From Place to Place:
A Comparative Study of 5 Models of Workplace Formation at 2 Colleges on 1 Campus

Abstract
Workplace or service learning is an important and growing context for teaching and learning theology. This is not just about providing unstructured off-campus “ministry experience” but placing and supervising students in a service context and inviting thoughtful reflection on what they experience and learn, integrated with their broader studies. As a linked series of case studies, this chapter analyses vocational/professional education in five courses based out of the two colleges housed at one campus in Mulgrave, Melbourne: Supervised Theological Field Education and Urban Neighbours of Hope internship in community development and urban mission, both at Stirling Theological College – University of Divinity; and Tabor College Victoria’s Teacher Education, Christian Counseling and Vocational Practice courses. We suggest possibilities for workplace learning that places learners in stretching workplace contexts as a means of apprenticeship, and consequently raise implications for integrated practical placements and learning-in-context pedagogy.

Keywords: Theological education, work placement, service learning, transformative education, ministerial formation, appreciative inquiry

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Transforming Theological Education
Theological education is in an interesting place as we grapple with changes on at least two fronts. On the one hand, the relationship of faith and society is changing as less people participate in church and yet more people are looking for life-giving
approaches to spirituality, leadership, values, meaning and community. We live in a world that is changing rapidly – moving on from where we have been but not always sure where we are going. Thus we express our context as postmodern, postcolonial, post-Christendom, post-secular, post-hierarchical, post-book, post-industrial, post-moral, post-national, post-almost-everything. A present challenge for theological education is to prepare Christian leaders, who are equipped to exegete their classic texts as well as engage their contemporary context, and communicate the resources of Christian tradition in relevant ways to a changing society.

On the other hand, the world of education is changing. As theological educators we want to cultivate the craft of our teaching. At our best we realise the need to commit to ensure we foster helpful learning for students. New paradigms in student learning that focus on transformative learning fit well in theological education. Foundationally we want to not just promote cognitive development. Our aim is to transform people and their inner lives, and equip them to transform the world around them.¹ This is the terrain of our formational and transformational agenda in theological education.

A recent investigation of where transformative approaches to education are happening at their best in theological education is Les Ball’s Transforming Theology project.² Ball asks where theological education is starting with student experience and where it could be better utilised; where it is fostering transformation; and where it is taking students outside the classroom to workplace contexts that can be significantly transformational in themselves, or especially when combined with guided reflective practice.

Ball points out that most theological education providers say their courses are transformational and start where learners are at and aim for holistic development, but challenges us to evaluate to what extent this is delivered. He affirms programs and pedagogy that are taking account of student experience and fostering transformation. For example, theology students are learning from reflective journaling, collaborative assessment, dialogue with followers of other or no religion, problem-based instruction, case studies, educational field trips, and appreciative inquiry (AI). Students often say their most formative learning – and when their experience is best taken into account – are in spiritual formation and Supervised Theological Field Education classes. But as Ball maintains, there is scope for more systemic development of learner-centred and transformational pedagogy and curriculum.

This paper focuses on the transformative ingredient of field placements and workplace formation. Theological colleges have a long history of including ministry experience in their programs, but it has not always or consistently been integrated or given real value. Our experience as students in different colleges included ad-hoc loosely monitored ministry experience programs where we were left to ourselves, and excellently developed and properly supervised programs of field education. Both of

² Les Ball, Transforming Theology: Student Experience and Transformative Learning in Undergraduate Theological Education (Preston, VIC: Mosaic, 2012); Cronshaw, “Transforming Theology (review).”
us have been involved in designing field placement programs and supervising students and student cohorts. And we are curious observers of the innovative curriculum for workplace-based training that is being developed in other higher education fields in order to develop professional practice and identity. Students are spending significant time experiencing and reflecting on their envisioned vocational place, whether training to be teachers, healthcare providers, chaplains or Christian ministers. As such, we are eager to investigate how we can best utilise places outside the classroom for mission and transformational outcomes that theological students require.

**Research scope and methodology**

In the form of questions, what we are investigating is what is the proper place for off campus training in a curriculum; i.e. learning in the context of action and work? How can we best utilise off-campus places for learning and teaching? How do theological educators ensure that spaces of learning beyond the classroom become places of learning? What is the student experience when their place of learning is a workplace, church ministry or service context? And where is the best place to send theological students? Church work is one obvious context. But theology and the mission of God are broader than just what happens in the ecclesial world. If theological education wants to equip people for being relevant to the world, then we need more placements in schools, social service agencies, advocacy groups, innovative mission contexts and so-called ‘secular’ contexts. This leaves us asking how can we best place learners in stretching placements and help them grow and apprentice as leaders? How can we best help learners engage with people in church and society, and reflect and learn from those experiences? What can we learn about the placement of theology students in church and community service contexts for learning and teaching? How can these placements form faculty and college foci and programs?

The methodology employed in this project was Appreciative Inquiry. We were looking for where the field education on this campus expressed its highest aspirations, where it was happening at its best and what other teachers could most learn from it. The qualitative data-collecting methods of the project were to collect and analyse curriculum and promotional documents about the courses; conduct expert interviews of the five course designers or coordinators; conduct interviews of students from each of the programs; and to describe, analyse and compare the five programs.

For the sake of focus and comparative value, and to reflect on a context we teach in, this paper deals solely with field education and workplace formation for students from two colleges on one campus, but in five programs:

1. Supervised Theological Field Education at Stirling Theological College (Stirling);
2. Urban Neighbours of Hope course in community development and urban mission at Stirling;
3. Teacher training at Tabor College Victoria (Tabor Vic);

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3 A point previously made in Cronshaw, “Transforming Theology (review)”, inspired by Ball, *Transforming Theology*. 
4. Counselling training at Tabor Vic; and
5. Master of Arts in Vocational Practice at Tabor Vic through Open Seminary.

Case studies

1. Stirling Supervised Theological Field Education

Supervised Theological Field Education (STFE) at Stirling is a program that includes a placement in a church, aged care facility or other ministry context, with a supervisor, evaluation and feedback committee from the ministry placement, and an action-reflection peer group on campus. It has been employed in its current format for over a decade at Stirling.

STFE has two primary frameworks that are employed. The aim of the program is to guide the development of students to be theologically reflective. The program is also built upon a praxis loop (practice, theory, practice) whereby students, often over a two-year cycle learn to locate their operating theological framework through placement-based case studies.

The program has beneficial effects for the college and students. The college is able to keep in touch with patterns and currents in church and community service placements: what is taking time, where demands are, what are the maps, what individual creative abilities are emerging, what things are taken for granted, and how culture is changing. Students value the place of practice being integrated within their academic world. They report they are often tested in placements – practically, personally, professionally and in terms of skill. The 360-degree reflection process incorporating supervisors, feedback groups and peers is often helpful to give students feedback on their vocational strengths and needed learning goals. For these reasons also, it is hard for students to avoid emerging challenges and issues possibly confronting their longer-term vocational direction.

The theological education sector recognises that one of the key and growing contexts for transformative theological education is workplace or service learning. This is not just about providing unstructured “ministry experience” but placing and supervising students in a service context and inviting thoughtful reflection on what they experience and learn, integrated with their broader studies.4

Student feedback on Stirling’s STFE program emphasised the importance of it to their formation for ministry and chaplaincy.5 Comments revolved around the surprisingly high degree of trust and disclosure generated among peers. There were several comments about tough issues being named and that there was little room for escaping presenting issues. The role of the qualified supervisors was overwhelmingly positive and appreciated and some students have maintained informal, ongoing mentoring-type relationships after the conclusion of the STFE program.

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4 Penny Galbraith, Stirling STFE Coordinator, Interview with Andrew Menzies, 10 September 2013; Alan Niven, Stirling Vice-Principal and Lecturer in Pastoral Theology, Interview with Andrew Menzies, 10 September 2013.
5 Stirling STFE Student Interviews with Andrew Menzies, 29 January 2014.
2. Urban Neighbours of Hope

The Urban Neighbours of Hope (UNOH) course in community development and urban mission was based with Tabor Victoria (through a UNOH employed teacher) and from 2013 is now offered through Stirling. UNOH is a missional order of the Churches of Christ that works in some of the poorest suburbs of Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland and the slums of Bangkok. The course is designed to equip UNOH workers or apprentices by helping them reflect on the issues they face in urban community development. The academic units of the course are designed between UNOH and Stirling, and students usually complete the units as part of a University of Divinity Bachelor of Theology or Master of Divinity (sometimes using the various exit points possible within these degrees).

Students enrolled with this program are UNOH interns first however a requirement of the placement is formal participation in the prescribed theological study. Units typically involve class time in UNOH contexts in Bangkok, Dandenong and their own placement through STFE, which is designed to create space for the same model used for Stirling ministry students to introduce interns to theological reflection. The ultimate purpose is to equip UNOH workers for thoughtful mission participation among the urban poor. The arrangement is essentially a form of industry partnership.

As a result of the placement and class experience students are expected to develop a theological rationale for what they do and why: consider the practical skills available and needed, and understand the complexity of the task of urban mission among the poor. The course helps develop the self-understanding of UNOH workers.

Peter Blair, UNOH Director of Training, emphasised the importance and benefits of students knowing why they were engaged in mission among the poor rather than “wishy-washy” romantic understandings. They also appreciated that they were engaging in something bigger than just the mission of UNOH by participating in a theological college and its wider scholarship as well as learning from other students, not just from UNOH. Value was also expressed for the importance of UNOH workers gaining some sort of academic qualification for their futures.6

There was a wide range of feedback from UNOH interns and workers interviewed.7 The variance possibly reflects the changing nature of the course delivery as noted above but also the wide variety of people participating in the program. Some UNOH workers were specifically in UNOH for “hands-on” work among the poor and felt that academic discipline was irrelevant or hard. Others expressed gratefulness for the wider horizons presented by the linking of their ministry with UNOH and formal theological studies.

3. Tabor Victoria Christian Counsellor Training

Christian Counsellor Training at Tabor College Victoria requires students to complete between 80 and 200 hours of supervised counselling in placements in addition to

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6 Peter Blair, UNOH Director of Training, Interview with Andrew Menzies, 20 September 2013.
7 UNOH students, Interviews with Andrew Menzies, 29 January 2014.
prescribed coursework. This is taught through the Bachelor of Arts or Graduate Diploma in Christian Counselling programs, and prepares students according to industry requirements prescribed by the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA).

The aim of the placements is to help students step off from academic coursework and learn to function as a “team-player” in the function of a healthy, professional, therapeutic environment. The placements are where students engage in real experience and learn how to be a “safe” practitioner. A guiding theory of the program is praxis, where counseling theory is tested and reflected upon with supervisors and when students return to classes for further formal content. A significant part of the placements is in helping students gain an understanding of their own natural counseling technique and reflecting on where modifications are required. Students are supported directly in their placement with a supervisor associated with their counseling context and by Tabor in a fortnightly, moderated, online group of other students using Google Hang-Out.

The frameworks employed are about integrating a balance between theory at college and practice in the placement through four foci: increasing self-awareness, understanding therapeutic practices, interacting with the professional body standards and practices, and working in a team. These are qualities that a counselor needs as a professional, and are best learned in the context of practice rather than merely in a classroom.

Getting 80-200 hours of placement and supervision is a challenge for many students, and sometimes expensive if they need to pay for the professional supervision. But students often get experience in multiple contexts and have to engage with live issues with real clients. One student spread her practicum over a primary school, working with at-risk youth, a city church counselling centre and an outer-suburban church-based centre. She faced ethical issues, had to debrief with her supervisor and move beyond theory to authentic engagement with her clients. She said their practicum was especially helpful for developing her own counselling style and working out how to adapt it to client needs.

4. Tabor Vic Teacher Training

Tabor Vic trains teachers, but this is highly regulated through the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) including strict professional experience requirements (teacher rounds). Tabor also has its own clear commitment to seeing professional experience as integral in their teacher training courses. The ultimate aim is not merely to produce good teachers, but to form teachers who will help children have positive learning experiences. The quality of teaching and learning of the children is what is in mind. The work placements of student teachers in schools are naturally central in this. All academic work leads into preparation for placements, or comes out of it, or develops frameworks for the next placement.

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8 Arthur Wouters, Tabor Vic Head of School – School of Arts and Social Sciences, Senior Lecturer in Counselling and Psychology, Interview with Andrew Menzies, 17 September 2013.

9 Counseling student, Interview with Darren Cronshaw, 14 January 2014.
Professional experience is sandwiched through the course. For example, Graduate Diploma Education (primary) students in term 1 are equipped with lesson plan and classroom management skills. The aim of the first five-week placement in term 2 is to help the students move from novices to develop confidence. They are not “thrown in the deep end” but carefully scaffolded through increasing responsibility. Starting with observation orientates student teachers to classroom management and gives them ideas on good teaching that they can adopt or adapt, and then try themselves when they are responsible for a small group and then the whole class. The students return to their academic work in term 3 with newfound motivation to learn and a wealth of school experience to draw on. The aim of the second five-week placement in a new school context in term 4 is to get the student teacher “ready to teach”. At the end of their course Grad Dip students will have done 55 days of professional experience – from observation through managing small groups to managing a whole fortnight of class teaching. Tabor are phasing out the Grad Dip and phasing in a Bachelor of Education (primary or secondary), and this will follow a similar sandwiched structure with 100 days over 4 years. The student teacher writes teaching plans, a daily observation and a daily reflection and uploads these for the Practicum Coordinator to view. Experienced teachers supervise students in their placement and provide regular feedback. Tabor source placements and pay schools, but a challenge is finding sufficient teachers who are willing and able to provide quality supervision.

Tabor Vic students do their practicum, and after graduation, teach in a wide range of schools: government, private, and “Christian”. Although as a Christian Higher Education provider, graduates are especially sought after by Christian schools. To help prepare student teachers to teach with their Christian values, whatever school they end up in, Tabor is adding a new subject in 2014, “Contexts and Philosophies for the Christian Educator”. Mason and her team are developing this subject to intelligently explore the intertwining and at times conflicting philosophies and expectations that frame contemporary schooling, and help them reflect on how their own faith impacts and is influenced by different Australian education systems.

Teacher education has a whole different level of expected workplace formation, compared to theology or ministry students. 100 per cent of education students do practical placements, as do 100 per cent of counseling students who want to be qualified with Australian Counselling Association (ACA). But there are lessons we can learn from teacher education for workplace formation for other courses. Most importantly, there is intentional integration of professional experience throughout education courses. Workplace formation is not stuck at the end of courses or independent of classroom learning, but integrated and an intentional part of the total program. Moreover, teacher’s professional experience is intentionally staged. It is not a “sink or swim” scenario, but neither are student teachers given only nominal responsibilities. Their challenge and responsibility is developed from “novice” to “ready to teach” over their program. The aim of the program is not that teachers will

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10 DipEd student, Interview with Darren Cronshaw, 13 January 2014.
12 Tabor Victoria – Communications, “Two years, and nearly 60 teachers,” Tabor Talk (December 2013).
be trained but one step further that students will learn well. By correlation, the aim of ministry training programs are not church leaders will be trained, but that the mission of the church will be done well – that disciples are formed.

5. Tabor Vic Vocational Practice

A program that focuses more specifically on the mission and practices of the church is the Master of Arts in Vocational Practice (MAVP), a six-semester course for experienced practitioners. There are currently cohort-based streams for church leaders and Aid & Development workers. Tabor Vic is aiming to prepare people for various vocations, not just in churches but also in other spheres of influence. Inspired by Parker Palmer, they want students to discern where their passions engage with world needs. The course is taught in South Africa, where Wynand de Kock started it in 2000 as Open Seminary as part of a church plant, and now also in America at Palmer Seminary since 2012 and in Malaysia focused on aid and development since 2013. This paper, however, focuses on the experience of Church leaders doing the course in Australia, where it has been taught since 2006.

The practitioner/students meet as peer groups for their learning and assessment tasks. Students say this is what really helps make the course function at its best, although admittedly a (rarely) poor cohort can make for a poor semester too. Their first assignment each semester is a collaborative social inquiry paper that a cohort group works on together to broadly investigate the topic of interest. Collaborative assessment is a good tool for mutual learning and teamwork; skills that are in themselves integrally important for ministry. Then the whole class meets for a mid-semester intensive, usually offsite in a relevant learning context. For example, church leaders have their class in a local church that exemplifies the topic of study – whether worship, spiritual formation, community building, missional service, evangelism or doing theology in vocational context. The MAVP is less focused on a teacher-learner paradigm, and is more about gathering experienced learners together with apprentice learners. Guest Lecturers are not specialist gurus but rather experienced learners assisting others in their growth in ministry. The unit is rounded off with end-of-semester individual reflection papers including local action plans. Each of the six subjects seeks to bring the workplace experience of the student into conversation with other practitioners, the academic lecturer, and a practitioner-teacher and their local context. The MAVP semester is already an extended 20 weeks to allow extra time for

13 Mason, interview.
17 de Kock, Interview, 2011; Cronshaw, “Reenvisioning Theological Education, Vocation and the Kingdom of God,” 11.
collaboration and reflection, and to help busy ministers finish their assignments well. De Kock would like even more time to allow students to implement and evaluate their interventions, although others say the semester units are already too long and intense, especially because students are in ministry contexts already. The course does not appoint students to a field placement as such, but requires students to be in ministry (using a broad definition) and offers them space for reflection.\(^{18}\)

The aim of the course is to help practitioners to cultivate a theological approach to study and ministry that engages questions from their ministry context. Assignments typically identify a live pastoral concern, reflect on it drawing on sacred texts (biblical studies, systematic and historical theology), identify gaps in knowledge and work towards a generative theological response, and indicate where that might lead in purposeful action. The ideal of the theological response and action is that it be “generative” rather than “stagnative”. This is Erik Erikson’s social psychological maturity level of generating an outcome that leads to further reflection and action steps and being a stakeholder in the next generation.\(^{19}\) De Kock comments: “Seeing yourself as a stakeholder in the coming generations opens possibilities for the future. Our theology should not only answer our questions but also create opportunities for the next generation to build on what we develop here. Theology never finds a final answer, just the best answer for our time”.\(^{20}\)

Les Ball, among others, critiques a compartmentalized and foundationalist theological curriculum.\(^{21}\) Traditional programs tend to start with introductory units in various sub-disciplines and add advanced knowledge in later years. However, students – especially those who are in the midst of ministry – come with a wealth of experience to draw on for reflection and classroom interaction. Ball suggests an alternative three-stage curriculum of establishing a hermeneutical and skills base in first semester, the application and development of the level 1 base over the next four semesters, finishing with personal integration and synthesis in final-semester reflective practice or capstone units. So instead of introductory units and selecting majors, the ideal progression is thus from equipping the learner with skills development, guiding them through theological discovery, and leading to personal integration.

The MAVP offers another model of approaching curriculum differently – starting with the student’s experience and centring on an aspect of the practice of ministry, rather than a “Schleiermacherian” traditional discipline division of theological studies. As students grapple with issues of church practice, they draw on different disciplines – biblical, historical and systematic theology – but the course is not designed around those categories. The course is structured around functions and practices of church with six subjects: worship, formation, community, service, evangelism, and the doing of theology in vocational contexts. De Kock starts with student questions that emerge from life and ministry practice rather than a syllabus of biblical sources and traditional answers. The pedagogy assumes we learn best by doing theology inductively rather than deductively; starting with live questions and

\(^{18}\) de Kock, Interview, 2013.
\(^{19}\) Erik H Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (St Albans: Triad, 1977 [1950]).
\(^{20}\) de Kock, Interview 2013.
\(^{21}\) Ball, *Transforming Theology*; Cronshaw, “Transforming Theology (review).”
drawing on tradition, rather than studying tradition and looking for application.\textsuperscript{22} For example, one practitioner investigated online churches and how they can foster community through online connections, another examined how denominations can train leaders for the churches many pastors will retire from in the coming decade, while another evaluated why a majority of young adults said they feel at ease communicating the gospel but only a minority do it.\textsuperscript{23} Another minister wrote a personal philosophy paper on intergenerational ministry and how to integrate his older and younger people, while another (in South Africa) evaluated Alpha and then designed their own contextually adapted program that proved more fruitful. Brian Macallan said it is very much a practical theology methodology that starts with questions from the local context rather than working top-down.\textsuperscript{24} Starting with student experience is critical pedagogically to enhance learning but also critical for ministry to enhance effective practice.

Feedback from churches, as reported by de Kock, is that they appreciate their leaders not being removed from their ministry context and that the assignments and teaching offer tangible benefits to congregational life. Moreover, people say they appreciate the MAVP and its high relevance and resonance with healthy congregational life and mission; there is less perceived or actual disconnect between what is studied and the churches’ reality, and yet it helps them to progress beyond where they are.\textsuperscript{25}

**Re-envisioning mission placements**

An earlier voice for workplace formation came from Robert Banks in *Reenvisioning Theological Education*.\textsuperscript{26} He appealed for a distinct mission focus in training, by which he meant that education and formation, at its best, always placed students where they could do what they studied and was at least in part field-based. He grappled with integrating action and reflection, theory and practice, and inspired by Donald Schón did not want merely action following reflection, or theory that is then applied in practice, but “reflection-in-action”, or formation that occurred while learners were in the midst of mission.\textsuperscript{27} Banks argued for further development of internships of mission placements, and faculty taking their classes into the midst of ministry beyond the walls of the classroom. But the best workplace formation is not just about working in a place outside of a college, but to do so with supportive and structured challenges, supervision and learning clusters.

The best of workplace formation at Tabor and Stirling happens when “ministers”-in-training have a peer group to guide them in their theological reflections arising from their ministry experience, or UNOH workers are stretched by the experience and complexities and realities of ministry among the poor, or classroom lessons prepare

\textsuperscript{22} de Kock, Interview, 2013.
\textsuperscript{23} MAVP student, Interview with Darren Cronshaw, 13 December 2013.
\textsuperscript{24} Brian Macallan, Tabor Victoria MAVP Coordinator and Senior Lecturer in Theology, Interview with Darren Cronshaw, 22 January 2014.
\textsuperscript{25} de Kock, Interview 2013.
student-teachers for their placement and help them debrief afterwards, or counselors-in-training have an actual practice context to develop their own counseling style, or experienced practitioners develop action plans for the questions and challenges they are facing. Not everything is directly transferable, but we hope that programs will learn lessons from the principles and practices of other different programs.

This chapter has discussed the values and frameworks of workplace learning in five courses, and where they function at their best, but there is more that could be explored. Moreover, there are at least three other programs based on the Mulgrave campus. Stirling’s Master of Theological Studies offers practising ministers one subject per semester on Bible, mission and leadership subjects related to gospel, church and culture themes, but in order to help ministers reflect on the mission challenge of their contexts and always with practice-focused assessment. Tabor Vic has Theological Field Education subjects. Moreover, Tabor Vic’s MAVP (Aid and Development) is distinct from the Church Practice-focused MAVP. Each of these three programs would also be worthy of investigation. Another potential area of further research is to more deeply explore the experience of students in the programs, perhaps like Colin Hunter, a master-teacher of Supervised Theological Field Education, did at Whitley College over a decade ago with a cohort of students.28

What sort of Christian leaders do our churches and society need?

Where and how do we best place students to learn from their practice of their ministry or other vocation? This is our question as researchers and as teachers. We have learned from the five programs at Mulgrave, but we would like to learn more from other sources and continue to develop our practice of facilitating workplace formation. As alluded to at the beginning of the paper, we place this paper in the context of not just changing educational models but a changing society that calls for new approaches to leadership. There are also changing expectations and requirements from our churches. The Church of Christ and Baptist Church movements that we, as pastors and teachers, belong to are rethinking what kinds of leaders we need for the 21st century. We are asking, “what is the nature and capacities of leadership that will best help empower our churches for their common mission?”

Paul Cameron, the CEO of Churches of Christ Vic-Tas, of whom Stirling is a Partner Agency, is calling the whole movement into a process of renewal. An important element of this is reviewing what kinds of leaders are needed for “communities of hope and compassion”, whether local churches, mission communities, agencies or orders. Cameron suggests the new type of leader needed for the 21st century will be able to:

1. Guide a transformational faith experience and introduce people to Jesus
2. Promote and lead spiritual formation for community members and help people know God deeper
3. Identify, develop, and support other leaders, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4)

4. Build, inspire, and lead a ‘team’ of both staff and volunteers
5. Develop and communicate a compelling vision
6. Motivate and develop a Community of Hope and Compassion as a ‘mission’ outpost or a community of missionaries
7. Interpret and lead change with appropriate directions, process and timing
8. Manage conflict, and allow it to energize creative moments
9. Maintain personal, professional, and spiritual balance
10. Be a lifelong learner, using every experience to learn to work smarter, not faster
11. Provide leadership for high-quality, relevant worship experiences that speak to the heart not just the head
12. Navigate successfully the world of technology.

Cameron asks are people in ministry evidencing these characteristics, and are we developing leaders who can lead 21st Century churches and other mission communities with these sorts of characteristics? This is the pressing missional agenda of theological education, and our changing educational, missional and church contexts all point us towards workplace formation as the best place to learn these characteristics.

Conclusion

Higher Education providers are developing some innovative curriculum for work place based training. Some universities are prioritizing community placements across their programs. Certain courses are being redesigned to develop professional practice and identity. Students are spending significant time experiencing and reflecting on their envisioned vocational place, whether training to be teachers, healthcare providers, chaplains or Christian ministers. Ball suggests theological education could learn from human service professions especially teaching, social work and nursing. These professions almost universally expect integrated practical placements. Some universities have completely redesigned their courses around professional practice, for example devoting the whole third year to clinical practice and reflective learning, and refocusing course aims around professional identity and skills for a changing work context as well as traditional content.

The theological education sector recognises that one of the key and growing contexts for transformative theological education is workplace or service learning. This is not just about providing unstructured “ministry experience” but placing and supervising students in a service context and inviting thoughtful reflection on what they experience and learn, integrated with their broader studies. The sector needs ongoing analysis in how best to place learners in stretching contexts to apprentice them as leaders. This paper has sought to identify insights and lessons in workplace learning from five different programs on one campus and propose implications for integrated practical placements and learning-in-context pedagogy for other places.

30 Cronshaw, “Transforming Theology (review).”
Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview schedule (Appreciative-Inquiry)

1. Explain your program’s history and how it operates now? How are students admitted? What percentage of your students go through this model?
2. What is the aim and purpose of the program?
3. What theoretical/theological/pedagogical frameworks inspired and shape it?
4. What is the value of workplace formation for the college, and for the student?
5. Give us an example of where you have seen formation at its best in workplace placements?
6. Where do you see the strengths of the program? Where could you see the program improving and developing?
7. Anything else you’d like to add?

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