

**A Guide Manual For Utilizing Electronic Resources In Spanish
For Graduate Theological Education In Latin America**

Reverend Larry D. McNeill

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the project was to develop a manual to guide students and faculty in the regional study centers of Latin America Theological Seminary (LATS) to utilize electronic resources to enhance their research and study practices. A survey of LATS students prior to the development of the manual revealed that the majority did not access the Internet for anything other than E-mail, and none had utilized the Internet to locate textual material for study purposes.

The underpinning of theological education was shown to be biblically mandated and firmly etched in the practices of God's people throughout the Veterotestamental historical record. The Church in succeeding eras has consistently employed effective means to perpetuate the tradition of popular theological education and ministerial formation. Electronic resources are tools for the current age to aid in the continuation of the educational mission of the Church.

The project focused on locating textual material in Spanish on the Internet and CD-ROMs relevant to curricular studies at LATS. An extensive discovery phase to locate appropriate material was conducted by way of comprehensive Internet searches supplemented by consultations with educators and students. The information located by the exploration was catalogued according to course offerings. A training course, *Introduction to Electronic Resources*, was designed to guide students and faculty into an effective use of the information available by electronic means. A successful administration of the course in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, yielded encouraging results that

LATS students and faculty would be able to quickly learn the necessary skills to navigate the Internet as a tool beneficial to their study discipline. Further, the course will be easily replicable in other regional centers across Latin America.

The major implications rendered by the project suggest that electronic resources provide an expansive supply of study material, most of which will not likely become available in LATS libraries by traditional printed means. The ensuing enrichment of study practices by LATS students and faculty will help them to be more thoroughly equipped for effective ministry in today's blending hues of cultures. It is reasonable to anticipate that the benefits of the project will extend beyond LATS students and faculty to the larger community of twenty thousand Assemblies of God theological students in Latin America in the mission effectiveness of the Church of Jesus Christ.