

Stories and Organizational Culture in Theological Education

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Abstract

A seminary's stories communicate the truths, practices and expectations of that community. The stories that we tell and retell over the years allow us to express commonalities, celebrate differences, voice dissent, and articulate collective vocation. All of these aspects of a school's organizational culture are formative influences on the student, contributing to the implicit curriculum of theological education. Drawing primarily on the fields of organizational theory, story-telling and theological education, this paper explores how institutional stories both reflect and produce organizational culture in theological education. Particular attention will be given to describing the ways in which organizational stories contribute to the transmission of values and knowledge in seminary culture and subcultures. Ultimately, this research asks faculty and administrators in institutions of theological education to consider the impacts of their informal "every day stories" on the formation of their students.