

**Matthew Floding, ed., *Welcome to Theological Field Education!* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2011), 206 pp.**

In *Welcome to Theological Field Education*, Matt Floding has gathered together some of the luminaries who teach and work at the intersections of theology and practice to offer their collective wisdom about several of the major components that comprise a robust Field Education program in theological schools. The end result is a very accessible book, which will be most beneficial to several different audiences including students preparing for field education, new and seasoned supervisor/mentors, as well as faculty and administrators responsible for experiential learning in a theological curriculum.

In this edited volume, each chapter gives deep consideration to one dimension of field education in such a way that it is possible to use select chapters as resources to the learning agendas of the audience with whom one is working. For example, I could envision asking theological students to read Floding's introductory chapter, "What is Theological Field Education?" *prior to* even beginning their work in reflective practice. I could then imagine using the concrete tools Lee Carroll offers in his chapter, "The Forming Work of Congregations" as a way to gain a complexified understanding of one's learning context. Also, I can imagine using Emily Click's essay, "Ministerial Reflection" in an attempt to teach reflective skills; and I can see benefit in asking students to return to this same essay once they are more fully engaged in the experience.

Similarly, each of the chapters on case studies, peer group reflection, self-care, ethics, assessment, and cross-cultural placements could be used as stand alone resources for use with students or supervisors. Many of the chapters have a section aimed specifically at those who supervise/mentor our students which could easily become components of an ongoing training program.

In addition to these helpful, topically defined chapters, Charlene Jin Lee and Lorraine Ste-Marie each offer a chapter which helps us understand the meta-narrative of this work in experiential education. Lee's chapter, "The Art of Supervision and Formation" considers the poetics and artful dimension of this work which helps locate it, ultimately, in the heart of mystery. This chapter suggests that we would do well to think metaphorically and artfully about the images which inform our teaching. Ste-Marie's chapter, "Language and Leadership" helps us peel back our assumptions about language itself, so that our acts of leadership might have more integrity. One of the most daunting pedagogical challenges facing theological field educators at any school is that of teaching our students how to reflect theologically on their experience. Whether we serve at a denominational seminary with clear theological tenets and claims, or whether we serve at an ecumenical divinity school, where the theological landscape beckons with many paths, helping our students do the integrative work at the intersections of theology and practice remains our central task. This book by Matt Floding and our colleagues provides wisdom in creating the "scaffolding" upon which we can design a program of deep and rich theological reflection.

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