



TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

SPONSOR: Cheryl Regehr

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DATE: February 13, 2012 for February 28, 2012

AGENDA ITEM: 4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION: Proposal for the closure of the Master of Religion, a 2nd entry undergraduate degree program offered conjointly by Wycliffe College (Toronto School of Theology) and the University of Toronto and closure of the degree.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION: The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs has the authority to recommend to the Academic Board for approval the closure of existing degrees and graduate programs. (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.a.iii*)

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs approves the closures of undergraduate programs within an existing degree, as defined by the University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process. (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.b.i.*)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN: None

HIGHLIGHTS:

This is a proposal for the closure of the current Master of Religion program offered by Wycliffe College and with it the closure of the degree Master of Religion (MR). This program is a 2nd entry undergraduate program offered conjointly by the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology of which Wycliffe College is a part.

The closure of the program is being closed in response to low enrolment. There is another program with very similar learning outcomes which has proven popular with students.

Students currently in the program have been consulted individually by the Principal and program director and will be allowed to complete the program.

The closure of this program and the degree has been subject to extensive consultation within the College and TST more generally. The program closure was also supported by a recent

accreditation review. This proposal was approved by the Basic Degree Council of TST on 13 December 2011. This constitutes the final level of approval within the Toronto School of Theology.

FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS: None

RECOMMENDATION:

Be it recommended to the Academic Board:

THAT the proposed closure of the Master of Religion, offered conjointly by Wycliffe College (Toronto School of Theology) and the University of Toronto, and with it the Master of Religion degree (MR) as described in the proposal from the Toronto School of Theology dated 5 February 2012 be approved with an effective date of September 2012 for the closure of admissions and an anticipated program closure date of January 2014.

University of Toronto
Closure of an Existing Program (graduate or undergraduate)
Proposal

(This template has been developed in line with the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process.)

Section 1

Closure Proposed:	Master of Religion
Department / Unit (if applicable):	Toronto School of Theology
Faculty / Academic Division:	Wycliffe College
Faculty / Academic Division contact:	Alan L. Hayes, Director, Toronto School of Theology
Department / Unit contact:	George Sumner, Principal, Wycliffe College
Effective date program will be closed to new admissions:	September 2012, subject to approval. (The program has been administratively closed to new admissions effective January 2012.)
Effective date of full closure of program: <i>(date by which students currently in the program will be expected to graduate)</i>	January 2014 (anticipated)
Version Date:	February 5, 2012

Section 2

1. Brief Summary

This is a proposal for the closure of the Master of Religion program (a three-year second-entry undergraduate conjoint degree program providing a general academic foundation and specialized research in theological studies).

2. Rationale

The closure of this program is being recommended on a number of grounds:

1. Enrolment in the program has declined. In no year since 2003 has the number of new admissions exceeded three. Cohort sizes have therefore become educationally sub-optimal, and administrative support has become inefficient.
2. Another, newer conjoint degree program, the Master of Theological Studies, is available to meet the same general learning outcomes, and has attracted a strong and steady enrolment. (Although the M.T.S. requires only two years of study, compared with the three years required by the M.Rel., students desiring the greater depth that the M.Rel. program has historically delivered may now take the one-year Th.M. following the two-year M.T.S.)
3. The alternative M.T.S. program has a degree nomenclature that is more recognizable and current than the M.Rel. nomenclature.
4. A recent accreditation review by a visiting team from the Association of Theological Schools supports this decision.

3. Impact on other programs/units of the proposed closure

The impact is negligible. The principal and program director have met with the students in the M.Rel. program and offered the choice of continuing in the program to completion or being accommodated in the M.T.S. program. All students have indicated their intention to complete the M.Rel. If any should change their minds, they can be easily absorbed without any stress on resources. In particular, all M.Rel. courses can be transferred to the M.T.S. program for full credit, subject to prerequisite and distribution requirements in the M.T.S. program, which are in any event similar to those in the M.Rel. program.

4. Student Accommodation

Undergraduate

	<i>Year one</i>	<i>Year two</i>	<i>Year three</i>	<i>Year four</i>
<i>Current enrolment</i>	2	4	2	#n/a

5. Faculty / Staff Accommodation

There will be no impact on faculty or staff members as a result of the closure of the Master of Religion program.

6. Governance Process

	<i>Levels of Approval Required</i>
<i>Decanal / Provostial Sign Off</i>	
	Faculty/Divisional Council (approval of closure of minors, where there is a continuing (specialist or major))
<i>Submission to Provost's Office</i>	
	AP&P (approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no specialist of major))
	Academic Board (approval of degree closures)
	Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, diploma closures)
<i>Inclusion in Annual report to Quality Council</i>	
<i>Inclusion in Annual report to MTCU (in case of closure of degree)</i>	

Developed by the Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs April 4, 2011