“Theological Education at Crowded Crossroads”
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ABSTRACT
Framed by theological education at the crowded and contested crossroads of academic and ecclesial worldviews, this paper considers the role of standards of evaluation and learning outcomes for pedagogy. Three criteria of an adequate theological education are presented: 1) contextualization, 2) engagement of diversity, in the particular senses of religious pluralism and complex interactions of multiple differences; and 3) integration of theory and practice, the putting together of various cognitive, relational, spiritual and professional understandings and skills. With reference to becoming an intercultural, justice-seeking church, I cite some practices for (re)freshing teaching and learning.

Introduction

Like the topic and times we live in with its debates about what constitutes theological education I get caught up in the tangles of professional/scholarly identities and myriad expectations of theological education. Schools related to mainstream churches in Canada are complicated by strife over recruitment, finances, organizational structures, management, and a hodge podge of theological stances. At the crossroads of academic, religious, and wider publics where different loyalties and agendas vie for allegiance, the ethos can be intense and overburdened.

The bright thread of this paper will be pedagogy (practices of teaching and learning) as a case in point about crowded crossroads. The classroom has become the overburdened space of theological education. In the densely packed arena of theological schools, in the harried lives of commuters, part-timers, and irregular attenders, in the
midst of studies which are interrupted for all sorts of reasons, the classroom is the one space students and faculty routinely meet. I teach in the divinity school of Victoria University in the University of Toronto, a member of the ecumenical Toronto School of Theology (TST).

Emmanuel College is related to the United Church of Canada. As liberal Protestant denominations in Canada decline, so too do resources for sustaining theological education and confidence in vibrant Christian identities and theologically educated leaders. Theological education, however, needs to be vitally relevant in a world caught up in the tensions of fragmentation, homogenization, social polarization and ethnic and religious strife. Why? Because, ready or not, faith communities are already immersed and constituted in relation to these realities and related to profound searches and struggles for a more just, participatory and sustainable world. Theological education is shaped at crowded crossroads but it is rooted in ecclesial traditions of how life is understood and faith is practiced.

Ecclesiology and Theological Education

The task of theological education is to motivate, equip, and enable the people of God to develop their gifts and give their lives in meaningful service. Because theological schools are derivative environments, creatures of the church and entwined in particular intellectual cultures, theological education is significantly a topic of ecclesiology. Traditionally the institution of theological education performed a plurality of roles: as a place to develop vocations, scholarship and leaders of the next generation of theologians and pastors; as a collection point for theological materials; and as an institution that provides resources of leadership and “expertise” to ecclesial bodies.
Theological education is also embedded in specific cultures and ecclesial histories and is also accountable to canons of academic disciplines and accrediting bodies such as the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). It exists at the often chaotic crossroads of diverse student bodies and affiliations, research agendas, churches and academies with their sometimes unhappy mixture of evaluative standards, and sometimes with deepening attention to relations with wider theological networks and programmes in local (e.g., on poverty and homelessness) and global contexts (e.g., with non-accredited schools in the global south). Therefore, theological education is broader than handing on scholarly, biblical and church tradition.

Whether theological teaching is or is not a spiritual practice, it is definitely not a spectator sport. As Shawn Copeland asserts:

> Our spirituality is our capacity to relate to God, to other human beings and to the natural world. Through these relationships, we give meaning to our experience and attune our hearts and minds to the deepest dimensions of reality. Thus spirituality is integral to ways in which we live our lives. It is about the kinds of persons we are and the kinds of persons we hope to become. . . .

The formal hopes for graduates with a theological degree are often rendered as required “learning outcomes.” This discourse intends to hold teaching and learning accountable to the institution’s stated mandate and curriculum that are in turn expected to meet the ATS standards. The overall goal is to foster a kind of “knowing in action,” a process that requires a variety of learning experiences to develop cognitive capacities and knowledge, skills, and personal/professional formation.

In this paper, I will discuss the importance of three evaluative standards for theological
education and thus for its pedagogy and learning outcomes: incorporating contextualization, engaging complex diversity, and integrating theory and practice to put together the various cognitive and relational skills necessary for personal/professional formation. I will then present a case study of a denominational commitment to become an intercultural church and investigate some implications for teaching and learning practices. To conclude, I will muse on teaching as a renewable resource that is (re)freshing and sustainable.

**Contextualization, diversity and integration as standards of theological education**

**Contextualization**

For several decades, theological education has assumed that Canadian and global contexts ought to be taken seriously. “Context” at Emmanuel College, for example, generally refers to the social, cultural and structural influences upon relationships and tasks. Teaching contextualization will equip students to analyze these factors, exploring how discursive power shapes perspectives and diverse experience in specific contexts. Crucially, if theological education is not to be “a type of theological inoculation against the hard realities of life,” as Mercy Amba Oduyoye puts it, five dimensions of context require attention: cultures, religions, injustice, marginalization and pluralism. In the broadest terms, theological education should be evaluated by how deeply and fruitfully contextualization as the space of theological work is incorporated into curricula and classrooms, worship and finances.

Contextualization refers to the way all knowledge is socially embedded and
constructed. Hence factors of personal and social identities have been and continue to be significant for interpreting, shaping, and participating in practices of faith and theological work. Therefore I presume that good theological education questions abstract theologies and dominant dualistic epistemologies which pejorize lived-world experience and contextual endeavors in teaching and learning. Lack of contextuality allows questions of justice to be avoided and reinstalls relations of entitlement and privilege.

Instead, theological education that is contextual will engage diversity and values integration and will empower and mentor students to make a difference and to imagine a world where healing and reconciliation happen, no one is excluded and all creation flourishes. Graduates, therefore, should be aware of and able to elaborate a given context with reference to key dynamics of specific cultures, religions, injustices, and pastoral issues.

Diversity

For over a decade ATS has been bringing the reality of diversity as a key feature of contextualization into the centre of theological education. Diversity, understood as interacting multiple differences, is a dynamic standard for theological education and its constitutive tasks of learning, teaching, research and formation.

1Understanding how doctrine makes sense in view of diverse Christian traditions in this context is one challenge. In her foreword to the recent Canadian collection Intersecting Voices: Critical Theologies in a Land of Diversity, Mary Jo Leddy states that “one of the new criteria for measuring the authenticity of any theology is whether it has the capacity to intersect with other perspectives and realities.” This criterion applies equally to theological education in light of the standards of contextualization and now diversity.
How can alterity and diversity be the condition, not an add-on, for varieties of knowledge, including theological? How can diversity be engaged rather than contained?

Notes William M. Chase,

Diversity is not casual liberal tolerance of anything and everything not yourself. It is not polite accommodation. Instead, diversity is, in action, the sometimes painful awareness that other people, other races, other voices, other habits of mind, have as much integrity of being, as much claim on the world as you do... And I urge you, amid all the differences present to the eye and mind, to reach out to create the bond that...will protect us all. We are meant to be here together.18

Engaging diversity is the capacity to know and to negotiate multiple, interacting differences. But to what purpose? As a key to seeking justice, right relations.

In terms of practices, engaging diversity requires skills in

listening and self-awareness, of being open to see how others see you, and with a spirit of

openness, learning about and from interactions with different people and traditions. Such knowledge, and the cultivation of habits of critical thinking, discernment, and compassionate action contribute

not only to vocational and spiritual formation but also underlie the third standard of evaluation, integration.

Integration

The hardest work in theological education is integration. The ATS Standard 3.1.1.3 states:

Learning should foster, in addition to acquisition of knowledge, the capacity to understand and assess one's tradition and identity, and to integrate materials from various theological disciplines and modes of instructional engagement in ways that enhance ministry and cultivate emotional and spiritual maturity.19

Integration is about connecting the acquisition of knowledge with relational skill
development and professional formation. The task is to integrate or reintegrate symbolic analysis (abstract, analytic work) with practice, with everyday life. Among theological faculty, understandings of what it means to “pull it all together” vary widely. As a standard of evaluation for graduating students, integration is defined as “aptitude for theological reflection and wisdom pertaining to responsible life in faith” (ATS Standard 4.1.1). The standard requires careful attention to “the coherence and mutual enhancement” of all of a curriculum’s intellectual, spiritual and vocational components (ATS Standards 4.1.2). To fulfill the multidimensional standards of incorporating contextualization, engaging diversity, and fostering integration, theological education needs to be extricated from fixations on doctrinal formulae that are abstracted from lived-world experience and from privatized spiritualities that dichotomize God and politics, theology and ethics, personal and social, private and public, creation and culture.

In the complex constellation of skills and knowledge required of all graduates from ATS accredited schools, students often learn to integrate through pedagogies of empowerment and mentoring. Integration is tricky. It cannot be accomplished in the abstract; to meet the learning outcomes and to be here together requires practice. In the midst of the concrete situations of need and wonder, suffering and joy, we learn together how to think about divine-human relations.

Theological Education via Pedagogies of Practices

A practice is an ongoing, shared activity of a community of people, in this case of teaching and learning. It partly defines and partly makes theological schools who they are. “Christian practices are things Christian people do together over time in response to and in light of God’s active presence for the life of the world. … Practices address
fundamental human needs and conditions through concrete human acts.” Practices of teaching and learning refer to how learning happens, and how the knowledge, skills, understandings and attitudes are taught and learned that enable students to meet the required outcomes. There are various paradigms and courses that use the rubrics of practices. “Practical theology” or “pastoral theology” suggests a focus on immediate ministerial concerns or on the concrete concerns of a particular community. While these suggest theological education that is useful, down to earth, straightforward, and immediately relevant, there is a broader critical sense in which I understand practices – as theologies of praxis. Nancy Pineda-Madrid describes praxis as “theological discourse that foregrounds the issues, concerns, and questions presented by the world; and the crucial role played by solid theory in the endeavor to bring the world into closer alignment with God’s intentions.” Thus, practices are activities which not only attempt to understand the world but also contribute to its re-making in keeping with the Reign of God, as this is interpreted through critically appropriated Christian traditions. In pedagogical terms, practices signal teaching and learning that complicate assumptions, ask hard questions that expect critical thinking and interpretation, and find companions for this life-long journey.

In terms of theological education, all three criteria are animated by a moral horizon of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love as we seek to be in right relation with God, self, neighbour and creation. I turn now to consider some implications for pedagogical practices that are relevant to the recent commitment of my denomination to becoming an intercultural, justice-seeking church.

**Intercultural church: Implications for Teaching and Learning in Theological**
An ecclesiology of intercultural community acutely focuses the standards of contextuality, diversity and integration. The rubrics refer to mutually reciprocal relationships within and among cultures. A denominational emphasis on intercultural ministries hopes to deepen the relationships among the peoples that make up this country and church, including Aboriginal peoples, Francophone peoples, ethnic minority peoples, and ethnic majority peoples. It is no accident that the question of identity is everywhere keenly probed when the world of crises, including the church, is caught in the tensions of contextualization, diversity and globalization. Questions of identity are always relational. I have a problem, though, with thinking about identity as essential or static or given because it restricts thinking about my identity to those who are like me. Rather, I tune to postmodern notions of subject positions so my “identity” is relational, at once uniquely personal and socially situated. “Complex identities” more accurately connotes being related to those who are different as well as similar. Understanding identity as socially shaped and dynamic also legitimizes resisting imposed or stigmatizing identities.

Theological education is now expected to equip leaders to bring people together from diverse backgrounds and social positions. If the church is to embrace the vision of nurturing relational spaces within and among cultures, the commitment to preparing those for accountable ministry means developing practices that animate and advocate ways of becoming a racially just church. Can we develop pedagogical practices appropriate to this ecclesial commitment, especially in mainstream white schools like mine?

Interculturality at crowded theological crossroads is a way to learn about who we
are as similar and as different, and who we want to be as unique and connected persons who live in multiple overlapping and diverse contexts. I will focus on two aptitudes and skills required to facilitate relational spaces between and among cultures. One is the ability to know and locate oneself in relation to concrete others. This requires social analysis and theological humility. Another is the ability to engage diversity through dialogue and disagreement. Three theological educators provide some practices for preparing leaders who can animate, teach, and advocate ways of becoming a racially just church.

The teaching practices that Elizabeth Bounds uses for contextual theological education translate well for learning skills in social analysis for intercultural learning. Consider the following assignments for students to practice in order to engage their field education sites in hospitals, prisons, or community organizations: In-class writings on theological topics in relationship to a discussion of an issue arising at the site; an assignment explaining a theological concept from the perspective of a person at the site; a sermon outline or bible study plan designed for the site, with a brief explanation of the purpose or focus in relation to the site context; regular “critical incidents” where students describe a site encounter with a paragraph on the social and theological concerns at stake (and which could be explored in class not only through discussion but through role play).

Another pedagogical practice that develops skills in becoming more aware of one’s social situatedness and moral agency is informed, principled and sustained dialogue. Roger Hutchinson has long taught and practiced a method of ethical clarification in which stories are shared, feelings expressed, facts are examined, values
identified, and worldviews unearthed. Taken-for-granted assumptions are challenged. Thus, Hutchinson’s approach is particularly useful when coping with pluralism and complexity because it prods all who have sincere perplexities, issues or contending visions to enter into conversation with others of different views. Hutchinson’s method of ethical clarification is grounded in the presupposition that everyone has a right to speak and be heard, no matter how deeply people may differ in their positions. The method consists of four stages or practices: storytelling and definition of the problem by all parties involved in the issue; factual verification; ethical clarification, considering moral standards or norms, obligations, consequences, and values; and finally post-ethical clarification, where issues of faith and worldviews are explored by examining the symbols, metaphors, images, sacred texts and traditions grounding them. A final stage should involve deciding on strategies and actions that move towards the change desired.

This “contrasting” method can be interculturally specified. We risk our assumptions and our practices by “contrasting” them with the assumptions and methods of others. Diversity, framed in the intercultural church project, refers to “a condition in which elements, including persons, differing from one another, are manifested in the same region/space/organization/institution.” Wenh-In Ng is a Christian educator with long expertise in the dynamics of teaching anti-racist practices for ministry and skills for intercultural acumen. She asks, “How might academic theological formation empower students from different cultural and ecclesial contexts to be strongly capable ministers and leaders in diverse cultural, racial, class and gender perspectives and experience? Does or will our teaching shatter the bondage of religious chauvinism, racism, sexism, class elitism and heterosexism in theological teaching and learning?”
Wenh-In Ng uses several exercises to teach racialized and gendered social identities and location to prepare and empower intercultural leaders: Students begin with an inventory of privilege and disentitlement. They begin journaling as they will throughout the course. To connect personal, ethnic and racial history with histories of migration, exclusion, and displacement in Canada, students situate their family genealogy in relation to an historical timeline of Canadian diversity, beginning with Aboriginal encounter with white settlers. They read the articles about “Struggling Against Racism” and write critical annotations of them. Again, a journal entry expresses their reactions. In-class students may have separate discussion groups of minority/racialized (who focus on the barriers of internalized racism and cross-racial hostility) and of whites (who focus on how white people carry the invisible knapsack of white privilege and advantage and also experience the cost of racism in different ways). Another in-class practice of using a gendered, postcolonial method develops practices of listening and intercultural dialogue by doing critical and creative group study of biblical texts and ecclesial documents in terms of how they empower anti-racist intercultural ministries and church communities. The praxis approach is evident in this final assignment for a class in Education for Anti-Racist Ministry that develops a strategy and action plan and prepares for it by research and reflection.

Theological education is not neutral. If students have the capacity for facilitating relational spaces of intercultural hospitality, respect and learning “simultaneously yet differently” they will have to know and be able to develop plural renditions of the whys and ways of faith and practices. As Rebecca Chopp elaborates, good theological education is “saving work” where capacities are strengthened to practice justice—right
relations—in teaching and learning, through dialogue, story-telling and liberating the imagination. Theology as saving activity requires methods based on answers to the following questions:

Who is speaking and from what location?

Whose purpose does this discourse serve?

What vision is produced through the practical possibilities?

In what way is this vision one of great social, personal, and planetary flourishing? 37

To take seriously assessments of the power dynamics that are refracted through practices of dialogue, justice will be normative for intercultural, anti-racist teaching and learning. Marvin Ellison’s norm of justice/love works well for assessing adequate intercultural practice: Is it with “mutual respect and care and a fair sharing of power”? Is it with “an intimate co-mingling of our longing for personal well-being in our bodies and right-relatedness with others throughout the social order”? 38

In the classroom, empowerment will be the heart of a “practices” pedagogy. One needs energy to “practice” how to be in right relation—with God, self, others and creation. Empowerment is the desire and skill for “analyzing ideas about the causes of powerlessness, recognizing systemic oppressive forces, and acting both individually and collectively to change the conditions of our lives. … Empowerment is a process one undertakes for oneself; it is not something done ‘to’ or ‘for’ someone.” 39 This interactive approach is also a learning outcome whereby practicing critical analysis and responsible
use of power encourages students to claim their theological education and find their theological voice in right relation to others. In this sense of doing justice, work requires attention and compassion. Empowerment for thinking contextually, engaging diversity and integrating intellectual, emotional and professional knowledge, is often demonstrated by a willingness to experiment, to value and use imagination, and to be flexible and appropriately critical with reference to one’s own and different theological and moral stances standpoints.

If teaching is to be (re)freshing and sustainable, classroom preparation and teaching will evolve with each class by giving attention to a quadrant of practices: be attentive to who you are and who you teach, to what you teach and how you teach.\(^\text{40}\) Good theological education is empowering: it encourages and supports students to take risks they deem appropriate, to go beyond fears of difference, beyond the tolerance of injustice, beyond the dread of displeasing people, to understand that without learning to give and to receive, to be hospitable and to be hosted, they will cease to learn and so will the church. Let us imagine, then, ecclesiologies that embody “community which exists to announce and give social form to what God hopes and strives for, for all creation, as this has been glimpsed in Jesus of Nazareth and experienced in the Spirit.”\(^\text{41}\)

Theological education is not only intellectual and theological work, but also about moral, vocational and spiritual formation. In her classroom, Mary Rose O’Reilly practices what she calls contemplative pedagogy. “Since much academic communication is thought about thought, how can we get ourselves, our disciplines, and our students to retain a hidden freshness? . . . Allow some space and silence in the classroom and watch how everything changes—everything is up for grabs, your whole life.”\(^\text{42}\) Pedagogies that
practice opening space and silence as well as room for dialogue and disagreement
discover that grace empowers one spiritual presence to intermingle with another, be it of
student and student, student and teacher, student and text, all of us immersed and learning
about who and whose we are and hope to become.

**Conclusion**

Theological education at crowded crossroads constantly negotiates the evaluative standards that adjudicate theological institutions and influence classrooms. Converging in these deliberations are the agenda of an ecumenical, intercultural church, the academy, and the needs of a pluralistic society and all who suffer in a globalized world. Accordingly, I have discussed the importance of three standards, contextualization, diversity and integration with reference to a sampling of teaching practices to meet intended learning outcomes framed by preparing leaders for becoming an intercultural church. I imagine the responsible character of theological education as ecumenical and diverse, multivocal and polycentric, practical and moral, inherently evaluative, improvisational and interdisciplinary practice. I long for wisdom to be a fruit of responsible practice and that “new songs of faith” will be taught and learned.

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**Notes**

1 I thank Jane Barter Moulaison for the invitation to participate on the 2007 Canadian Theological Society panel she convened on the future of and issues in...
theological education which initiated this essay.

2 Debbie Lunny defines pedagogy as “a dynamic interaction between people, ideas, things, events, and/or situations that can produce new knowledge, skills, consciousness, and/or insights in any of the people involved.” See “The Pedagogy of Transnational Feminist Activism” in Canadian Woman Studies, Les Cahiers de la Femme 25, nos. 3-4 (2006): 85.


4 I have been teaching full-time since 1988, first theology in Saskatoon at St. Andrew’s College and since 1998 at Emmanuel College in theological ethics. TST administers the joint advanced degrees like the doctoral programme for member colleges. These formal relationships indicate some of the networks of professional and institutional accountabilities that set the standards of curriculum and evaluation for accreditation. For example, Emmanuel College has recently finished a curriculum review that is framed by learning outcomes generated by the UCC, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), TST and the University of Toronto through the Ontario Government Graduate Studies standards. Our teaching faculty of twelve is ecumenical, Caucasian, mostly middle-aged, almost gender balanced, and shaped by commitments to an engaged model of theological education.


The overarching goals of *The Curriculum Review Report of Emmanuel College*, adopted in Spring 2007 value the following seven areas: 1) intellectual engagement with traditions of a faith community, the United Church, for example; 2) skills, knowledge and sound practices of church leadership; 3) personal and professional ethics; 4) habits of inquiry and learning; 5) reflective practice; 6) inclusive interpretation and behaviour; 7) personal and vocational formation. For each of the seven values, Learning Outcomes are given under four topics: knowledge, critical interpretation, integration, and practices.

Other conditions that pertain are study of and engagement with diversity in current Canadian and Toronto contexts; contextual experiences throughout the curriculum; and communal learning experiences as an integrated whole. Cited from “Bread For the Journey: Reviewing and Revising Emmanuel College’s Basic Degree Curriculum,” submitted by the Curriculum Review Task Group, February 14, 2007, to the Emmanuel College Council, p. 37.


The oversight of theological education in the United Church of Canada is through its General Council’s Education for Church Leadership Committee. It names “Cultural
and Contextual Sensitivities and Analysis” as one of four competency areas for candidates of ordained ministries. These learning outcomes (in slightly amended wording to suit Emmanuel’s culture) are: 1) Culture and Context; 2) Spiritual and Vocational Formation; 3) Christian Faith and Heritage; and 4) Practices of Church Leadership. In addition, the Association of Theological Schools, Emmanuel’s accrediting body, has for many years stressed that contextual study and analysis is one of the foundational standards for theological education in the United States and Canada. ATS Accrediting Standard, 3.1.2.

http://www.ats.edu/accrediting/overview.asp

12 See ATS Accrediting Standards 3.1.2. The character of context continues to be debated and pluralized in recognition of the differing contexts of aboriginal peoples and Quebec as well as the regionalism that exists coast to coast to coast.

13 Three common understandings for the term “context” in North America are: first, an informal or formal arrangement of relationships with a shared purpose such as a marriage, a clinic, a school, or congregation; second, the setting where something happens—studying the context in this understanding means studying the various features of the location where a congregation’s life and mission is lived out; third, which has special emphasis in the recent curriculum review is that context may refer to the social, cultural and structural influences upon the relationships and tasks of those in a context (The Curriculum Review Report of Emmanuel College). However, while faculty accept that faith (belief and behaviour) lives and develops in a context, there is no substantial agreement on how this matters and should influence theological education and moral life in communities.
Mercy Amba Oduyoye, “Contextualization as a Dynamic in Theological Education,” *Theological Education* (Supplement 1993): 114, 118. See also the early conversation in *Theological Education* vol. XXIII (Autumn 1986) devoted to “Global Challenges and Perspectives in Theological Education.”


Definitions, of course, vary. Diversity is “a condition in which elements, including persons, differing from one another are manifested in the same region-space/organization/institution; usually used with a positive connotation” in *That All May Be One: A Resource for Education toward Racial Justice*, edited by Wenh-In Ng (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 2004), p. 80. I find diversity, referring to interacting multiple differences especially across lived constructions of bodies, culture/ethnicity/race, gender, geographical region, sexuality, is a properly contested term. See Marilyn J. Legge, “Beyond Borders: Diversity as Moral and Spiritual


20 See “Educating Clergy: A Distinctive Challenge,” in *Educating Clergy*, edited by Charles Foster et al., p. 25.

21 See “Teaching Toward Integration: Cultivating the Pastoral, Priestly, or Rabbinic Imagination,” in *Educating Clergy*, edited by Charles Foster et al., pp. 5, 330.


The Ethnic Ministries Council recommended to the 39th General Council 2006 that The United Church of Canada declare itself an intercultural church, and that intercultural dimensions of ministries be a denominational priority in its commitment to racial justice. Racial justice requires mutually respectful diversity and full, equitable participation of all Aboriginal, Francophone, ethnic minority, and ethnic majority constituencies in the total life, mission, and practices of the whole Church. Furthermore, the Ethnic Ministries Council recommended that the name of the unit be changed to suit its expanding work, and that the new name of the unit be “Intercultural and Diverse Communities in Ministry.”

My synopsis of the report is based on “A Transformative Vision for The United Church of Canada” at http://unitedchurch.ca/files/organization/gc39/workbook1_commissions.pdf

See, for example, Pamela K. Brubaker, Globalization at What Price? Economic Change and Daily Life (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2001).

One helpful pedagogical resource is Jamie Swift et al., *Getting Started on Social Analysis in Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003).

See, for example, Nancy J. Ramsay, “Teaching Effectively in Racially and Culturally Diverse Classrooms,” in *Teaching Theology and Religion* 8, no.1 (January 2005): 18-23.


The term “contrasting intercultural thought” is from Orlando Espin in “Toward the Construction of an Intercultural Theology of Tradition,” *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology* 9, no. 3 (February 2002): 22-59.


In this spirit, see also Gregory Baum’s essay in this volume. He advocates five principles to guide theological thinking and teaching: 1) responsible public discourse 2) framed by an engaged, emancipatory commitment that 3) while necessarily interdisciplinary 4) can be integrated into ecclesial traditions and 5) be open to the influence of other perspectives.

See, for example, the 2006 United Church of Canada Statement of Faith, “A Song of Faith” at [http://www.united-church.ca/beliefs/statements/songfaith](http://www.united-church.ca/beliefs/statements/songfaith)