



SMU | PERKINS
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2007

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HENRY LUCE FOUNDATION APPROVES GRANT TO THE CENTER FOR THE
STUDY OF LATINO/A CHRISTIANITY AND RELIGIONS AT SMU'S PERKINS
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dallas, Texas—The Henry Luce Foundation's three-year grant of \$315,000 will fund research at the Center of Latino/a Christianity and Religions. The funding supports the Center's mission to promote a deeper understanding of the varieties of religious life and expression within the Latino communities in the United States and in Latin America.

"This is a marvelous moment in the effort to establish and develop the programming of the Center, and it is an important milestone for Perkins," explains William Lawrence, Dean of Perkins School of Theology. The Center is headed by Dr. David Maldonado, who is "excited about the many possibilities that the Luce grant will make possible."

The Center will address topics and issues related to the Latino/a religious experience within a broader ecumenical and religious context, as well as attention to international dynamics and realities. Already known for its Mexican American Program, Perkins seeks to strengthen and deepen its engagement with Latino/a realities through educational programs, the generation and promotion of research, and the dissemination of knowledge.

Lawrence says, "The presence, dynamic growth, and increasing diversity of Hispanic populations challenge the church and religious leaders in preparing those who will minister with this population. The Center will be a great resource for the various

degree programs at Perkins School of Theology that prepare religious leaders to minister in a social context in which the Latino population is an increasingly significant factor.”

In fostering and supporting innovative research projects by both younger and established scholars, the Center will contribute to the growth of knowledge concerning Latino religion and religiosity. Through consultations, seminars, public events, and publications in a wide range of formats, the Center will disseminate the results of new ventures in scholarship in these areas and the insights gained through this work in ways that will be of value to the churches, the academy, and the wider society.

Perkins School of Theology is one of five University-related official schools of theology of The United Methodist Church. The school was founded in 1911 by the Methodist Episcopal Church South, now The United Methodist Church. Degree programs include the Master of Church Ministries, Master of Divinity, Master of Sacred Music, Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry degree, as well as the Ph.D. in cooperation with SMU’s Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences.

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