Raising Up Stewardship Leaders

Gettysburg Seminary Financial Coaching Program:

Information for Students

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Financial Coaching at Gettysburg Seminary

Rostered leaders of the church are called upon to provide guidance for congregations in many different ways. Traditionally, we think about areas such as worship, visitation, Bible study, counseling, youth ministry, stewardship, evangelism and administration. Rostered leaders are called to equip and empower congregational members to engage in all these ministries and others, too. As women and men have prepared to serve as leaders in the church, the focus of their preparation has primarily been on core areas of theological education. Leaders need to be good preachers, teachers, counselors, worship leaders. But leadership in the church today also requires financial leadership.

Gettysburg Seminary is offering a new Financial Coaching program to assist students who may desire or need growth in this critical area. The program is available to all students and their spouses. Financial leadership depends upon habits and practices of generous giving, which in turn are founded on healthy financial intelligence. The coaching program is designed to help in the stewardship of personal finances. Financial intelligence can best be taught by experienced leaders.

The goals of the Financial Coaching Program at Gettysburg Seminary are:

- To help students understand the relationship of personal financial management and faithful stewardship
- To help students develop good personal financial habits with respect to planning, budget development, and debt management
- To provide helpful, respectful, and confidential assistance to any student who seeks help with financial matters

What is a Financial Coach?

Coaches are people with skills in the area of personal finances including budgets, debt management, and stewardship of resources. They are good stewards, are generous, have good listening skills, and can maintain strict confidentiality. The coach's job is to help you clarify goals, brainstorm plans, and work toward your goals. A coach is there to help you figure out what God wants you to do and to do it.

Coaches are volunteers. Some were invited to serve as a coach because they have expressed an interest in helping students with financial issues. Others were recommended by a pastor or bishop. All coaches complete an orientation program. During that program, coaches are:

- Encouraged to tell their own financial stewardship story---what they believe, how they exercise generosity.
- Asked to commit to meet with their student no more than once a month for the school year. Frequency of meetings will be mutually determined, as will dates, times, and locations for regular meetings.

- Asked to read and sign a statement regarding healthy boundaries prior to coaching a student (a sample is found at the end of this packet).

All coaching sessions are confidential and free of charge.

Signing Up for a Coach

Students should contact the Financial Aid Office to become involved in the financial coaching program. During a brief orientation, the student and his/her spouse will review and sign the "Student Contract for Personal Financial Coaching" (a sample is included at the end of this packet). The Financial Aid Office will then match the student (and spouse) with a coach or coaching couple and forward the student's contact information to the coach. The coach will contact the student to arrange the time and location for their initial one-hour meeting. If the meeting will take place on campus, it is the student's responsibility to reserve a room through the Seminary Events Office.

Meeting with Your Coach

Before your first meeting with your coach, please prepare a Money Autobiography as outlined on the following page. This will serve as the basis for your discussion and help you and your coach to identify areas of personal financial management that are important to you. The Money Autobiography is confidential and you do not need to give it to your coach; however, it is an important tool in the coaching process.

At the close of your first meeting, you and your coach will discuss how future meetings will proceed. The expectation is that students and coaches will meet monthly throughout the academic year. Be sure to decide when and where you will meet next and how you will remind each other of the meeting. Again, it is the student's responsibility to reserve meeting on space campus through the Events Office if needed.

At the conclusion of the program in the spring, coaches and students will be asked to complete an evaluation that will be used for our future planning.

Activity: Writing a Money Autobiography

A "money autobiography" is a personal reflection of your life with money – how your family of origin has formed your attitudes toward money, and how your present situation and faith contributes to your feelings about money. There are no right or wrong money autobiographies. The following questions may be helpful in guiding your writing process.

Family of Origin History

1. Who handled the money in your family of origin?
2. Was money discussed in your family of origin? When and by whom?
3. How abundant or scarce was money in your family of origin?
4. How did your family of origin discuss and express generosity?
5. How did your family of origin discuss and express the connection between faith and money?

Personal History

1. What are some of your early memories of money?
2. In your early years, how did you earn money? How did you spend it? How did you save it?
3. As you grew and began to earn more money, how did your spending and saving patterns change?

Present Family

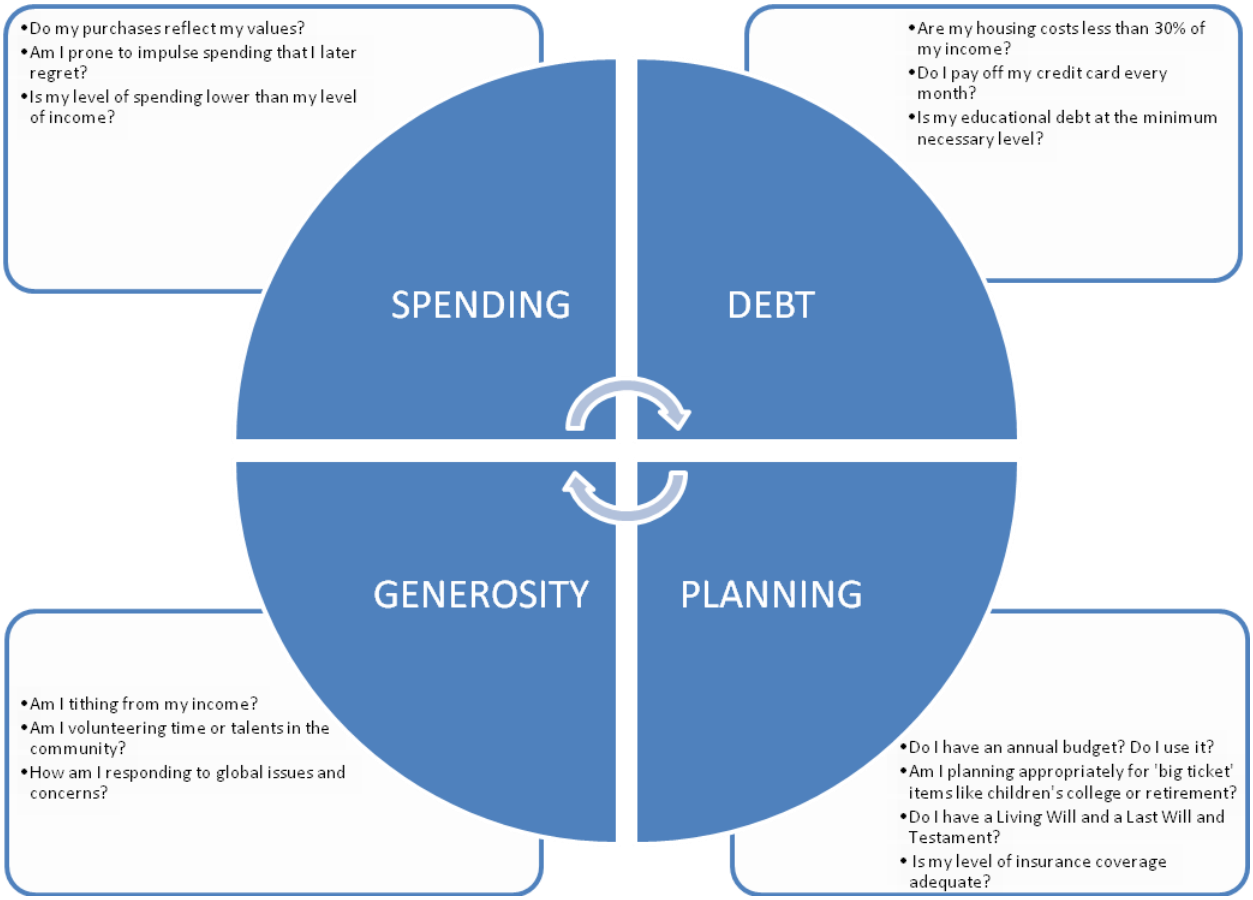
1. Who handles the money in your present family situation?
2. Is money discussed in your present family? When and by whom?
3. How abundant or scarce is money in your present family?
4. How does your present family discuss and express generosity?
5. How does your present family discuss and express the connection between faith and money?

Personal Reflection

1. What words or phrases summarize your attitudes toward money?
2. What attitudes or feelings about money would you like to change in yourself? In your spouse or children?
3. What skills or competencies would you like to gain with respect to money and financial wellness?
4. How would you articulate the connection between your faith and your handling of money?

Information: What is Financial Wellness?

Financial wellness, like physical or emotional wellness, is individualized for each person. There are, however, certain indicators of financial wellness in the areas of Spending, Debt, Generosity, and Planning.



Information: The Financial Picture for Gettysburg Students

Gettysburg Seminary graduates and fosters the development of Christ-centered stewardship leaders.

By virtue of having a leadership position in a congregation, each student **will**:

- Be a financial stewardship leader in his/her congregation.
- Have spending plans to prepare and manage.
- Teach generosity and encourage faithful discipleship.

One of the ways to prepare students to do this well is to encourage them to grow forward in their own personal financial health.

Cost of Education

While the annual tuition at Gettysburg Seminary is $12,285 for 2009-2010, the cost of education for each student is over $30,000. Tuition fees are as low as they are because of generous contributors to the seminary. Efforts are being expended to keep fees as low as possible through increasing the amount of financial gifts given to the seminary by donors.

In addition to the cost of tuition, a student's budget also includes educational and living expenses, often for a family. The table below shows an estimated budget for a single student living on campus for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Tuition	$12,285
Books & fees	$1,180
Housing	$5,840
Seminarian health insurance	$2,500
Food & household supplies	$3,500
Transportation	$4,950
Misc. personal expenses	$5,025
TOTAL	$35,280

Educational Debt

For most students, educational loans are necessity. There is growing concern throughout the church about increasing levels of educational debt seminarians graduate with. A high debt-load has financial, as well as personal, impacts on church leaders and the church as a whole.

Educational Debt for 2007 LTSG Graduates

	MDIV degree (4 yrs)	MAMS degree (2 yrs)
Seminary Educational Debt	$47,624	$32,507
Monthly Repayment (10 yr term)	$425	$290
% of Monthly Salary	12.1%	11.6%

Long Range Costs of Student Loans

(Does not include consumer debt: credit cards, auto loans, private loans, mortgage payments)

Amount	Percent Interest	Time	Monthly Payment
$1,000	6%	10 years	$11.10
$5,000	6%	10 years	$55.50
$10,000	6%	10 years	$111.00
$25,000	6%	10 years	$277.50
$30,000	6%	10 years	$333.00
$60,000	6%	10 years	$666.00

Considering that monthly beginning salaries for graduates generally range from $2,000 to $3,000, loan payments can consume a significant portion of monthly income:

Monthly Income	Average Debt	Monthly Payments	% of Income
$2,000	$25,000	$277.50	13.9%
$3,000	$25,000	$277.50	9.3%

One general rule of thumb regarding loan repayment is that debt service ought not to exceed 8% of monthly income. Exceeding the "8% rule" may have negative impacts when seeking a home mortgage and other loans.

Other Impacts of Educational Debt

In addition to the obvious financial ramifications of debt, there are other costs as well. An Auburn Seminary study of the education debt of theological students identifies these issues:

- Impact on career choices
- Creates stress in professional life
- Creates stress in personal life
- Hold back from purchasing a home (maximum – 8% income used for student debt)
- Prevents from saving for their children's education
- Delay health care costs

In the same survey, borrowers had these things to see about the effect of debt:

52% "I wish I had borrowed less"

40% “My financial situation is NOT comfortable”
30% “Debt has influenced my career choices.”
26% “I or my spouse has had to moonlight.”
24% “I have had to accept higher-paying employment.”
24% “I have missed a payment because I did not have the money.”
21% “I have had to postpone health care.”

Financial Wellness Opportunities at Gettysburg Seminary

2009-10 Academic Calendar
Fall semester: Sept. 2 -Dec. 16, 2009
January term: Jan. 4-27, 2010
Spring semester: Jan. 28-May 13, 2010

Events
Financial Coach Training
Tuesday, September 1

Senior Seminar
Tuesday & Wednesday, January 26 & 27

Contact Information:

The Rev. Dr. A. Donald Main
Financial Coaching Coordinator
717-584-5468
Admain615@comcast.net

Ms. Susie B. Kowalski
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Healthy Boundaries for Coaches

SAMPLE

Please read and sign the following statement regarding healthy boundaries in relating to a student.

1. I will keep my conversation with the student confidential unless they give me permission to share the information.
2. I will keep appropriate sexual and physical boundaries. I will endeavor to help the student feel and be safe. While my face-to-face meetings are to be private, they will take place in a space that is visible to others.
3. I will not attempt to sell or market any financial product or be in any financial relationship with the student and/or spouse.
4. If I decide to present financial information, I will present it on a general basis as possibilities for the student to consider. Product information will not be company specific and will be generic. Coaches may say, for example:
   - "You may wish to consider a money market fund for short-term cash needs that would be coming up in the next year or so."
   - "You may wish to consider a balanced mutual fund for a one- to four-year time frame."
   - "You may wish to consider growth funds or stocks for a five-year or more time frame."
   - "You need to determine your own risk tolerance before making any investments."
5. I will not give direct financial assistance to the student. If I wish to help alleviate student debt I will instead participate in the Gettysburg Seminary Fund or other giving opportunity.

I have read and understand the statement above and promise to abide by these boundaries.

Coach signature: _____ Date: _____

Seminary representative signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Contract for Personal Financial Coaching

SAMPLE

Please read and sign the following statement regarding the commitment to Financial Coaching.

We/I desire to have a personal financial coach.

We/I understand the coach is willing to give one hour a month during the school year to encourage the development of financial intelligence and practices regarding generosity and wise spending, including:

- Planning
- Budgeting
- Debt management
- Healthy choices

We/I understand the financial coaches are to be helpful and respectful and will keep information confidential.

As such, I/we promise:

1. To notify Susie Kowalski if I/we have not been contacted by a financial coach within two weeks of signing up for the personal coaching program.
2. To arrange for meeting space on campus if needed.
3. To meet with the coach at least once a month until you determine that:
   a. Your goals have been satisfactorily reached.
   b. The chemistry between you and the coach is unsatisfactory
   c. You are graduating from the seminary.
4. To show up for all appointments. If unable to make an appointment I/we will call my/our coach and reschedule.

If I/we decide to terminate I/we will:

1. Inform the coach and Susie Kowalski.
2. Write a thank you letter to the coach for their interest and investment of time, prayer and energy on my/our behalf.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse signature (if applicable):_____ Date: _____

Seminary representative signature: _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICE USE

Coach assigned: _____ Contact information: _____