusion of this project, a major alumni initiative took place that gives promise to much of what this project describes. In March 2004, 130 members of the Alumni Leadership Community and their spouses met in Orlando, Florida for a Retreat. This purpose of this three-day retreat was to form a national “team” of alumni leaders by reintroducing them to the vast ministries of the seminary through video and speakers. Presenters included members of the faculty, students, laypersons, and members of the advancement/alumni offices. A worship team from Houston provided up-tempo worship. Alumni met in small groups for regional and local alumni cultivation strategy. During the plenary sessions, they were given the opportunity to re-commit their lives and ministries to Christ.

The Retreat followed the same basic pattern used for the President’s Retreat weekends, a spiritual retreat designed for major donors of the seminary. One goal of the Retreat was to encourage alumni to invite wealthy members of their churches to one of these President’s Retreats. The presenters intentionally did not ask the alumni for a

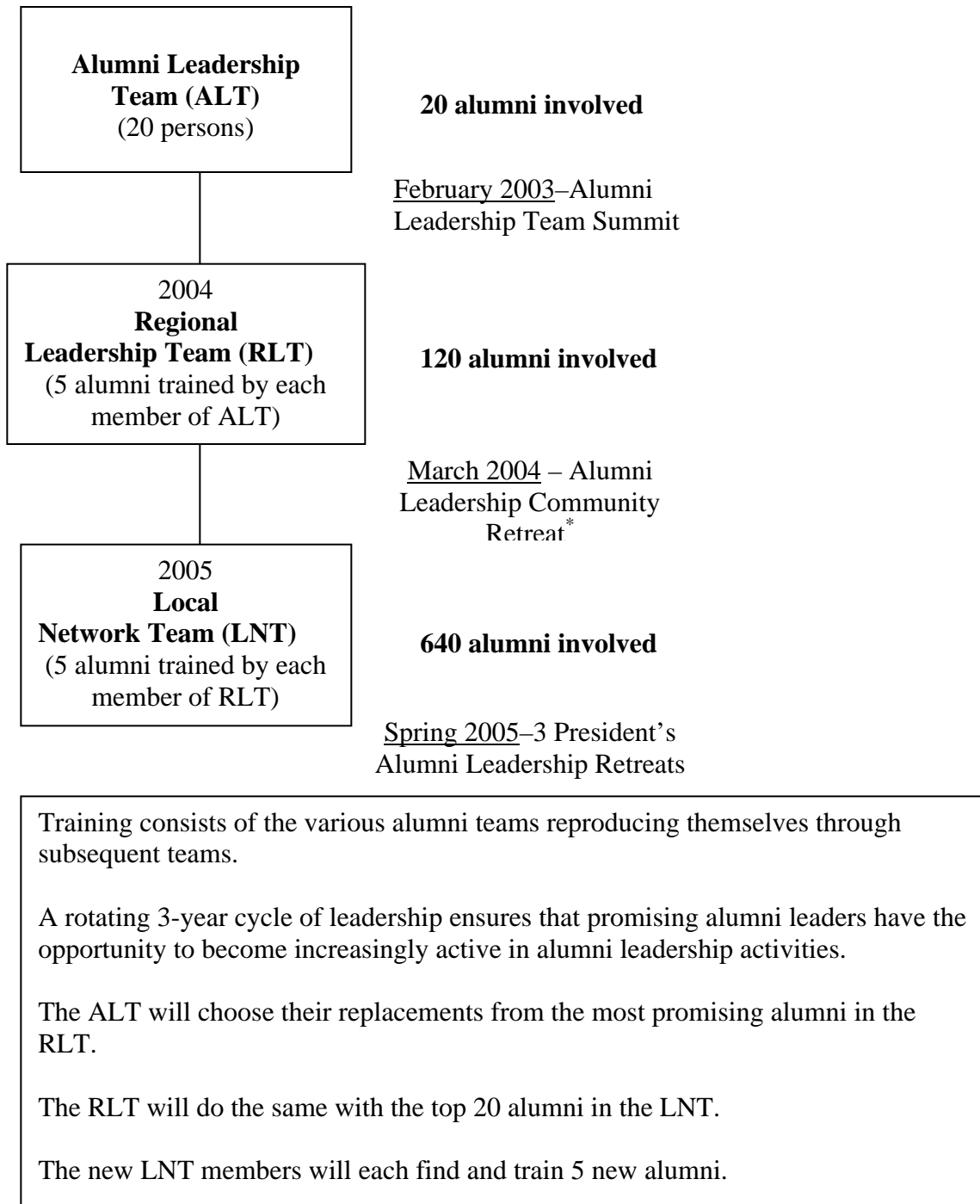
monetary gift. Many were skeptical about the purpose of this retreat, and we really wanted to just shower them with love and ministry.

Nearly all of the alumni left the retreat with a renewed love for the seminary, and a deeper sense of call and purpose for their own lives. The significance of the event for the spouses who attended was an unexpected result. The renewal in their own lives was perhaps more noteworthy than that in the lives of the alumni. Overall, the response from both alumni and spouses was overwhelmingly positive. The retreat was a resounding success.

The promise of the Alumni Leadership Community Retreat is that these alumni will return to their places of ministry with a renewed understanding of the seminary, a passion to spread the word about the work of the seminary, and a desire to engage other alumni in fellowship and support of the seminary. The coinciding timing of this Retreat with the conclusion of this alumni study could not have been better. I believe that this is indeed a new day for the alumni of Asbury Seminary, and the opportunity to be a part of this transformation has been a blessing to my own life and ministry.

APPENDIX A

Alumni Leadership Community Structure



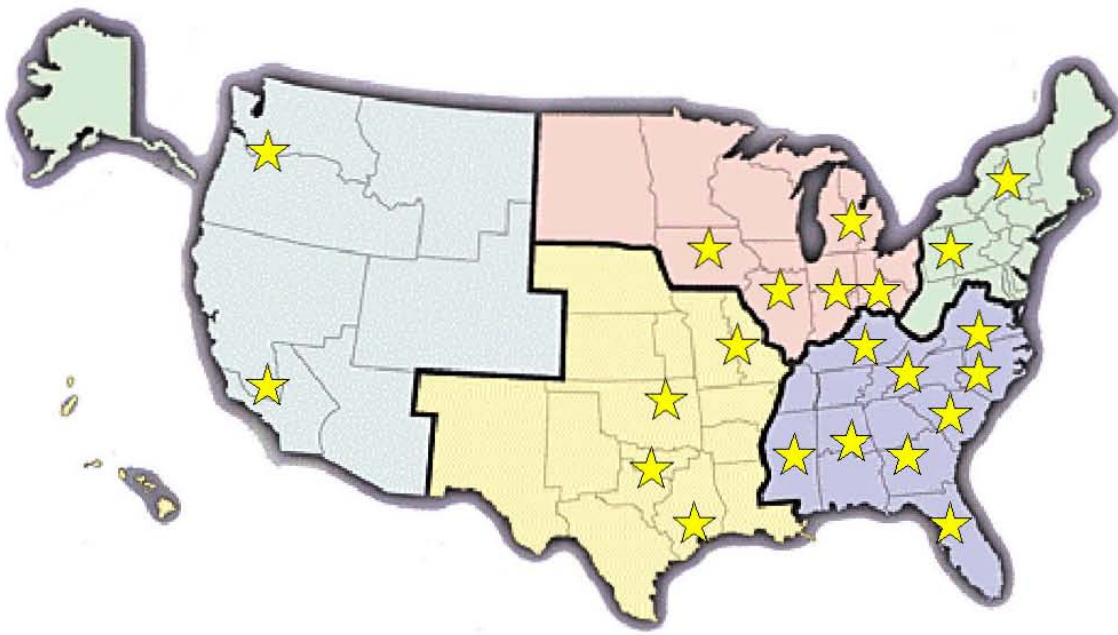
* The Alumni Leadership Community Retreat involves all alumni in both the Alumni Leadership Team and the Regional Leadership Team. This retreat serves as an opportunity for the alumni to meet one another and engage in creative networking.

APPENDIX B

Alumni Leadership Team Geographic Regions

Alumni Leadership Team Membership

★ = 2004 Member Locations



APPENDIX C

Alumni Leadership Team Mission, Vision, and Objectives

MISSION

To glorify God and resource disciple makers of Jesus Christ

VISION

To provide lifelong vocational, spiritual, emotional, and Mental development opportunities for our alumni through the building of meaningful relationships

OBJECTIVES

1. Engage in recruitment of prospective students of Asbury Seminary
2. Promote creative local church connections with Asbury Seminary
3. Build community among Asbury Seminary alumni
4. Provide leadership at denominational conference gatherings
5. Identify and introduce potential donor relationships with Asbury Seminary
6. Multiply the ALT through the training of other alumni

APPENDIX D

Alumni Leadership Team Goals Report



Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

As a means to remain accountable to one another and to God, please report your personal goals (and progress) for each of the Alumni Leadership Team Objectives.

Please return this form to the Alumni Office by: _____

OBJECTIVES:

1. Engage in recruitment of prospective students of Asbury Seminary.

Annual Goal: _____

Progress on annual goal:	First Quarter	_____
	Second Quarter	_____
	Third Quarter	_____
	Fourth Quarter	_____

2. Promote creative local church connections with Asbury Seminary.

Annual Goals:

Progress on goals:

3. Build community among Asbury Seminary alumni.

Annual Goals:

Progress on Goals:

4. Provide leadership at denominational conference gatherings.

Annual Goals:

Progress on Goals:

5. Identify and introduce potential donor relationships with Asbury Seminary.

Annual Goals: _____

Progress on annual goal:	First Quarter	_____
	Second Quarter	_____
	Third Quarter	_____
	Fourth Quarter	_____

6. Multiply the ALT through the training of other alumni.

Annual Goal: _____

Progress on annual goal:	First Quarter	_____
	Second Quarter	_____
	Third Quarter	_____
	Fourth Quarter	_____

APPENDIX E

Internet, Self-Administered Survey for Alumni

Survey of Asbury Seminary Alumni

Thank you for your honest responses.

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

1. **In what year did you graduate from Asbury Seminary?** _____
2. **What degree(s) did you earn?** _____
3. **To which denomination do you belong?**

 Assembly of God
 Christian/Missionary Alliance
 Church of God, Anderson
 Free Methodist Church
 Friends
 Nazarene
 Nondenominational/Independent
 Presbyterian
 United Methodist Church
 Wesleyan Church
 Other: _____
4. **In which region of the United States do you live?**

 Southeast (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA)
 Northeast (CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, VT, WV, RI)
 North Central (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD, WI)
 South Central (AR, KS, LA, MO, NE, NM, OK, TX)
 West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)

ASBURY SEMINARY ALUMNI RELATIONS

5. **“My experience as a student of Asbury Seminary was a very positive one.”**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. What would you say has been Asbury Seminary's primary interest in alumni relations?

- Biblical/theological development of alumni
 Continuing education
 Developing the spiritual life of the alumni
 Fundraising
 Recruiting new students

7. "Asbury Seminary cares primarily about my spiritual life."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. "Asbury Seminary's primary desire is that I give financially."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. How has your opinion of Asbury Seminary changed since you graduated?

Greatly Decreased	Decreased	Neutral	Increased	Greatly Increased
1	2	3	4	5

10. When you receive a mailing from Asbury Seminary, do you typically:

- Read it, and then discard it without responding
 Read it, and then respond in some way
 Throw it away without reading it

11. How many times in the past 3 years have you given financially to Asbury Seminary?

- 1-5
 5-10
 More than 10
 I haven't given financially.

12. How many times in the past 3 years have you met with other Asbury Seminary alumni for fellowship?

- 1-5
 5-10
 10-15
 I haven't met with other alumni.

13. "Fellowship with Asbury Seminary alumni from other denominations is important to me."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

14. How important to your life and ministry is your relationship with Asbury Seminary?

Not At All	Not Very	Neutral	Important	Very Important
1	2	3	4	5

15. How likely would a stronger relationship with Asbury Seminary help your personal spiritual development?

Not At All	Not Very	Neutral	Likely	A Great Deal
1	2	3	4	5

16. How likely would a stronger relationship with Asbury Seminary assist you with practical ministry tools?

Not At All	Not Very	Neutral	Likely	A Great Deal
1	2	3	4	5

17. How open would you be to attend an Asbury Seminary alumni spiritual retreat in your state or region?

Not At All	Probably Not	Neutral	Willing	Very Willing
1	2	3	4	5

18. "I consider Asbury Seminary to be a ministry worthy of my financial and local church support."

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

19. Does your local church include Asbury Seminary in its annual budget?

Yes
 No

20. If you are a pastor, have you spoken with your laypersons about Asbury Seminary in the past 3 years?

Yes I am not a pastor
 No

21. In the past 3 years, have you encouraged one or more persons to attend Asbury Seminary?

Yes
 No

22. How often do you return to the Asbury Seminary campus?

More than twice a year
 Once a year
 Every other year
 Once or twice since graduation
 I have not returned to campus since graduation

23. Is using the Internet as a means to stay in touch with other alumni an idea that interests you?

- No
- Yes

24. Which of the following Asbury Seminary resources have you utilized?

- AOI (Asbury Online Institute)
- Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leadership
- Ministers' Conference
- Other: _____

25. What are your top five (5) resources for personal and professional development?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

ASBURY SEMINARY AND YOUR UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION

26. What year did you graduate from your undergraduate institution?

27. "My experience as a student of my undergraduate institution was a very positive one."

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

28. "Since graduation, my experience with my undergraduate institution has been similar to my relationship with Asbury Seminary."

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

29. "My undergraduate institution's alumni office is interested primarily in my financial gifts."

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

30. If forced to make a choice, would you financially support Asbury Seminary or your undergraduate institution?

- Asbury Seminary
- Undergraduate Institution

31. How does your undergraduate institution keep you connected with them?

(Check all that apply)

- Annual phone call solicitation
- Annual reunions
- Magazines
- Mailed financial solicitations
- Other: _____

32. How does Asbury Seminary keep you connected with them?

- Annual phone call solicitation
- Annual reunions
- Magazines
- Mailed financial solicitations
- Other: _____

33. “My undergraduate institution and Asbury Seminary desire the same type of relationship with me.”

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

34. How has your relationship with your undergraduate institution differed from your relationship with Asbury Seminary?

- Since graduation, my relationship with Asbury Seminary has been more meaningful to my life.
- Since graduation, my relationship with my undergraduate institution has been more meaningful to my life.
- Since graduation, both have equally been meaningful to my life.
- Since graduation, neither one has been meaningful to my life.

35. How does your identity with Asbury Seminary compare to that of your undergraduate institution?

- I first think of myself as a graduate of Asbury Seminary.
- I first think of myself as a graduate of my undergraduate institution.

36. A college/university and a seminary have the same basic purposes.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

ASBURY SEMINARY ALUMNI LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 37. Have you heard of the Asbury Seminary Alumni Leadership Team?**
___ No
___ Yes
- 38. If “YES,” do you know the name of the Alumni Leadership Team representative in your area?**
___ No
___ Yes
- 39. If asked by someone, could you describe to him or her the basic purpose of the Alumni Leadership Team?**
___ No
___ Yes
- 40. Is serving Asbury Seminary with your time something that interests you?**
___ No
___ Yes

APPENDIX F

E-mail Invitation to Participate in Internet, Self-Administered Survey

Greetings in Christ from the alumni office at Asbury Seminary!

I'm sending you this e-mail not in my capacity as the Director of Alumni and Church Development but as a Doctor of Ministry student here at the seminary. My dissertation project involves how our alumni's relationship with Asbury Seminary compares to the relationship they currently have with their undergraduate institutions.

I've posted an **anonymous survey on the Internet**. The short survey should take **no more than 2-3 minutes** of your time. Your responses will not only help me in the fulfillment of my project, but they will also help the seminary know how best to serve its alumni.

Simply click on the link below and follow the directions on the survey site. **No cookies will be downloaded nor changes made to your computer.**

Here's the link: <http://www.whateveritis.edu/>

Thanks for your valuable help!

APPENDIX G

Follow up E-mail Invitation

Dear Alumni Family,

I want to thank you for the tremendous response we've had with regard to the Alumni Survey. It means so much to know that you care enough about Asbury Seminary to take the time to complete the survey.

For those of you who haven't yet had a chance to complete the survey, there's still time! Simply follow the link below to be transported to the online survey. Your responses will help us create ministries that will be meaningful to our alumni.

Thanks again!

Here's the link: www.whateveritis.edu

Deep peace in Christ,

**Mike Voigts, '93
Director of Alumni and Church
Ministries**

APPENDIX H

Alumni Survey Raw Data

Evaluation Report: Alumni Survey 2003

(N = 1850, n = 595, 32%)

Question	n or Mean	% or SD	Question	n or Mean	% or SD	Question	n or Mean	% or SD
2. To which denomination do you belong?			5. What would you say has been Asbury Seminary's primary interest in alumni relations?			11. How many times in the past 3 years have you met with other Asbury Seminary alumni for fellowship?		
Assembly of God	3	0.5	Biblical/theological development of alumni	16	2.7	10-15	69	11.6
Christian/Missionary Alliance	10	1.7	Continuing education	145	24.4	5-10	73	12.3
Church of God, Anderson	8	1.3	Developing the spiritual life of the alumni	63	10.6	1-5	281	47.2
Free Methodist Church	46	7.7	Fundraising	334	56.1	I haven't met with other alumni.	168	28.2
Friends	3	0.5	Recruiting new students	22	3.7	13. How important to your life and ministry is your relationship with Asbury Seminary?		
Nazarene	15	2.5	8. How has your opinion of Asbury Seminary changed since you graduated?			Very important	82	13.8
Non-Denominational/Independent	30	5.0	Greatly increased	48	8.1	Important	276	46.4
Presbyterian	6	1.0	Increased	268	45.0	Neutral	141	23.7
United Methodist Church	378	63.5	Neutral	226	38.0	Not very	76	12.8
Wesleyan Church	27	4.5	Decreased	44	7.4	Not at all	17	2.9
Other	66	11.1	Greatly decreased	6	1.0	14. How likely would a stronger relationship with Asbury Seminary help your personal spiritual development?		
3. In which region of the United States do you live?			9. When you receive a mailing from Asbury Seminary, do you typically:			A great deal	78	13.1
Southeast (AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA)	214	36.0	Read it, and then respond in some way.	151	25.4	Likely	309	51.9
Northeast (CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, VT, WV, RI)	70	11.8	Read it, and then discard it without responding.	407	68.4	Neutral	136	22.9
North Central (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD, WI)	145	24.4	Throw it away without reading it.	31	5.2	Not Very	58	9.7
South Central (AR, KS, LA, MO, NE, NM, OK, TX)	92	15.5	10. How many times in the past 3 years have you given financially to Asbury Seminary?			Not at all	8	1.3
West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)	47	7.9	1-5	336	56.5			
			5-10	12	2			
			More than 10	18	3			
			I haven't given financially	226	38			

Question	n or Mean	% or SD	Question	n or Mean	% or SD	Question	n or Mean	% or SD
15. How likely would a stronger relationship with Asbury Seminary assist you with practical ministry tools?			25. How often do you return to the Asbury Seminary campus?			30. How does your undergraduate institution keep you connected with them? (Check all that apply)		
A great deal	77	12.8	More than twice a year	43	7.2	Annual phone call solicitations	231	58.1
Likely	338	65.8	Once a year	94	15.8	Annual reunions	218	56.6
Neutral	138	21.8	Every other year	65	14.3	Magazines	444	74.6
Not Very	28	6.4	Once or twice since graduation	278	46.7	Mailed financial solicitations	451	75.8
Not at all	5	0.8	I have not returned to campus since graduation	93	15.5	Other	176	38.1
16. How open would you be to attend an Asbury Seminary alumni spiritual retreat in your state or region?			27. Is using the Internet as a means to stay in touch with other alumni an idea that interests you?			31. How does Asbury Seminary keep you connected with them? (Check all that apply)		
Very willing	148	24.8	Yes	463	77.8	Annual phone call solicitations	463	77.3
Willing	294	47.7	No	124	20.8	Annual reunions	96	19.1
Neutral	82	15.5	23. Which of the following Asbury Seminary resources have you utilized?			Magazines	494	83.6
Probably not	54	9.1	AOI (Asbury Online Institute)	142	23.9	Mailed financial solicitations	481	81.1
Not at all	13	2.2	Bacon Institute for Advanced Church Leadership	68	11.4	Other	171	28.7
18. Does your local church include Asbury Seminary in its annual budget?			Minister/Ministry Conference	266	44.7	32. How has your relationship with your undergraduate institution differed from your relationship with Asbury Seminary?		
Yes	18	2.7	Other	101	17.0	Asbury Seminary is more meaningful to my life than my undergraduate institution.	324	54.5
No	563	94.6	32. If forced to make a choice, would you financially support Asbury Seminary or your undergraduate institution?			My undergraduate institution is more meaningful to my life than Asbury Seminary.	51	8.6
19. If you are a pastor, have you spoken with your laypersons about Asbury Seminary in the past 3 years?			Asbury Seminary	436	73.6	Both have equally been meaningful to my life.	205	34.5
Yes	357	56.6	Undergraduate Institution	126	21.2	Neither one has been meaningful to my life.	8	1.3
No	311	28.4	34. How does your identity with Asbury Seminary compare to that of your undergraduate institution?			I first think of myself as a graduate of Asbury Seminary.	444	74.5
20. In the past 3 years, have you encouraged one or more persons to attend Asbury Seminary?			I first think of myself as a graduate of my undergraduate institution.			I first think of myself as a graduate of my undergraduate institution.	111	18.7
Yes	452	70						
No	193	22.1						

35. Have you heard of the Asbury Seminary Alumni Leadership Team?		
Yes	275	45.4
No	112	19.4
36. Do you know the name of the Alumni Leadership Team representative in your area?		
Yes	94	15.8
No	491	83

37. If asked by someone, could you describe to him or her the basic purpose of the Alumni Leadership Team?		
Yes	89	15
No	495	83.7
38. Is serving Asbury Seminary with your time something that interests you?		
Yes	306	51.4
No	262	44

		Strongly Agree (5)		Agree (4)		Neutral (3)		Disagree (2)		Strongly Disagree (1)		Average	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	M	SD
INSTRUCTIONS: Please respond to each of the following items by checking the appropriate box to the right of the statement. If you have "No Opinion" on the item, check the last column labeled "No Opinion."													
4	My experience as a student of Asbury Seminary was a very positive one.	429	72.1	141	23.7	15	2.5	5	0.8	0	0.0	4.68	0.56
6	Asbury Seminary cares primarily about my spiritual life.	80	13.4	295	49.6	184	30.9	30	5.0	2	0.3	3.71	0.77
7	Asbury Seminary's primary desire is that I give financially.	52	8.7	232	39.0	181	30.4	110	18.5	16	2.7	3.33	0.97
12	Fellowship with Asbury Seminary alumni from other denominations is important to me.	51	8.6	206	34.6	274	46.1	51	8.6	9	1.5	3.40	0.82
17	I consider Asbury Seminary to be a ministry worthy of my financial and local church support.	102	17.1	335	56.3	131	22.0	16	2.7	5	0.8	3.87	0.75
26	My experience as a student of my undergraduate institution was a very positive one.	222	37.3	253	42.5	86	14.5	29	4.9	3	0.5	4.12	0.87
27	Since graduation, my experience with my undergraduate institution has been similar to my relationship with Asbury Seminary.	51	8.6	214	36.0	40	6.7	214	36.0	73	12.3	2.93	1.25
28	My undergraduate institution's alumni office is interested primarily in my financial gifts.	171	28.7	240	40.3	115	19.3	48	8.1	12	2.0	3.87	0.99
32	My undergraduate institution and Asbury Seminary desire the same type of relationship with me.	40	6.7	191	32.1	83	13.9	205	34.5	70	11.8	2.87	1.19

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
- Pastors Prayer Summits - Beeson Pastor's ...	1	0.2 %
AOI	1	0.2 %
Saddleback, Willow Creek, Injoy, private retr...	1	0.2 %
1. Various consultants 2. Various national con...	1	0.2 %
John Maxwell, Beeson Institute for Advanced ...	1	0.2 %
1. Dynamic Church/Leadership Conferences (...)	1	0.2 %
I am retired, so personal study and worship s ...	1	0.2 %
books, seminars, retreats	1	0.2 %
1)Personal study. 2)Continuing Education exp...	1	0.2 %
Youth Specialties; Small group with friends; Bi...	1	0.2 %
Reading, Interent	1	0.2 %
ATS MINISTERS'S CONFERENCE DIST &...	2	0.3 %
personal devotions, prayer and Bible study, W...	1	0.2 %
Internet books church community profession...	1	0.2 %
Internet, Magazines, Conferences/Events, Con...	1	0.2 %
My professional library, interaction with other ...	1	0.2 %
Online, books, seminars	1	0.2 %
Books, Specialized Seminars in my interest are...	1	0.2 %
Graduates of the Seminary, Ministry Conferen...	1	0.2 %
Internet, Magazines, Conferences/Events, Con...	1	0.2 %
Graduates of the Seminary, Ministry Conferen...	1	0.2 %
Books, Conferences, DMIN program at Ande...	1	0.2 %
Net Results, Preaching Magazine, general read...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, conferences, retreats, personal readi...	1	0.2 %
1. Reading 2. Willowcreek 3. Injoy	1	0.2 %
homeletics, various books, web pages, semina...	1	0.2 %
Books, conferences, magazines	1	0.2 %
Reading Books Conferences like Willow Cr...	1	0.2 %
DMin program at Asbury Daily Quiet Time M...	1	0.2 %
Willowcreek preachingtoday.com Pastors.c...	1	0.2 %
The Bible, Continuing Education Events, Readi...	1	0.2 %
(1) The Bible; (2) weekly men's prayer group i...	1	0.2 %
Friends, Books, Tapes, Mentor, D-Min. progr...	1	0.2 %
Easum Bandy Associates / Leadership Netwo...	1	0.2 %
reading, conferences	1	0.2 %
Books	2	0.3 %
AOI, ATS Ministers Conference, Annual Co...	1	0.2 %
Focus on the family, Books, Denominational C...	1	0.2 %
reading, conferences, The Scriptures Daily Bi...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Local churches, American Scientific Affiliation,...	1	0.2 %
Faculty Publication, Good News, USAF Cha...	2	0.3 %
Courageous Leadership, Bill Hybels; Purpose ...	1	0.2 %
1) individual bible reading/prayer (2)fellowship...	1	0.2 %
Seminars at local churches such as Ginghamsb...	1	0.2 %
Ministers Conference, Francis Asbury Society...	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Community Church; Mainstay ...	1	0.2 %
Local church Clergy friends Fuller Seminary ...	2	0.3 %
Beeson Institute, personal time with God, conti...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, Books, Magazines, shared resource...	1	0.2 %
Christian Ed Conferences, Magazines, Person...	1	0.2 %
denominational resources	1	0.2 %
Family, ministers, fellow workers, books, prof...	1	0.2 %
1. D.min. program at Asbury, 2. cursillo and w...	1	0.2 %
preaching plus, meyers briggs, Easum-Bandy, ...	1	0.2 %
on-line books, 2 off-line books, 3 local area el...	1	0.2 %
The Bible AACCC Accountabilty group Prayer ...	1	0.2 %
Reading, attending continuing education semin...	1	0.2 %
Reading Books; Attending Conferences; Meet...	1	0.2 %
Youth Specialties National Youthworkers Con...	1	0.2 %
reading, denominational seminars/training, othe...	1	0.2 %
I make use of various online resources for mini...	1	0.2 %
Interaction with wife. Weekly meeting with fo...	1	0.2 %
I make use of various online resources for mini...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, books, mentor, video training,	1	0.2 %
Study Groups, Accountability group, continuin...	1	0.2 %
Books - Seminars - Internet -	1	0.2 %
As a school teacher I attend workshops, semi...	1	0.2 %
1. Beeson Institute 2. Discipleship Journal 3.R...	1	0.2 %
Conf. Cont. Edu, Conferences, Dmin Work,C...	1	0.2 %
Bible reading and prayer, practice of ministry, ...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Magazine; The Upper Room; Chri...	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Association, Vision New Engla...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute; Ministerial Conference; King...	1	0.2 %
Personal reading, group study, course enrollm...	1	0.2 %
3rd party ministers' conference, books, district...	1	0.2 %
Community Bible Study Church Bible Intern...	1	0.2 %
1 Bible (I know that sounds overly trite, but ho...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Magazine, Various Books,Confere...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Bible, Reference Material, Internet, conferenc...	1	0.2 %
individual Bible study; meeting with other past...	1	0.2 %
Books by Henri Nouwen and Thomas Merton...	1	0.2 %
1.Reading the Bible 2.Beeson Institute 3. Boo...	1	0.2 %
Thomas Merton's writings Personal reading in...	1	0.2 %
DMin program at Gardner-Webb. Bishop's S...	1	0.2 %
The Lord, my church body, opportunities in m...	1	0.2 %
1.Personally (Holy Spirit) directed Bible Study...	1	0.2 %
Reading, Denominational Training opportunitie...	1	0.2 %
(1)CBA - Christian Business Administrators A...	1	0.2 %
Sandy Cove Christian Conference Center, Pas...	1	0.2 %
1. Denominational Materials 2. Men's Ministry...	1	0.2 %
Wesleyan Theological Society, American The...	1	0.2 %
periodical preaching resources, workshops, Al...	1	0.2 %
Youth Specalities. I belong to the Evangelical ...	1	0.2 %
Church, AACC, NACC, fellow counselors in ...	1	0.2 %
1)Reading Books, 2) Attending Seminars, 3)A...	1	0.2 %
I have recently completed a mentoring proces ...	1	0.2 %
Injoy Life Tape Series; Discipleship Journal; P...	1	0.2 %
Are you talking about books, magazines, Bible...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute; Preaching Today; Leadership...	1	0.2 %
Peers, Air Force Chaplain Service Training,	2	0.3 %
Bishops Convocations, as well as taking cours...	1	0.2 %
1. Personal Bible Study. 2. Regular fellowshi...	1	0.2 %
Colleagues,parishoners,personal study,service,...	1	0.2 %
Various denominational literature, devotional st...	1	0.2 %
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities...	1	0.2 %
Bible, books, Christian magazines and journals...	1	0.2 %
personal retreat, local conferences, comentarie...	1	0.2 %
Bible, Practical Ministry Innovations, Building ...	1	0.2 %
Books by John Maxwell, Phillip Yancey, Rich...	1	0.2 %
Reading, journals, retreats, conferences, small ...	1	0.2 %
Enhance leadership skills, gain practical skills f...	1	0.2 %
1. Florida UM Conference Sponsored Semina...	1	0.2 %
Scripture	1	0.2 %
AACC Conferences, ATS Minister's conferen...	1	0.2 %
1. Saddleback 2. Adam Hamilton 3. Jack ...	1	0.2 %
Internet, professional magazines, journals, cont...	1	0.2 %
question a bit vague, but here goes: 1) Books ...	1	0.2 %
Brookings Institute; UM chaplaincy retreats; P...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Friends OMSI AACC ACA	1	0.2 %
conferences, websites, articles, AOI	1	0.2 %
Asbury, INJOY Leadership tapes and books ...	1	0.2 %
National Conferences Reading Books Tape -...	1	0.2 %
Church conferences; reading and study; resour...	1	0.2 %
1. personal study 2. denominational programs...	1	0.2 %
D.Min at ATS; National Pastor's Convention; ...	1	0.2 %
Miniatry Conference, Various journals, AOI, ...	1	0.2 %
Women's ministry leadership training Local ch...	1	0.2 %
Books, magazines, videos, Internet, conferences	1	0.2 %
Leadership Journal (Christianity Today Publica...	1	0.2 %
Conference Bishop's Convocation, other conf...	1	0.2 %
Books purchased through Cokesbury. Minist...	1	0.2 %
various conferences offered in my geographica...	1	0.2 %
1. Denominational seminars in our Pacific Nort...	1	0.2 %
Reading; Continuing Education; Intentional eng...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute, Conference Continuing Educ...	1	0.2 %
Academy of Congregational Development, bo...	1	0.2 %
Redwood Christian Park - Boulder Creek, C...	1	0.2 %
Mentoring Keeping up to date with newly pub...	1	0.2 %
Occasional seminars, books, magazines	1	0.2 %
Bible, Devotional books, Church growth/evan...	1	0.2 %
The Internet, The Library, Shores David Mes...	1	0.2 %
Bible Reading, Selected Books & Magazines, E...	1	0.2 %
1. District Retreat 2. Nearby conferences held...	1	0.2 %
Depends on the year.	1	0.2 %
books,seminars,denominational events,audiota...	1	0.2 %
Internet Conferences Covenant group readin...	1	0.2 %
ATS D. Minn; Lectio Divina	1	0.2 %
Christianity Today, Leadership Magazine, Con...	1	0.2 %
ATS D. Minn; Lectio Divina, National Pastor'...	1	0.2 %
Denominational/Annual conference resources; ...	1	0.2 %
1. District 2. Conference 3. National level ev...	1	0.2 %
1) Cont. Ed. opportunities through our confer...	1	0.2 %
reading, conferences, retreats, audio/video tapes	1	0.2 %
Journaling, Conferences, books	1	0.2 %
Personal devotional wife, my accountability gr...	1	0.2 %
Holston Conference activities, Holston Renew...	1	0.2 %
I am a retired missionary, so some of the quest...	1	0.2 %
Local church, professionals from other ministri...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Leadership magazine...regional continuing ed. ...	1	0.2 %
1. Personal theological/biblical/spiritual growt...	1	0.2 %
The Bible, Small Groups, Youth Specialties C...	1	0.2 %
Reading books and journals- attending seminars	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Association, materials from Sad...	1	0.2 %
Holy Bible, Purpose Driven materials, Asbury ...	1	0.2 %
Probationary Covenant Group of NCNY Con...	1	0.2 %
Bible,Church, conferences,Bible studies, supp...	1	0.2 %
Purpose Driven Church -- Warren, Willow Cr...	1	0.2 %
Scripture, fellowship, technical manuals, experi...	1	0.2 %
Bible study/prayer, Workshops,Conferences,f...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Network; Center for Discipleshp ...	1	0.2 %
D.Min. program, Local/regional continuing ed...	1	0.2 %
Christianity Today; books; minister's conferen...	1	0.2 %
Daily devotional material books periodicals ...	1	0.2 %
ATS Min Conf, FL Conf School of Min, FL ...	1	0.2 %
Spouse,journals, books, my therapist, two coll...	1	0.2 %
National Association of Nouthetic Counselors,...	1	0.2 %
Asbury Minister's Conference,Denominational ...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute For Adv. Ch. Leadership, Ne...	1	0.2 %
accountablity group that meets weekly, consta...	1	0.2 %
Spiritual disciplines of prayer, reading Scriptur...	1	0.2 %
Because of serious health problems, I am tryin...	1	0.2 %
Incubator Group, books, Minister's Conf., Inj...	1	0.2 %
1. Professional Conferences in area of Speciali...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, books, CCN programs, small group...	1	0.2 %
Bible Study	1	0.2 %
Leadership Network, Leadership Journal, Fas...	1	0.2 %
Bible, Colleagues in Wesley Foundations, Coll...	1	0.2 %
Bible study, local church pastor, Christian Offi...	1	0.2 %
General Reading of classics and new literature.	1	0.2 %
colleagues, professional journals, training sessi...	1	0.2 %
Pastor to Pastor form Focus on the Family. T...	1	0.2 %
1. Good Church Music Seminars (Choral espe...	1	0.2 %
Seminars (such as Ministers' Week), books, r...	1	0.2 %
Bible, books, conferences, friends,	1	0.2 %
Christian magazines, Christian books, conferen...	1	0.2 %
1. Order of the FLAME-World Methodist C...	1	0.2 %
UM School for Congregational Development ...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
1. Bible Study 2. Daily Devotional (Chambers...	1	0.2 %
Conference Pastors In Training Program, Den...	1	0.2 %
1) To grow closer to Christ. 2) To make sure ...	1	0.2 %
I'm not involved in ministry, except at my local ...	1	0.2 %
1. Reading the Bible and devotional material 2...	1	0.2 %
the scripture, prayer, interaction with other loc...	1	0.2 %
Reading, attending an annual conference in my ...	1	0.2 %
1. Continuing Education Opportunitiess. 2. In...	1	0.2 %
Bruce Wilkinson's books (The Prayer o Jabez,...	1	0.2 %
Books written by Asbury Seminary Professors...	1	0.2 %
Since I am retired several of the questions abo...	1	0.2 %
1. Willow Creek 2. Frazier Memorial United...	1	0.2 %
Touchstone Magazine, First Things Magazine, ...	1	0.2 %
Personal reading, ministerial colleagues, some ...	1	0.2 %
books, seeking out persons gifted in area mag...	1	0.2 %
1. North Ala Academy for Congregational De...	1	0.2 %
Homiletics.com, district/conference seminars, ...	1	0.2 %
prayer, colleagues, research, retreat, workshops	1	0.2 %
Scripture Union's study guide, "Encounger wit...	1	0.2 %
First Things, Christianity Today, Books & Cultur...	1	0.2 %
Personal Bible Study and Prayer, weekly pray...	1	0.2 %
Reading material, Asbury alum pastor, Fuller T...	1	0.2 %
CPE, Readings, Retreats, Professional organiz...	1	0.2 %
books, tapes, internet, conferences, fellowship...	1	0.2 %
The Scriptures,seminars, pastor's school , pray...	1	0.2 %
Denominational structure- The indiana district ...	1	0.2 %
Mentor/ Coaches, Preachingtoday.com, Lead...	1	0.2 %
John Maxwell - Leadership materials, Adam ...	1	0.2 %
Saddleback, Willow Creek,	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Community Church; Saddlebac...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, books, colleagues	1	0.2 %
1. The Bible; 2. Reformed/Calvinist Comment...	1	0.2 %
books, conversation with other leaders, Don J...	1	0.2 %
The Bible Prayer Study with my Congregatio...	1	0.2 %
Meeting face to face with professors	1	0.2 %
1. Professional Journals 2. Annual Conferenc...	1	0.2 %
scripture,Touchstone Magazine,local church s...	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Association Conferences/Readi...	1	0.2 %
Personal Devotions, Wesleyan Ministers' Retr...	1	0.2 %
1. Other Ministers 2. Church Seminars/Confe...	1	0.2 %
1.Minister's conference. 2. Information from ...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
1. Seminars and Continuing Education 2. Boo...	1	0.2 %
1. Bible Study and Prayer. 2. Attending chur...	1	0.2 %
1.Bible,Local Pastor,Ministerial Assn.,College...	1	0.2 %
Area church meetings, books, church prayer g...	1	0.2 %
internet, books, magazines, colleagues, and for...	1	0.2 %
Books, Training Seminars, Other pastors who ...	1	0.2 %
ACSI Conferences, Christianity Today, Wesle...	1	0.2 %
leaqdership mag cont ed conference works...	1	0.2 %
Ralph Moore and Hope Chapel in Hawaii, Ric...	1	0.2 %
1. Preparing messages and studies. 2. Reading...	1	0.2 %
Dr. Susan Muto -- Epiphany Association, Pitts...	1	0.2 %
1. Reading new books, 2. Conversations with ...	1	0.2 %
Asbury Alumni, Local Church Family, Christia...	1	0.2 %
ATS Minister's Conf, AOI, regular daily devot...	1	0.2 %
Attending worship at Park Cities Presbyterian ...	1	0.2 %
Personal Bible study, small group study, worsh...	1	0.2 %
I have been retired since June 1991 and have ...	1	0.2 %
1. Logos/libronix Scholars Library System 2. ...	1	0.2 %
Willow Creek Leadership Conferences, Injoy,...	1	0.2 %
Books, seminars, internet, magazines, videos	1	0.2 %
Assorted continuing education events/conferen...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Magazine	1	0.2 %
Asbury D. Min Program, books, magazines, o...	1	0.2 %
National Conventions including: National Religi...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Network; Easum Bundy Associates;	1	0.2 %
Reading Continuing Education Other pastors ...	1	0.2 %
conferences,INJOY,	1	0.2 %
The Bible, denominational training events, FM ...	1	0.2 %
1) devotions and study in small groups and sin...	1	0.2 %
Conferences at teaching churches such as Sad...	1	0.2 %
Rick Warren's stuff, George Barna's stuff, Ma...	1	0.2 %
The Communicator,Choisters Guild,Creator m...	1	0.2 %
1. Reading/study of scripture. 2. Willow Cree...	1	0.2 %
library research, internet research, books, tape...	1	0.2 %
1) Books on leadership, theology, etc.; 2) Jou...	1	0.2 %
Denominational seminars, Biblical studies, read...	1	0.2 %
(1)D.Min.work at ATS(1986-90)(2)Ongoing ...	1	0.2 %
Logos/Libronix software, Willow Creek Asso...	1	0.2 %
Books, sermon material from other great prea...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, magazines, sermon illustrations (sub...	1	0.2 %
Books, Conferences, Training Events (i.e. Pre...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
reading conferences networking with other mi...	1	0.2 %
1. Spending time with my family 2. Books on ...	1	0.2 %
AOI, CBD, Upper Room,	1	0.2 %
books, D.Min. work at Bethel, Wesleyan Past...	1	0.2 %
The Bible Wed. p.m. Bible study ...	1	0.2 %
Study of Scripture, Reading Books, Reading P...	1	0.2 %
1. Prayer 2. Spiritual retreats 3. Theological J...	1	0.2 %
InJoy tapes; Leadership Journal; Christianity T...	1	0.2 %
1. willow creek summit, 2. D. Min 3. various ...	1	0.2 %
Various seminar; I subscribe to over 20 newsl...	1	0.2 %
National Youth Workers Convention, Mentori...	1	0.2 %
I am a counseling graduate in the mental health...	1	0.2 %
1. Current position 2. Good News Magazine...	1	0.2 %
Local church, friends, nation-wide conferences...	1	0.2 %
Church conferences, personal study, sabbatica...	1	0.2 %
Books, Great Seminars, Friendship with other ...	1	0.2 %
Beeson school for advanced church leadership...	1	0.2 %
Mentoring, Seminars, Pastoral Meetings	1	0.2 %
Books, Wesleyan/Holiness Women's Clergy ...	1	0.2 %
Peer network, conferences, websites, books & ...	1	0.2 %
Conferences, books, workshops, journal articl...	1	0.2 %
Conferences, Books, Professional meetings	1	0.2 %
Books, Accountability Small Group, Seminars,...	1	0.2 %
1. books, e-mail, websites, videos/DVDs, CDs	1	0.2 %
1. Personal devotions 2. Air Force PME 3. C...	1	0.2 %
AOI, Minister's conf. cluster meetings within di...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute of Advanced Leadership, Will...	1	0.2 %
Church Conferences (Saddleback, Ginghamsb...	1	0.2 %
1. The Holy Spirit 2. The Word of God. 3. ...	1	0.2 %
personal study of written materials, reading the...	1	0.2 %
1. publications/periodicals 2. seminars 3. Confe...	1	0.2 %
Personal Spiritual Life; Beeson; Maxwell; Den...	1	0.2 %
(1)ATS Ministry Conference, personal study...	1	0.2 %
American Camping Association, Journals, Boo...	1	0.2 %
Books, CPE programs (continued education), ...	1	0.2 %
The Billy Graham Training Centre at Asheville,...	1	0.2 %
Reading; DMin work; Conferences	1	0.2 %
1. Personal Prayer and Bible Study 2. Accoun...	1	0.2 %
conferences, books, peers, a church coach, int...	1	0.2 %
1. Conferences 2. Internet 3. Professional Pub...	1	0.2 %
Ken Callahan, Pete Steinke,	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Denomination, Regional seminars, Focus on th...	1	0.2 %
Personal readings,church involvement, work in...	1	0.2 %
Denominational continuing ed events, Ministers...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Network, books, other profession...	1	0.2 %
1. Continued friendship with Dr. Mulholland, 2...	1	0.2 %
1. magazines 2. books 3. district sponsore...	1	0.2 %
Annual Conference and District training, book...	1	0.2 %
Bible, other books and periodicals, church, fri...	1	0.2 %
AOI, Willowcreek leadership summit, includin...	1	0.2 %
my personal relationship with God my wife b...	1	0.2 %
1. Myke Merrill from Parma, NY. 2. Reading ...	1	0.2 %
Further ed. through D.Min program. Professi...	1	0.2 %
1. Leadership Magazine 2. Renewal Ministrie...	1	0.2 %
Scripture reading, devotional materials, church...	1	0.2 %
Books, Periodicals, Seminars, Conference Sp...	1	0.2 %
1. Alone time with God, prayer, and Bible Stu...	1	0.2 %
Dealing with change in the local church, Dealin...	2	0.3 %
International Worship Institute, Change Confer...	1	0.2 %
I want to be guided through the Holy Spirit, Cr...	1	0.2 %
Pastoral care and counseling, personal devotio...	1	0.2 %
Master's Level counseling courses at a local c...	1	0.2 %
1) Books 2) periodicals 3)Internet 4)Asbury ...	2	0.3 %
Asbury Ministers' Conference, The Walk to E...	1	0.2 %
The Time is Now (Dee Duke and Brian Smith)...	1	0.2 %
1.Conference and Denominational events 2. I...	1	0.2 %
Prayer and Bible study, personal study in vario...	1	0.2 %
1. My wife. 2. Fellow staff at my church. 3. M...	1	0.2 %
Bible, prayer, fellowship, books, ministry.	1	0.2 %
Teaching Church workshops. A national fello...	1	0.2 %
Doctoral program at another seminary. Maga...	1	0.2 %
AOI - Probationary Elders covenant group - ...	1	0.2 %
Internet, USAF Chaplain Service, my library	1	0.2 %
local church; denomination; professional organi...	1	0.2 %
1. conference sponsored events, 2. reading, m...	1	0.2 %
My church, Beth Moore, Small group, NACC...	1	0.2 %
Presently, I teach in a public school. I am not i...	1	0.2 %
I am retired and am no longer seeking to devel...	1	0.2 %
The Bible, Books, Accountability Group, Past...	1	0.2 %
1. Interdenominational Prayer/Renewal Move...	1	0.2 %
1. Roman Catholic Church 2. Spiritual director...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Bible, Devotional Books, Theological Books, ...	1	0.2 %
1. Bible Study 2. Prayer 3. Fellowship group...	1	0.2 %
Association of Professional Chaplains. Bereav...	1	0.2 %
Leadership Journal, Discussion with other past...	1	0.2 %
books, magazines, internet, continuing ed., life ...	1	0.2 %
Daily devotional/prayer time, engaging in "dialo...	1	0.2 %
1. Center for Pastoral Effectiveness 2. Readin...	1	0.2 %
Attending Conferences, Interent, Journals & Arti...	1	0.2 %
Leadership, Theological, pastoral, preaching d...	1	0.2 %
Denominational and Other Conferences/Semin...	2	0.3 %
1. Asbury Min Conference; 2. Florida UM Co...	1	0.2 %
Prayer, Asbury Seminary Celebrate Jesus Part...	1	0.2 %
Conference Minister's school, Alban Institute, ...	1	0.2 %
Renovare; PhD at Oxford Brookes in Practica...	1	0.2 %
Continuing education seminars and pastors' ret...	1	0.2 %
My job; conferences; continuing ed opportuniti...	1	0.2 %
1. reading 2. attending seminars 3. sharing with...	1	0.2 %
Asbury, Disciple Bible Study, Alpha, Periodic...	1	0.2 %
In not knowing where to say this, I chosen the ...	1	0.2 %
1. Michigan Area School for Pastoral Ministr...	1	0.2 %
1. My parish church. 2. Books. 3. Personal ...	1	0.2 %
Online courses, reading,	1	0.2 %
Local school districts, and colleges, and Churc...	1	0.2 %
Professional Journals, CSLewis Foundation C...	2	0.3 %
Conference Continuing education opportunities	1	0.2 %
Group Children's Ministry workshops and res...	1	0.2 %
CMA, EFMA, books on leadership, Mission l...	1	0.2 %
Magazines, internet, books, talking w/ others	1	0.2 %
1. Willow Creek Conference 2. National ...	1	0.2 %
Presnt Ph.D. Program at Drew University	1	0.2 %
internet, books, networking, laypeople, emergi...	1	0.2 %
1) The "Fellowship" of United Methodists in ...	1	0.2 %
1. Prayer 2. Bible Reading 3.Group discussio...	1	0.2 %
denominational continuing education, small gro...	1	0.2 %
Beeson Institute for Advanced Church Leader...	1	0.2 %
Bible study, Continuing Education Seminars, R...	1	0.2 %
1. Bible & study resources 2. Books about Life i...	1	0.2 %
My own mission agencies.	1	0.2 %
Theological publications (reviewed in a small g...	1	0.2 %
personal reading, accoutability and prayer gro...	1	0.2 %

24. Identify your top five resources for personal and professional development.	Number	Percent
Association of Professional Chaplains, My acc...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, Conferences, Continuing Education ...	1	0.2 %
Reading, Attend seminar annually in Jefferson ...	1	0.2 %
Local Conferences and seminars	1	0.2 %
Scriptures , , Upper Room Disciplines, Family ...	1	0.2 %
Seminars, Conferences.	1	0.2 %
Personal time with God, Ministry ventures, Bo...	1	0.2 %
Intentional Growth Center (Lake Junaluska); ...	1	0.2 %
1. Seminars close to where I live. 2. Personal ...	1	0.2 %
Reading in the field, teaching courses to colleg...	1	0.2 %
Epworth Institute, Ministry Growth Groups, P...	1	0.2 %
daily devotions, popular books, resources sup...	1	0.2 %
1)Denomination 2) Personal reading 3) Bibili...	1	0.2 %
Bible Commentaries Books	1	0.2 %
Leadership Journal, Christianity Today, Willo...	1	0.2 %
Annual Conference Events, parachurch semina...	1	0.2 %
ATS Ministry Conference Leadership magazi...	1	0.2 %
books, seminars, district pastors & wives midye...	1	0.2 %
1. Ministers'Conference, 2. Connected in Chri...	1	0.2 %
Total	425	72.4 %

Missing Cases = 167

APPENDIX I

Alumni Survey Tabulated Data

Life as a Student			
<u>"My experience as a student was a positive one."</u>			
SA/A	Neutral	D/SD	Total
<u>Asbury Seminary</u>			
572	15	5	592
<u>Undergraduate</u>			
475	84	33	592
Alumni Perception of Asbury's Relationship with Them			
<u>"Asbury Cares About My Spiritual Life"</u>			
SA/A	Neutral	D/SD	Total
383	177	32	592
<u>"Asbury's Primary Desire is that I Give Financially"</u>			
SA/A	Neutral	D/SD	Total
278	185	129	592
<u>"What is Asbury Seminary's Primary Interest in Alumni Relations?"</u>			
Biblical/Theological Development		16	2.70%
Continuing Education		147	24.80%
Spiritual Life of Alumni		64	10.80%
Fundraising		340	57.40%
New Student Recruitment		23	3.90%
No Response		2	0.33%
TOTAL		592	
<u>"How Does Asbury Seminary Keep You Connected with Them?"</u>			
Annual Phone Call Solicitation		464	78.30%
Annual Reunions		96	16.20%
Magazines		452	76.30%
Mailed Financial Solicitations		457	77.20%
Other		180	30.40%
How Alumni Perceive the Seminary			
<u>How Alumni Opinion of Asbury Seminary Has Changed Since Graduation</u>			
Gr. Incr./ Increased	Neutral	Decr./ Gr. Decreased	Total
322	220	50	592

<u>Asbury Seminary as Worthy of Their Time</u>			
<u>Seminary Mailings</u>			
Read and respond		153	
Read and discard		408	
Don't read; only discard		31	
TOTAL		592	
<u>Frequency of Fellowship with Other Alumni (past 3 yrs.)</u>			
10 or More Times		70	11.80%
5-10 Times		74	12.50%
1-5 Times		277	46.70%
Never		171	28.90%
TOTAL		592	
<u>Importance of Asbury Seminary to Life and Ministry</u>			
Very Impt./ Important	Neutral	Not Very/ Not at All	Total
356	143	93	592
<u>Openness to Attending Asbury Seminary Spiritual Retreat in their Area</u>			
Very Willing/ Willing	Neutral	Probably Not/Not	Total
441	88	63	592
<u>How Often Alumni Return to Campus</u>			
More than twice a year			44
Once a year			95
Every other year			87
Once or twice since Graduation			270
Never			96
TOTAL			592
<u>Interest in Using the Internet as a Means to Stay in Touch with Other Alumni</u>			
Yes	473	79.90%	
No	119	20.10%	
TOTAL	592		
<u>Interest in Serving Asbury Seminary with Their Time</u>			
Yes	313	52.80%	
No	265	44.70%	
NR	14	2.40%	
TOTAL	592		

<u>Asbury Seminary as Worthy of Their Finances</u>			
<u>Number of Financial Gifts to Asbury Seminary in Past 3 Years</u>			
			Percent
1-5 Gifts		340	57.40%
5-10 Gifts		12	2.00%
More than 10		18	3.00%
No Gifts		222	37.50%
TOTAL		592	
<u>"I consider Asbury Seminary Worthy of my financial and local church support"</u>			
SA/A	Neutral	D/SD	Total
446	125	21	592
<u>Asbury Seminary and the Local Church</u>			
<u>Alumni Who Include Asbury Seminary in Local Church Budgets</u>			
Yes	16	2.70%	
No	565	95.40%	
NR	11	1.90%	
TOTAL	592		
<u>Alumni Who Have Spoken with Laypersons About Asbury Seminary</u>			
Yes	333	56.20%	
NO	154	26%	
NR	105	17.70%	
TOTAL	592		
<u>Alumni Who Have Encouraged at Least One Person to Attend Asbury Seminary</u>			
Yes	460	77.70%	
NO	132	22.30%	
TOTAL	592		

Asbury Seminary and Personal/Vocational Development			
<u>Importance of Asbury Seminary to Life and Ministry</u>			
Very Impt./Impt.	Neutral	Not Very/Not	Total
361	138	93	592
<u>Likelihood that a Stronger Relationship with Asbury Seminary would help with personal/spiritual development</u>			
A Great Deal/Likely	Neutral	Not Very/Not	Total
396	130	66	592
<u>Likelihood that a Stronger Relationship with Asbury Seminary would help with practical ministry tools</u>			
A Great Deal/Likely	Neutral	Not Very/Not	Total
424	125	43	592
<u>Asbury Seminary Resources Utilized</u>			
AOI		140	
Beeson Institute		68	
Ministry Conference		289	
Other		103	
None		53	
<u>Top Resource for Personal and Professional Development</u>			
Source		Number	Percent
AOI		6	1.00%
Beeson Institute		9	1.50%
Books		64	10.80%
Denominational Resources		33	5.60%
Doctoral Programs		11	1.90%
Internet		14	2.40%
Magazines/Journals		24	4.10%
Ministry Conference		13	2.20%
No Response		127	21.40%
None		11	1.90%
Parachurch Conferences		104	17.60%
Personal Bible Study		141	23.80%
Relationships with Others		35	5.90%
TOTAL		592	
<u>Summary of Developmental Resources</u>			
ATS Related	35		Corporate 205
Non-ATS Related	419		Independent 249
TOTAL	454		454

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