

The Blessings of a Liberal-Arts-Based Worker-Training Curriculum in an Age of Specialization

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A friend of mine has a recurring fantasy. She dreams she is on a jumbo jet and the pilot and the co-pilot are suddenly both taken very ill; they can no longer fly the plane. She volunteers her services and, despite the fact that she has never had a single flying lesson, she brings the airplane down in a near flawless landing.

On the ground, the reporters quickly gather around her, asking how she managed to do it. "Well," she says, "I've always believed that you can do anything with a broad, liberal arts education."

(Fergusson)

That story will not make liberal-arts believers of the unconverted; this paper won't, either. Curriculum design is a matter of judgment, not revelation or empirical proof. Nevertheless, we owe it to the church and to our students to explain as plainly as we can what we are about in our synodical prep schools and colleges.

In this paper I've tried to think through the meaning of education for Christians; to consider a rationale for the liberal-arts education of WELS pastors and teachers; and to describe the blessings some pastors and teachers acknowledge in the broad-based training they received. I hope that the paper expresses my gratitude to God and to our synodical fathers for my own training and for the educational heritage of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

To help me write the paper, 45 WELS pastors and 27 teachers answered four questions:

- 1) What do they see as the blessings of their broad-based liberal-arts training?
- 2) Do they wish that they could have taken more vocational courses in college?
- 3) Do they wish that they could have taken more liberal-arts courses?
- 4) Do they have anything else to say to their worker-training faculties?

The 72 workers are all men and women who entered our synod's ministry within the last ten years. (See Appendix A.)

*In the italicized quotations from their letters, P =pastor; T=day-school teacher;
PT pastor teaching in an area Lutheran high school
ST=secondary teacher in an area Lutheran high school*

We live in an age of specialization. Today's university tends to separate each area of knowledge from the rest and to divide each area into ever narrower fields. Wayne Booth tells about a committee appointed annually in the Social Sciences Division of the University of Chicago to decide on the award of a prize for the best dissertation done during that year.

An economist on the committee, after reading the submissions from the other fields, announced that a dissertation from economics that he would now submit was superior to all the others, and

should get the prize. The other committee members insisted that before granting his case they should have a chance to read it and compare it with the others. “No,” he said, “that’s impossible. You could not possibly understand it” “But how can we judge,” they insisted, “if we are not allowed even to see the work?” He remained adamant, and when they refused to award the prize to a dissertation that they were not even allowed to see, he withdrew himself and the dissertation, from the competition....

Booth comments: “Must we not admit, then, in all honesty, that we are indeed a pack of ignoramuses, inhabitants of some ancient unmapped archipelago, each of us an island—let John Donne preach as he will—living at a time before anyone had invented boats or any other form of inter-island communication?” (316)

Such extreme specialization, a fact of life in today’s multiversity, does not yet cloud the mental horizon of most WELS pastors and teachers or of the students in our worker-training colleges. Specialization for our pastors means family ministry, counseling, foreign mission work; and for our teachers, working in a departmentalized school, coaching, church music leadership. But the argument for earlier, narrower and deeper vocational training is appealing. How better prepare for life in an increasingly complex civilization than by choosing one area of knowledge and intensively cultivating a vocational specialty as early as possible in one’s education?

Our congregation has recently completed a study of the possible need for and advisability of calling a third pastor.... From studying the reports and reactions of other multi-pastoral congregations, it becomes clear that it’s not always the best to have too much specialization in the position descriptions of our called workers. There are, it seems, advantages in the area of efficiently carrying out prescribed tasks in prescribed areas of responsibility, but the jury is still out in our circles as to whether we’re better able to serve the flock with more shepherds who share general responsibilities or with more shepherds who shepherd specific areas of the flock (P19).

Most American college students choose a major, often a vocational one. “Of the catalogs of 270 institutions studied by the Carnegie Council [for the Advancement of Teaching] staff in 1976, only three described undergraduate curricula that either did not include disciplinary majors or discouraged students from taking them” (*Missions* 19). The average share of the curriculum devoted to the major in American college education has probably not diminished greatly since then: about 30% to 40%. Furthermore, if many electives are available, “the greatest share of the electives is being used to achieve more depth rather than breadth in undergraduate studies. The effect of this use of electives is to increase the proportion of the students’ curriculum actually used for the major” (*Missions* 193).

At many university commencements, professional school graduates boisterously exhibit a sense of security, solidarity, and professional identity. Not unlike coaches exhorting their team, college deans occasionally join the festivities, proudly introducing their ever-growing numbers of graduates as “this constructive group of engineers,” “these harmonious musician,” a “our caring nurses.” In contrast, liberal arts graduates, decreasing in numbers each year, are typically less united in celebration. They have yet to begin the professional studies their fellow graduates have already completed, and many are anxious about selecting a career. Signs on the tops of their mortarboards read, “I need a job” (Stark and Lowther 7).

Of the 65 four-year colleges and universities in Wisconsin and Minnesota listed in *The College Handbook 1987-88*, only Northwestern College, Watertown WI graduated all its students with degrees in “liberal/general studies.” Pre-theological and theological students at other liberal arts and Bible colleges could choose undergraduate majors in Bible, theological studies, Biblical languages, religious education, religious music, or missionary studies; one Bible college offered a major in deaf culture ministries. Dr. Martin Luther

College, New Ulm MN listed a single undergraduate “major” for all its graduates: “Education: elementary.” All the teachers graduating from the other Minnesota and Wisconsin colleges chose subject area majors during their undergraduate years.

The WELS worker-training colleges turn out generalists. Our teachers do not specialize in subject areas during their four undergraduate years. Only with the addition of the five-year Secondary Teacher Education Program [STEP] has DMLC now begun to offer subject-area majors for secondary teachers. Our future pastors wait for their admission to the seminary to begin the study of theology, except for taking a course in the ecumenical confessions and the Smalcald Articles as college sophomores and three New Testament Greek exegesis courses as upperclassmen. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary students pursue no theological or pastoral specialties. Even while our congregations are making plans for staff ministries, all graduates of Northwestern College and of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary receive the same diplomas.

Should our worker-training system still strive to produce church workers who would agree with Henry Horn that “our generalism is our joy”? (80) Or is it time for our WELS worker-training colleges to turn out more specialized graduates? Should we not at least spend more educational effort in equipping teachers with pedagogical skills, perhaps at the expense of some general education courses? Couldn’t our future pastors begin already in their college years to learn techniques for shepherding a congregation? After all, in a complex civilization “each person concentrates his energies upon doing a few things well rather than many things poorly” (Philip Phenix in *Missions* 186). Why still strive for the “no-man-is-an-island” liberal education ideal?

I. The Meaning of Education for Christians

The first “course of studies” I experienced was the curriculum of our home, designed by my father and mother. “God made me, with all creatures,” but it was through my parents that he gave me body and life, house and home. The curriculum my parents designed for me taught me not only skills for daily living but also values and priorities. At its foundation was the understanding, sometimes expressed and always implicit, that we humans are created to live with our God, now and forever; that sinners become members of his family through faith in Jesus Christ his Son; that faith in the Father and the Son is created and nourished by the Spirit through his means of grace; that earthly life is given us to be offered back to God in thankful service.

Education is a continuum in which the world progressively opens up for the growing human being. At first a child’s world is very narrow, bounded by his mother’s breast, his father’s shoulder, the slats of his crib. But the young learner’s world soon broadens exponentially to include family, home, neighborhood, playmates, teachers and school. Beyond creating and nourishing faith by his Word, God’s own curriculum to educate human beings is the life-experience he provides in the world, especially through other people. He lets us learn as we are influenced by the words and example of others, inside and outside school.

All through school, and for years after school, parents continue to teach their children. They do so whether they want to or not. The father who never says more than “hello” to his son and goes out to the nearest bar every evening is teaching the boy just as emphatically as though he were standing over him with a strap.... It is impossible to have children without teaching them. Beat them, coddle them, ignore them, force-feed them, shun them or worry about them, love them or hate them, you are still teaching them something, all the time.

And teaching is not confined to parents and professional teachers.... We are all pupils and we are all teachers. Think of your own life as an individual. Much of it is routine. Some of it is amusement. The rest is made up of learning and of teaching: whether you are a doctor enlarging his knowledge of certain types of illness or a housewife planning her work more effectively, whether you are a trade-union official learning about economics or a typist learning about life on a minimum wage, whether you are a young husband cheering up his wife, a political speaker influencing an audience, a bus-driver covering a new route, or an author writing a book, you are

learning for yourself and teaching others. Most people do not realize how much even of their private life is taken up with amateurish teaching and haphazard learning; and not many understand that most of us, as public beings, either learn or teach incessantly (Hight 4,5).

I had other experiences in life that have been more of an education to me [than college].... I worked in the “real world” for three years before starting college. Those experiences in trucking, traveling and construction gave me a realistic education and forced me... to learn more in life than my liberal-arts based education (T8).

The best broadening in my education was not a course, but a trip to Europe in the summer before my senior year. I came back a different person. The second best was having a regular job. Another good experience was six weeks spent in the Inner City in VBS projects (P32).

If I help feed cows all morning for a week, or help build a garage, or go out and fight a prairie fire all night, the people know me better, I know them better.... I sometimes get the impression that people outside and inside the church feel the pastor is another breed of human being.... Because of the area and people, not getting involved would be very hurtful to my work.... At first I was reluctant to get out of the office or to take off the tie and put on jeans and flannel shirts and boots... but I truly believe my involvement has been beneficial for all concerned, and also in the community.... [This is part] of what I believe the Apostle Paul meant when he wrote, “I became all things to all men that I might save some” (P21).

Even in school, formal classroom curricula are only a part of the life experience we share with our future church workers, probably not the half of their real *curriculum vitae*. Our students also learn from the extracurriculum, “learning experiences provided informally through recreational, social, and cultural activities”(Missions xiv) sponsored by the schools. Athletic coaches educate their teams, and their student bodies, too. When Martin Luther Prep students look at British upper-class culture through the eyes of a Cockney flower girl or the Northwestern Forum Society pictures in Japanese theatrical style the American navy’s arrival in Japan, our schools are teaching, our students learning.

I learned more music theory by singing in a choir than I did in any theory class.... To me; this is learning the fun way (PT2).

To be able to persuade and lead others down a road requires some leadership skills. The Learning I received was not part of the set curriculum, but a byproduct of it; e.g., playing sports; organizing a bloodmobile drive; organizing the men’s volleyball tournament (STI).

In our residential prep schools, colleges and seminary, students are even more deeply influenced by the “hidden curriculum, which consists of learning that is informally and sometimes inadvertently acquired by students in interaction with fellow students and faculty members and inferred from the rules and traditions of the institution” (Missions xiv). As we encourage or tolerate a certain quality of campus life, as we ourselves simply live our lives on campus and share the lives of our students in their classrooms, gyms and dormitories or in our offices and homes, we are constantly teaching our future church workers, broadening or narrowing, opening or closing their minds, even forming their characters.

When I think of my high school college and seminary training I associate my favorite subjects with professors whose attitudes revealed Christian love, fairness and caring (P14).

I owe X a great debt of thanks. He tolerated me through freshman phy-ed He taught me, 'Y, you have a burr under your saddles.' I did, you know. I got kicked out of more phy-ed classes for fighting than anyone in the history of Northwestern. God used guys like X to teach me that Christians with "burrs under their saddles" better, by God's grace, do something about them or society and church cannot stand to be around them (P6).

I...thank God for the professors who took the time and energy to invite us over, talk with us, encourage us and simply be with us. You can't put that in a curriculum (P32).

Values permeate every part of our educational system. Paul held up before Timothy the first subject in our course of study and the value which, we hope, permeates our teaching: "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel" (2 Timothy 2:8). In the central event of creation's history Jesus Christ, God's Son, after humbling himself to be nailed to a cross in our place, rose from the dead the third day to declare us mortal sinners forgiven, possessors of God's free gift of eternal life.

Such gospel teaching is inseparably connected not with a philosophical outline of "Christianity" but with a historical plan of salvation, beginning and ending in the paradise of God. By showing us our place in God's eternal plan the Holy Scriptures "can open the mind to the salvation which comes through believing in Christ Jesus." Thus the Bible gives us a mental vantage point from which to view everything in nature and history on planet Earth. By the same means the Holy Spirit prepares us and our students for ministry, providing "the comprehensive equipment of the man of God," which "fits him fully for all branches of his work" (2 Timothy 3:15,16--Phillips).

While Scripture trains us in Christian faith, it also teaches us a deep distrust of fallen human nature. "We can never put too much trust in Jesus and we can never put too little trust in ourselves" (Thielicke 129). We and our students are born rebels, soldiers on the wrong side of the spiritual war that will go on till the end of time. And though Jesus has freed us from our voluntary servitude, the old man in us would like to reenlist on Satan's side. God's law testifies that "thro' all man's pow'rs corruption creeps/ and him in dreadful bondage keeps.... God's image lost, the darkened soul/ nor seeks nor finds its heav'nly goal" (TLH 369:2,3). Only through faith in Christ do we live in that fellowship with the Father for which he created our race.

Yet even for fallen man, considered without Christ, two creative blessings of God remain in effect. Before the fall God said to our first parents, "Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Genesis 1:28,29). Through his gift of sexuality God gave man a share in the work of creation. Through the second, equally far-reaching command and blessing God also gave the human race the ability and the will to "subdue" the earth, his inanimate creation, and to "rule over" our fellow non-human creatures in it. Thus in a sense the Creator also shared with man his own government of this world. Man is the crown of creation, not only the highest creature but the earthly "ruler" of God's world.

In order to "subdue," man must understand. It stems to me that understanding from the beginning would have involved learning, intellectual work. But work before the fall would have been a totally joyful experience, the thankful exercise of the natural powers God had given the human tact. Perhaps we can guess from the life of Jesus how learning would have taken place for unfallen humanity. The perfect Man grew in wisdom as he grew in stature: Jesus *learned* (Luke 2:52). We are not minimizing his divinity but rather recognizing his full humanity when we say that the twelve-year-old Jesus went to the temple to learn. Those were no make-believe questions he asked the teachers (Luke 2:46): our young Lord was curious. He wanted to learn about God's Word and his world, as eagerly as Adam would have learned from his heavenly Father and from the new-created world around him in paradise. The way that Jesus taught shows that his mind was open to all the ways of nature and to all the experiences of humanity in his Father's world.

"All men by nature desire to know" (Aristotle). The baby looks more and more intently at the mobile swinging over his crib and tries to grasp it; the toddler repeats the sounds his parents make until it dawns on him after repeated experimentation that the sounds have meaning and can be fitted together into words and

sentences; the grade-school beginner ecstatically discovers that lines and dots on a page symbolize sounds and words; and men become Nobel laureates by being inwardly driven to pursue courses of experimentation until they *know*. Surely one of our purposes in education must be to exercise our students' natural curiosity, to avoid stifling this human passion to know.

But learning is also mental work. Such work would have been totally natural in paradise, like birds' song or otters' play, but it has been accomplished ever since the fall only with mental sweat. Some educators who disregard man's sinful nature think that learning still "comes naturally." But learning is work and thus depends on motivation: "One must never assume that students learn simply by being exposed to information or ideas, regardless of how enthusiastic, exotic or inspired the presentation. The bottom line of all learning is a receptive mind, or, to put it in a vernacular, 'Ya gotta wanna!'" (Doepke). Through all man's powers, also through the power to learn and understand, corruption creeps. We sinners slothfully neglect our human potential for learning. We abuse God's natural world. We substitute sinful pleasures for the wholesome enjoyment of the gifts God intended for us. We lust for selfish gratification and honor instead of desiring to worship God and to serve him in our fellowmen with all the abilities God gave. Nevertheless, his creative command to "subdue the earth" and to "have dominion over" its creatures remains in effect even in our sin-corrupted human nature.

As we share food, clothing and shelter with our children, we also pass on to them the gathered fruits of human learning. Parents in the home and teachers in schools communicate to a new generation the heritage of human culture, and a curriculum takes shape: the basic skills of reading, writing, calculating, and then also literature and history, music and art, logic and higher mathematics, psychology and philosophy, science and technology. While we deny theories of biological and social evolution, we must recognize that knowledge has evolved as the human race has learned more and more about God's creation and its uses. Men employ their God-given abilities to observe, understand, imagine. They share these gifts with following generations, and so God's gifts are multiplied. Complex civilizations arise from the cumulative experience, learning and imagination of many individuals of many generations.

Even though shot through with the evidences of human sin, God's cultural gifts, no less than "rain from heaven and crops in their seasons," fill our hearts with joy and show the Creator's kindness to his creatures (Acts 14:17). We could survive on earth without music to hear and pictures to look at; without the thoughts of other men we read in books; without the fruit of the imaginative and artistic talents God has given to other members and other cultures of our race; without dishwashers and computers and indoor plumbing; but the God who gives "daily" also gives "richly," far beyond what we need for bare subsistence. Christian students are grateful for such gifts.

[Liberal arts/ study broadened my horizons as a young adult and opened my mind up to a world of ideas. I count it as a special blessing that I was able to study these subjects at the feet of instructors who based their thoughts and comments on the wisdom of God! History classes were always my favorite. I remember first understanding in Prof. X's class that it was only the Hebrews, God's people, that had a "sense of history".... (T2).

I personally enjoy [activities in music, the theater, and the arts] and try to share them with my students. My own education laid the foundation for this appreciation (T5).

Taking Shakespeare was also helpful. A few weeks back we went to see Henry V and I was able to explain to my wife what was going on and what they were saying. After eight years of marriage a guy is thankful for any way in which he still can impress his wife (P2). Prof. X gets the prize for teaching me, intriguing me, to know myself and others around me. Psychology was the tool.... I studied for that class. As much as I learned I was left hungry. I will forever be a student of my own heart and a dedicated observer of what makes people tick (P6).

As a civilization becomes more complex, schools must make curricular choices. Harvard, the first American pre-ministerial school, was able to give a reasonably well-rounded education for its time by instructing its students over a three-year period in about ten subjects, centering around classical languages and literature and the Bible. The president taught them all (*Missions* 1). Today the growth of knowledge forces church colleges to make curricular choices. We can only teach representative aspects of human knowledge. There is a reason why Christian colleges have generally taught the liberal arts, fashioning their curricula from courses chosen from the fields of theology, humanities (including fine arts), social science, natural science, mathematics, logic, communication.

The reason for such choices lies in the order of human knowledge. Christian educators do not see knowledge as if it were a vast loft full of hay, all the contents of equal status. It is rather like a spacious manor house with many rooms, serving various purposes for those who live there: a chapel, workshops and offices, a library, living rooms, a kitchen, pantry and closets. An order of value is established in creation: knowledge of 1) God, 2) man, and 3) the rest of nature. 1) What God has prepared through Christ for those who love him does not enter the heart of man except through the Spirit's working (1 Corinthians 2:9,10), and so God's revelation of himself through Christ in the Scriptures will always be the heart of Christian teaching at all levels. 2) After theology, knowledge has to do with understanding man himself, the crown of God's creation. That puts the humanities (including fine arts) and social sciences right after theology in Christian education: for "what a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!" (*Hamlet*, II,ii). 3) Even the crown is not the entirety of God's creation. Natural science, which also develops in response to God's command to "subdue the earth," thus forms a third priority for Christian education. Finally, there are the "instrumental skills"; if the other areas of learning are like rooms in a house, mathematics and logic, speaking and writing are like the wiring and lighting system, or like cabling connecting workstations in every room with each other and with a central mainframe—the library.

If education especially teaches the practical applications of knowledge, it is technical. If the emphasis of an education is preparation for a full-time profession or occupation, it is vocational training. A church that prays, "Give success to the Christian training of the young, to all lawful occupations on land and sea, and to all pure arts and useful knowledge," dare not despise vocational and technical education. Yet if a church with limited earthly resources is to make a specifically *Christian* contribution to education, it will not devote its resources to areas where there is nothing specifically Christian to be taught or learned. Christian motivation makes the fulfillment of any honorable calling a good work before God; Christians will be guided by God's will in whatever they do; Christians lovingly serve their fellowmen as they design machinery, fill prescriptions, weld beams for bridges. Christians can teach and learn in any area, but there is no *Christian* teaching of engineering, pharmacy, welding, library science, home economics. On the other hand, the Scriptures do have specific teaching about God, about man, about how God would have man look at his world. The Scriptures lead the church to teach a *Christian Weltanschauung* in the church's schools. That means not only teaching theology but also teaching the liberal arts from a Christian viewpoint.

A broad-based liberal arts education gives the Christian insight into human nature and society. Reading Shakespeare or studying world history opens up perspectives that you do not get from a purely vocational focus on education. You need a view of the world in order to have a Christian world view! (P24)

Education which is purely vocational and technical is sometimes accused of degrading man, as if he were no more than "a digestive tube pierced at both ends" (Lyon, 11). But the abuse of education is not confined to vocational and technical curricula. Fallen Adam in us, like unconverted man around us, always hankers to set up God's gifts in God's own place. Paul said about the civilized world at his time: "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:25). For the liberally educated, culture and man himself often become gods. The devil's method has not

changed since Eden. To lead Eve astray Satan used a tree that was “good for food and pleasing to the eye.” To tempt Adam he employed the woman, the best earthly gift the man had received from God. In a liberal arts education we intend to spread out before our students, at least in representative fashion, “all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.” The devil visits liberal arts college campuses to whisper, “All this will I give you if you will bow down and worship me,” i.e., “Just put the gifts in the place of the Giver.” A Christian liberal arts student, while he learns to know the kingdoms of this world and enjoys their splendors as God’s gifts, needs the gospel of forgiveness and the guidance of the Spirit in Scripture so that he can answer with Jesus, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only’” (Matthew 4:8-10).

The new man created in us through baptism accepts the inbred human desire to understand and the human ability to learn as God-given talents to be developed to their fullest potential. The new man receives the splendid, God-given fruits of human learning as instruments to glorify the Giver and to serve man according to God’s revealed will. He prays with Augustine: “See, Lord, my King and my God, I would wish everything useful which I learned as a boy to be used in your service—speaking, reading, writing, arithmetic, all.... It was you who made for the craftsman his body, you who made the mind that directs his limbs, the material out of which he makes anything, the intelligence by which he grasps the principles of his art and sees inwardly what he is to make outwardly.... All these things praise you, the creator of all” (*Confessions*, in Bridston and Culver 145, 146).

We Lutherans confess in the Reformer’s *Small Catechism* that the ability to learn and thus also the fruits of learning are precious gifts of a merciful Creator. When we say, “I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,” we also accept human learning and culture as gifts of almighty God, our Father through faith in Christ. For all such gifts and in my use of all such gifts, “I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him.” A historian of education sees the Lutheran colleges in North America—largely liberal arts institutions—as “expressions of the irrepressible Lutheran commitment to learning rooted in the love of the gospel, a sense of the mind as a gift of God, and of the world as God’s creation in which the people of God explore their vocation” (Solberg 1985, 350).

The blessings we learn to treasure in a Christian liberal arts education are the natural gifts of our senses; reason, and understanding, by which God has equipped us to learn; the truth about God, man and the world which God has revealed in his Word; and the fruits of human learning and imagination which have been produced by man in response to God’s creative blessing, “Subdue the earth.”

II Rationale for a Liberal-Arts-Based Training for Church Workers

The “Philosophy and Purpose” statement on over a full page of the Dr. Martin Luther College Catalog (11,12) says not one word about training church workers. It speaks about God’s good creation, human sin, Christ’s redemption and what education means for human beings restored through Christ to sonship with God. Only then dots a statement on training for the vocation of a Christian teacher follow.

I have no regrets [about] my DMLC preparation, especially in regard to a technical; vocational emphasis. Teaching is a human enterprise, blessed by God It will never become a technical exercise (T6).

Similarly, the Northwestern College curriculum “offers instruction that aims to provide the student with an understanding of sinful man, for whom the Word of God is intended. To do this, it offers courses that outline God’s dealing with mankind as recorded in history, and it includes a study of man’s accomplishments and failures as they are reflected in the various disciplines of a liberal arts course of study” (*Report of the Curriculum Review Committee 2*). Both of our colleges aim to produce graduates who confess Christ, who are prepared to serve his church as called workers, but who also can say, “I am a human being. Nothing that relates to man do I consider foreign to me” (Terence, Heauton Timoroumenos 77).

Do you consider your training a blessing? Absolutely. Two phrases come to mind, one from Plato, the other...from Jesse Jackson. "The life which is unexamined is not worth living" [and] "Make humanity your study" (P26).

My background in literature gives me insights into what makes people tick, into the human condition since the Fall; into the effects of sin in the lives of God's creatures.... In the characters and settings of novels and plays we find our people, their situations; their sins; their feeble attempts at human solutions.... We want well-rounded graduates entering our seminary—not "humanists," but men who understand humanity.... We need to know people (P13).

On the foundation of a Biblical approach to the world, to man, to culture and learning, our colleges build curricula to train pastors and teachers. Our synodical liberal-arts institutions are also pre-professional and professional training schools, preparing young Christians for church vocations. Here another pervasive value becomes evident: a high regard for the holy ministry.

Looking back on my college and seminary years reminds me of a funnel. The wide end of the funnel was my time in college. There was so much to learn, so many subjects. By the time I graduated from Seminary I was at the narrow end of the funnel.... There was only one thing to learn and proclaim... Jesus Christ and Him crucified thank God for the diverse, liberal-arts education I had in our worker-training schools, but, most of all I thank God that we were constantly reminded there is really only one thing you can do with it all...—lay it at the feet of the Savior and say, "Here am I. Send me!" (P3)

The truth that gives meaning to our lives is the good news of Jesus Christ. The crucial importance of the ministry of the Word follows, as in the Augsburg Confession Article V "Of the Ministry" follows Article IV "Of Justification." "Men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith" (IV). "That we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted" (V) ("solchen Glauben zu erlangen, hat Gott das Predigtamt eingesetzt, Evangelium und Sakramente gegeben"). Our synodical forefathers valued the preaching and teaching ministry right after their love for Christ himself. Otherwise they would not have offered him the gift of worker-training schools. Today we are learning to value anew the priesthood of every believer. Yet if we erred in the past by failing to appreciate that facet of our Lutheran heritage, we dare not now lose our balance on the side of despising the holy ministry. The Lord Jesus Christ ordained the public preaching and teaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments as an integral part of his plan of salvation for humankind. Not only the church in general but our students specifically need to hear and learn that.

Both NWC and DMLC faculty members [should] never forget the goal of their students. They need constant reminders of their goals. Profs need to frequently say, "When you become a pastor/teacher, you will use what you're learning here to...." I did receive those encouraging words from many profs at New Ulm... (T5).

I would want to share with my fellow-workers [in the worker-training schools] the importance of a liberal-arts education balanced by teachers who, by their example and experiences shared with students keep the students focused on the privilege of the ministry they are pursuing as a full-time vocation. I believe in a liberal-arts education. But sometimes it's difficult for students to understand its value.... Ultimately, we're not just teaching liberal arts for the sake of liberal arts (P4).

Our standard pre-ministerial program originated in the German *Gymnasium*, combining secondary and the beginning of post-secondary education in a unified curriculum. Though we now conform to the American division between high school and college, the prep-school course of study not only prepares for some degree of worker-training specialization in college but also adds breadth to general education in the WELS worker-training system. A secondary preparation which systematically gets its students ready for the next stage of their education allows for broader and deeper college curricula. In the upper box on the next page is a sample prep school program (NPS).

In the lower box on the next page the WELS worker-training college curricula are outlined. The DMLC graduation requirements listed are those of the four-year elementary program. The five-year STEP program, not described here, incorporates the essentials of these first four years. It adds credits in professional education and a chosen major field: English, mathematics, music, physical education, science or social studies.

Foreign languages in the NWC curriculum would be listed under humanities in most college catalogs. In this outline they are placed opposite DMLC's professional education component because of their primary function as a required preparation for theological study at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The college curriculum preserves a further "humanities" purpose for the languages by including a final one-semester required area elective in secular German for students who take the German option and a final required area elective for all students in some classical Greek author. Four semesters of conversational Spanish are free electives.

A SAMPLE WELS PREP SCHOOL PROGRAM

SUBJECT	REQUIRED HOURS (for sem.hr., multiply x2)	EXPLANATION
Religion	11	OT, NT, doctrine & topics.
History	13	Anc, Eur to Ref, mod wld from Ref, Am.
English	18/23	Seniors in teacher program take advanced language arts in place of Latin 4.
Latin	20/10	Juniors and seniors in teacher program: see English and Mathematics.
German	10	Junior and senior years.
Mathematics	10/15	Juniors in teacher program take algebra 2 in place of Lat. 3.
Science	17	Gen sci/computer, bio, chem, phys.
Music	6	Int, form, theory, + Lutheran hymns all years.
Physical education		Required without academic credit.
Chorus		Elective.
Band		Elective.
Keyboard		Elective.

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THE WELS WORKER -TRAINING COLLEGE PROGRAMS

DMI,C	SEM.HR.	NWC	SEM.HR.
GENERAL EDUCATION	82	GENERAL EDUCATION	72
Religion	18	Religion	20
Social studies (2 WesCiv, 3 his, geog)	18	Social studies (2 WesCiv, 1 his, 1 psy, ele in psy/soc)	18
English (Comp, spe, 2 lit, hist of Eng lang)	15	English (Comp, lit, spe, lit ele)	13
Mathematics	7	Mathematics	6
Science	11	Science	8
		Philosophy	3
Music	11	Music	3
Physical Education	2	Physical Education	1
AREA OF CONCENTRATION 14/15 (English/math/music/ science/social studies)		FREE ELECTIVES 18/21 (Wld rel, 8 his, art, 9 Eng, 4 Ger, 4 Spa,6 Gre, Heb, 2 sci 4 mus, log, 3 soc./psy)	
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION 42		BIB. & THEOL. LANGUAGES 44/41	
		German/I,atin	12/19
		Greek	18
		Hebrew	14
	-----		-----
CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED	138/139	CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED	134

The DMLC student gains some depth in one chosen field of general education by electing an area of concentration. (A concentration is not a major; the 14 or 15 concentration credits by themselves would not qualify as a minor in the average college program.) If a Northwestern student's interests lead him to pursue further depth in some liberal-arts area, he may do so with his free electives, subject to the limitations of the catalog and the schedule. (All the NWC free electives are listed in the outline; the number given with some is the number offered *beyond* the required area electives.) Most students use this part of the curriculum to pick and choose among subject areas and instructors.

What most stands out about these curricula is not so much their breadth as the fact that, partly by necessity but also by design, they prevent specialization. Only about one-third of the average American college student's graduation requirements are in general education. It is this deficit which has led some educators to call general education "a disaster area" (Levine 3). One remedy after another has been proposed ever since the '40s. More recently Allan Bloom diagnosed *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987; Mortimer Adler has responded with *Reforming Education: The Opening of the American Mind* (1990). The solution of E. D. Hirsch was *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Should Know* (1987), but he has met scathing attacks ("mind-stuffing") from Richard Paul and others who prescribe critical thinking as the answer to the woes of general education in an age of specialization. At the end of his history of the American undergraduate course of study Frederick Rudolph even saw a hopeful sign in the possibility of a depressed market for college graduates: "Perhaps we can stop making technicians and get back to the business of making human beings" (289). Lynne Cheney gave her proposals to rescue general education in *Fifty Hours* (1989). The Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities suggests that the curricular time devoted to general education in American colleges should be increased to somewhat over 40% of the total.

But DMLC's general education requirements already amount to 59.2% of the college coursework. At NWC the proportion is 58.2%, if we count everything but the required languages and four pre-professional semesters of religion. After the student's initial choice between the pastoral and the teaching ministry, the curricula do not allow for further specialization during the first four years for teachers, during the entire eight years for pastors. The WELS worker-training system is designed to produce generalists, because that is our picture of the teaching and pastoral ministry. Our teachers prepare to work in parish day schools; our seminary produces parish pastors.

The more I talk to people in education from outside our circles; the more I realize how they don't have a clue about what our WELS schools are like. Our teachers have to have a broad-based education, especially those whose situations warrant "the wearing of many hats" DMLC's primary purpose is to train teachers for our elementary schools whether they teach one grade or all nine, coach, play organ, direct the choir, or work with the youth group. Our teachers need an education that will prepare them for any and all of those situations (ST4).

We need ministers who are well read diverse, etc. It enables me to be all things to all men. The pastor is not a specialist. He is a generalist, and needs the background to be one. By the way, do you know the difference? A specialist studies more and more about less and less until he brows everything about nothing. A generalist studies less and less about more and more until he knows nothing about everything.... Without a liberal arts background, would we keep our sense of humor? (P7)

While I was a student at NWC, I wanted to take more English, literature and composition classes because I enjoy that area very much, but I could take only so many electives I see the wisdom of that now. I know a little about a lot of things; if I wish to know more about a specific thing I have the tools to learn about it on my own, thanks to the training I received in WELS schools (P34).

Dr. Martin Luther College calls the emphasis of its curriculum “general education,” defined by the faculty as “those common educational experiences derived from the significant areas of human knowledge that are deemed profitable to aid the Christian in his preparation for responsible participation in society. General education is concerned with the Christian student’s total being: his spiritual welfare, his intellectual gifts, his sense of values, his aesthetic sensitivity, and his physical well being as they stand in the perspective of Scriptural truth” (*Status Study* 1968, 87). General education provides a basis for the teacher’s ministry: most elementary teachers give instruction in almost every arcs covered by their college curriculum. General education also prepares the teacher for life-long learning. (On general education at DMLC, see Appendix B.)

I am sure that if most DMLC students were allowed to specialize to a greater degree with vocational subjects of their choice, they would probably do so. I personally would have stayed clear of history, math and science classes and would rather have concentrated on English and music classes. However, how many of our grade schools are departmentalized?... Surely it is in our students’ best interest that their teachers have knowledge in various subjects (77).

Little training was done in the areas of administration, the school principal’s role, elementary school curriculum management; communication with church and school contacts, etc. But in retrospect I feel the liberal-arts courses gave me a much more “well-rounded” education than if I [had] not [taken] them as part of my studiesI felt the DMLC curriculum had me caged in, with so few electives offered. But I now think it’s necessary to require so many particular courses in order to train our teachers properly (T12).

Rather than using the term “general education” Northwestern College has preferred to speak of its “selective liberal arts curriculum.” According to Levine, “liberal education” is a commonly used synonym of “general education,” but the term is used more specifically to describe education “consisting of a curriculum more or less in its entirety organized around the cultural heritage of civilization and thus concentrating heavily on the humanities” (9). The statement of objectives in the NWC *Catalog* mentions first the college’s stress on language studies to carry out its primary objective of preparing students for admission to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In addition the college offers “a selective liberal arts program, with special emphasis on literature and the social sciences, in addition to the language studies named above” in order “to produce graduates with a well-rounded education” (5).

If I had had the option to specialize more and sooner, I quite likely would have done so and now I would look back on that with regret: But if I do have any regrets now, they are that I didn’t appreciate what I had at the time.... I now sometimes wish I could go back and take Shakespeare over again. Or Milton. Or Roman history (P1).

I appreciate my liberal-arts education at Northwestern much more now than I did while I was in the midst of receiving it. That’s probably a tribute to the men who had the foresight to require of us an education we might not necessarily have chosen for ourselves when we were just out of high school (P15).

In a 1985 workshop presentation to his faculty, “The Place of the Liberal Arts in the Northwestern College Curriculum” (reprinted in WLQ 83:1-Winter. 1986, 43-60) then-President Carleton Toppe cited a number of definitions of the liberal arts and descriptions of the competencies that liberal education is designed to foster. Then he conducted a “walk” through the liberal arts that contribute to the preparation of future parish pastors: religion, philosophy, literature—“Literature alone could provide a good liberal arts education”-- history, foreign languages, social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, language itself.

A respect for these separate disciplines is, it seems to me, one strength of our rather old-fashioned approach to liberal arts education as opposed to the kind of broad syntheses and “appreciation” courses which are being recommended in some current attempts to save a semblance of general education for the specialized American college student. Our curricula contain discrete clumps and complexes of subject matter, not homogeneous mush. Surely prep school and college teachers must point the way to synthesis and provide opportunities for appreciation, but such objectives cannot be achieved prematurely. Appreciation grows—sometimes more, sometimes less successfully—in the minds of liberal arts graduates as they mature. First the gritty facts of the various disciplines deserve respectful teaching and learning. C. S. Lewis put this succinctly in a little essay called “The Parthenon and the Optative.”

“The trouble with these boys,” said a grim old classical scholar looking up from some milk-and-watery entrance papers which he had been marking: “the trouble with these boys is that the masters have been talking to them about the Parthenon when they should have been talking to them about the optative.” We all knew what he meant. We had read work like that ourselves.

Ever since then I have tended to use the Parthenon and the Optative as the symbols of two types of education. The one begins with hard, dry things like grammar, and dates, and prosody; and it has at least the chance of ending in a real appreciation which is equally hard and firm though not equally dry. The other begins in “Appreciation” and ends in gush. When the first fails it has, at the very least, taught the boy what knowledge is like. He may decide that he doesn’t care for knowledge; but he knows he doesn’t care for it, and he knows he hasn’t got it. But the other kind fails most disastrously when it most succeeds. It teaches a man to feel vaguely cultured while he remains in fact a dunce. It makes him think he is enjoying poems he can’t construe. It qualifies him to review books he does not understand, and to be intellectual without intellect. It plays havoc with the very distinction between truth and error (109).

The ability to make such a distinction is fostered by learning facts and practicing judgments in a variety of disciplines. John Lyon sums up the objectives of liberal arts training by first quoting Aristotle: “An educated man should be able to form a fair off-hand judgment as to the goodness or badness of the method used by a professor in his exposition. To be educated is in fact to be able to do this.”

Put in simple terms, the most basic aim of a liberal arts education is to enable one to recognize when another is talking rot.... Ours is a society where “knowledge” is voluminous, fragmented, and specialized, and where utterly unreasonable rewards are paid to those who can convince masses of people to “buy” something—be it an idea, a government policy, or a soap powder. It is hard to imagine a skill more important to individuals in such a society than the ability to “be able to form a fair off hand judgment as to the goodness or badness of the method used” by someone in the setting-forth of his argument: that is, the ability to tell when someone is talking rot and when he is not (7,8)

I cannot think of many more worthy objectives for education, or of any single ability more useful to the future pastor or teacher.

Liberal arts education, according to President Toppe, provides “a grid or a network into which to ‘plug’ the diversity of knowledge.”

A liberal arts education helps its graduates to agonize and align elements of knowledge with the master thoughts and principles of human knowledge and experience. It enables them more readily to relate one area of knowledge to another. The liberal arts graduate has a broader pattern into which to fit human knowledge and experience; the specialist has primarily only the pocket-sized sketch of his discipline. Too many college graduates have only an engineer’s, a

nurse's, a computer programmer's, a mathematician's, a lawyer's view of the wide world in which they live (57).

At the end of his presentation President Toppe formulated the problem with which our faculties must grapple as they consider today's changing ministry and a worker-training curriculum which will enable us to be all things to all men in a highly specialized world. How will we strike a balance between the liberal arts and vocational-professional training?

The matter of proportioning a liberal arts curriculum to professional and technical courses remains a vexing problem. Preparation for a profession appears to call for specific training in addition to the general studies a college is expected to provide. Most American colleges are crowding out general studies by acquiring a large number of specialized courses. Their humanities have yielded to the professional majors; the "core of common studies" to "how to" courses. The emphasis has been on the development of vocational skills rather than on the synoptic education a liberal arts program can provide.

Seminaries and pre-seminary colleges have also been affected by this trend. Seminary courses in professional techniques, in administration, and in counseling and psychology have left little room for dogmatics, exegesis and church history. A pre-seminary college is also tempted to offer more practical courses that will benefit the future pastor. A parish pastor could, conceivably, make use of a variety of skills: bookkeeping and accounting procedures, blueprint reading, mechanics, media operation, graphics, computer programming, electronics. How many should the pastor trainee acquire from his college education?

The "skills" our curriculum offers are largely in the field of communication.... Can we add other "how to" courses? I suggest that if we do, we proceed with caution. Practical disciplines have a way of displacing valuable liberal arts courses as many American colleges have come to realize. Most students also prefer practical exercises to the rigors of mental discipline. We are on a slippery slope when we expand these offerings. Satisfy one priority and two others will be knocking at the door (58).

NOTE: Here is a partial listing of practical courses suggested by the pastors and teachers in their letters: human resource management, practical coaching courses, introduction to law, real estate, construction (choosing a contractor), discipline techniques, secretarial skills, mass media, woodworking, business administration, basic survival skills (e.g., time management, choosing a spouse, social etiquette and grooming). There were strong pleas from both pastors and teachers who found themselves or brothers in the ministry poorly equipped to handle money. Many wish they had learned more about using computers. The most frequently repeated request was for training in counseling skills. See the end of Part II below.

Some pastors and teachers suggested more liberal arts offerings, though at least one was aware "*that with the addition of all the classes I'd like, DMLC might feature a seven year program*" (ST2): sociology, political science, ethnic studies, economics, modern literature (best sellers), American cultures, denominations and current trends in American religion, modern ethical issues, humanism and evolution, foreign languages at DMLC, more spoken foreign languages at NWC, foreign travel as part of the NWC curriculum, advanced composition, a course in drama performance. The most frequently repeated request was for more psychology. See the end of Part II below.

There were also requests for more specialized professional courses: coaching, curriculum development, teaching writing, discipline techniques, current denominations and trends in American religion, special education, early childhood education, more direct work with children, and especially counseling.

Learning on the job has not been intimidating for liberal arts graduates, who have developed versatile study skills. They know how to read, and how to organize and assimilate new knowledge. Other liberal arts graduates have entered professions without “practical” skills and have done better than their competition in business and management (Toppe 58,59).

Having been granted the opportunity to use my liberal arts education in both realms, ministry and business, I would have to affirm that my training was a tremendous blessing.... I'm sure that no one on the NWC faculty specifically trained me to work in a mortgage company. And I also know that none of the faculty taught me anything about wrap and buy down loans. Yet because of the training I received, I was able to take varying concepts and readily adapt them to the task at hand. Many of my colleagues who were specifically trained in business and finance were unable to make such a jump. They were too specialized and not flexible enough (P19).

I was able to apply for and receive a Federal Energy Regulation Commission license to build and operate a number of hydro-electric power plants (P23).

I believe that the foundational tools of understanding and the ability to research and communicate clearly are the stuff for which college curricula are responsible—not the “how to’s” one can pick up at a missionaries’ conference or counseling workshop. Finally, one’s experiences will be his best tutors in those areas (P9).

In 1988 as part of a major research project examining the skills needed for work, the American Society for Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration published a report entitled *Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want*. The report identifies seven skills groups: 1) learning to learn; 2) listening and oral communication; 3) competence in reading, writing, and computation; 4) adaptability: creative thinking and problem solving; 5) personal management: self-esteem, goal setting/motivation, and personal/career development; 6) group effectiveness: interpersonal skills, negotiation, and teamwork; and 7) organizational effectiveness and leadership. Though the approach to 5) would be quite different for a called church worker, such objectives could well be—not automatically, but by consistently applied design—outcomes of broad-based liberal arts education. I would guess that our schools do a better job with the first four than with the last, but all the skills in the list certainly apply to the preaching and teaching ministry.

Society is beginning in some areas to get away [from] specialization of jobs. [An example:] the rewriting of union contracts in the auto industry, where the job description has been increased from two to forty different duties that a worker may be required to do.... We (teachers) are [also] expected to do more than just one “job.” For our workers to be most effective; they must realize that perhaps they will be “jacks of all trades, and masters of none”Our synodical training should be for generalists rather than specialists (ST1).

[The comments of] a secular educator struck me.... Ask any employer whom he'd rather hire; and he will pick the applicant with a liberal arts education. The simple reason is that the liberal arts education teaches people to think, to reason, to understand where a technical education tends to train people to respond, to react according to textbook learning. The former is more

enduring and adaptable to the situation; the latter can be more inflexible [and] it must be updated as technology changes (P9).

We probably could not agree in detail on a body of liberal-arts knowledge which every pastor or teacher should possess. We can, however, aim at presenting to the church a certain kind of human being. This picture ought to influence our choice of courses, how we teach, and the experiences beyond the classroom we incorporate in the education of our future pastors and teachers. I am not describing now the Scriptural requirements for ministry: mature Christian faith, a sanctified life, a good reputation, knowledge of Scripture, ability to teach. Those prerequisite talents and fruits of the Spirit are “givens” in our conception of ministry. Nor do I speak here of the love for people which we are emphasizing more and more in our descriptions of the preaching and teaching ministry. The genuine love for people Christ looks for is a fruit of faith, nourished by the means of grace. As we seek an increase of Christian love in our students we must enrich their spiritual lives and improve the spiritual example we set.

The graduates we aim to produce are Christian human beings. They are curious, knowing that they cannot know everything, they listen and learn, remaining open their life long to all kinds of knowledge. They are *current*, not only aware of the world of information, thought and imagination in libraries, museums and laboratories, but interested in today’s newspaper, in the world of people and nature around them. Yet they are also *conscious of history*: understanding that there is nothing new under the sun, they are accordingly wary of being carried away by the spirit of their own times. They are *creative*, making use of the gifts of imagination and problem-solving ability God has given them. If true originality is beyond them, they are at least *appreciative of the creativity of others*. They are *critical*: they think, weighing values—not only moral values, but aesthetic values, too—and acting accordingly. To be prepared to exercise such qualities in life, they are *cultured*, but not in a “hoity-toity” sense: through education and experience they have cultivated the above qualities in many contexts. Finally, we aim to produce graduates who *effectively communicate thought in speech and writing*. This quality could be placed either last or first: it must be exercised in the learning of all the rest.

I believe that, after preaching the Gospel, exemplifying it in our lives, and training students in Christian living, the worker-training school faculty’s function is to model such qualities and to require students to exercise them in the contexts of particular disciplines--the curriculum. Those qualities of mind cannot be taught as subjects. You cannot teach a student to be curious by having a course in curiosity. Rather, you bring him face to face with the immense variety of inanimate, animal and human nature. You impart historical consciousness by teaching facts of history, making students march in the boots of people in their own and humanity’s past, expecting them to apply the lessons they are learning from historical sources to the events they currently see on TV. Colleges have tried to teach courses in critical thinking, but a consensus is growing that “students must learn to think within the context of each discipline” (Henderson 10). You certainly cannot teach “culture,” but you can assign the reading of great books; you can demand that students make reasoned judgments and engage in civilized discourse about what they have read; you can require them to listen to good music; you can make a gallery tour an integral part of a history or art course. In every subject, teachers can give practice in written and oral expression and apply graduated standards to evaluate their students’ growth in communication skill. Speaking, listening, reading and writing can be taught in any curriculum, but liberal arts students have an advantage: the best models. They should constantly be reading authors *and hearing teachers* who love and respect language. They should also have the advantage of comparing their native English with one or more foreign languages.

So far I have not quoted letters from WELS ministers in the body of this paper. But here is a thoughtful comment from a foreign missionary, addressing his own question whether our methodologies enable students to get the most out of our liberal-arts courses.

In my opinion, a liberal-arts curriculum, properly taught, should teach a person to think “liberally,” that is, “freely,” in the good sense of the word. A liberal-arts education should lead a person to think creatively, not redundantly. A person should not be bound to do everything a particular way simply because “that’s the way it has always been done.” It should rather enable

a person to assess any particular situation objectively and arrive at a solution that is logical; open-minded; and, above all God pleasing. Such an education should also lead a person to challenge constructively the past, question what he has been taught and honestly critique the information offered to him. None of this activity is to be carried out simply to gainsay or effect change for change's sake, but rather to glean every possible blessing of the past and eliminate that which has with time become counter productive. And for Christians this is all to be done on the basis of God's Word. A liberal arts education should also make a person "proactive," not "reactive." A reactive person occupies himself with waiting around, reacting and responding to situations and problems, and establishes as his goal "minding the shop" and "fixing" things...A "proactive" person will look at the world around him, determine under God what can be and should be accomplished, and then he will go out and do what needs to be done in order to make it all happen...A liberal-arts training should also lead a person to work purposefully, not perfunctorily. In other words, a properly trained person will not simply "put in his time," but he will "get something done." He will not just work "hard"; he will work "smart" (Pl2).

There are individuals with little formal education who show some or all of the qualities we aim to foster. Some able students whom we admit to prep school or college may exhibit more of these qualities as talents given by God or as skills learned at home than others show when we send them on their way with a diploma. But if we aim at presenting such candidates to our synod, we need to model these qualities before our classes and then, with our objectives in mind, be about our business of teaching the liberal arts: religion, philosophy, history, English, German, Latin, Greek, mathematics, science, music, psychology and the rest-adding to or subtracting from the actual list as the needs of our congregations and mission fields, the circumstances of the times, and our own abilities and limitations allow.

Does advocacy of liberal arts endorse our liberal arts curriculum exactly as it is conducted today? Not necessarily. The times may call for adjustments. Other liberal arts courses may more nearly meet present needs. Furthermore, in the business world programs are revised or even discontinued if they are not "cost effective." Similarly, liberal arts courses should be "education effective." If they do not yield the benefits they promise, they also call for revision, if not replacement. Low ratings in popularity polls, however, cannot be the determining factor. In the troubled 1960s many colleges and universities yielded to student demands for curriculum changes. They have since rued the day (Toppe 59,6)

In this paper I have, with a few exceptions, resisted my inclination to pass on to the worker training faculties the many criticisms and constructive suggestions which pastors and teachers submitted in their letters. The letters themselves will be forwarded to the academic deans of the colleges for incorporation in upcoming self-studies. One area, however, drew so much comment that I felt I would be an unfaithful messenger from the workers to the faculties of the worker-training system if I did not mention it. Pastors and teachers are pleading for more knowledge of psychology and counseling principles.

Lack commitment to their Savior has led far too many away from the church and has resulted in a wide range of problems that pastors and teachers must confront Alcoholism and drug abuse within the family are at an epidemic stage. Child abuse and neglect are much more prevalent than I ever imagined. Suicides; death, phobias, and psychological problems are all areas (in which) teachers must be able to give sound advice Of the problems that I have mentioned, I have dealt with them all and others even more complex...Therefore I do wish that I would have been able to specialize more in the area of psychology (TI).

Counseling has been a major part of my calling.... To have been taught some counseling skills would have been most helpful in my undergraduate study. A certain must for today's ministers (STI).

I don't think many of us are fully prepared for the situations we encounter in the ministry. I knew about adultery, incest, child abuse, spouse abuse and the like. But I had no idea that they would be so prevalent among the families I'd be working with. Taking extra courses in psychology and sociology won't fully equip the man for the task but at least he will have been exposed to the reality of what's out there.... I was assigned in '83. By '84 I was attending almost every seminar for counseling by the clergy that I could find in the Denver area. Some of it was good. A great deal was rubbish. And I found it very disappointing to find so many clergy of other denominations more rooted in psychological analysis and techniques than in the Scriptures. Still going to those seminars helped me out especially in the context of a mission setting where so much of what I do is dealing with dysfunctional families who turn to the church as almost a last resort (P2).

The amount of time I spend in counseling the unchurched tells me that if I knew more about psychology I might be able to better apply law and gospel and let the Holy Spirit get to work. I think NWC would be a good place to help the student see the differences between secular counseling and Biblical counseling. Today's infatuation with the support group and "meet my needs" thinking warrants such a familiarity, in my opinion (P25).

I never imagined I would have to deal with so many social problems Every week I deal with either shattered or crippled marriages, infertility, sickness, teenage rebellion, drug and alcohol abuse, physical abuse of children and wives, discipline, loneliness, depression, middle-age crisis, postpartum blues, Alzheimer's disease, step-parent conflicts, and on and on (P33).

There have been several occasions in my brief ministry in which I have not recognized certain patterns of behavior which red flagged some psychological disorders.... A greater awareness of psychology and the mind would no doubt serve my ministry well (P38).

III. Blessings of a Liberal-Arts-Based Worker-Training Curriculum As Our Pastors and Teachers Perceive Them

“Do you consider your broad-based, liberal-arts training in high school and college to have been a blessing to you in your life and ministry, living as we do in an age of specialization? In what respect(s)? Do you have anecdotal or other evidence to support your opinion?” This was the first question I submitted to 56 WELS pastors and 34 WELS teachers who entered the ministry within the last ten years. Forty-one parish pastors, 4 pastors who teach in area Lutheran high schools, 23 Christian day school teachers and 4 additional area Lutheran high school teachers responded.

First, here are longer extracts from two responses to the above question, one from a graduate of DMLC teaching in an area high school, the other from a parish pastor. The DMLC graduate is not teaching in a parish grade school, but I cite her response not only to show you what some of your graduates are doing but also to give an example of teaching students to think.

Has my liberal arts training been a blessing to me in my life and ministry, living as we do in an age of specialization? A resounding yes.

The first and most obvious reason is that these courses have given me and all graduates (excuse the cliché) a “well-rounded” education. Learning a little bit about many things opens

and broadens the mind, so that new ideas may more easily enter in, if not for acceptance, at least for consideration.

A second, and again obvious, reason is that these little bits of knowledge spurred me on to learn more. Love of learning, learning for its own sake, is a trait which teachers should certainly own and freely reflect to their students.

A third reason it has benefited me is that it gave me material which I pass on to my students at X Lutheran High School every day, even though I teach in a specialized area. I have attempted in the past two years to inject my American literature students with a small dose of the related humanities. In conjunction with the works of the American writers, I constantly refer to American history, a course which parallels my course. I also expose them to American (and some European) artists and musicians. For example, I tell them about Renoir and Monet, Debussy and Ravel when I teach Stephen Crane's literary impressionism....

Not only does the addition of these musical and artistic works spark the interest of students and aid against tedium, [but] it also helps open and broaden students' minds. In my short teaching experience I have found that high school students tend to think that anything not distinctively 1980-1990 white American middle class is substandard. Because Hawthorne didn't use the diction and syntax they do, he's "stupid." Because Duke Ellington's jazz doesn't have a throbbing beat and metallic sound; he's "weird." Because Picasso's cubism doesn't depict a quaint little farm in a pretty green valley, he's "crazy."

I think it's only through much exposure to different views of life that they begin to see that different is not "dumb." It's just different. With more exposure they not only become more open to new ideas, [but] some of them even ask where they can learn more.

Much of what I teach them I learned in my courses at DMLC. That which I searched out on my own must also be traced back to DMLC because that's where the foundation was laid (ST2).

Here is a longer extract from a parish pastor's response to the same question.

My very general response is an enthusiastic "Yes!" Here's my thinking. Every my brief experience has been showing me that the situations of ministry are amazingly varied—from evangelizing the suspicious skeptic to counseling the teary-eyed husband, to confronting a couple caught up in the morals of a godless world. To be an effective minister must involve the ability to understand how people think and [to] apply the tuneless principles of the law and gospel. I believe my liberal-arts-based education is helping me to adapt to the situation.

With its heavy emphasis on language skill, the liberal arts education is a great help to me in communication. Whether in preparing sermons or printing bulletins, writing reports or sending out newsletters, I'm finding that proper grammar, spelling and usage are vital. The ministry of the Word depends on clear communication....

Being all things to all men is important. People don't expect me to be an expert in their field (e.g., computers, engineering, mechanics), but if I wasn't at least mildly conversant in the problems and frustrations they face, I wonder what their attitude toward preaching would be. It's interesting that people don't expect me to be an expert even in many church matters, such as focal accounting; administration, setting up bylaws. They have been firm in telling me, "We called you to be our spiritual shepherd for the ministry of the Word." Yet...it doesn't hurt to be able to understand and offer guidance in those areas, and show that we are fellow laborers in the Lord wide common concerns.

History was never my strong point in school. Yet coming away from all those history classes has given me a rounded perspective on current events. Viewing newspaper headlines

from the vantage point of history reminds us that man and his predicament have really not changed all that much.

Literature also gives us insight into human nature. Lately I've been heading to the library to read all the classics I can get my hands on (some of which I should have read in school but foolishly settled for Cliff's Notes). I've even pulled [out] my 2,000 page college textbook of masterpieces of world literature for a rereading. To understand cowardice from Stephen Crane or the difficulty of always living by truth and honesty as Cooper showed his readers through Hawkeye teaches me much about human nature and leads me to appreciate even more how God specifically dealt with our weaknesses not through legal demands to improve, but through forgiveness. A knowledge of literature is also helpful when it comes to writing articles and preparing sermon illustrations (P9).

Further quotations will be briefer and to specific points.

1. Classroom teachers are grateful for the background information they received in their liberal-arts-based training.

I teach all the basic classroom subjects, as I'm sure do most WELS teachers, and the liberal arts background knowledge is invaluable in the classroom. A teacher can catch the imagination of the students if she has the knowledge to go beyond the text (T2).

Perhaps at the time I was taking these courses I may not have always appreciated or understood the purpose behind them, but in retrospect, I can truly see value in themI took a liberal arts course entitled Transformational Grammar.... From the knowledge I gained through this course, I was able to [prepare] a simple third and fourth grade lesson on sentence structure (T20).

I teach in a self-contained junior-high classroom. This means I almost have to be an expert in every academic area. Without the liberal arts courses I took I would not have had the background needed to do an effective job of teaching (T21).

Even though I teach only in the music area...I have had much opportunity to tutor students in other classes. Without that broad base of education, I might feel myself at a loss when a student needs help in algebra or grammar.

Here at X Lutheran High School our curriculum continues to expand, [and] yet I'm still in touch with most of it because of my own liberal-arts background As a result I can help kids in study hall with their algebra, geometry, English, German, history and music. As we struggle to recruit future pastors from this school nobody is left with the impression that our WETS pastors are supposed to be "theological eggheads. " In our wide-ranging religion class discussions, no one has ever expressed the notion, "You're only a pastor. All you know is the Bible" (PT4).

2. Our liberal-arts-trained workers recognize that through their education they learned how to learn.

You don't have [all] the answers, but you know where to find the answers (T16).

All may not be vitally relevant to a 20-year-old, but understanding and evaluation and discipline in the study accomplishes what must be done. I learned discipline with my books: I can learn to do anything, with God's help, if I get the right resources and put myself to the task with the gifts heaven has given me. I even passed "Milton" (P6).

NWC and the Sem should not be expected to have taught workers everything they need to know. Almost as important as the course material itself is the attitude of learning. We need to teach our workers how to keep teaching themselves after they leave school (P16).

A liberal arts education prepares an individual for lifelong learning. A strict vocationalism tends to produce graduates who feel they are “completed products,” whereas the liberal arts stress the teaching of how to learn (P24).

This past year I spent three quarters involved in “Deaf Studies” at our local college.... For the past year and a half I have been ministering to a deaf couple. Last October I performed their wedding ceremony in sign language. I am an expert by no means... [but] I think that the broad-based education I received made going back to school much easier, even if it was only on a very part-time basis. That type of education showed me that learning can be fun and that there is always something else to learn (P37).

3. Our liberal-arts-trained workers recognize that their education taught them communication skills.

In each school [i.e., NLA and DMLC] I had men (as teachers) who loved words and the power words could possess. More importantly, I had men who loved the WORD of God and sought to bring it to our lives as students and members of Christ’s Kingdom (T6).

I see over and over how we were taught linguistic analysis; to study the structure of language; to become proficient in evaluating ideas and in precision of expression. I am a far better communicator, in thinking, writing and speaking as a result of the language courses. What do pastors do with most of their time? 1) Evaluate what other people say; 2) write; 3) talk (P16).

Putting words together in a way that’s understandable, using examples that are memorable, discovering the need for logical progression: all of these are a major chore. MLS and NWC gave me an education that specifically dealt with these communication needs. But indirectly, I was taught by every presentation, every book I was forced to read every paper I cranked out in the wee AM. hours (P6).

4. Our liberal-arts-trained workers recognize that their education helped teach them to think.

Members of our congregations look to their teachers and pastors as leaders... [who] are critical and creative thinkers and can respond on the spot in a God pleasing manner. I believe that without the liberal-arts background our WELS workers would suffer from working inside a shell (T3).

What I do remember as being a real blessing are the professors who took the time to make you think. Not all [the] answers are in the book to copy from. I’m thinking in particular of are of the many history courses that I had with Prof. X. I was definitely one of those “get it straight from the books” type. That course... and that teacher had the most influence on me and let me know I did have some good ideas of my own, and not to be afraid to voice an opinion. A good boost for self-confidence! (T23).

I treasure the liberal arts background. Without appreciating it immediately, a student develops a common-sense critical evaluation to subject matter presented. An individual learns to think for

[himself.] In an age where people look to specialists and specific programs to answer problems, the liberal arts graduate can adapt to a variety of circumstances. In the ministry I feel [that] this [is] critical! A pastor needs the Word and the ability to apply that Word based on his understanding of individual circumstances. No specific program can ever replace the personal diagnosis of an evangelical Seelsorge (P40).

5. Our synod's pastors and teachers recognize that their education helped equip them to "build bridges" to people of various personalities, occupations and cultures. This is the aspect of liberal arts education most widely recognized by our workers as having helped them to "be all things to all men."

When I am conversing with parents of children in our school I can confidently speak on a wide range of topics. I'm sure it gives them confidence in me as their child's teacher when it is obvious that I've had a well-rounded education (T7).

When working with people, it is most helpful to have at least some background in many areas to better relate [to] people of varying backgrounds (T9).

I am... prepared to talk with anyone about a variety of subjects and be knowledgeable about them. We then as teachers can show our interest in other people's livelihoods. This has often served as a start to a conversation which later led to a smoother or easier conversation with a parent about a student. Having a well-rounded knowledge of God's world can help bring a conversation also to the topic of God's Word (T14).

Though our society may be one of specialization, yet in the ministry I still must deal with people from each area of specialization (T15).

I find myself better able to relate to... students at X Lutheran High School. Very few students are just involved in one facet of their education, whether it be academics, music, athletics or drama. I feel that well-rounded students are often the best able to relate to others. We need our future church leaders to be able to use and appreciate ALL the talents our gracious Lord has given them (ST4).

Recently our congregation was able to complete the construction of our first building (WEF unit). The project moved forward because of special help extended to us by a local developer. I had opportunity to meet originally with the man because of several matters of common concern to our respective projects. Looking backward, he candidly admitted because of his Jewish background, Oxford education and perception of preachers, he was quite uneasy about meeting me for the first time. At that initial meeting we found ourselves conversing on numerous subjects. He was quite impressed at the "rounding" our denomination's school system provides. Because of the resulting friendship, Joe took on the church project at a non-profit level. We continue to be friends and I have had opportunity to share the gospel with this friend (PS).

A proper education at the feet of the liberal arts will allow a minister from the inner city to have some appreciation for the pleasures a farmer has over straight furrows, and allow a ministerial candidate from farmland to appreciate the pride an American black feels over the release of Nelson Mandela. These are simple cultural differences, but our hope for qualified pastors is that they will be free "in spirit and mind" to accept other cultures on their own terms.... [My liberal arts education] has broadened me to understand that some people appreciate literature and

music as much as others appreciate the Green Bay Packers and Milwaukee beer. It is the antidote to parochialism (P11).

I led a rather sheltered life. From the time I was in the third grade I attended only WELS schools. Other than a few vacation trips, I lived most of my life in central Wisconsin. I wasn't aware of a single relative who was not a member of the Wisconsin Synod. Upon graduating from the seminary I was assigned to an exploratory mission in Portland, Maine, a place far different from anything I was familiar with. I believe that the broadening and the opportunity to mature afforded by NWC helped me not only tolerate but enjoy living in Maine. I believe that if we wish to continue to carry on a nation-wide (and world-wide) ministry, then we need to continue a program of education which exposes sheltered students to the history, thought and language of other cultures (P13).

A man I know who graduated from a Bible college has difficulty understanding how other people can think differently than he, how others can have different philosophies of life (P17).

I have been in two places where the Wisconsin Synod was totally unknown.... As I began work... I canvassed and the first three people in a row looked at me as if I were some kind of leper. I wondered whether my tie was crooked or I had forgotten to zip something up. They all said, "Is Lutheran anything like Lithuanian?" The fourth house knew Martin Luther, "that black guy who was killed in the sixties" The secret to success in this situation as well as in my present situation is, to become a woodchuck to a Vermonter and a Saskatonian to the Saskatchewanians[A liberal-arts education] has a little bit of a connector or bridge with the smartest, the least smart, the richest, the poorest, the powerful and the weak. The points of connection we have allow us to develop rapport and relationships with those we want to minister to. This in turn allows us to share Jesus Christ with them (P23).

My efforts to "be all things to all men" have found me in conversations with people of backgrounds quite diverse from my own. As I learn to know those within my community (a middle-to-upper-class bedroom community just north of Philadelphia) my "well-rounded" education has helped me in my listening skills As people share their lives with me, I find myself somewhat acquainted with their backgrounds, vocations and personal interests.... My education has helped me as I strive to be a "people" pastor (P25).

For the past two years of our exploratory mission I worked exclusively with the unchurched. It was unbelievable how many different types of discussions I found myself in. One man was into Greek philosophy, another asked my opinion on the theories of Carl Rogers, another guy I met collected Shakespearean artifacts and literature, another fellow was a medieval history buff. One young lady and her parents just moved here from Germany a short time ago. I confess I did not learn much German in school but I did learn enough to understand them and make them comfortable. She is now a member (P33).

I received my high school training at Lakeside LHS.... I enrolled in the civil engineering course at Northwestern U...for two full years...After that...I enrolled at NWC.... My present congregation is made up of members as diversified as ranchers and computer specialists, housewives and air traffic controllers... firemen and F-16 fighter pilots. And we're still under 100 souls—but growing!.... With such a wide-ranging array of jobs; interest; backgrounds, etc., among my parishioners, I feel it is a great blessing for me to have such a rich and diversified background...My interests give me a much more personal "bridge" with the member or prospect

to whom I'm seeking to bring the Word.... More often than not I'm not in a preaching setting: my contacts are more often one-on-one...and therefore require those bridges for access into the person's life and needsI think if anything a broad-based experience is vital and absolutely necessary for today's pastor, perhaps more than ever, simply because of the greater specialization going on in the world More than ever, we as shepherds must be able to relate to all our sheep, must even more be "all things to all men ; so that we might save some (P29).

The area of California that I am working in is one that is a real melting pot of cultures and occupations...Jack P. [is] a research scientist for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.... I have been able to sit and talk about the physics involved in the mission and not feel inadequate or lost... Elena D., born in Siberia... saw her parents killed in the Revolution, fled to China, married an army sergeant... I felt comfortable speaking to her when the first time we met she talked history... about the Russian revolution and church history-she was Eastern Orthodox.... "Crash" K...is a heavy equipment operator-he runs a cat. This man stands about 6'6 , 280 pounds; is an ex-Hell's Angel full beard long hair (yes; he does come to church occasionally). He is well-versed on early American literature and history. We have spent hours talking about that period of time. Here again the liberal arts background that I received has come in handy and has made my ministry more enjoy able as I have been able [to] feel comfortable and confident [with him] (P37).

People don't expect you to be knowledgeable in every matter. The main thing is for one not to be totally ignorant. The broad-based training has helped us with that I've already had to sit back and listen to a member who is a gifted car mechanic explain the workings of a carburetor.... When confronted with such situations; one just needs to be a good attentive listener. Usually by just showing interest in the person speaking you can get through many a conversation with a specialist (P39).

Having lived overseas for several years now, I have the chance to look at my homeland and fellow countrymen from a different perspective. We Americans are open too "American," that is, we are knowledgeable about America, but often ignorant of the rest of the world Wisconsin Synod Lutherans; predominantly German in heritage and Midwest in orientation, are certainly not exceptions to the rule. I believe Christ has called us to be "world Christians, "men and women who have a concern for and at least a basic knowledge of this world of ours. If we are to preach the gospel to all nations... we should be exposed a little to them and their history already in college. NWC's history courses gave us a feel for the flow of world history. Art and music courses opened up many cultures to us. Foreign languages gave us a chance to think [the way] "foreigners" think They also developed in me a desire to know more about other countries (P32).

I came from a small farm town in north central South Dakota. I learned a lot on the farm, but my interests and knowledge of many things like art, science, music and history were broadened through my education. They have been a blessing to me especially in my mission work. Just recently I came across a very famous orchestra conductor here in Japan while delivering tracts one evening. The little knowledge I do have about music was given to me by God through the very capable teaching of godly men at NLA, NWC and WLS. On this one occasion alone my training built a bridge for me to be able to share the gospel with this... conductor who is troubled about the future (P41).

Earlier this week as part of our junior Word of God study, we were searching through 1 Corinthians 9. "Our goal with your education," I explained, "is to make you into interested;

interesting, credible people who can talk with folks about books science, math and sports as a fast step toward personally sharing the good news about Jesus” Whereas Allan Bloom thinks that a liberal education “leads nowhere beyond itself,” we must be able to demonstrate...how our classes equip us for evangelizing (PT3).

6. Our synod’s pastors and teachers realize that during their education they could not know to which fields their calls would take them. They are grateful for the breadth of their preparation.

In my opinion...specialized courses have limited worth prior to the real-life teaching experience. The teaching courses and workshops that I have taken since graduation, both from DMLC and public colleges have been valuable because I could relate the new ideas to past real-life classroom situations There is a definite need for specialized courses to prepare the teacher for the classroom, [and] yet one can only pick up so much in theory (T2).

Since the majority of our teachers fulfill their calling in self-contained classrooms I believe that at DMLC we should stay away from producing graduates who are specialized in one field. Instead we should be broadening the base in all areas of liberal arts. This is not how I felt when I was at DMLC. I took all the math courses I could ... My training at DMLC prepared me very well for the advanced math courses I took at the U of M ... All of this study has had little application to my teaching at the upper elementary level. I certainly do not recommend that we stop students from pursuing their interests, but too often I feel students concentrate in an area where they are strong; and neglect their weaknesses. The adding of the fifth year at DMLC is a step in the right direction. We are producing graduates who are specialized, but not at the expense of a well-rounded education (T21).

While in college I had difficulty choosing specific courses of instruction, but after teaching I have some ideas of where I could use some help, not only because of my personal shortcomings; but also because of requirements in my call or situations that arose. The summer school program has been a blessing to me (T22).

In our circles we are being trained for service. The type of service, scope of call is unknown to us in our training. I appreciate the broad background I was given, since it has helped me in areas [where] I never dreamed I would be serving, e.g.: [an] economics course I have taught the past two years; serving in the guidance area; being athletic director (ST1).

I believe that, had I specialized, with a boy’s view of the ministry, with gifts in the form of a rough-cut stony I might have missed some of the benefit I have derived from my studies... If I had specialized in English rather than in the area of counseling, if I had considered history of more value than the basics of math, would I be the “jack of all trades” the parish pastor must be? (P6)

Who in their right mind would claim to be wise enough to know how to prepare men for all the angles of the ministry? When I was [in California] I had to know accounting to reestablish an orderly system for cash flow and record keeping.... in starting a new church here [in Nevada] I had to do demographic work to select the area of town we should be in.... I have gone head to head with two developers... and have not been last; intimidated or written off as a Dan Quayle.... We can do it not only because God inspires us through his Word, but also because our training has given us the confidence and poise to meet anybody on whatever playing field they choose (except conspicuous consumption) (P26).

7. As members of the worker-training faculties, you yourselves are blessings God has given his church through broad-based liberal-arts worker-training curricula.

A concern for the ministry of the gospel has led our church to staff its training schools with pastors and teachers who know from the inside what the ministry is about. It has been the policy of our boards of control to publish requests for candidates for professorships without expecting that the nominees should have completed specialized subject-area education. That comes later. Our practice imposes on the professor after he accepts his call an obligation to attain depth in a particular subject area. Intensive continued education may place strains not only on the individual and his family, but on the synod and our schools as well. Sometimes we have been too easily satisfied with shallow subject-area preparation. Yet our church has persisted in calling pastors and teachers with broad liberal-arts training to its faculties.

Our boards of control call Christian human beings of particular character, talents and interests who want to serve where Christ and his church may call them. We have not encouraged those with scholarly inclinations to follow their own special interests by equipping themselves as soon as possible with academic qualifications. The church has not in effect asked men to nominate themselves for faculty positions by pursuing advanced degrees before they receive calls to teach in our prep schools and colleges. An age of specialization will subject this practice to increasing pressures. Most secondary and post-secondary educators specialize earlier in their educational careers; I expect that we will also be calling younger teachers to our worker-training schools. But even as we continue working to upgrade our professional competence and depth in our subject areas, maintaining our doctrine and practice of the call is well worth the sacrifice of easier academic recognition. The risen Lord provides pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:7-13). He gives the ministry to the church. Let the church decide how to use his gifts.

8. Our synod's pastors and teachers are grateful to the worker-training faculties for the education they received.

I would like to encourage the worker-training faculties to keep up the level of training that they are giving their students. Their job is not an easy one, as the times keep changing and so do the students' needs. But the spiritual training that they are giving their students is a gift that no one can replace (T23).

I realize my deep debt to the wisdom and foresight of X and his faculty for their appreciation of and their determination to continue a liberal arts curriculum in spite of the clamor around them for a more outwardly "Christian" curriculum on the one hand and a more specialized training on the other. I am reaching people with the gospel whom I never imagined I could reach.... It is because I was not trained to be an intolerant Bible banger... intent on and imprisoned by parochial points of view. My training opened me to many ideas and deepened the insight understanding, tolerance and tact necessary [for] reaching people from all walks of life without putting too many obstacles in the way of the gospel. These gifts are gifts of the Spirit but they are not given in a vacuum. Your insistence on a liberal arts education kept in step with the Spirit's guiding and reinforced the lessons God was teaching me (P26).

I would want to thank God for every professor who takes his calling seriously and does (his best) under God to be an example for the students, to encourage them in the ministry, and to prepare them for carrying on in the Savior's footsteps. Please tell them for me (P31).

June 6, 1990

Paul E. Eickmann

APPENDIX A

Letter to 56 *WELS* Pastors and 34 *WELS* Teachers
(Responses were received from 45 pastors, 27 teachers-80%.)

January-February, 1990

Dear _____,

The theme of the synodical professors' conference in June 1990 is "Becoming All Things To All Men." The title of the introductory essay assigned to me is "The Blessings of a Liberal-Arts-Based Worker-Training Curriculum in an Age of Specialization." I need your help to broaden the viewpoint of my essay and to keep it from becoming too academic.

Your name was supplied to me by _____.^{*} I asked him to identify church workers who might contribute insights regarding our synod's worker-training curricula. I hoped for contributions from workers acquainted with present conditions in our worker-training schools and so asked for names of people who entered the ministry during the last ten years or so. You have not been in the ministry for a long time, but the man who recommended you considered you qualified to help our worker-training faculties by commenting on how and what they are teaching.

This is not a statistical study. I am simply asking you to reflect on a particular aspect of your education: not on your theological preparation or on the educational and pastoral methods courses you took, but on the liberal-arts-based part of your training. How have you in your personal life and in your ministry been blessed through this aspect of your education?

Liberal studies have been defined as "education rooted in the concerns of civilization and our common heritage" or even as "education that liberates the learner in spirit and mind." Sometimes liberal studies are called "general education," i.e., not the courses that specifically prepare us for our vocation, but "the breadth component of the undergraduate curriculum." A school and college experience including such studies and under the influence of the gospel should produce an educated Christian, whatever his future vocation will be.

To illustrate from *WELS* college catalogs: the "liberal-arts-based" studies at DMLC are the college's "one basic curriculum of general education courses in religion, music, science, mathematics, and the humanities," together with area of concentration courses "selected from one of the following: English, mathematics, music, science, and social studies."

Northwestern College "offers a selective liberal arts program, with special emphasis on literature and the social sciences." Through these studies Northwestern "seeks to produce graduates with a well-rounded education." Courses in religion and foreign languages are also included in this objective, but not in their function as a specific preparation for seminary study and for the work of the ministry. Through their choice of free electives Northwestern students may concentrate on one of a small number of subject areas, but only to a limited degree.

Please give some thought to the topic and then answer the following four questions.

1. Do you consider your broad-based, liberal-arts training in high school and college to have been a blessing to you in your life and ministry, living as we do in an age of specialization? In what respect(s)? Do you have anecdotal or other evidence to support your opinion?

^{*} Each of the presidents of the twelve WEIS districts was asked to supply two names. Most scatted more. The administrators of the home and world mission boards each provided five missionaries' names. The Administrator of the Board for Parish Education kindly supplied the names of fifteen men and fifteen women in the teaching ministry. Two area Lutheran high school principals each sent the names of several high school instructors.

2. Do you wish you had been permitted to specialize to a greater degree with vocational subjects while you were in college? Which subjects, and why? Do you have anecdotal or other evidence to support your opinion?

3. Do you wish you had been able to broaden your education by taking other liberal-arts subjects beyond and in addition to those that were offered or required in college? Which subjects, and why? Do you have anecdotal or other evidence to support your opinion?

4. If you were presenting this topic to the teachers of your church's worker-training schools (high school, college, seminary), is there anything else that you would want to share with them?

I'd be grateful if you would answer within three weeks, i.e., by . If you can't help me at this time, please just jot a note to that effect on this letter and return it. I'll understand.

A postage-paid envelope is enclosed for your response. Thank you for whatever help you can give. I hope that it will be a contribution to the training of future WELS ministers. If you would like a copy of the paper, let me know and I will send it after the profs' conference.

God bless your work and ours!

Sincerely,

(Signed) Paul E. Eickmann

NOTE: The responses are being forwarded to the academic deans of DMLC and NWC as contributions to the next college self-studies.

APPENDIX B

GENERAL EDUCATION AT DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

NOTE: The principles incorporated in this statement were first reported to the DMLC faculty by the Academic Council in late 1967. The theses are quoted from "A *Status Study of Dr. Martin Luther College*," 1972.

1. General education is understood to be those common educational experiences derived from the significant areas of human knowledge that are deemed profitable to aid the Christian in his preparation for responsible participation in society according to his station in life.
2. General education is concerned with the Christian student's total being: his spiritual welfare, his intellectual gifts, his sense of values, his aesthetic sensitivity, and his physical well being as they stand in the perspective of Scriptural truth.
3. General education includes content from the following areas of human knowledge: (1) Religion, (2) Languages, (3) History and the Social Sciences, (4) Natural Sciences and Mathematics, (5) The Arts, (6) Physical Education and Health.
4. General education is important for the student who is preparing for the Lutheran teaching ministry not only for its value to him as a person, but also for its value to him in his work in the ministry,
 - a. For, by its very nature, general education provides the student with a rich background of intellectual knowledge and skills which one must necessarily possess to be a qualified candidate for the teaching ministry.
 - b. Furthermore, general education fortifies and enriches the student's understanding of the relationship between Scriptural truth and human knowledge; such an understanding is vital to his Christian world-view and gives direction to his work as a Christian teacher.
5. General education, through the common learnings inherent in its structure, provides a basis for intelligent communication which transcends personal interests and thus assists in establishing an *esprit de corps* within the teaching ministry.
6. General education is of primary importance to the student's specialized interest and study, for general education gives perspective to the student's learning as he pursues an area of concentration and a program of professional education.
7. General education, while fundamental to, and a substantial portion of, the student's preparation for the teaching ministry, is but a continuing part of his education. Therefore, general education should meet the student at, and take him beyond, his previous educational experience and provide him with what he needs to continue this kind of learning, either formally or informally, throughout his life.

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