

# **Chapter 9 – Standard 11b**

## **Ministry Formation**

### **Overview**

One of Lancaster Bible College’s Core Values & Goals (CV&G) is that we are “Committed to developing students for a ministry and service mindset as evidenced by preparing them both academically and spiritually to serve Christ in the Church and society.” Likewise, one of our academic Core Knowledge & Skills (CKS) is for all graduates to “Demonstrate an understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for serving Christ in the Church and society.” Therefore, it is clearly seen that ministry formation is embedded in who we are as a Bible college. This piece of a student’s development is part of our core and not merely an add-on. With that in mind, Chapter 1 of this self-study addresses the evidences that LBC is accomplishing its mission and CV&Gs, including #6, and Chapter 2 addresses the evidences that LBC is accomplishing its CKS including #7. Nevertheless, for the reviewer’s convenience, this section will pull together a summary of the process of ministry formation at LBC, especially in light of our rapid growth and expansion and the changing face of the Bible college student, two of the key issues on which we are focusing in this study.

### **Standard 11b**

*The institution’s academic programs are appropriate to the achievement of its mission and to the level of educational programs offered, with some programs oriented specifically to full-time vocational ministry but all programs enabling students to achieve a biblical worldview.*

## **Compliance Documented**

In keeping with a comprehensive report with a focus on key issues, the reader is directed to our [Compliance Index](#) showing evidence of our compliance with all appropriate essential elements of Standard 11b. We track the assessment and planning aspects of this standard through Taskstream workspaces for Student Life and Christian Service (first two years of ministry formation), through each of the academic program majors (after the first two years), Adult Learner Services (for accelerated programs) and through the Office for Institutional Effectiveness (institutional-wide evidences). While the documentation within these workspaces include ample evidence of our compliance with this standard, two examples noted later in this chapter come from input received from members of our community. In a 2010 Employer Survey, 94% of the employers of LBC graduates indicated that these employees demonstrated competence in Core Knowledge & Skill of “demonstrat[ing] an understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for serving Christ in the Church and society.” Likewise, in the spring of 2015, a survey was sent to various community members, most of whom supervise LBC students doing internships, field service, and Christian Service projects. Over 85% of respondents felt LBC was achieving its Core Value & Goal of being “committed to developing students for a ministry and service mindset as evidenced by preparing them both academically and spiritually to serve Christ in the Church and society.”

## **Research Questions**

With the purposes of advancing institutional self-understanding and self-improvement in mind, the following research question guided the study group in preparing this section:

1. What evidence is there that LBC maintains a consistent and effective process whereby undergraduate students at all levels, including those in our accelerated programs, are maturing in their ministry formation.

## **Analysis of Key Issues**

As noted in the Overview, ministry formation is embedded in who we are as a Bible college. Chapters 1 and 2 of this document note how ministry formation is included in both our Core Values and Goals and our Core Knowledge and Skills. This chapter builds upon the evidences found there and summarizes the process of ministry formation at LBC, especially in light of two of the key issues we are focusing on in this study: our rapid growth and expansion and the changing face of the Bible college student. This chapter provides evidence that Lancaster Bible College not only meets the essential elements of the Ministry Formation portion of the ABHE Academic Programs standard, but that LBC excels in the preparation of our students for ministry, both in the Church and society.

This remainder of this chapter is divided according to the following three foci:

- Ministry Formation in the First Two Years, as overseen by our Student Life Department
- Ministry Formation in the Academic Programs, as overseen by the programs within academic departments (including a section addressing our accelerated undergraduate degrees)
- Institutional evidence of ministry formation, as compiled by our Office for Institutional Effectiveness

### **Ministry Formation in the First Two Years**

The foundation for ministry formation is provided during the student's first two years here on campus and is overseen by the Student Life Department. The Student Life Department exists to

help fulfill LBC's mission by cultivating a culture of encouraging students to assess life and circumstances in light of a biblical worldview. Through intentional investment and deliberate care, Student Life challenges students to live a life marked by integrity and effort, to develop healthy habits of stewardship and living, to grow in their God-given passions and abilities, and to serve the college community, the Church, and the world. This section of the chapter will examine how The Student Life Department carries out ministry formation within the first two years of an LBC student's experience by addressing the six ABHECOA essential elements as noted below.

## **Essential Elements**

- 1. A culture and programs that promote development of effective witnesses and servants in the church and the world at large.*

The development of LBC's students into effective witnesses and servants starts with the Weekend of Welcome [WOW]. Through group sessions, WOW introduces incoming students to LBC's mission "to educate Christian students to think and live a Biblical worldview in order to serve Christ by proclaiming Him in church and society." Academic Department Retreats continue the formation process through community-building and intellectual/faith development.

All students transitioning to LBC with fewer than 30 academic credits enroll in two semesters of First Year Experience [FYE]. In FYE students explore opportunities on and off campus as they experience LBC culture, serve, learn from others, and learn about themselves. The Student Learning Outcomes of FYE include seeking a deeper relationship with God, practicing servant leadership in a local church/organization, and formulating a goal driven plan for the pursuit of being a lifelong learner.

Student Life @ LBC hosts an annual Church Day at LBC as well as Ministry Thursdays in which students can familiarize themselves with area churches and ministries for the purpose of community and ministry. Student Life plans several Mission 3:30 service days throughout the academic year. Students are invited/encouraged to participate in serving organizations and ministries in the community. Students living in LBC's residence halls serve the community/church through semester ministry projects.

LBC's partnership with Compassion International encompasses a student's entire tenure at LBC. Each LBC student is partnered with a Compassion child to support throughout the student's four years at LBC. Students are encouraged to write to their child each semester in order to develop a discipleship relationship and inculcate a mindset of ministry outside of the walls of LBC and into the world.

During year two at LBC, students enroll in two semesters of Christian Service (CSV) in order to cultivate an attitude of humility through the development of relationships, seek opportunities to share the gospel with those in spiritual need, and learn hands-on skill through service.

2. *An educational philosophy in which ministry formation is viewed as an integral part of the student's education.*

LBC's mission has remained constant since 1933: *To educate* Christian students to think and live a biblical worldview and to proclaim Christ *by serving* Him in the church and society (italics added). LBC's curriculum is designed so that this purpose can be realized by each student who attends the college. LBC's Core Knowledge and Skills, along with the college's

Mission, form the grid through which each academic department and major filter their objectives. The entire curriculum is based on preparing graduates who:

- Demonstrate proficiency in knowing, interpreting, integrating, and applying the Scriptures
  - Demonstrate critical thinking skills and proficiency in acquiring, evaluating, communicating, and applying information
  - Develop an understanding and appreciation of, and compassion toward cultures of the world
  - Develop the principles necessary for a biblical worldview resulting in a dynamic understanding of one's role in relation to God, self, and the world
  - Demonstrate an understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for professional Christian ministry
3. *A program of supervision that provides an adequate basis for evaluating and guiding students in the pursuit of their professional goals.*

Academic advisors provide supervision for the evaluation and guidance in a student's professional goals. LBC's Counseling and Career Center (C3) also provides career counseling to students. A student's familiarity with the C3 office begins in the first semester through FYE's First Steps Coffeehouse. Familiarity with resources for professional development and attainment of goals is assessed in FYE.

4. *A ministry formation program coordinated by a director normally with faculty status and implemented under the supervision of faculty.*

The Director of Student Success, an adjunct professor, coordinates LBC's ministry formation program, CSV. The Director receives supervision from the Dean of Students as well as the Senior Vice President of Student Experience and the Provost's Office.

5. *Evidence that the program is adequately staffed and financially supported.*

The Director of Student Success, as well as two Graduate Assistants staff ministry formation at LBC. The Student Success budget was funded with \$14,060 for the 2016-2017 academic year. (Personnel Requisitions and budgets available for viewing upon request.)

6. *A system of ongoing program review and assessment of outcomes that results in program improvement.*

Yearly review of Student Learning Outcomes for FYE and CSV occurs. Assessment of student growth and formation transpires through assignments, and student/supervisor evaluations. Evidence of review and outcomes assessment is reflected in Taskstream. As a result of assessment, program improvements include an emphasis on students' church involvement and spiritual gifts assessment.

## **Ministry Formation in the Programs**

After the first two years, LBC students select one of LBC's 29 majors from our seven academic departments. Each major program builds upon the student's first two years of generic ministry formation by focusing on equipping the student to serve in the Church and society through his or her chosen field of study. [Appendix 9A](#) includes reports from each of the seven departments summarizing the various methods used to instill ministry skills in their students. Each of these 20 programs has a Taskstream Assessment & Planning workspace where they recorded direct and

indirect evidences that their students/graduates have met the ministry formation learning outcomes for their programs.

While the various programs deliver and assesses ministry formation in slightly different ways, some common characteristics can be found.

- Homework/projects with a specific focus on ministry formation
- Courses with a specific focus on ministry formation
- Practicums, internships, student teaching, and other field service assignments

Ministry formation is even a key part of our Accelerated Undergraduate Degrees (AUD) program. AUD students take part in a “Christian Service” program. This program is implemented under the faculty-ranked Associate Dean. Adult learners are expected to stay engaged in Christian Service in their present contexts (work, ministry, church). AUD does not require internships nor practicums in its curriculum. Full-time students in their second and subsequent terms with AUD are required to identify what they will be doing for ministry formation, and who their supervisor will be. That supervisor provides evaluation and guidance. AUD students are engaged in “Christian Service” until they graduate, regardless of level status (whether freshman, sophomores, juniors or seniors). In this way AUD uses Ministry Formation as an integral part of the student’s education throughout their journey.

### **Institutional Evidence of Ministry Formation**

As noted at the beginning of this report, one of Lancaster Bible College’s Core Values & Goals is that we are “Committed to developing students for a ministry and service mindset as evidenced by preparing them both academically and spiritually to serve Christ in the Church and society.” Likewise, one of our academic Core Knowledge & Skill is for all graduates to “Demonstrate an

understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for serving Christ in the Church and society.”

The Office for Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) is tasked with the goal of documenting evidence that shows we are meeting this Core Value & Goal (CVG) and Core Knowledge & Skill (CKS). We track evidences through our Taskstream Assessment & Planning workspace. Just a few of the relatively recent evidences found there include the following:

**CVG #6 - Committed to developing students for a ministry and service mindset as evidenced by preparing them both academically and spiritually to serve Christ in the Church and society.**

**Evidences from our Community:** In the spring of 2015, a survey was sent to various community members, most of whom supervise LBC students doing internships, field service, and Christian Service projects (see [Appendix 1B](#)). The respondents are a fairly accurate representation of our local community, albeit with a heavy leaning towards those in religious organizations. Of the 58 survey respondents, over 40% identified themselves as local pastors or ministry leaders, about 30% as teachers, and the rest as business owners and community leaders. Survey participants were asked whether they agree that LBC is fulfilling each of its Core Values & Goals. Over 90% of the 58 participants believed LBC is meeting all seven of its Core Values & Goals. Specifically, 85.5% agreed that LBC was achieving CVG #6.

**Evidences from our Adult Students:** Approximately every five years LBC administers the Adult Students Priorities Survey (ASPS) to adult students enrolled in either our on-campus accelerated undergraduate programs (five locations) or our graduate programs. The Priority Survey of Online Students (PSOS) is administered to our adult students enrolled in our accelerated undergraduate

programs (AUDs) solely online. (LBC does not offer any other program totally online except the AUDs.) Both surveys showed remarkably high scores in almost all areas of the CV&Gs categories. These scores also showed higher satisfaction than the national comparison groups.

Of the 522 adult students in our on-campus programs (accelerated degree programs and graduate students) asked to participate in the ASPs, 169 (32%) completed the survey. LBC added campus-specific questions asking our adults students about our Core Values & Goals. All of our CV&Gs were found to be in the top 12 of our strengths according to our adult students, with CVG #7 ranking 11<sup>th</sup>. (See [Appendix 1K](#) for full results.)

Likewise, online adult students found that LBC is doing a pretty good job in meeting our Core Values & Goals. Ruffalo Noel-Levitz's Priorities Survey for Online Learners (PSOL) was administered in the early spring of 2015. This is a national survey which covers items of specific relevance to students who are pursuing degrees via distance education. LBC results were compared with a national comparison group made up of over 118,300 respondents. Of the 118 LBC students asked to participate, 35 (30%) completed the survey (see [Appendix 1L](#) for full results). While CVG #6 was not ranked in the top ten, it did fall in the acceptable range and, therefore, was not rated as a "challenge."

**CKS #7 - Demonstrate an understanding and application of the knowledge and skills necessary for serving Christ in the Church and society.**

In a 2010 Employer Survey, 94% of the employers of LBC graduates indicated that employee demonstrated competence in CKS #7 as appropriate to the position held. As of Fall 2016, 170 different Assessment Annotations have been submitted linked to CKS #7. The Assessment Annotation form is a tool faculty use to document some of the assessment activities taking place in the classroom. The form allows faculty to document that their students are indeed achieving the

course's student learning outcomes. It also allows them to reflect on areas which need to be tweaked to increase their effectiveness in the classroom. In addition to identifying the course outcome being measured by the assessment activity, the form allows faculty to link their assessment to programmatic outcomes, Bible & Theology outcomes, Arts & Sciences outcomes, and Core Knowledge & Skills.

Our [Institutional Effectiveness web page](#) (Appendix 2E) includes other evidences of the ministry formation of our students including the following.

- A report documenting 2012-2013 service hours showed that LBC students logged in 51,725 hours of service through:
  - Christian Service - 2,340 hours
  - Practicums - 12,620 hours
  - Internships - 19,752 hours
  - Field Service - 12,320 hours
  - Student Teaching - 12,320 hours
- 90% of LBC Alumni felt adequately prepared to proclaim Christ through service in church and society
- 73% of LBC Alumni volunteer at a Christian organization other than their church
- 81% of LBC Alumni were active in their local communities
- LBC Alumni serve around the globe. Since 1964, over 55 countries have been touched by the ministry of LBC alumni who use the education and training they received to impact the lives of unbelievers and believers alike.

## **Key Strengths Noted in This Section**

- LBC has a consistent and effective process of ministry formation. LBC students begin the process of ministry formation virtually from day one on campus with a Weekend of Welcome as our Mission and Core Values and Goals are instilled in them. The process continues through their First Year Experience, their second year of Christian Service, and then through their major program.
- There is ample evidence, ranging from indirect self-reporting to direct input from employers and other community members, to show that the ministry formation of our graduates has enabled them to “proclaim Christ by serving Him in the Church and society.”

## **Suggestion**

1. While there is institutional-wide aggregate evidence that LBC graduates are well prepared for ministry, there is less evidence of such stemming from specific programs. Academic programs should pursue additional ways in which they can document that graduates of their programs have been adequately prepared for ministry, both in the Church and in society.

## **Recommendations for Growth and Improvement**

None