

**Learning outcomes of the
Master of Divinity Program or equivalent
for preparation for ordered public ministry
in the Anglican Church of Canada**

**A Background Paper for the National Gathering on Theological Education
January 5-7, 2010**

Introduction to Matrix on Outcomes for Education for Ministry

Over recent years, churches and those involved in training for ministry have shared a growing concern for the outcomes of the ministry preparation process. In Anglican polity order is conferred in ordination. A priest is a priest, wherever they serve and however they are trained. However, Anglican polity has usually distinguished between order and office. Office refers to the particular ministry undertaken by an individual as authorized by the church and / or licensed by the bishop. When we speak of office we are speaking of particular contexts of ministry that call for particular sets of competencies (skills, insight, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours) in order to undertake ministry effectively.

Over recent years we have become aware that the church is facing significant challenges that are placing increasing demands on all who minister, including and especially those engaged in the ordained ministry of our church. In Canada our contemporary context includes amongst other factors that have been identified:

- A rapidly shifting culture
- Increasing pluralism
- A growing segment of the population for whom religious faith is allied with suspicion of institutional structures
- Declining church membership
- Shifting patterns of participation for those who still attend

The shifts that are taking place, and the challenges faced by churches require us to re-examine the ways in which we discern and train candidates for ministry. What competencies are needed in leaders who must help churches address the challenges we have identified? This affects the whole process of discernment and ministry education, including the need for lifelong learning.

In assessing theological education this has led to an increased emphasis on the outcomes of the educational process rather than simply the content. It is no longer enough to say that a candidate has completed a course in New Testament, it is important ask if the candidate can use the knowledge they have gained in teaching, preaching, counselling individuals, in giving guidance to congregations seeking to shape a future for themselves in uncertain times, etc. The question is not, what was taught, but what was learned. Intellectual knowledge is important for those who will teach (as priests are called to do), but detached from the capacity to integrate that knowledge into the wider collection of competencies required for congregational leadership knowledge alone would represent an inadequate outcome of the learning process for ordered ministry.

The move to outcomes based assessment of learning can be seen in the recent work of a number of bodies, and we have sought to learn from each of them. In the context of the Anglican Communion the document provided here draws on the work of TEAC (Theological Education for the Anglican Communion) who are using outcomes based measures to strengthen theological education across the Anglican Communion. For some years the ATS (The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada), which accredits most theological schools in Canada has been moving to an outcome based approach to assessing the effectiveness of programs of education for ministry. We have drawn on the recommendations of our Indigenous Partners, which also suggest particular outcomes by which readiness for ministry is assessed. We have also sought to learn from the work of our partners in the United Church of Canada. However, what holds together these new developments and the diverse sources is a return to our own roots.

The competencies we have outlined are linked to the understandings of ministry made explicit in examination of candidates as found in our ordinals (BCP and BAS). If they are organized here to serve the goal of assessing education processes, they are nonetheless driven by the theological commitments of those foundational documents.

In bringing these materials together the committee is reflecting the growing consensus that the challenges facing our church are such that we need to be very clear in our understanding of what the practice of ministry involves for those who are ordained. Given this understanding we then must be very intentional in the way in which we identify the competencies necessary to effective ministry. This is true not only in the complexities of the present but all the more so in the emerging future church whose exact shape and leadership needs none of us can fully know. This last point is crucial. It means that our educational programs need to prepare candidates not only to undertake well-known tasks and walk well-known paths, but also to be able to draw on the rich resources of our tradition in ways that enable it to speak to ever-new realities in ways that are both creative and faithful. This last task will require even greater awareness of the tradition and even more insightful analysis of the cultural context of ministry than we have required in the past.

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There are four general standards for theological education according to the Association of Theological Schools (ATS): Religious Heritage, Cultural Context, Personal and Spiritual Foundations, and Capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership. The following *Learning Outcomes* arise primarily from the guidelines set forth in the “Grids” of the working party “Theological Education in the Anglican Communion” (TEAC), the ATS standards as well as documents on Aboriginal Ministries in the Anglican Church of Canada.

By the end of the degree program, graduates will:

Religious Heritage

The Church is the family of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. (BAS)

WILL you then give your faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same, according to the commandments of God.... And seeing that you cannot by any other means compass the doing of so weighty a work, pertaining to the salvation of man, but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy Scriptures, and with a life agreeable to the same; consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning... (Book of Common Prayer)

Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the holy scriptures, and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ? (Book of Alternative Services)

- Understand the development of the Christian tradition, and how that has been received and interpreted in Anglican thought.
- Understand of the diversity of that tradition, historically and globally.
- Articulate core Christian doctrines, including their defences and their critiques, and the particularities of how they have been received within Anglicanism.
- Understand the significance of relationship between the Christian faith to its Jewish origins.
- Understand the significance of philosophy in the development and defence of the Christian faith.
- Become familiar with the writings of several major theologians, including key shapers of the Anglican Tradition.
- Be aware of the challenges and promises facing Christian theology in a pluralistic and secular world.
- Consider the place of the Christian faith in a globalized and pluralistic world.
- Become aware of the teachings and the practices of other faiths that are encountered in the Canadian context and beyond.

- Be equipped to teach the Christian tradition.
- Become familiar with the history of missions in Canada and how that has shaped the heritage and character of the Anglican Church of Canada.
- Become familiar with the history of missions of the Anglican Church globally.
- Have an understanding of the Anglican Communion worldwide, its history, diversity, successes, failings and contemporary challenges.
- Become familiar with the history of the English Reformation.
- Be able to articulate core Anglican doctrines.
- Display an understanding of Anglican spirituality and the importance of liturgy in Anglican self understanding as well as in doctrinal and ethical awareness.
- Have read the biblical canon.
- Be able to exegete select texts from the Bible using appropriate historical critical and literary tools
- Understand the different genres that comprise the Bible
- Gain an awareness of how the biblical text is interpreted through the lenses of gender and culture.
- Demonstrate a growing critical engagement with the Scriptures and the traditions of Christian thought, characterised both by faithful obedience and openness to new insights.
- Develop a practice of study and reflection, and a working knowledge of how to interpret and use Scripture in a range of different contexts.
- Interpret the Bible and make it accessible to the community.
- Understand the importance of the community's reading of the Bible in the light of Christian tradition and God-given reason
- Engage with a reasonably comprehensive range of biblical traditions within the canon of Scripture, and become familiar with how these themes relate to the basic credal doctrine and the teaching of major figures in church history.

A.3.1.2. Cultural Context

All baptized people are called to make Christ known as saviour and Lord and to share in the renewing of his world (Book of Alternative Services).

- Identify the local contexts in which theology is formed and how that context contributes to the shape of the theology and church practice.
- Demonstrate awareness of the pains and stresses in their own context, and of the spiritual and ethical issues raised there.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the cultural contexts that shaped Anglicanism and how this has contributed to the strengths and challenges for Anglicanism in their own context
- Engage the tools of the social sciences to reflect upon issues of race, class and gender and their impact upon theology and church practices.
- Become familiar with environmental issues and be able to articulate a theological response to these.
- Be sensitive to the global character of the Church and the relationship between the North American church and the wider global communion.
- Be aware of and attentive to the contributions of and challenges faced by First Nations people in our context, particularly in aftermath of residential schools.

A.3.1.3. Personal and Spiritual Formation

And that you will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost; that, by daily reading and weighing of the

Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry; and that ye may so endeavour yourselves from time to time to sanctify the lives of you and yours, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that ye may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow (Book of Common Prayer)

- Move toward a fuller understanding of one's call to ministry, service or study and its relation to academic preparation.
- Offer leadership in community worship.
- Learn to discern the place of God in one's own life and in those of others.
- Bear witness to one's own experience of God's love and grace for the encouragement of others.
- Show evidence of lives increasingly formed and sustained by trust in and dependence on the gifts and grace of God
- Demonstrate commitment to loving service in the Church rooted in a sustained and growing love of God in Christ.
- Understand the importance of offering their lives in service to the Friend of sinners.
- Become rooted and growing in a disciplined life of prayer shaped in Anglican common prayer and life within the demands of initial training and the expectations of public ministry.
- reflect with insight on personal strengths and weaknesses, their gifts and their vulnerability
- Demonstrate evidence of personal and spiritual growth and self-awareness.
- Exercise appropriate care of self, accountability to others and be aware of how to access support when needed.
- Exercise insight in handling conflict and its resolution
- Show a genuine commitment to the Christian faith as lived through the Anglican Communion
- Demonstrate a healthy, loyal and not-uncritical relationship to their diocese and national church / province

A.3.1.4. Capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership

As a priest it will be your task to proclaim by word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to fashion your life in accordance with its precepts. You are to love and serve the people among whom you work, caring alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. You are to preach, to declare God's forgiveness to penitent sinners, to pronounce God's blessing, to preside at the administration of holy baptism and at the celebration of the mysteries of Christ's body and blood and to perform the other ministrations entrusted to you. (Book of Alternative Services)

Wherefore consider with yourselves the end of your ministry towards the children of God, towards the spouse and body of Christ; and see that you never cease your labour, your care and diligence, until you have done all that lieth in you, according to your bounden duty... (Book of Common Prayer)

- Articulate the nature of the priest's vocation and identity.
- Give an account of one's vocation to ministry and mission and one's readiness to receive and exercise ordained ministry as a deacon/ priest within the Church of God.
- Demonstrate familiarity with responsibilities appropriate to the newly ordained working under supervision
- Be able to reflect upon different types of ministry and understand the particular ministries to which they are called.

- Demonstrate the capacity for effective collaborative leadership and an ability to work in teams in a range of settings
- Demonstrate an ability to improve team-working and leadership skill
- Preside effectively and gracefully over worship, especially eucharist.
- Engage in pastoral leadership in a supervised practical setting, monitored by the diocesan bishop or his/her representative.
- Develop skills to recognise gifts in others and to equip them to serve.
- Engage in pastoral leadership in a supervised clinical setting.
- Preach effectively in public contexts with supervised assessment.
- Understand and participate in the drama of worship and gain a sense of the priest's or deacon's role therein.
- Become aware of the public character of theology.
- Assess strategies for active justice-seeking mission.
- Become aware of and exposed to a variety of ministry settings; e.g. Aboriginal ministry, urban ministry, Northern ministry and rural ministry.
- Show a secure grasp of exegetical and communication skills, in theory and in practice, in the contexts of worship, group-study and the media
- Demonstrate gifts and capacity to offer pastoral care
- show understanding of how children and adults learn in order to nurture others in faith development
- Demonstrate an awareness of the church's role and opportunities in public life, and in collaborative and well-informed working with ecumenical partners, other faith communities and secular agencies.
- Understand basic administration including stewardship of resources, vision, prioritisation, collaborative working, finance and accountability.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the theory and practice of mission and evangelism, changing expressions of church life, and their relation to the local context.

Skills for teaching and learning

Will you endeavour so to minister the word of God and the sacraments of the new covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be made known and received? (Book of Alternative Services)

WILL you then give your faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same, according to the commandments of God; so that you may teach the people committed to your care and charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same? (Book of Common Prayer)

- Demonstrate the capacity to write clearly in a way that leads the reader (hearer) through the points made in a way that brings clarity and credibility to the teaching purpose of a particular piece of work.
- Show the capacity to use appropriate research methods in the preparation of a piece of writing intended to support the teaching ministry.
- Show an awareness of the resources that are available to support the research necessary to support the teaching ministry
- Assess the merit, usefulness, and applicability of various types of theological publications and resources.
- Develop communication skills, both written and oral, that are clear, engaging and effective.¹