



**FOR INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

**SPONSOR:** Sioban Nelson, Vice Provost, Academic Programs  
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**PRESENTER:** Sioban Nelson, Vice Provost, Academic Programs  
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**DATE:** October 21, 2013 for October 29, 2013

**AGENDA ITEM:** 2ii

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Follow-up Report on the Review of the Toronto School of Theology

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee is the point of entry into governance for reports, summaries and administrative responses on the results of academic reviews of programs and units commissioned by academic administrators. The role of the Committee is to ensure that the reviews are conducted in accordance with University policy and guidelines, that an appropriate process has been followed, that adequate documentation is provided and consultations undertaken, and that issues identified in the review are addressed by the administration. Under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process, the Committee may request a one year follow-up report when concerns are raised in an external review that require a longer period of response.

This report is forwarded, together with the record of the Committee's discussion, to the Agenda Planning committee of the Academic Board, which determines whether there are any issues of general academic significance warranting discussion at the Board level. The same documentation is sent to the Executive Committee of Governing Council for information.

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

- 1. Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (October 29, 2013)**
  - + Agenda Committee of the Academic Board (November 6, 2013)
  - + Academic Board (November 21, 2013)
  - + Executive Committee of the Governing Council [For Information] (December 2, 2013)

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The Toronto School of Theology (TST) was reviewed on January 10-11, 2012, and the report of the external reviewers was taken to the October 29, 2012 meeting of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P). AP&P asked for a one year follow-up report regarding the content of the proposed conjoint Ph.D. program.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

In response to AP&P's request, Toronto School of Theology prepared a follow-up report that addressed the reviewers' recommendations for the proposed conjoint Ph.D. program. Specifically, the report addressed recommendations relative to quality assurance in the proposed conjoint Ph.D. program, planning and integration with TST member institutions, faculty and student research, and doctoral student supervision. The report also described TST's consultation process as it developed the conjoint Ph.D. program.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

n/a

**RECOMMENDATION:**

For Information.

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**DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

TST One Year Follow-Up Letter from Dr. Alan Hayes, October 10, 2013



## Toronto School of Theology

*affiliated with the University of Toronto*

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October 10, 2013

Professor Sioban Nelson  
Vice-Provost Academic Programs  
Simcoe Hall

Dear Sioban,

Thank you for your letter of September 18, inviting the Toronto School of Theology to submit a one-year follow-up report, as the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs requested last fall, on a recommendation that was made by our external appraisers during our cyclical review under the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process.

The recommendation was to develop a conjoint Ph.D. program that would meet the University's very demanding standards for its own Ph.D. programs. Indeed, this was the single most important recommendation that the external reviewers gave us. Towards this end, the external review recommended our attention to the following matters: (a) a strong central authority in the administration of the new doctoral program; (b) collaboration among the member colleges of the consortium in enrolment planning, faculty complement planning, and planning for faculty renewal; (c) a clear allocation of faculty resources from the member colleges to the doctoral program; (d) a programmatic emphasis on faculty supervision and mentoring; (e) faculty collegiality and student cohort identity, so that the new program might have a more collaborative character than our current conjoint Th.D. program; (f) a TST-wide faculty research culture; and (g) a coordinated structure of course requirements and comprehensive examinations, in contrast to the complicated sets and sub-sets of requirements in our current conjoint Th.D. program;

We approached the development of a conjoint Ph.D. program as a new venture, not as a revision of our current conjoint Th.D. program. The process of development

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involved considerable consultation with our TST faculty members in “Town Hall,” departmental, and member college arrangements; with the heads of our member colleges; with our academic administrators and academic council; with students; with representatives of several cognate disciplines at the University; and with academic administrators in the Office of the Provost, the School of Graduate Studies, and the Faculty of Arts and Science. We also researched similar programs at peer institutions. Every feature of the prospective program was open for discussion, and, in fact, every feature will be in some ways different, and sometimes significantly different, from our current conjoint Th.D. program: learning outcomes, admissions policies and procedures, supervisory expectations, faculty resourcing, curricular requirements and offerings, comprehensive examinations, and academic administration. Moreover, several of the recommendations of the external review pointed to the need for a reform of our corporate and academic governance, which had remained substantially unchanged since our founding in 1969. We have now changed our corporate governance, have approved in principle a new academic governance, and have created a new administrative unit for graduate program oversight and administration.

Let me review the list of recommendations above, by the letter of the alphabet against which each one is listed.

(a) (c) We have created a new central authority in the administration of the new doctoral program, on the model of what the University calls an extra-departmental unit of type “B”. The Graduate Centre for Theological Studies, as we call it, has the authority to make faculty appointments from the member colleges, to allocate faculty resources, to administer quality assurance, to oversee curriculum, and, in general, to administer the program.

(b) The heads of the member colleges have formed themselves as a collaborative group for enrolment planning, faculty complement planning, and planning for faculty renewal.

(d) The proposed new program will give each doctoral student a faculty supervisor who will normally be advising and mentoring the student from admission to thesis defence.

(e) Two core courses will promote student cohort identity.

(e) (f) Administrative structures and operational practices will promote faculty collegiality, and we envision the secondment of a senior academic to serve in a capacity comparable to a vice-dean of research, supporting and promoting a research-intensive culture among our graduate faculty.

(g) The internal disciplinary divisions of our current conjoint Th.D. program, which we call departments, will disappear. A student's program will centre on his or her research topic, and will be characterized by an interdisciplinary, ecumenical, and global perspective.

Over all, the new program will be student-centred, research-intensive, and collaborative, and will meet the recommendations, and realize the vision, of our external reviewers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan".

Alan L. Hayes  
Director