

Longtime seminary president to retire: Carnegie Calian of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

News in the [December 14, 2004](#) issue

Carnegie Samuel Calian, among the longest-serving and most successful seminary presidents in the nation, will retire in January 2006 after 25 years at the helm of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

"I think the institution needs a change, I need a change. My wife wants a change," said Calian, 71, the son of Armenian immigrants who Americanized his first name from "Carnig" to "Carnegie" when he was a child. "I really feel that God has another chapter for me, but I don't know what it is yet."

He is the longest-serving president of any seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and among the two or three longest-serving among all 251 accredited seminaries in the nation. Under his leadership, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary was transformed from a struggling liberal institution to a thriving one whose theologically diverse faculty includes some of the most prominent evangelical scholars in the denomination.

Calian sought to create a centrist school that would model theological diversity and reconciliation to a divided church. Although the seminary is increasingly perceived as evangelical, he said the faculty represents a healthy cross section. Among them are New Testament scholar Robert Gagnon, whose *The Bible and Homosexual Practice* is a manifesto for opponents of gay ordination, and Ronald Cole-Turner, a United Church of Christ theologian specializing in bioethical issues.

The theological shift has been accompanied by an increase in endowment from \$9 million to \$139 million, and in degree program enrollment from 210 to 380 students. Another 3,000 people attend the school's continuing education courses each year.

Daniel Aleshire, president of the Association of Theological Schools, the accrediting agency for seminaries, said that only a few large, evangelical seminaries surpassed

Pittsburgh for growth in enrollment and financial stability over the past 20 years. –
Religion News Service