

FOR APPROVAL

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO:	Committee on Academic Policy and Programs
SPONSOR: CONTACT INFO:	Susan McCahan, Vice-Provost, Academic Programs (416) 978-0490, vp.academicprograms@utoronto.ca
PRESENTER: CONTACT INFO:	Same as above
DATE:	January 27, 2022 for February 17, 2022
AGENDA ITEM:	4

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Proposal for the closure of the Specialist in Christianity and Culture (HBA), Faculty of Arts and Science.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

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 (UTQAP). (*AP&P Terms of Reference, Section 4.4.b.i.*)

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. **Committee on Academic Policy and Programs [for approval] (February 17, 2022)**

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

The proposal to close the Specialist in Christianity and Culture was approved at the Faculty of Arts and Science Faculty Council meeting on February 9, 2022.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Specialist in Christianity and Culture is a Faculty of Arts and Science program sponsored by St. Michael's College. The Christianity and Culture Programs were established in 1979 to

provide students with the opportunity to study Christianity from an interdisciplinary approach and engage in the subject matter from a variety of scholarly perspectives.

The program requirements for the Specialist were revised in 2010 with the goal of balancing the need for flexibility and breadth, and providing students with a clear and transparent pathway. However, student interest in the Specialist continued to decline, with fewer than 10 students enrolled in the program in 2013-2014.

The 2013-14 UTQAP review of the program recommended that the program consider suspending or closing the Specialist and focusing resources on the existing Major, the offering which allowed for double major pairings in cognate areas to be available to students. Enrolment in the Specialist was suspended in 2015 with the intention to plan for revisions to the Major and Minor. In 2016, the program decided to proceed with formally closing the Specialist after all current students had completed the program. This decision was reflected in the Faculty of Arts and Science Dean's one-year follow-up report to the external review.

Students who wish to pursue an offering in this area may take one of the three remaining programs situated under the Christianity and Culture umbrella: Christianity and Culture Major; Christianity and Culture Minor; and the Christianity and Education Minor.

There are no students currently active in the Specialist. A small number of students who enrolled in the Specialist prior to 2017 have lapsed in their studies and are no longer actively studying in the Faculty of Arts and Science. Should these students return to their studies, they would be easily accommodated to complete the Major in Christianity and Culture to complete their degree.

Students in the Christianity and Culture Major are aware of the potential closure and appreciate the reasons for it. Students who were part of the UTQAP review were in favour of the Specialist closing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no negative implications to the closure of the Specialist.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be it Resolved,

THAT the proposed closure of the Specialist in Christianity and Culture, Faculty of Arts and Science, dated January 20, 2022, to which admissions were administratively suspended on April 1, 2015, be approved with an anticipated program closure date of April 30, 2022.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

- *Proposal for the closure of the Specialist in Christianity and Culture, Faculty of Arts & Science*

University of Toronto Proposal:

Closure of an Existing Program (Graduate or Undergraduate)

This template has been developed in line with the University of Toronto's Quality Assurance Process. The process followed for the closure of any program is the same as that required for the approval of any new such program.

Closure proposed; please specify precisely what is being closed: i.e., graduate diploma, field, certificate, option within a program (e.g., specialist, major or minor), entire program or degree (graduate or undergraduate).	Christianity and Culture Specialist (ASSPE0463)
Department/unit if applicable:	St. Michael's College
Faculty/academic division:	Faculty of Arts and Science
Faculty/academic division contact:	Randy Boyagoda, Vice-Dean, Undergraduate
Department/unit contact:	Mark McGowan, Interim Principal and Vice-President
Effective date program will be closed to new admissions:	Admission to program has been administratively suspended since April 1, 2015
Effective date of full closure of program: date by which students currently in the program will be expected to graduate.	April 30, 2022
Version date: please change as you edit this proposal.	January 20, 2022

1 Brief Summary

- Please clarify precisely what is being closed.
- What is the relationship between what is being closed and any remaining offerings:
 - ▶ If only part of a program is being closed, please clarify the relationship between this and those portions of the program that will remain open.

We are proposing to close the Christianity and Culture Specialist program, a Faculty of Arts and Science program sponsored by St. Michael's College, for which admission has
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been suspended since 2015. Closing the Specialist was a recommendation of the 2013-14 UTQAP review of the Christianity and Culture programs that has been considered and adopted by the program.

With the proposed closure of the Christianity and Culture Specialist program, students may still pursue the three remaining programs situated under the Christianity and Culture umbrella: Christianity and Culture Major, Christianity and Culture Minor, and the Christianity and Education Minor. In particular, the Christianity and Culture Major offers students an opportunity to engage meaningfully with the same core subjects of the Specialist, and allows students to combine this study with a Major in a different field, as is increasingly in demand for Arts & Science programs.

2 Academic Rationale

Background:

- You may wish to speak to when the program was first created; how long has it been offered; past success of the program.
- What has led to the decision to close the program?
- Please provide a full academic rationale:
 - ▶ You may wish to refer to changing enrolment; changing disciplinary landscape; shifting expertise of the professoriate; poor quality of the academic offering; overlap with other existing programs.
 - ▶ Where appropriate, you may want to quote from recent unit or program reviews.
 - ▶ Explain alignment with the unit's academic plan.

The Christianity and Culture Programs were established in 1979 to provide students with the opportunity to study Christianity from an interdisciplinary approach and engage in the subject matter from a variety of scholarly perspectives. The Christianity and Culture Specialist allowed students to be exposed to and develop research skills and methods, enabling them to integrate knowledge learned from 200- and 300-level courses with research conducted on specific problems/topics to formulate their arguments during their 400-level specialized seminars.

The program requirements for the Specialist had been revised in 2010 with the goal of balancing the need for flexibility and breadth, and providing students with a clear and transparent pathway. However, student interest in the Specialist continued to decline, with fewer than 10 students enrolled in the program in 2013-2014. In the 2013-14 external review of the program, reviewers recommended that the program consider suspending, or closing the Specialist, and focusing resources on the existing

major in the area. The reviewers also recognized that the existing major allowed for double major pairing in cognate areas which might be desirable. The College then suspended enrolment in the Specialist in 2015 with the intention to plan for revisions to the Major and Minor. In 2016, the program planned to proceed with a formal closure for the Specialist after all current students had completed the program. This decision was reflected in the one-year follow-up report of the external review.

Since that time, in 2018, the Major and Minor underwent significant curriculum modifications to restructure course pathways and progression through these programs. This included consolidation of introductory courses into one gateway course (CHC203Y1), and setting up pathways along four possible thematic clusters: Christianity and the Arts (CHC200H1); Varieties of Christian Community (CHC215H1); Christianity and Education (SMC218H1); Christianity and Science (CHC232H1). Since these revisions have come into effect we have seen a small growth in the program overall, and received positive feedback from students about the changes. This has proven to be a successful direction for the program and the program will continue to support students through the Major and Minor.

3 Impact on Other Programs/Units of the Proposed Closure

- Please provide evidence of consultation with any programs/units/faculties that will be affected.
- What are the positive and negative implications that need to be considered in the closure.
- Impact on the nature and quality of the division's program of study.
- Impact of closure on other units including inter-divisional and inter-institutional agreements/contracts.
- Please mention if the courses that supported this degree, program or program option will continue to be offered.

There is no impact on other programs or units. Courses that supported this program, including those cross-listed by other programs, for example from Mediaeval Studies, are still offered as part of the other Christianity and Culture programs, both the Major and the Minor, as well as the Christianity and Education Minor. The decision to close the program reflects planning decisions made in 2016 following the external review.

4 Student Accommodation

- Please include the current enrolment showing breakdown, by year, in the program or option being closed.

Table 1: Undergraduate

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Current enrolment	0	0	0	0

- Provide details concerning how students in progress will be accommodated.
 - ▶ Will students be allowed to complete their program or be transferred to another program? In the latter instance, please comment on the ease with which they can complete the requirements of the new program and show evidence of consultation, if relevant.
 - ▶ Deadline by which accommodated students must complete the program—if there are grounds for concern, what are their options if they have not completed the program by that deadline?
 - ▶ Capacity/course availability to accommodate affected students.
 - ▶ Can inactive students reactivate to the closed program?
- What will the impact of the proposed closure be on the range of academic options available to students in the future (i.e., are there other programs or options that will fill the void that may or may not be created by the closure)?
- Consultation with students.
 - ▶ Please provide details concerning consultation with students around the proposed change, including:
 - meetings, town halls, emails, questionnaires
 - any response or feedback received
 - ▶ How will students be notified of the change following approval?

There are no students currently active in the Specialist. All previously active students in the program have graduated, with the most recently enrolled student having graduated in Spring 2020. A small number of students who enrolled in the Specialist prior to 2017 have lapsed in their studies and are no longer actively studying in the Faculty of Arts and Science. Should these students return to their studies they would be easily accommodated to complete the Major in Christianity and Culture to complete their degree.

Students in the Christianity and Culture Major are aware of the potential closure, and appreciate the reasons for it. There have been no formal requests to enrol in the Specialist. Students who were part of the UTQAP review were in favour of the Specialist closing. Likewise, the program committee, and its student members, have

been consulted and made aware of this decision for some years and have never failed to support it.

For current and future students, a strong range of program options remains – the regular Major and Minor together with the Minor and Major in Christianity and Education.

5 Faculty/Staff Accommodation

- What is the impact, if any, on faculty and staff of the closure?

The faculty and staff who supported the Specialist remain active supporting courses for the Christianity and Culture Major and Minor, and Minor in Christianity and Education, and will not be impacted by the closure.

6 UTQAP Process

The governance pathway is summarized in the table below.

Steps	Approvals
Decanal and Provostial sign-off	
Faculty/divisional council (approval of closure of minors, where there is a continuing specialist or major)	February 9, 2022
Submission to Provost's office	February 9, 2022
AP&P (approval of program closures: undergrad specialists/majors; minors where there is no specialist or major; graduate fields or diploma; and collaborative programs)	February 17, 2022
Academic Board (approval of degree, graduate program, diploma closures)	N.A.
Executive Committee of Governing Council (executive confirms degree, grad program, closures)	N.A.
Inclusion in annual report to Quality Council	July 2022
Inclusion in annual report to MCU (in case of closure of degree)	

Proposal for the Closure of an Existing Program (Graduate or Undergraduate)