

**REPORT TO THE FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL OF  
THE FELLOWSHIP OF GRACE BRETHREN CHURCHES  
FROM GRACE COLLEGE AND GRACE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**Prepared by Ronald E. Manahan, President  
18 January 2007**

This report is presented at the request of the Fellowship Council and provides information regarding how Grace Schools, Inc. (Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary) supports and pursues the *GrowGoLead* vision of the FGBC. As a cooperating organization that has voluntarily chosen to associate with the FGBC, the institution is committed to this vision within the sphere of its incorporated activity as an accredited Christian higher education institution and its stated mission: “Grace is an evangelical Christian community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence, and preparing for service.”

**“Grow”**

As indicated in reports to the Council in prior years, evangelistic outreach efforts develop through a number of initiatives that are pursued during each academic year. These initiatives are aimed at encouraging students and staff to be involved in settings that provide *engagement* with those who have not come to faith in Christ. These settings include ministry teams sent out locally and regionally from campus, the Halloween alternative called FunFest (this year an event for the general public with approximately 1,200 community members attending this student-led evangelistic initiative), and Heart of the Holidays (a distribution of food, clothing, supplies, etc. to needy families with whom the gospel is shared; this year it involved most students).

During this 2006-2007 academic year we put a special emphasis on engagement with others as a means of staying in touch with non-Christians. Students and staff alike have been engaged in a number of these initiatives. In August 2005 about 170 student leaders plus staff spent a day doing service projects scattered through our county, an initiative called “Incarnate.” At the end of the day a rally was held to which those served were invited to hear about God. This project grew out of contacts Grace personnel established through the Kosciusko (County) Leadership Academy (KLA). Each year KLA provides 25 young leaders from the community with a year-long exposure to all the major facets of our community and to major leaders in our region. Grace personnel are involved each year as director of the program, presenters, and participants. The Incarnate project allows Grace students and staff to team with county organizations in order to serve our county. This year various ministry projects will take students near (Chicago) and far (Philippines). 73 students are studying or student teaching in a number of states (from Virginia to Hawaii) and countries (Argentina, Brazil, England, France, Germany, Guam, Peru, Philippines, Spain). These experiences put them in contact with many non-Christians and gave students the opportunity to live out the Christian life in these settings. The college’s School of Music creates additional opportunities for many students to interact with community people through chorus, ensemble, chamber, and symphony

performances. Another project of engagement with our community relates to a gift the campus has received to develop a water quality project. Grace will have the managing role and will work with all of the county school systems, lake associations, soil and water district, and other interested parties.

Our institutional goal through these efforts is to create opportunities where employees and students learn ways of engaging non-Christians. Additional outreach settings include internships, intercollegiate sports team ministries, sports camps, tutoring experiences, service on community and regional boards, consulting work, service clubs, and professional organizations.

Another initiative related to “growing” is noteworthy. Grace continues giving training to students engaged in business internships (specifically the *Orthopaedic Scholars Institute*), encouraging and teaching them how to live out their faith in the workplace so that their life makes a difference for Christ and for the company where they serve.

### **“Go”**

The regular academic rhythm from year to year provides opportunity for broadening the global vision of students. Sometimes this happens through courses and programs. During the Freshman Foundations course (required of all first-year college students) every student was required to fulfill four hours of community service. Global Perspectives helps students develop an appreciation for other cultures and encourages ministry and service engagement with those outside their comfort zone. One requirement of this course is that college students must spend at least ten days within another culture. Every student who is graduated from Grace College must complete this requirement. Furthermore, a number of students take intercultural ministry courses. Often these courses are populated with students seriously considering ministry service.

Other students, of course, are studying modern languages. Those majoring in a language must spend one year abroad studying the language in a target culture and those minoring must spend at least one semester.

As reported to you previously, a campus-driven Latino initiative continues developing and networking throughout our county. This effort has developed opportunities within the county’s school systems (including elementary, middle, and secondary schools), the Kosciusko County Community Foundation, Sus Amigos, and others. This year a Latino VIP campus visit day was held and about 30 area Latino students visited campus. We hope to see a number of them enroll.

This year a number of individuals have helped students and employees understand more of other regions of the world through guest lectures, the Conference on Mission, international students, students for whom English is a second language, and faculty members from a culture outside the United States.

Seminary faculty members are engaged in various ministries, sometimes weekend church ministries and other times seminars, workshops, and teaching outside the country. The seminary is advancing the work of the Korean Studies Program. This year two Grace faculty members have traveled in Korea and made contacts with church leaders. Other US-Korean contacts are being explored. We fully intend to see the program grow.

The seminary has taken the necessary steps to become accredited to offer CEUs for use by churches and church leaders. Additionally the seminary is close to beginning development of online seminary courses.

### **“Lead”**

Leadership development at Grace College and Seminary includes professional ministry leadership and ministry leadership beyond. The arts and sciences undergraduate education sends leaders out into various careers. In particular the seminary in recent time has added three excellent young professors who are deeply committed to ministry and have local church and para-local church ministry experience, and they are fine scholars. I am very encouraged by the direction the seminary is taking.

The seminary is working with FGBC personnel to provide educational services at the Equip '07 Conference. The results of the prior Equip conference were encouraging, and the same result is expected for Equip '07.

The *Center for Character and Leadership Development* continues its effective service in the college. Between 175 to 200 students participate. The *Orthopaedic Scholars Institute* on the Grace campus continues preparing students regarding how to live out their Christian faith in the workplace. Additionally the *Prison Education Program*, serving 275 plus students, continues its discipleship program, educating and helping inmates prepare for their release and for living out the Christian life both inside and outside prison.

During the spring of 2007 Grace is partnering with a church to provide a ministry leadership conference for approximately 100 African-American pastors plus other lay leaders. Grace is providing seminars for the conference.

A business plan for online education has now been completed, and plans are quickly falling into place for online education for the seminary and perhaps some in the college as well. A faculty member is moving toward the end of his Ph.D. program in online education at Capella University. This means that the institution will have internal expertise regarding instructional design and online education.

### **Institutional Background Information**

The 2006-2007 year is bringing administrative changes to Grace. Currently there are three searches going on to fill key administrative positions. Two of the searches are to fill positions being vacated. The other position is a new one.

As you know by now Dave Plaster is leaving Grace (May 2007) to assume the senior pastor role of the Grace Brethren Church of Columbus. I am most sad to see Dave leave but happy for his new opportunity. Below is a copy of the text of his announcement on campus. It provides a good statement on his leaving.

On Sunday, 19 November, Dr. Dave Plaster accepted the invitation to become senior pastor of the Grace Brethren Church of Greater Columbus (Ohio). This is a great honor for him, and the strength of the church's vote makes clear that this is a God-directed match between church and leader. During the next weeks a transition arrangement for Dave will be developed. On the one hand I am really excited for him and the church; I know he will have a great ministry. On the other hand I am saddened to see a highly regarded and respected colleague who has done so much good for the institution transition to the next phase of ministry. Dave will continue serving at Grace as he has until arrangements for his transition to the church are completed, and the implementation of those arrangements begins. In his resignation letter Dr. Plaster wrote the following. "It is with a great deal of emotion that I officially resign my position as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Grace. I have invested a great deal of my life and ministry here. I have served in the administration for almost twenty years. My teaching career began as a part-time seminary instructor in 1982. Should the Lord have directed, I would have been happy to continue my work here (at Grace). However, I have accepted the invitation of the Grace Brethren Church of Greater Columbus to serve as senior pastor. I strongly believe that this is the Lord's direction for my future ministry."

A provost position (will carry many of the senior most administrative roles Dave filled plus additional ones) search is already underway, and the hope is to have a person in that position by the summer of 2007. Our current dean of students is joining our graduate faculty in counseling beginning in August 2007. Thus a new dean is necessary, and the search to fill this position is nearing completion and interviews will begin soon. A new position is being developed, vice president for college academic affairs. That search is now closed and interviews with candidates should begin within weeks.

Here is additional institutional information. The total 2006-2007 combined institutional enrollment is 1,409 students (fall semester), a record enrollment in the history of Grace. As an institution Grace carries on five major educational endeavors: The arts and sciences undergraduate on-campus college, the prison education program, the masters programs in counseling, the seminary, and educational ministries and services (examples are ministry teams; tutoring of P-12 students; *Latino Initiative*; *Reneker Museum*, *Mount Memorial Art Gallery*; *American Lyceum Lecture Series*; *MasterWorks Festival*; conferences and seminars; and camps).

The 165-acre campus has more than twenty buildings totaling nearly 500,000 sq. ft. of space. A major new facility, the Orthopaedic Capital Center, a 60,000 sq. ft. multi-use building (capacity for speaking and concert events is 2,800; will house college chapel; has smaller meeting rooms with capacities ranging from 35 to 200; can host small trade

shows; can host regional corporation meetings; will provide for intercollegiate sports; will house the Institute for Enterprise Development) is scheduled for completion in May 2007. Approximately \$1.5 million still needs to be raised toward the \$9.1 million structure. In addition there is an outdoor athletic field (Miller Field) that provides intercollegiate baseball, softball, tennis, and soccer facilities. Morgan Library houses 160,000 volumes plus a microfiche collection, archives, an online data retrieval system, and special collections including the papers of American evangelist, Billy Sunday, and a manuscript collection (will be a part of a national display in Charlotte, NC). The library is also part of a nation-wide interlibrary loan system and is networked to data bases providing more than 19,000 full-text periodical titles.

The college and seminary are regionally accredited by The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (Chicago). Grace Theological Seminary is an associate member and is in process to become a full member of the Association of Theological Schools, the accrediting body for theological accreditation in the United States and Canada.

Specialized accreditation is also held by the following programs.

- Business International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education
- Music National Association of Schools of Music
- Social Work Council of Social Work Education
- Teacher Education National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
- MA in Counseling Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

Grace is a member of the Alpha Chi National Honor Society, the smaller college equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa. Furthermore, Grace also belongs to a number of education associations: Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, Independent Colleges of Indiana, Independent Colleges of Indiana Foundation, Indiana Commission for Higher Education, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Council of Independent Colleges. Regarding intercollegiate athletics Grace belongs to the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, the Mid-Central Conference, and the National Christian College Athletic Association.

Currently Grace employs 190 full-time, 120 part-time, and 280 student employees, a total of 590.