
PANEL DISCUSSIONS

“I Will Give You Shepherds”

Student Formation, Research Literacy, and Accreditation Standards

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ABSTRACT Key Church documents communicate the guiding principles for seminary education and formation programs. We will explore how the library interprets these and creates policy for library resources and services, especially those relating to information and research literacy programs. We will discuss how library policies and programs created in this way can support accrediting standards.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This project started as a yearlong consideration by three Roman Catholic seminary library directors of how information literacy fits in the framework of Church documents on formation and ATS standards that define the seminary library and the institution it supports. We work to form men to become priests for the entire Church, and the community of libraries and librarians in Catholic seminary formation is small enough to share best practices, collaborate on projects, and learn from each other's successes and setbacks. We titled our panel presentation “I Will Give You Shepherds,” the English translation of

the title of Pope John Paul II's 1992 exhortation on priestly formation, *Pastores dabo vobis*, to emphasize the focus on approaches that consider the documents of the Church in the role of the theological library.

This past year, Jennie came across a book of essays that inspired her and sparked our efforts to support our faculty and students more effectively. The book was titled *Integrating Work in Theological Education*, published in 2017. This quote from the foreword by Stephen Graham inspired her thinking through the process:

Every institution committed to training people for ministry is embedded in a network of complex relationships that result in a labyrinth of responsibilities to sponsoring faith communities, to the judicatories that oversee a denomination or religious body . . . to accrediting agencies, and to the local civic context.¹

After Jennie arrived at Sacred Heart, in one of her first conversations with their academic dean, she learned that in previous accreditation cycles, Sacred Heart was found lacking in its ability to help students build integrative thinking skills. Though they have a series of classes where students work on these skills, the results are often not what they should be. She spent some time contemplating the following questions: What can the library do? How will our programs and services help to improve future ministry? How can we support students as they acquire information literacy skills and build integrative thinking practices to improve their writing as well as their preaching? How does all of this work? How do we get from a need to train priests to the complex enterprise that is theological education today?

The theological library is often covered by, even buried under, layers of governance, especially in a hierarchical organization as deep as the Roman Catholic Church. Our institutions have mission and vision statements that shape our work in the library. We are aware of the standards from ATS and regional accreditors that ensure they are performing in accordance with their stated mission, goals, and objectives. The foundational documents of the Church also play an important role in how we justify and advocate for the work we do and should not be overlooked.

However, the documents are not always as explicit as we would like them to be, especially when it comes to seeking guidance for

the theological library. For example, a word search of one particular document only contains two instances of the word “library.” Therefore, it is necessary to perform a deeper reading of these documents to find ways the library can support what is being called for in them. This process is hardly unique to libraries. A keyword search of the Gospels will only yield the term “church” twice, and yet the relationship between scripture and worship is unquestionably fundamental. Therefore, we will seek to draw connections from the documents to the library with the understanding that they implicitly, yet fundamentally, support our work.

We will begin with brief overviews and backgrounds of the institutions we serve. Next, we will explore three key documents of the Catholic Church regarding priestly formation: the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, *Optatam totius*, and the *Program of Priestly Formation* (from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops), and how they connect to our institutions and libraries. Finally, we will share how we each approach creating library policy for resources and services that support accrediting standards, and how those policies translate into action in the form of information literacy training in each of the three settings.

SACRED HEART SEMINARY & SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Sacred Heart Seminary & School of Theology is sponsored by a religious order, the Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJ), a global religious order founded in the nineteenth century by Leo John Dehon, a Frenchman who was born into an aristocratic family. Dehon earned degrees in science, law, philosophy, theology, and canon law. His ministry focused on education and improving conditions for the working class during the Industrial Revolution. He developed a charism that is motivated by the Sacred Heart of Jesus and works for social justice.

The seminary is located in the Milwaukee suburbs and trains priests for dioceses all over the U.S. They have a strong ESL program and serve a global church. In addition, after the Milwaukee Archdiocese declared bankruptcy in 2011, the archdiocesan seminary, St. Francis de Sales, closed their academic program. Students at St. Francis now complete their academic degrees at Sacred Heart. They grant MA and MDiv degrees. Students can earn a BA in partnership with Cardinal Stritch University. They also grant certificates in philosophy.

ST. JOHN VIANNEY SEMINARY

St. John Vianney Seminary (SJV) is located in Northern Colorado. Catholic seminary formation was accomplished at St. Thomas Aquinas Theological Seminary from 1908 to 1995. During that period of time, the seminary was run by the Vincentian Order of priests. In 1995, the seminary closed. The Archdiocese of Denver opened SJV in September 1999. It is a diocesan seminary now serving twelve dioceses around the country, as well as Vietnam, Uganda, and Myanmar.

SJV's educational programs vary by student and the bishop assigning the man to study. In any seminarian's first year, he encounters the Spirituality Year. This is a year of media fast (no news or communications outside the seminary, online or otherwise, except Saturday) with a focus on prayer, discernment, reading the Bible and Catechism, learning about the lives of the saints, and having assignments around campus for three hours per week. The library is one of those places.

After the Spirituality Year, comes Philosophy (or Pre-Theology). A seminarian can complete the Standard Program (no degree), earn a BA in Philosophy in collaboration with Regis University in Denver, or earn his Bachelor of Philosophy in affiliation with the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (PUSTA). During his subsequent four-year course of Theology studies, a seminarian will end with either the Master of Divinity based on SJV's accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools or a Bachelor in Sacred Theology (STB) in affiliation with PUSTA.

ST. PATRICK'S SEMINARY & UNIVERSITY

St. Patrick's was founded in 1898 by the Sulpician order with the blessing and oversight of Archbishop Patrick Riordan, the second archbishop of San Francisco. It was the first diocesan seminary to open west of the Rocky Mountains. It was jointly governed by the Sulpician order and the Archdiocese of San Francisco (ASF) from 1898 to 2017. The seminary is now under the jurisdiction of ASF alone. The seminary offers an MDiv for those seeking basic academic formation for ministry, an MA in Theology for students demonstrating exceptional academic achievement, an STB if going on for further study, and a BA completion program in Philosophy for Pre-Theology seminarians. The seminary is affiliated with the Dominican House of Studies in order to offer the STB.

Under the new administration, the seminary has been more actively seeking out late vocations, transfers from other seminaries, and, beginning last year, international students, when two students from the Diocese of Suwon, South Korea were admitted. All this is being done with the intention of boosting enrollment, which dropped steadily over the past five years. A full experience at St. Patrick's consists of two years in Pre-Theology and four years in Theology. However, depending on their educational background at the time of admission, seminarians may enter at various stages of formation. Seminarians typically spend the year between the second and third years of Theology in a parish in their diocese as part of the Pastoral Year Program, which is a distinctive and well-regarded part of the St. Patrick's formation experience.

THE DOCUMENTS OF CATHOLIC SEMINARY FORMATION

Our presentation will begin with a brief look at a few of the documents that guide our work. We will discuss how our institutions and libraries connect in concrete ways with the foundational documents of priestly formation in the Catholic Church in the United States. As Figure 1 illustrates, there are a number of documents issued by the Church that define priestly formation. These documents may be issued at different levels of authority, from the pope to nationally based entities such as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Some of the documents, particularly at higher levels, offer general outlines for how formation takes place, while others offer explicit details for programs designed to fit specific cultural contexts. It is impossible to chart, let alone consider, every document, so we selected three documents at different levels for our analysis. These documents are the Vatican II conciliar document *Optatam totius* (1965), the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (2016) issued by the Congregation for the Clergy, and the fifth edition of the USCCB's Program of Priestly Formation (1995) or PPF. For each document we will interpret them to uncover ways they can be used to shape library collections, programs, and services, and seek alignments with programs supporting students, faculty, and the institution in general.

Recognizing that the renewal of the Church is dependent on her priests, *Optatam totius* ("The Desired Renewal of the Whole Church")

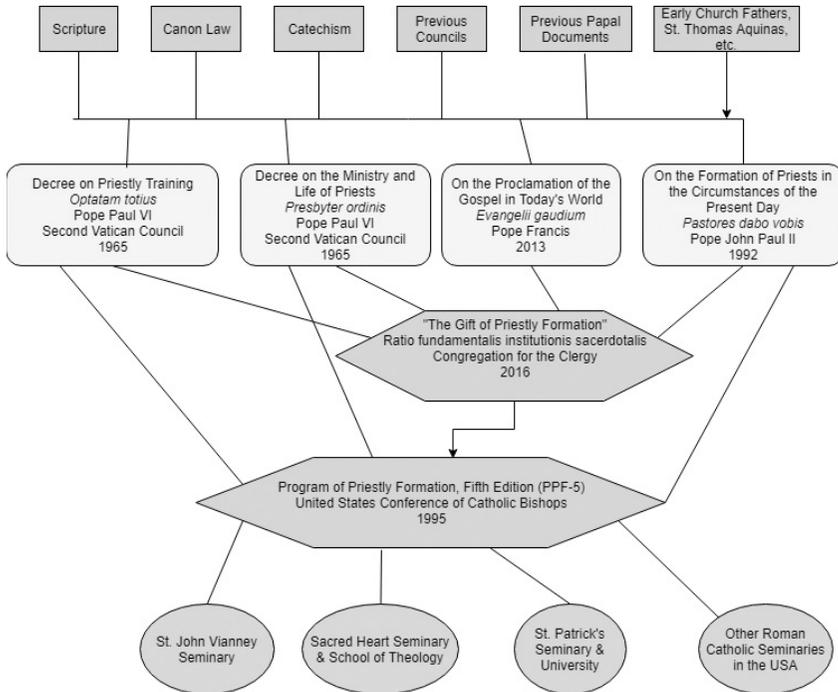


FIGURE 1: Relation of Sources and Documents to Seminaries (chart by David Kriegh) *Optatum totius*

seeks to set out (1) the program of priestly training undertaken by each country; (2) the importance of fostering vocations; (3) setting up major seminaries; (4) development of spiritual training; (5) the course of studies; (6) the promotion of pastoral training; and (7) what happens after the course of studies. Where does the library fit into this?

To discover the guiding principle for libraries discerned from this document, we begin with the following statement from the opening paragraph: “The desired renewal of the whole Church depends to a great extent on the ministry of its priests.” Also consider the following: “The norms of Christian education are to be religiously observed and properly complemented by the newer findings of sound psychology and pedagogy” (OT 11). From this grows the necessity of suitable administrators and access to information. The language here anticipates the rising need for information literacy and resources as well as the importance of access to those resources and the need to instruct in the proper use. Other documents refer more specifically to suitable administrators, but the reference to pedagogy speaks to the importance of the ATS Standards and the Association of College

and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* in the lives of our seminarians.

How SJV interprets and implements this guiding principle can also be found in the same paragraph of the document: “The whole pattern of seminary life . . . must be so arranged that it provides . . . an initiation into the future life which the priest shall lead” (OT 11). While this paragraph finds itself situated in the development of the spiritual training of the seminarian, it also points to the intellectual dimension of formation and provides a good lead-in to lifelong learning, which the Ratio (see next section) points to even more specifically. At SJV, this takes four forms. First, all members of the community have twenty-four-hour access to the library, which is an unusual quality of libraries in Catholic seminaries. Next, staff are available outside of regular posted hours; the shifts of most library staff exceed the posted hours. Third, exposure to the library really begins for the seminarians in their Spirituality Year. We spend time with them as mentioned above. Finally, the library provides information literacy and writing assistance throughout the course of studies.

RATIO FUNDAMENTALIS INSTITUTIONIS SACERDOTALIS

The next Church document that we considered was the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, or “The Gift of Priestly Vocation,” promulgated in December 2016 by the Congregation for the Clergy. The guiding principle for libraries was discerned to lie within the four dimensions of formation. Articulated norms and guidelines for seminary programs were based on the principles laid out in Second Vatican Council documents (such as *Optatam totius*) as well as later papal documents and subsequent editions. These are notably flavored by the work of Popes Benedict XVI and Francis. This document lays out the four dimensions of priestly formation: human, intellectual, pastoral, and spiritual.

The *Ratio* is updated on an irregular basis, usually in response to a change in the Church. For example, the 1985 update was necessitated by the 1983 revision of the *Code of Canon Law*. The most recent edition proposes changes that are fundamentally different from current structures of formation used by St. Patrick’s. Most notable among the changes is the call for a “propaedeutic stage.” The seminary is still weighing options on what will satisfy this new requirement, which

is pending the revision of PPF (see below). Thus far a suggestion of using the current two-stage “spirituality summer” program to meet the new requirement has been the most seriously considered. This is a relatively new program based on SJV’s Spirituality Year program, and each segment follows each of the first two years of Pre-Theology. However, the propaedeutic stage requirement requires structural changes to the seminary environment to promote its distinctiveness, while the summer programs simply overlay the current environment. St. Patrick’s will likely wait for the new PPF to make any final decisions. As for the four dimensions of formation, this language infuses all seminary programs. A seminary classroom, unlike a traditional university classroom, typically gives consideration to all four, not just the intellectual. In a similar way, the library also should strive to reach beyond the academic in the programs it offers. The *Ratio* makes a change in the language from “pillars” to “dimensions” to emphasize that these four aspects of formation do not stand apart from one another. A library that realizes this integration can more effectively serve its institution.

PROGRAM OF PRIESTLY FORMATION, 5TH EDITION

The final Church document that was considered for the sake of this program was the fifth and most recent edition of the *Program of Priestly Formation* or PPF. Considered essentially to be the “national *Ratio*” for the United States and therefore under the jurisdiction of the USCCB, this is a document that takes the principles of the *Ratio* (see above) and fits them to the specific needs of seminaries in the United States. Most of these seminaries report to accrediting bodies such as ATS and various regional accreditors, and also must observe standards put forth by the US Department of Education. Where the *Ratio* is incapable of acknowledging all of these bodies due to its global scope, the PPF’s more limited scope allows for this. Recent major changes to the *Ratio* have necessitated an update of the PPF, which is expected in 2020.

Like many other seminaries in the United States, the PPF is the “guidebook” of Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology. The text is more practical in nature than the aforementioned documents. Institutional documents such as the Faculty Handbook and course syllabi frequently cite paragraphs from the PPF to establish reasoning and learning outcomes. However, the PPF is over twenty years older than the latest *Ratio*. This means that in some cases the *Ratio* must be

consulted in these processes. For example, the PPF lacks input from documents promulgated by Popes Benedict XVI and Francis due to the simple fact that it was issued ten years before Benedict XVI's papacy began. Putting this into practice at seminaries such as Sacred Heart, it means anticipating that the language of "pillars of formation," which is still used by the PPF, will be changed to conform with the *Ratio's* language of integrated "dimensions" to prepare seminarians for ministry.

Elements from the PPF that are echoed in accrediting guidelines and documents include:

- "Excellence in education at the college level demands **access to a strong library** with print, non-print, and electronic resources that is professionally staffed, as required by accrediting agencies" (para. 184).
- "The aim of pastoral formation—the formation of a "true shepherd who teaches, sanctifies, and governs or leads—implies that such formation must include a number of essential elements ... **skills for effective public ministry** ... an ability to communicate the mysteries of faith in clear and readily comprehensible language using **media appropriate to the social context**" (239).
- "The librarian ordinarily enjoys **faculty status** and administers the library according to the **standards** of the respective professional accrediting and educational associations. The librarian ordinarily **reports to the academic dean**" (341).

SHAPING LIBRARY POLICY TO THE DOCUMENTS AND SEMINARY MISSION

The documents previously discussed lay out the Church's thinking on how to create shepherds for the Church. Among the many formation aspects outlined, those involved in the academic dimension must work together. Ministry is relational, as is education. How well are relationships formed with the dean and with the other faculty? Where do librarians find the text that helps to advocate, to create relevant library services and effective collection development policies?

At St. Patrick's the mission statement of the library follows that of the seminary, which reads: "St. Patrick's Seminary & University is a

Catholic educational community that forms priests of Jesus Christ who is teacher, priest, and shepherd.” The corresponding mission statement of the Library is: “The Carl Gellert and Celia Berta Gellert Foundation Memorial Library supports the overall formative programs of St. Patrick’s Seminary and University by providing academic resources that inform and entertain, enrich the curriculum, and advance faculty and student research in a broad range of theological fields of study.” Both statements were much longer and more detailed in the past. The institution routed most of the excess language to the vision and core values, while the library elaborates further in its collection development policy.

Paragraph 137 of the *Ratio* indicates that the librarian reports to “the coordinator of intellectual formation,” which at St. Patrick’s is the academic dean. Paragraphs 153-187 lay out the organization of studies, which helps to guide the collection development policy. The section ends by calling for an organized and well-run library to support these studies. Both show the importance of the library in supporting intellectual formation. In the broader discussion of the dimensions of formation in the *Ratio* we see the openness to electronic resources carefully considered. This has implications in the human and pastoral dimensions, pertaining to how a seminarian receives the information and how they use it respectively in their priestly vocation. This ties directly to the information literacy frames that tout scholarship as conversation and the value of information, as we will explore in the next section.

The mission of St. John Vianney Seminary reads: “Responding to the Lord’s command to go and make disciples of all nations and under the apostolic vigilance of the Archbishop of Denver, the mission of St. John Vianney Theological Seminary is discernment of, and unified formation in, priestly identity marked by an intelligence of heart, with men called to proclaim Jesus Christ and build a civilization of love in persona Christi Capitis. Likewise this community forms deacons and lay faithful to live as holy men and women in the Church’s mission of the New Evangelization.” There is not a mission statement for the library as such, except in support of the mission of the seminary. However, in the introduction to the library’s collection development policy, there is an indication as to where their service areas lie: “The Cardinal Stafford Library is the library for the Seminaries of the Arch-

diocese of Denver. In addition, the library is open to the students of St. Francis School for Deacons, Augustine Institute, the Denver Catholic Biblical School, and the Denver Catholic Catechetical School. Some religious orders send their students to St. John Vianney seminary to complete their intellectual formation. The general public may also use the library's resources."

The mission of SHSST reads: "Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology is dedicated to serving God's people by preparing men of all ages for priesthood and by educating others for ministry in the Roman Catholic Church." The seminary is guided by fundamental documents in the Catholic Church: primarily the PPF, but also the *Ratio*, and those that pertain to the charism of Leo John Dehon, SCJ (Priests of the Sacred Heart).

At SHSST, the library director meets every two weeks with the academic dean. The focus of their time is academic support services as well as advocacy for library collections, programs, and services. The library director reports on seven areas (slide with ATS mapping to 7 report areas): Priorities & Goals, Personnel, Physical Space, Resources and Services (students, faculty/staff, SCJs, Community), Academic Support Services, Consortium (SWITCH), and Other (programming, e.g., their spirituality series). Regular communication with the dean is important. At SHSST, it helps with the support of faculty and academic initiatives. A bonus is that often she is able to ensure the dean's support for their collection policies, services, and programs. This also gives them the opportunity to update the faculty at Academic Faculty and Faculty Council meetings.

FORMATION OF INFORMATION LITERACY PROGRAMS IN THE SPIRIT OF THE DOCUMENTS

At SHSST, the library promotes information literacy whenever possible. The Writing Skills Associate (halftime paid position that reports to the library director) works with faculty to improve writing skills. Academic Support Services includes their efforts to help faculty with scholarship, students with good research practices, the use of LibGuides to focus on resources and research methods, and more. One of the librarians is currently a member of the Academic Advisory Board, which meets weekly to discuss issues and projects, some relat-

ing to library services and resources. During the most recent process of accreditation, writing the self-study has reinforced the importance of ATS Standard 4 and provided opportunities for advocacy.

SHSST belongs to an eight-member consortium that provides some of their library technology, such as a shared catalog and remote authentication. In addition, there is a group dedicated to creating information literacy tutorials. At Sacred Heart, basic information literacy skills are taught in TS500, a research and writing course taken by all new students. We value the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy* and teach a limited version, appropriate to our level of graduate education. Our focus is on three key areas: (1) research techniques appropriate to graduate level study; (2) how to evaluate resources; and (3) how to avoid plagiarism: when to cite the works of others, whether paraphrasing or using a source to support an argument.

Other classes where SHSST is able to teach Information Literacy skills for specific assignments are twofold. First, students use a variety of commentaries to help analyze scripture for the Sunday homily, comparing and contrasting various scholars' approaches to the same scripture passage. The other outreach is for courses requiring research papers of at least eight pages.

Overall, it should be stressed that the focus at Sacred Heart is on the practical aspects of the degree. While some students may go on for graduate work, they are the exception. Most students are preparing for busy lives as priests in dioceses where it will not be unusual to work seventy-two-hour weeks.

At St. Patrick's, they have been exploring different ways of connecting the library with the classroom and institution. Traditionally this has taken the form of the "one-shot" instruction through a class visit to the library. More recently, they had an embedded librarian in a Pre-Theology course, which helped the library get a better sense of the classroom culture and curriculum and at the same time offer tangible connections to library resources. In the near future, MA students will be taking a required one-credit course in Theological Research to build on their Academic Writing course from Pre-Theology, and it is hoped this will expand to the STB and MDiv students based on initial feedback. Tailoring information literacy as appropriate to each stage of formation (propaedeutic, pre-theology, theology) merits further exploration as the propaedeutic stage develops.

One promising development at St. Patrick's, done in consultation with the dean, has been the formation of a Library Collections Committee. This body, which includes a faculty representative from each department, advises the library director in purchasing and single-copy weeding. It has given those involved a much greater appreciation for the library, which means allies in other initiatives, hopefully including a comprehensive information literacy program in the near future. This also keeps in the spirit of paragraph 137 of the *Ratio*, which lists the librarian with "professors" (i.e., faculty) rather than "specialists," which they interpret as a charge for the collegiality of such a committee. The goal is to work in harmony, rather than just doing what the faculty or dean instructs us to do.

At SJV, information literacy is promoted wherever it is reasonable. One of the areas of academic support that the library provides is a writing tutor who is housed in the library. Information literacy opportunities have varied broadly since 2007; starting in the fall semester of 2018, the library will host three Friday afternoons each semester where we will offer short, one-shot looks at bite-sized information literacy sessions. The library director is a voting member of the Academic Council and the chair of that body's Library Committee, which serves the council and the library director in an advisory capacity. Primarily, policy creation around information literacy and accrediting standards happens in conversation between the library director and the dean, as well as among the Library Committee.

At SJV, the library reaches into the academic life of the seminary for information literacy in three primary ways: in the classroom, Friday afternoons, and mystery nights. In each of the philosophy and the theology cycles, one course per semester (per year of study) is identified as writing/research intensive. While this information is not always communicated outside of the department, this is often discovered when a faculty member invites a library presentation. Librarians are also occasionally asked to provide a research introduction to a class where the professor has an unresolvable conflict (e.g. he's going to a conference that lands on a course day). For the past three years, we have been offering alternating writing- and library-specific instruction opportunities. This has been on Tuesday afternoons, and really covers the range from appropriate use of commas to navigating a new database and so on. This coming academic year, as

mentioned previously, the library is going to offer “Friday afternoon in the Library” sessions. These will run about three hours and cover a variety of topics, and the director and his staff hope to offer snacks and ask for RSVPs to allow for adequate preparation. This is designed to look almost like a mini-conference, where if a seminarian misses one twenty-minute session, he hasn’t lost the entire program. Mystery nights are colloquially referred to as “Murders, Thefts, and Kidnapings, Oh My!” Based on an information literacy idea borrowed from an elementary school library, the library has successfully grown this into hosting mystery nights in the library. These mysteries are a standard kind of “whodunit” affair. Supported financially by the Friends of the Library and created completely anew each time by library staff, this information literacy opportunity really brings the entire community together around a dynamic way of developing knowledge of library resources.

CONCLUSION

In this presentation, the hope was to draw connections from core seminary establishing documents through three different institutions to the various programs of their respective libraries. These documents are as important to what is done as accreditation standards and information literacy frameworks. Having a solid knowledge of these documents can help improve library advocacy, as they draw on values formed within the Church rather than imposed by an external body. In the final moments, the presenters encouraged attendees to seek out and deeply read their own establishing documents to build a direct line between your library and the greater institution it serves.²

ENDNOTES

- 1 Kathleen A. Cahalan, Edward Foley and Gordon S. Mikoski, *Integrating Work in Theological Education* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick, 2017), 19-20.
- 2 The slides and text for this panel presentation may be found at <https://leodehonlibrary.libguides.com/shepherds>