



2011 ATFE Biennium

**A PEER REVIEW OF  
RESOURCES: MANUALS,  
HANDBOOKS, AND WEBSITES**

Sam Johnson, Stephanie Sauve,  
and Richard Cunningham

# 31<sup>th</sup> Biennial Consultation

## January 19 to 22 2011

San Juan, Puerto Rico

### A Peer Review of Resources: Manuals, Handbooks and Web Sites

#### A Working Group

**Leaders:** Sam Johnson, Boston University, School of Theology  
Stephanie Sauve', Colgate Rochester, Crozer Divinity School  
Richard Cunningham, Seattle University, School of Theology and Ministry

#### **Recommendation [to ATFE Steering Committee]:**

Those participating in this working group, the presenters, participants (audience) and the leadership affirmed the need for peer review of field educators – handbooks, manuals, and resources or course-packs.

- The working group recommends to the ATFE Steering Committee that this Working Group be offered again at the next consultation with these modifications
  1. The working group be offered in the first two days of the Consultation
  2. Time will always be a factor in this workshop. This unique pedagogical approach needs more time than other workshops. Ideally 2 time slots with a break in the middle would be very helpful. The length of the working group needs to be at least 3 hrs.
  3. It is necessary to cap the number of participants to 12 persons. Peer review participants need to register for this working group 2 months prior to the consultation.
  4. Consultation participants who do not submit documents are welcome to participate in the review process as an inquirer / observer.
  5. We will look for ways to facilitate the exchange of documents – this will eliminate the need for hard copies. Participants will be encouraged to exchange documents online.
  6. Down the road we believe it will be good and necessary to expand this peer review process to “refereeing” web based documents [in contrast to hard copy manuals / handbooks].
  7. Post the three Appendixes attached to this document on the ATFE Web site under the heading Manual and Handbook Guides
    - Appendix A – Guidelines for Manuals and Handbooks
    - Appendix B – Handbook
    - Appendix C- Rubric for Assessing Handbooks and Manuals
- Recognition of the participants. It was generally thought that a letter from the facilitators of this working group to the president or dean of the institution state the

value of this unique peer review process. In addition, a Certificate accompanies the letter and to be presented to the field educator. Such a letter and certificate could become a part of the field educator's academic record or file. By employing this process, the ATFE Consultation is a visible part of the faculty review process or useful in rank and tenure consideration. [Certificate sample is below.]

- At present three persons have indicated a desire to be contacted:
  - Sam Johnson, Boston University, School of Theology
  - Stephanie Sauve', Colgate Rochester, Crozer Divinity School
  - Richard Cunningham, Seattle University, School of Theology and Ministry

### **Presenters and Participants:**

The Working Group on Field Education Resources [manuals, handbooks, websites] was attended by 17 individuals. Twelve field educators submitted their field education documents to other field educators for peer review. The twelve presenting documents were:

Glenn Prescott, Golden Gate Baptist Seminary  
Elizabeth Soto, Lancaster Theological Seminary  
Tammy Wilden, Methodist Theological School in Ohio

This is the 4consecutive ATFE Consultation that this Working Group has been offered. A total of 61 persons have attended the sessions with 28 persons submitting documents for peer review.

### **Academic Standards**

The academic institutions represented by the members of ATFE place a high value on academic rigor, educational standards, research and scholarship. In the main, most Field Educators are responsible for producing a variety of documents that have a wide variety of uses within their institutions.

The leadership of this working group are committed to assisting colleagues raise the level of appreciation for and use of documents as a powerful means of communicating with different institutional audiences. These field educators' documents are significant teaching tools providing opportunities to address critical issues in pastoral ministry and preparation for ministry. These documents have great potential to address multiple audiences when used to their fullest such as - students, inquirers, supervisors, faculty, local congregations, denominational leaders and pastors. This process encourages authors to meet accepted standards.

### **Peer Review**

Higher education has a keen understanding of the value of reviewing one's own work as well as the work, research, methodology, assumptions of another. Sometimes the peer review process is called "refereeing" another work. Such is the case with this ATFE Working Group. Field Educators have developed a highly specialized language that makes them well qualified to referee each other's work.

Peers are well qualified and often the most critical judge of the how, what, where, and why of programs, process and scholarship. Not only did each participant contribute to this disciplined process, they discovered ways to improve their own materials.

These educational documents were scrutinized for their clarity of presentation, process descriptions, educational assumptions, pedagogical approaches, learning strategies, competency assessment, legal concerns and articulation of methods such as theological reflection and supervision. Prior to the meeting each participant was given instructions, guidelines or standards, and a rubric for evaluating documents. Reading a peer's document is fertile ground for analytical discovery – comparing and contrasting with what you have written in the midst of offering feedback to another.

### **The Peer Review Process:**

- Each presenter or peer is asked to distribute their documents [manual, handbook, web address] to the other participants and the leadership.
- Guidelines and resources are distributed to the participants prior to the Consultation.
- Peers will have an opportunity at the Consultation to give and receive both – verbal and written feedback from the other participants.
- Persons who did not submit documents for review are encouraged to participate in the Consultation session.

### **Guidelines and Rubric**

To assist field educators who have the task of designing or editing manuals and handbooks for use in their institutions the leadership of this working group have crafted several resources.

- Guidelines: a several-page guidance piece is intended to explore the function, purpose, audience of a handbook, manual or web site. [see attached #1]
- A Handbook on Theological Education Documents – this explores the basic elements of a handbook [see attached #2 ]
- Rubric: The Rubric is an assessment tool for reviewing essentials in a handbook or manual, e.g., sexual harassment, multi-cultural issues, legal issues, glossary of terms and definitions or descriptions. [see attached #3]

### **Outcomes of this Working Group**

Here are several theoretical strengths and values of this peer review process:

- It enables people new to the discipline of field education to enter into a community of field educators, be affirmed and obtain practical advice on a central part of their program. It is a win, win, win.
- The distance learning process employed in this peer review process encourages participants to send written or Internet materials to others where in the privacy of their own office they can examine the documents / postings of colleagues. This creates a safe environment to see what others are doing and to compare it to their own work. Usually, they see the uniqueness of their own context, the value of their own work, and readily make adjustments to improve their own manual, handbook or web site.
- Raised the bar on Field Education documents within the academy by giving practical suggestions for clear and tight writing, addressing legal issues, theological methods for a variety of different audiences.
- Building connections – people were delighted to put faces with names.
- Helped participants to view each other's work / program as a part of a larger community of scholarship and education across geographical boundaries and faith traditions.

The method of Peer review is a natural for field Educators and strengthens the ATFE guild. Educationally we observed the value of this process:

- They experience the value of peer review as a process.
- When peers send their handbooks to a stranger within the ATFE community, when they leave the workshop they are part of the ATFE community with friends and colleagues they did not have before. Deep respect and appreciation of each other
- Peers begin to understand theological field education as a discipline that has theory, standards, and colleagues.
- Desire to help others better their document and programs
- A collegial spirit that was positive and affirming.

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### **A certificate and Letter**

Those completing the Peer review process are given a certificate. In addition, the president or dean of their school is sent a letter acknowledging the field educators participation in the peer review process.

### **Association for Theological Field Education Certificate of Completion**

is hereby granted to

[name of school]

to certify that

[name of field educator]

has submitted Field Education Documents  
for peer review

Granted: January 22, 2011

[Signed by working group leaders]

The Association for Theological Field Education is in an affiliated relationship with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS)

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**Date: February 4, 2011**

**To: Matthew Floding  
Chair, ATFE**

**From: Dick Cunningham**

**Regarding: Affirmations and Recommendation [to ATFE Steering Committee]:**

Those participating in this working group, the presenters, participants (audience) and the leadership affirmed the need for peer review of field educators – handbooks, manuals, and resources or course-packs.

- The working group affirms and recommends to the ATFE Steering Committee that this Working Group be offered again at the next consultation with these modifications
  1. We affirmed the time frame of the working group in the total schedule of the Consultation.
  2. The longer block of time worked well for the peer feedback to take place – 3 hrs is excellent.
  3. Keep in mind that the peer review participants need to register for this working group 2 months prior to the consultation.
  4. Consultation participants who do not submit documents are welcome to participate in the review process as an inquirer / observer.
  5. We will look for ways to facilitate the exchange of documents – this will eliminate the need for hard copies. Participants will be encouraged to exchange documents online.
  6. Down the road we believe it will be good and necessary to expand this peer review process to “refereeing” web based documents [in contrast to hard copy manuals / handbooks].
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    - Appendix C-Rubric for Assessing Handbooks and Manuals
- It was generally thought that a letter to the president or dean of the institution and Certificate be given to the field educator which could be used in faculty review or rank and tenure consideration.
- At present three persons have indicated a desire to be contacted:
  - Stephanie Sauve’, Crozer Divinity School – [Ssauve@crcds.edu](mailto:Ssauve@crcds.edu)
  - Jimmy DuPree, Pentecostal Theological Seminary [jdupree@ptseminary.edu](mailto:jdupree@ptseminary.edu)

## **A Handbook on Theological Field Education Handbooks and Manuals**

**The following is an outline of a possible *Handbook on Handbook and Manuals* that comes out of the Workshop and will be used in as a working document for future workshops on handbooks and manuals. It could be developed as an instrument to be put on the ATFE website and/or published in the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*.**

Introduction: What is the Issue? How this Handbook came about.

### Chapter I Handbook versus Manual

- Definition
- Context
  - Free standing non-denominational seminary
  - Free standing denomination seminary
  - University related non-denomination seminary
  - University relation denominational seminary
  - Variations

### Chapter II Who is the Perspective Reader?

- User
  - Student
  - Supervisor
  - Intern Committee Member
  - Peer Reflection Group Leader
- Seminary Member
  - Dean/President
  - Director, Assistant Directors
  - Administrative Assistants
  - Faculty
  - Other
- Denominational Executive
- Site Administrators
- Other Field Educators
- Lawyers

### Chapter III What are the Purposes?

- Provide a description of the program
- Provide an understanding of the program's philosophy and methodology
- Provide an explanation of how it fits into the Seminary's curriculum
- Clarify and highlight requirements
- Provide a legal document in case of litigation
- Provide documents and materials for the course

## Appendix - B

### Chapter IV How Does One Layout the Handbook or Manual?

- Cultural considerations depending upon the context
  - Academy
  - Church
  - Agencies
- User considerations
- Guidelines for layout
  - User friendly
  - Getting started in the field education program
  - Reference use during the field education program
  - White space is a value
  - Line length is a consideration
  - Font use is important
  - Table of contents is a must; an index is helpful
- Organization, what goes where?

### Chapter V Things to Consider

- Glossary
- Pictures
  - Staff
  - School, sites, students
  - Faculty who are involved
- Graphics
- Descriptions of director, support staff, faculty
- Length
- Online, pdf



## Appendix C

### RUBRIC FOR MANUALS & HANDBOOKS ATFE Peer Review

#### I. Type of Material and Cover

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The document is clearly identified as: Handbook, Manual, Resource, Course Pack, or Syllabus.</li> <li>The target audience is clearly named and/or identified: E.g., Student, local congregation, mentor, coach, supervisor, faculty</li> <li>Cover is descriptive of its contents</li> <li>Cover uses typeface / font that is easy to read and functional</li> <li>Table of Contents is directional and provides an outline for the contents</li> </ul>			

#### II. Purpose of Manual or Handbook

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall purpose is easy to locate and clearly stated               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A conveyer of information</li> <li>A legal document of expectations, requirements, process</li> <li>A classroom guidance and reference point</li> <li>An external document for administrators</li> </ul> </li> <li>Reveals and explains the terms or words used in the program with clarity and usable definitions</li> <li>The layout/design/ style fit the purpose of the manual</li> <li>Intuitively connects the document with the reader</li> <li>Links organization of the program with specifics – moving from broad concepts to the particulars</li> <li>Multi-cultural issues are presented and articulated</li> </ul>			

#### III. Scholarship and Assessment

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content presents material that is academically rigorous</li> <li>Is pedagogical approach is named and illustrated</li> <li>Learning goals, outcomes, competencies, are obvious</li> <li>Material is a thoughtful link between the theology of knowing and the practice of ministry</li> <li>A clear outline of student assessment is stated</li> <li>Primary sources, theologians and practitioners are properly footnoted</li> <li>A bibliography is present and up to date</li> </ul>			

#### IV. Pedagogy | Expectations

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student expectations and requirements are obvious:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grading criteria is stated</li> <li>Assignments   due dates   procedures   processes are named</li> </ul> </li> <li>Peer and self feedback [evaluation] is described and defined</li> <li>Pedagogical approach and learning theory</li> <li>Material addresses: call to ministry   family of origin   personal story myth  </li> </ul>			

**RUBRIC FOR MANUALS & HANDBOOKS**  
**ATFE Peer Review**  
**Page Two**

**V. Theological Reflection**

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defines model and/or methods of theological reflection</li> <li>• Leads one to understand the role of a reflective practitioner engaging hermeneutics, interpretation, scripture, tradition</li> <li>• Helps the student meaning making</li> <li>• Unpacks the story, elaborates on its implications, explores its meanings at the human or doctrine level</li> <li>• Explores ambiguities, gaps, places that don't fit</li> <li>• Doesn't wrap up incident in neat tidy way—goes beyond a Sunday School lesson or beyond “automatic” church or ecclesiastical language</li> <li>• Identifies that deity that the student is pursuing</li> <li>• Conclusion and prayer show insightful connection between experience and the theological understanding</li> </ul>			

**VII. Internship | Problem Resolution | Denominational Involvement | Legal Documents**

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough description of the elements of an internship</li> <li>• Identifies problem resolution – sexual harassment, dual relationships, dating, power dynamics and authority</li> <li>• Articulates legal documents used and provides specific forms</li> <li>• Specifies denominational or ecclesial roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Names how local or teaching congregations are involved – and defines the roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• States the process for removing a student from the program or an internship site</li> </ul>			

**VIII. Voice, Style, and Readability**

<i>Criteria</i>	Strong	Satisfactory	Needs work
<i>How does the document meet the criteria.....</i>	Meets at high level	Meets most criteria	Meets few criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is clear, easy-to-follow, readable</li> <li>• Is tightly written, concise; avoids wordiness; doesn't ramble</li> <li>• Occasionally has imaginative flair—good metaphor, striking image, apt nugget of insight</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>			