

## DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL

With a global financial crisis slowly abating throughout the year, Duke Divinity School successfully overcame significant financial challenges in 2009 while continuing to seek new opportunities to carry out its mission. All the while, the school maintained a hopeful outlook and a strong focus on preparing students to become effective, faithful leaders in the church, the academy, and the world.

Like most other schools across the country, Duke Divinity School saw the value of its endowment – a critical piece of our financial support – decline by more than 25 percent at the worst of the recession. In response, the school sought efficiencies and achieved significant cost savings in the last year to help keep the budget balanced.

At the same time, our community engaged in a period of intense strategic planning to position ourselves as a more flexible institution capable of meeting the needs of a changing church. In September 2009, the faculty approved an official update to our 2006 strategic plan, which aligns with our core mission and will help make the Divinity School a financially stronger institution that is better able to fulfill its role of service and witness to the Triune God by preparing faithful and effective leaders.

We are now working to implement this plan, which includes proposals for new degree programs to address broader constituencies for the Divinity School and respond missionally to the needs of the church.

New degree programs we hope to begin offering in 2011 (all of which would need to be approved by the Association of Theological Schools and Duke University by the summer of 2010) include a master of arts in Christian Studies (M.A.C.S.), a master of arts in Christian practice (M.A.C.P.), and a doctor of ministry (D.Min.). None of these degrees would diminish the school's commitment to existing degree programs, especially our core Master of Divinity program for local church ministers, or to residential learning. Rather, they are meant to fulfill needs of churches and individuals that we are unable to meet with our current offerings.

The M.A.C.S. is a 32-hour graduate theological degree for full-time students, to be completed over eight months of the academic year. The degree is designed for students who have an interest in serious theological study, seek to enrich their vocation, leadership, or service in the church, and want to bring theological reflection to bear on their vocation in the world.

The M.A.C.P. is a graduate theological degree that organizes learning around short-term intensive residential seminars, in conjunction with ongoing group interaction assisted by web-based learning platforms. It is designed for students who are seeking disciplined theological reflection while remaining in a full-time lay ministry context or other professional position.

The D.Min. is intended to enhance the work of Christian leaders serving in local churches, denominational positions, and other faith-based organizations through a combination of theological study, reflection on their experiences in ministry, and/or training in organizational management. Like the M.A.C.P., the degree would be structured on a cohort model that organizes learning around short-term residential seminars as well as ongoing group interaction facilitated by web-based learning platforms. Therefore, it would allow church leaders and other professionals to pursue intensive advanced study while remaining employed on a full-time basis in their vocational settings.

As Duke Divinity School concluded this period of rigorous strategic planning, it also prepared to welcome a new dean on July 1, 2010.

L. Gregory Jones, who has served as dean of the Divinity School since 1997, was named Duke University's senior advisor for international strategy in the spring 2010 semester. Jones, who continues to oversee Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, will step down as dean at the end of June.

Richard Hays, the George Washington Ivey Professor of New Testament at the Divinity School, will serve as dean for a two-year term while a national search is conducted for Jones' successor. An ordained United Methodist minister, Hays is internationally recognized for his work on the letters of Paul and on New Testament ethics. Read more about this leadership transition on the Divinity School's website at [www.divinity.duke.edu/news/spotlight/senioradvisor](http://www.divinity.duke.edu/news/spotlight/senioradvisor).

Meanwhile, the Divinity School continued with its strong tradition of teaching, research, and outreach.

We were pleased to welcome a diverse, energetic, and academically strong group of new students in the fall of 2009. The median grade point average for the entering class was 3.62 out of a possible 4.0. Minority enrollment is 21 percent, and the median student age continues to be low—24 for the entire class and just 23 for the master of divinity students.

Of 151 students seeking the three-year M.Div. degree, 52 percent are United Methodist; 15 percent are Baptist, 8 percent are Anglican or Episcopal; and 4 percent are Presbyterian. Eighteen other denominations round out the M.Div. class.

We also entered the fourth year of our Doctor of Theology program; our Th.D. applications increased this year to more than 100. We now have 35 students enrolled in the program, and we graduated our first student in December 2009.

Early in the spring 2009 semester we launched "Faith & Leadership," the online magazine of Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, which is supported by a grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. The magazine, which already has developed an enthusiastic following, aims to strengthen the practice of Christian leadership through video interviews with transformative leaders, theological reflections, in-depth articles and stories, and reading

lists. Its companion blog, "Call & Response," offers a daily roundup of news and ideas, as well as commentary from several pastors, a seminary president, and experts in the sociology of religion.

Approximately 100 people participated in Duke Divinity School's first Summer Institute in 2009, a week-long program designed to cultivate a community of Christian worship, reflection and action. The Institute, led by world-class scholars and practitioners, focused on a theme of reconciliation and was titled "Shaping the Beloved Community in a Divided World." A second Summer Institute was planned for 2010.

And the Divinity School hosted numerous additional events in 2009 and early 2010 important in the life of the church as well as the academy, including ongoing meetings of our Episcopal Leadership Forum for United Methodist Bishops, a 20th anniversary celebration for our Baptist House of Studies, a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Black Seminarians Union, and numerous lectures, sermons, and panel discussions.

We are deeply grateful for the relationships among the United Methodist Church, this Annual Conference, and Duke Divinity School, and we already are looking forward to another year of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. To learn more about Duke Divinity School, please visit our website at [www.divinity.duke.edu](http://www.divinity.duke.edu).

Respectfully submitted by

*Dean L. Gregory Jones*