Queen’s University

Executive Summary of the Review of the Academic Programs in the School of Religion

In accordance with Queen’s University Quality Assurance Processes (QUQAP), the School of Religion submitted a self-study on November 12, 2013 to the Faculty of Arts and Science, the School of Graduate Studies and the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) to initiate the cyclical program review of its undergraduate and graduate programs. The approved self-study presented program descriptions, learning outcomes, library report and analyses of data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and the School of Graduate Studies. Appendices to the self-study contained CVs for each full-time member in the School of Religion.

Three arm’s-length reviewers (Dr. Frances Garrett, Associate Professor, Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto; Dr. Lorne Dawson, Professor, Department of Sociology & Legal Studies, University of Waterloo; and, Dr. James Carson, Professor and Chair, Department of History, Queen’s University) examined the materials and conducted a site visit on April 3-4, 2014. The site visit included interviews with the vice-provost (teaching and learning), vice-provost and dean and associate dean, graduate studies, dean and vice-dean of arts and science and meetings with undergraduate students, graduate students, librarians, cognate heads, staff and faculty.

In their report (May 12, 2014), the review team provided feedback that describes how the School of Religion’s programs meet the QUQAP evaluation criteria and are consistent with the university’s mission and academic priorities. The review team noted that the undergraduate academic programs offered by the School of Religion were very strong and a tribute to the dedication and capabilities of the core faculty. The school also received high praise for its MA program with its remarkably high levels of completion and considerable student satisfaction. In particular, the review team noted graduate students’ appreciation for the amount of support and mentoring they were receiving from their supervisors.

The review team did report on a number of challenges including: shifting one of its two required undergraduate theory and methods courses from the third year level to the second year level; replacing the three-year continuing contract position in Judaism with one in Islam; rebranding the MA program in terms of two or three specific areas of study; strengthening the connections between religious studies and cognate departments, improving the school’s website and reviewing the workload of its administrative staff.

Based on all of the above documentation, a Final Assessment Report and an Implementation Plan were prepared by the vice-provost (teaching and learning) and approved by the provost (December 1, 2014).

The academic programs in the School of Religion have been approved to continue and are scheduled for their next review in eight years (2021-2022)

Prepared by the vice-provost (teaching and learning)
November 11, 2014