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From the Editor

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From the Editor | ROBERT D. HAAK

AS I WRITE, the campus is beginning to stir from its summer dormancy. Faculty members have been trickling back from around the country and around the world. Football players are back in the dorms. Student workers are arriving for beginning-of-the-year planning. It's about to begin again.

This is what we are about—the education of young people in each of our places with all that entails. If anyone should be interested in the topic of the church's understanding of Lutheran education, it should be us. As we define our place in the academic world for our selves and our institutions, to one degree or another we look to the resources that our Lutheran heritage provides. We look for the guidance of the church, not to dictate who we are and what we do, but to inform the sorts of conversations that might take place on our campuses. This guidance will be forthcoming in the social statement on Lutheran education which is being prepared for dissemination and vote by the Churchwide Assembly in 2007. In order to facilitate the preparation of this statement, the Task Force on Education has prepared two documents, "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study" and "Our Calling in Education: A First Draft of a Social Statement." These documents are designed to begin and carry forward the conversation about "a Lutheran vision of education and its meaning for our church and society" (Task Force on Education 2004: 3).

The papers in this issue were presented at the Vocation of a Lutheran College conference held at Capital University in the summer of 2005. Each of them is intended to encourage and to be part of these conversations. Marcia Bunge correctly observes that no social statement can say everything about everything. Choices will have to be made about what issues are addressed and what elements of the issues will take priority. She makes specific suggestions of elements she believes must be included in a Lutheran statement. Paul Dovre reminds us of the context in which this statement will be received and points to important parts of the theological tradition that may provide resources for the statement. Samuel Torvend reminds us that this state-

ment will not only speak at those in Minneapolis and Chicago but must be able to speak to a diverse community that wasn't raised within the cultural and theological traditions of ELCA Lutheranism. Cheryl Budlong points us to the ever-growing literature concerned with how young people learn. She asks us to reexamine our 'mental models' of what education itself means.

It is evident to those reading these papers: that, in good Lutheran fashion, the authors are more interested in raising the important questions than in proposing a single, definitive answer. It seems to me this is exactly the right thing for Lutheran educators to be doing—raising proper questions. I am confident that reading the following papers will make the issue of a Lutheran vision of education more complex, and therefore more truthful.

As educators at Lutheran colleges and universities, we are not only called on to hear the comments of our colleagues, but also called upon to bring our own voices into the conversation. As professional educators at Lutheran institutions, we have distinctive voices to add to the conversation, and areas of expertise that are needed by the Task Force and by the church. Several of the authors and Arne Selbyg, the publisher of *Intersections*, remind us that comments for the Task Force in Education must reach them by October 15. This deadline is fast approaching. Each of us is challenged to become familiar with the proposals and formulate our contributions by this deadline. In the onslaught of work that faces us each day in the arrival of real, live students in our offices and committee work on our calendars, each of us is challenged to take the time to consider the issues and make our views known. The full documents under discussion may be accessed at www.elca.org/socialstatements/education. Comments may be emailed to Ronald.Duty@elca.org.

If you have made it this far in the Editorial, you have proven that you are very concerned and involved in the question of the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities. I would invite you to consider submission of materials that speak to the concerns

voiced in the Purpose Statement at the front of this issue. Please submit your work (preferably in electronic MLA format) to me at BobHaak@augustana.edu.

The vast majority of copies of *Intersections* are distributed through an office on your campus (different on each college campus). If you find this forum valuable—and want to ensure that you receive your own copy and not be at the mercy of whomever distributes the newsletter at your institution—please send a note indicating your interest to LauraOMelia@augustana.edu. You will be added to our direct mailing list so that you may receive each issue in a timely manner.

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Works Cited

- Task Force on Education, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. "Our Calling in Education: A Lutheran Study." 2004. <http://www.elca.org/socialstatements/education/involved/study.pdf>
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