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# "Shrinking to Grow":

## NEWBOLD COLLEGE REFOCUSSES ON ITS ORIGINAL PURPOSE— EDUCATING CHURCH WORKERS

BY REINDER BRUINSMA



Newbold College Facebook Page

**N**ewbold College of Higher Education—the official name since 2013—is very dear to me. In the early 1960s I spent two years at Newbold before I graduated with my bachelor’s degree in theology. Through the years I have come back numerous times to the beautiful campus near the village of Binfield, some thirty miles from London in the hilly county of Berkshire, to attend meetings and training courses and to participate in conferences. From 1995 to 2007 I served as a member of the Board of Governors of the college, and from time to time I taught an “intensive” in the theology department. I have kept myself informed about developments at Newbold, by consulting the regular channels, and by getting the juicier bits of news from friends among the Newbold staff.

However, in spite of having stayed close to Newbold, I was totally surprised—and, yes, shocked—by the sudden news of the radical changes at the college that had been voted by the college board in the autumn of last year, and that will go into effect as early as possible in the course of the current year. After reading some of the news bulletins

Over time, the college had a much wider influence than its limited size would have suggested. Several of the denomination's top theologians in the past began their career at Newbold, and at least three of the college's principals became prominent leaders elsewhere.

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I could not help but wonder: Is this the beginning of the end for Newbold College, after it has served the church in large parts of northern and western Europe for 120 years?

The college has played an important role in the history of the Trans-European Division and the repeatedly shifting group of organizational entities (unions, conferences, and “attached fields”) that function under the division umbrella. Over time, the college had a much wider influence than its limited size would have suggested. Several of the denomination's top theologians in the past began their career at Newbold, and at least three of the college's principals became prominent leaders elsewhere. I am thinking of V. Norskov Olsen, who was Newbold's principal (as the president of Newbold has traditionally been called) in my student days. He became the president of Loma Linda University (1974–1984). Andrews University's current president—Andrea Luxton—served as Newbold's principal from 1997 to 2001. Jan Paulsen, Newbold's principal from 1976 to 1980, went on to become the division president, and then, eventually, the president of the Adventist world church (1999–2010). Was the illustrious history of my first *alma mater* now coming to an end?

Reluctantly I accepted the request from the *Spectrum* editor to write an article about the changes that are taking place at Newbold. Why was this new direction deemed necessary, and where would it lead? In the past few weeks, I have read relevant documents and held Zoom-interviews with over a dozen persons who could, each from their unique perspective, fill me in on numerous details. Then I sat down to write the 3,000-word piece that was requested. I wanted it to be positive (because of my pro-Newbold bias), but also intended to be fair to all persons and parties involved and, above everything else, to be objective and correct.

### **What Brought This About?**

I began my series of interviews with a long session with Dr. John Baildam, the current principal, who has worked at Newbold for almost forty years. He was appointed to his present role in 2014 and is now the second-longest serving principal, only surpassed by W. G. C. Murdoch (1930–1937 and 1938–1946). The detailed account that he provided of the main factors that led to current changes at Newbold gave me valuable background information. The COVID-19 crisis may have been the catalyst for the current overhaul of Newbold's educational program, but the elements behind it, Baildam explained, were long in the making. Studies and reports from the past sounded alarms at regular intervals, warning that the college was facing a stormy future.

Newbold is expected to serve the fourteen fields of the Trans-European Division. With its 90,000 members, this division (TED) is the smallest of the world divisions, which limits the potential for recruiting large numbers of students. Until quite recently a major percentage of the students (in particular in the English Language Centre and in the theology department) came from outside the division. Constantly rising fees have made study in Britain less attractive, and this has adversely affected the intake of American students. Several other reasons, beyond the college's influence, have had a negative effect on recruitment. Visa restrictions made it extremely difficult for most African students to enroll, and the growing number of good-quality Adventist universities in Africa were becoming a good alternative to study in Europe. The recent Brexit impacts negatively on the college's ability to recruit students from some of the European countries that in the past sent a good number of students. When COVID-19 struck, the English Language Centre lost its ability to attract students almost overnight

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While maintaining past levels of student enrollment became increasingly problematic, the costs of operating the college continued to rise. About 50% of the annual operating budget of just over £4 million (ca. US\$5.5 million) had to be subsidized by the division, with the eleven unions and three attached fields chipping in 1% (and in some cases even a bit more) of their tithe income. This level of subsidizing became untenable, the more so since, with lower enrollment, the subsidy-per-student rose further and further (in some cases amounting to more than \$25,000 per year)! Moreover, the arrangement of the 1% subsidy from the individual fields was far from popular and was due for review.

Undeniably, the reorientation of Newbold has much to do with finances. And yet, when I asked Dr. John Baildam whether the changes were driven by ideology or by financial concerns, he was adamant that the answer was: "yes and yes." In fact, the ball began rolling in conversations between the presidents of the TED fields and the division president Raafat Kamal, who has been leading the division since 2014. He was anxious, he said, to hear from them what they actually thought about the college and its services to the church. Does it deliver what they expect from their college and to which they heavily contribute financially? Do they have ideas and wishes that are not, or not sufficiently, being heard in the full board meetings? Concerned about this, Kamal proposed that perhaps they should meet as a "closed" group in which they could, with less inhibition, speak their mind. And so it happened.

In this conversation, the field presidents made it clear they were far from happy with the "product" that Newbold's theology department delivers. The graduates

from Newbold tend to have developed into academics rather than into the kind of cutting-edge, frontline pastors who are needed in the churches throughout the division. In fact, many of the eleven union presidents indicated that, for this reason, they preferred to hire new pastors from elsewhere. Some also expressed concern about the fact that in the process of learning to think critically (one of the key goals in the teaching of the college faculty) some students completely lost their faith, and that the traditional Adventist identity has not always been sufficiently emphasized in the lecture room. There was a clear consensus among the group that the curriculum of Newbold's ministerial training should have a greater focus on practical matters than was currently the case.

In his interview with me, President Kamal outlined the process that he had followed from that pivotal point onwards. He had summarized in writing the outcome of this meeting with the field presidents, sent it around to them with the request to confirm that this was an accurate representation of what had been discussed. This became the basis for a "ten-point" statement of "Core Commitments and Recommendations," which was voted with overwhelming support during an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors on September 30, 2020.

### **The Ten-Point Plan**

While the COVID-19 crisis, with its reduction of most activities on campus, and the financial catastrophe that resulted from this, was the catalyst, and presented an opportune moment for making drastic changes, the ultimate factor that drove the reorientation of the college was the wake-up call from the fields that urged the owners of the college (the various entities of the division) to reassess the priorities for the future operation of Newbold.



Dr. John Baildam

Newbold College Website

The ten-point statement starts with emphasizing (1) the continuous significance of the college for the TED fields and (2) the need for adaptation and restructuring to meet the expectations of the fourteen organizational entities that comprise the TED. The following item (3) points to the future direction: “Newbold exists first and foremost to meet the pastoral and leadership training needs of the TED.” In order to do so (4), the current department of theological studies will be replaced with a new Centre for Ministry and Mission (CMM), which will begin implementing a new program at the start of the academic year 2021–2022. (5) All plans, financial and otherwise, “should initially be built on a margin of 80–100 students, who (6) will be offered a mix of on-campus programs and online classes. In addition, (7) ministerial training programs will be restarted in some regions of the division (Baltics and Balkans). All this will (8) require a re-visiting of degree accreditation issues and of staffing priorities. Furthermore, (9) a masterplan will be developed for the use of the land and the buildings that will no longer be needed for college activities, so that investment returns can be maximized, and subsidy levels can be reduced to a more sustainable level. Finally (10), The “Newbold culture” is to be improved “in terms of students’ experience and administrative services.”

It is felt that in this new approach Newbold will be able to better respond to the actual situation of many current and future theology students. Gone are the days when most students, after finishing their secondary schooling, arrive in Binfield around their eighteenth or nineteenth

birthday, to embark on their theological education. Today, an increasing number of theology students are older, have a job and often also a family, and then opt for ministry as a second career. For most people in that category, moving to the United Kingdom for a number of years is simply not feasible. Offering all courses online will facilitate this growing student segment. Dr. Laszlo Gallusz, one of the most recent additions to the group of theology teachers, emphasized in my Zoom conversation with him that Newbold must indeed become more flexible. He feels the college would do well to introduce a modular system and serve its clients in a new (mostly digital) way.

At the same extraordinary board meeting where the “ten points” were approved, six working groups were established to work out the details of the plan, of which the Curriculum Panel was perhaps the most important one. How could the element of practical theology be strengthened, within the criteria established by the accrediting organizations (among them the AAA—the Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities) and by the universities with which Newbold has important academic ties (in particular the University of Wales Trinity Saint David)? And how could the content of various courses be refocused to reflect the orientation of the newly established Centre for Ministry and Mission? Dr. Daniel Duda, the educational director of the division has, on a temporary basis, been appointed as the transitional head of the new Centre for Ministry and Mission.

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Newbold College Facebook Page

## Consequences and Concerns

The decision to concentrate—at least for the foreseeable future—exclusively on theology meant closing the English Language Centre and the departments of Business and Humanities. This happened, to a large extent, as the COVID-19 pandemic exerted its toll. Because of some “voluntary” redundancies and retirements, this process did not cause significant staffing problems. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the staff of Newbold has been reduced by some twenty FTE’s—which is, considering the size of the institution, quite significant. Careful arrangements have been made to ensure that the students currently enrolled in these departments would not suffer academically and financially and could complete their program at sister institutions.

As the students left the campus because of the pandemic, the cafeteria and residential facilities were all closed. When the new programs take effect in the coming months, the cafeteria will not be re-opened, and only one of the residential halls will be used by the college. Classroom activities, and the offices for administration and teaching staff will move to Salisbury Hall, built in 1957 as the central building for the college. The library will continue to function, but all other buildings will receive another function. The TED will assume the responsibility for the exploitation of the grounds and the buildings. An expert group is developing a master plan how to best use the facilities that will no longer be needed as the Centre for Ministry and Mission is being realized. Talks are being held with interested parties about the possibility of using Moor Close, a mansion that dates from 1864/65 and has served the college as residential hall and for various other purposes, as a health facility. The recently fully re-furbished sports hall-auditorium could perhaps be part of such a venture.

As could be expected, a transition such as is now in process will meet with some obstacles. It would be an understatement to say that the theology professors at Newbold are somewhat critical of various aspects of the changeover from the Department of Theological Studies to the Centre of Ministry and Mission. President Kamal talked to me quite openly, and at length, about this. He said he was very aware of the fact that the theology teachers felt they were not, or at least insufficiently, consulted. However, in his opinion, he followed the correct procedures. In the past, in his opinion, the theological department functioned perhaps at times too autonomously, and tended to set and follow its own course. The teaching staff, Kamal emphasized, implements the direction that the owners/stakeholders of the college (the Board of Governors) have decided. He feels that in working out the details of the decision that the board took in September the expertise of the staff has been called upon. He denies allegations that he failed to listen to the persons and parties involved before initiating the changes. In total he spoke with forty-nine persons, including some of the theology teachers, as he sought broad input about the changes that were being considered.

Things began to become awkward when, in his second meeting with the theology professors, Kamal introduced the possibility that there might have to be changes in the staffing of the CMM, which might result in some of the current staff becoming redundant. This created a sense of uncertainty as jobs might be on the line. It was explained that, for the time being, budgetary constraints would not allow for the hiring of two specialists in pastoral/practical theology, and that this might mean that two existing budgets might have to be re-assigned. How to cut or re-assign budgets in an organization is, of course, governed

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When I asked Baildam whether he looks at the future of Newbold with confidence, he stated:

We are “shrinking for future growth.”

by national employment laws, which in Britain are rather complicated.

It seems to me, after my interviews with staff members and with the division president and other leaders, that the turmoil that could be expected to arise from possible staff reductions was underestimated. Kamal realizes, he said, that people are hurting, but denies that there was any witch hunt or strategy to get rid of particular people. He insisted that he will do whatever possible to avoid involuntary redundancies, and to cause the least possible harm. “This new approach that is now being implemented is rather a result of the division administration and the board not having acted earlier, when all the signals pointed to an unavoidable crisis if no drastic changes were made.”

### Looking With Confidence Towards the Future?

*How likely is the Centre for Ministry and Mission to succeed?*

In order for that to happen, potential students must see the revamped ministerial training as an attractive option. And the new approach must win the confidence and support of the leaders in the various fields.

Challenges abound. The competition in the Adventist market for theology students is considerable. Several educational institutions of unions in Central Europe that belong to the TED offer master’s degrees in theology. In addition, Friedensau Adventist University in Germany is now also providing a master’s degree in theology in the English language.

It is of vital importance that the issues that cause unrest among the staff of Newbold, in particular about the future composition of the corps of theology professors, can be solved amicably, and that the teachers will be fully motivated to give the new setup their very best. After all, they are, in the words of Raafat Kamal the “vessels” through which the product of the CMM must be delivered.

The leaders in the TED are convinced that the denomination, in the part of Europe for which they are responsible, needs a first-class training center that can provide the church with pastors and other church workers who can relate to the members who are called to live their faith in a postmodern, secular world. And these church representatives must be able to present the Adventist message in ways that are relevant for the European public. The new CMM must use and further develop delivery

models that fit with the world of the twenty-first century.

*It must succeed*, for continuing with the old-style Newbold is a dead-end street. *And it can succeed*, I am assured by Dr. Daniel Duda, who leads out in the transition, and by Dr. John Baidam, on whose watch this change is taking place. An enormous amount of work has gone into designing significant adjustments of the curricula. Preparations are underway to ensure that the new mix of classroom and online teaching will “work.” A group of specialists has begun the challenging task of maximizing the financial benefits that will come from the exploitation of parts of the grounds and of several buildings that must get another function. As to the goal of 80–100 students—it remains to be seen whether this number is immediately achievable. So far, there are some hurdles, but most elements are on track.

When I asked Baidam whether he looks at the future of Newbold with confidence, he stated: We are “shrinking for future growth.” Raafat Kamal used these very same words. They do not exclude the possibility that in the future new disciplines might once again be added to the program, and more staffing will be needed. But first, a new model must be tried and must prove its success and give the flagship educational institution of the Trans-European Division a new, sustainable basis that will deliver the kind of “product” the church needs in its passionate endeavors to build God’s kingdom and provide the right kind of spiritual care for the Adventist community in Europe.



REINDER BRUINSMA is a native of the Netherlands who retired in 2007 after a long career in pastoral, editorial, teaching, and church leadership assignments in Europe, the United States, and West Africa. After receiving a BA from Newbold College and an MA from Andrews University, he earned a BDiv with honors and a doctorate in church history from the University of London. He recently interrupted his retirement to serve as the president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Belgium and Luxemburg. He has authored more than twenty books, in Dutch and English, and a large number of articles. He has also translated various theological books from Dutch into English.



*Editor's Note: The following comments were posted by readers on the [spectrummagazine.org](http://spectrummagazine.org) website following the publishing of Reinder Bruinsma's article "Shrinking in Order to Grow."*

### **Larry Geraty**

From all I know, Reinder Bruinsma has done a very credible, accurate, and fair job with his article. I must say that given the changes, however, few Americans will be attracted to that type of institution unless they are preparing for ministry. As it was, it was life-changing and prepared me for my life-long ministry—and I'm talking spiritually as well as academically. When I think of the professors who did the best job, such as Woodfield in English literature, Porter and Dorland in history, Schuil in biblical languages, Keough in Bible and theology, and Scarr in music—I presume none of them would now be hired at the new Newbold envisioned. I can't help but mourn the passing.

### **Barry Casey**

I read Reinder Bruinsma's report on the future of Newbold with interest and with sadness. Like so many

others, my year at Newbold was absolutely life-changing spiritually, culturally, and educationally. I appreciated the sheer pedagogical talent of Dr. Woodfield, Dr. Schuil, Dr. Leonard, and Bob Zamora. I made life-long friends, contributed to The Gate ministry, both at Coventry and Bracknell, reveled in the cultural life of London, and spent hours in Foyle's and the Penguin Bookshop. So, to learn that Newbold is cutting back its Humanities and Business curriculum and transforming into a ministerial-only emphasis was disheartening.

This seems like a shift right-ward, instigated from the top down and at the behest of TED administrators who are unhappy with the "product" of ministerial graduates from Newbold. Despite the protestations of TED administrators, the faculty and staff concerns do not seem to have been fully addressed. This looks like another heavy-handed move by administrators at the division level to interfere with the educational process

without fully realizing the consequences. The scope and breadth of the education offered at Newbold provided all students, theology students included, ways to understand and address the postmodern world. I fear that will be lost or at least drastically cut back. The opportunity to rub shoulders with fellow students from many nations, backgrounds, and interests was part of that education, a facet of Newbold that many of us remember as life changing. Moreover, the student community aspect of Newbold, something so dear to those who have attended there, will be greatly diminished.

There is no question that Newbold faced real challenges before COVID, and the loss of students on campus was a tough blow. Principal John Baildam and his administration are to be commended for working their way through those challenges with courage and faith. Now it remains to be seen if these losses of curricular robustness, community spirit, and openness to the challenges of twenty-first-century life, will be offset by the “shrinking for future growth.” I hope and pray it will be so. Newbold and its legacy in the lives of thousands deserves it.

### **Tom de Bruin**

As someone close to these changes, let me just say that Reinder has done an astounding job of giving those in charge the benefit of the doubt. (In reply to comment below: This is not a criticism of Reinder! Just my attempt to contextualize this report.)

### **Michael Pearson**

Reinder Bruinsma’s article on Newbold restructuring may provide a skeleton of an administrative account but it offers no flesh. The article gives little or no voice to the pain of those made redundant. No voice to those excluded from the top-down consultation processes. It says nothing of the possible conflicts of interest of some of the Board members between college and union conference. Nothing of hidden administrative agendas. Nothing of possible personal hostilities. Nothing about a lack of ability to imagine an alternative and more inclusive future for the college. These are difficult things to talk about and it seems that the leaders lacked either the will or the skill to do so.

I wonder whether a fuller picture will ever emerge. Clearly there was a need for change. But one might have

hoped that it would be achieved with greater transparency, fuller compassion, a greater concern for community, and leadership that was more visionary than bureaucratic.

It pains me to say this, but this crucial process is deeply flawed. It reflects badly on the Church in the Trans-European Division.

### **Kate**

The recent development at Newbold is another attempt to Americanize European Adventism. This is another suspicion against science. This shows another gap between Christian claims and actual behavior. You don’t treat your own people like that, nor your enemies, nor any person.

Do we really want to be afraid to research and think, ponder and weigh, connect and include? Do we really want to work and study and live in a climate of suspicion?

If this way continues and even reaches other colleges in the division, then this basically means the end of academic freedom in TED and as such per definition the end of academia in TED.

Just a word to Tom and Mike: You know Reinder. He probably only wanted to protect the colleagues remaining with this kind of diplomatic article. Please give him the benefit of a doubt.

### **Andreas Bochmann**

Thank you, Reinder Bruinsma, for tackling the gigantic task of trying to give a fair and polite report of what is one of the most devastating stories of Adventism in the UK: the reduction of a fine, well-established (120 years) and respected academic institution into a “car-salesmen-training-centre” (the cars being the 28 fundamentals, I guess). Too much critical thinking??? Revert that sentence into the opposite . . . so that’s how we want to be prepared for the twenty-first century! Mike Pearson is right that some flesh is missing in this bare bone article—like a long-serving staff member writing in describing the process as they have experienced it: “Insulting, insidious, patronizing—disrespectful is too mild.”

### **Arnoud van den Broek**

As a theology student freshly graduated at Newbold, I must say that I recognize many of the arguments presented for the changes that are set in progress. Indeed, the



curriculum very much focused on achieving the required academic level. I prefer more of the practical “hands-on” courses that contribute to the highly necessary skills pastors nowadays need.

Nevertheless, the importance of “critical thinking” that Newbold is (positively or negatively) known for must not be underestimated. And I am thankful for what many of the lecturers have taught me. The postmodern society that pastors have to work in does not accept a stiff-necked proclamation of biblical truth, the Christian faith, and the Adventist message. Instead, it requires well-thought-out arguments based on biblical truth, the Christian faith, and the Adventist message against the enormous variety of ideas about God, religion, faith, and truth: arguments that will speak to the hearts of those that have not seen their questions answered by the church in the past. This does not mean in any way that critical thinking is a synonym for following the changes in society. Instead, it is a necessary strategy to bridge the ever-moving gap between Christian truth and modern society.

Regarding the process that has been followed to effectuate the transition of Newbold so far and some of the critical notes that are made by some who are immediately affected by these changes, I think we must realize that changes often (if not always) hurt. Therefore, pain itself is not an argument against these changes. Moreover, the reality is that change is an inseparable part of the birth of the Kingdom of Heaven. Newbold must always understand its mission in the light of this Event.

### **HerMjstsTaxCollector**

I don’t know much about the methods used to implement this transition, nor am I a TED fan. In fact, I am generally suspicious towards church administrators. But I have to be straight with you. I have studied theology at Newbold in recent years and am grateful for the experience and the education received. However, I have seen first-hand what is hailed as “critical thinking” there. In reality, it is often just uncritical acceptance of everything liberal or “progressive,” and uncritical rejection of everything “traditionally” Adventist or deemed conservative, even if the larger society views it as progressive or subversive, e.g., veganism or Sabbath-keeping. And worse, this uncritically liberal approach is commonly accompanied by the sneering and mocking of

those who do not conform to that uniformity of “liberal” thinking. They are left feeling like some backward Neanderthals. Happened time and time again, even in the class, even perpetrated by the teachers—even towards their few colleagues who respectfully disagree with them. Is that academic freedom?

The reaction had to come. Newbold had it coming. Now we can only hope and pray that the pendulum does not swing too far in the other direction. Much more humility (intellectual and general) before fellow believers, and especially before God and the beauties and instructions from His Word is needed in order for Newbold to prosper. “Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples” (Deut. 4:6). Praying for you all, especially for the staff and teachers bearing the double burden of reforming Newbold and facing accusations of “betrayal” for it. The Lord is your strength and wisdom.

### **Niels-Erik Andreassen**

The recent report on changes to the operations of Newbold College is of concern to former students whose lives and careers were shaped in important ways by that college. The report appears to indicate that the immediate cause of the difficulties is financial, but there may be other factors even more complex than the financial.

It is hard to understand the college finances with the limited information provided in the report. But, on the face of it, it seems as though the college could meet only 50% of its operating costs with tuition revenue, placing an annual financial burden on the TED of £2 million, or 1% of tithe receipts throughout the division (I grant that may be a simplistic reading of the numbers). It is not unusual for colleges to need revenue above tuition to meet expenses. That extra funding is made available to keep the college open and protect our church members from ignorance about many things, including our faith.

Everything else being equal, 1% of revenue does not seem a huge cost to the TED in return for having a university-like institution of higher education that brings students from high school to undergraduate and graduate programs of study, while providing the TED with its work force. It actually sounds like a good deal. However, that assumes the proprietors of the college (division, unions, conferences, and fields) scattered across Europe are

satisfied, benefited, and blessed by the work of the college and proud of its product. If these expectations of the TED, its members, and families are not met, any cost of education quickly becomes too high, and educators will hear about it and must respond.

The Adventist church is an education church. That explains why “Newbold” was founded over a century ago. And we have 2,000 years of Christian history to remind us that without education Christianity falters and goes astray. The test of the new plan for Newbold is whether or not it can light the candle of higher education once again in the TED for all its members to see.

### **Julian Kastrati**

Friends, what Newbold needs the most at this time is our unsolicited, generous support and solidarity. The college has shaped our lives in so many more ways than our academic accomplishments. Could I kindly suggest that we don’t succumb to cynicism and negativity with our comments and/or feedback? Everyone, whether individuals, churches, or institutions, goes through mountaintop- and valley-moments in life. C’est la vie. There may be uncertainty and uneasiness in the valley, but there’s also resilience and resolve. Let’s focus on what is positive and yes, old-fashioned as it may seem, let us pray for all decision-makers as well as current staff and students!

### **Linda Nottingham**

Quite honestly, I probably should not be surprised by the many comments from the scholarly community and the people who attended Newbold with all their precious memories. I went to La Sierra, but could not afford a year abroad, like so many of the folks making the comments above.

But I am surprised. I wonder if any of the above respondents ever ran a business. The school is a business. And apparently, it was economically infeasible to continue to operate the school in the way they had previously done. How many of you teary-eyed alumni have made significant, sacrificial annual contributions to the institution, given the remarkable value it brought to your lives?

In further support of Dr. Bruinsma’s report, I am almost ebullient over the description of a “process” that was employed to establish the current plan. Process is so

often sidestepped or ignored completely in the church and its educational institutions.

As an example of another education institution which faced a crisis of relevance, I remember going out to teach at Holbrook SDA Indian Mission in the late 1960s. The curriculum was college prep and almost totally irrelevant . . . and it had been that way since the school was established in 1946. Most students did not finish school and went back to the Reservation to care for the sheep herds. And they never left. I am still friends with a woman who was one of my students there. She lives on the Reservation to this day.

Recognizing the disconnect, and through the implementation of a process, the faculty was supported by the governing church administrators to bring in practical courses, in addition to the accredited curriculum, such as nursing, animal husbandry, welding, agriculture, etc.

The school still goes strong today, and students are graduating from the twelfth grade. And they are prepared to take whatever road they chart for themselves in the future. Particularly if they choose to go back to the Reservation.

I salute the folks at Newbold and wish them the best.