

**SECTION 3**  
**ASSOCIATION FOR THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION (ATFE)**  
**AND ASSOCIATION FOR REFLECTIVE PRACTICE**  
**IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION (ARPTE)**

*Editor's Introduction*

The articles in this section explore emerging formational pedagogies from different institutional locations and ministry contexts. They share the conviction that pedagogy is never neutral. The design of a learning environment is itself a formative act, shaping not only what students know but who they are becoming.

Lee Beach argues that field education programs bear a particular pedagogical responsibility: to create structured opportunities for students to explore the inner landscape they bring to ministry. The practices he describes (spiritual autobiography, small reflection groups, mentorship, summative retreat) move students from surface performance toward deeper self-understanding. Beach's account suggests that the first pedagogical question is not what students should learn but who they are being formed to be.

L. Callid Keefe-Perry argues that the arrival of artificial intelligence in theological education invites a clarifying question: Does this tool extend a student's capacity for meaning-making, or does it replace the productive struggle that formation requires? His ANCHOR framework, grounded in self-determination theory and expanded into vocational formation, offers educators a design specification for integrating AI in ways that preserve student agency, deepen interiority, and orient learning toward the neighbor. The framework's core distinction—between capacity extension and capacity replacement—applies well beyond AI. It names a temptation present in any pedagogy that mistakes polished outputs for genuine formation.

Terry Wildman's account of the First Nations Version Bible translation project does not emerge from a seminary classroom, but it carries a pedagogical logic that runs through all three other articles. The First Nations Version Project began with the recognition that standard English translations were failing to teach Native people—that Scripture was not connecting because the medium of instruction was culturally misaligned with the community it was meant to form. What Wildman and his translation council built was, among other things, a pedagogical intervention: a way of returning the sacred text to a community in a language that could actually reach them.

Finally, Dietra Wise Baker asks whether formation can be deliberately oriented toward justice. Drawing on her vocation as a teacher, scholar, and faith-based community

organizer, Wise Baker examines contextual education as the site where the gap between theological rhetoric and transformative action is most visible. Her account of redesigning Eden Theological Seminary's contextual education curriculum around practices of reflection, risk, relationships, and rage describes an endeavor to move students from social service impulses toward the sustained, structurally engaged work of social transformation.

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