

## **Internal Academic Review 2010-2011**

### **Theology Programs in Queen's School of Religion Internal Academic Review Committee Report to Senate**

The Internal Academic Review (IAR) of the Theology Programs in Queen's School of Religion is now complete. The IAR Committee (IARC) has taken into consideration all of the submissions related to the IAR of the Theology programs and respectfully submits the following report. This IARC Report to Senate is intended to supplement the findings of the attached Review Team Report, and to provide a mechanism for the Vice-Provost and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies to report on the progress in addressing the Review Team recommendations (please see attached letter).

#### **Introduction**

The IAR of the Theology Programs in Queen's School of Religion is the last IAR to be completed under the Senate Internal Academic Review Policy. All future reviews will be performed under the new Quality Assurance processes (*QUQAPs*). Because the Theological College was participating in an external accreditation of all its undergraduate and graduate programs by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) at the same time as its IAR, Dr. Patrick Deane, former Vice-Principal (Academic), authorized a joint Self-Study document to meet the requirements for both the ATS and the IAR. The ATS external accreditation Review Team also served as the external reviewers for the IAR process.

It is important to note that during the time period of the external accreditation and the IAR, two major events occurred. The first was the reintegration of Queen's School of Religion (known as the Theological College until 2009) with Queen's University to form the School of Religion within the Faculty of Arts & Science. The second was the June 14, 2010 decision of the United Church of Canada to cease giving the School a grant for operations effective June 30, 2011. Despite these very significant changes that had major effects on the ongoing and future operations of the Unit, the overall academic quality of the Theology Programs in Queen's School of Religion was assessed as being excellent.

## **Summary of the Internal Academic Review of Queen's School of Religion Theology Programs**

The School of Religion is to be applauded for its high quality undergraduate and graduate theology programs. It is also commended for its outstanding contributions to research and scholarship. The IARC was pleased to see that the School has taken on the challenge of significantly revamping its course offerings. The recent thorough curriculum review has resulted in clearly defined learning outcomes which is highly aligned with the structure of the new quality assurance processes (*QUQAPs*) This places the School in an excellent position to transition smoothly into their next cyclical program review. The IARC also acknowledges the wisdom of the School's decision through the equivalent of their faculty board/ Senate (Committee on Religious Studies) to suspend admissions into four of their academic programs with low enrolment where the quality of the programs was considered to be in jeopardy. Finally, the IARC was greatly encouraged by the enhanced cooperation between the Theology programs and the Queen's library system which has resulted in a great improvement in the quantity of and access to relevant library holdings in recent years.

The IARC shares the concerns raised in the Review Team report about waning enrolment in all degree programs offered by the School and the absence of a clear cut plan to address the issue. Consequently, the IARC strongly encourages the School of Religion, in conjunction with the Faculty of Arts and Science and the School of Graduate Studies, to enhance their student recruitment efforts and to explore ways to capitalize on opportunities to attract students from other relevant areas of study (e.g. political science, history, business, health sciences, etc). A review of the Peer Profile Report that was part of the IAR shows a disproportionate number of older students in the Queen's programs compared to other peer institutions, and this approach may promote a greater balance of younger students within the programme. As well, the demographics of the students enrolled in Queen's Theology are less than optimally diverse, and a broader awareness of this program among undergraduate and graduate students may enhance representation of currently under-represented racial and ethnic minorities. Overall, the IARC recommends that the School pays particular attention to addressing these issues of diversity when planning and implementing their enhanced recruitment efforts.

The IARC congratulates the School of Religion on so ably managing a challenging transition period without compromising the quality of their academic offerings. It fully supports the School of Religion during this important juncture in its evolution and anticipates its continued success. The IARC is confident that in the future, the Queen's

School of Religion will be viewed as a case where change came with opportunities and the end result was an enhanced quality of its academic programs sustained by its excellent profile of research and scholarship.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan P. C. Cole, PhD, FRSC  
Chair, Senate Internal Academic Review Committee

### **Committee Members**

M. Blennerhassett, School of Medicine  
S. Cole, Deputy Provost (Chair)  
D. Martin, Family Health Team  
M. Purcell, EQUIP  
D. Reid, School of Business  
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N. Somani, BCom '13  
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March 5, 2012

Dear Dr. Cole,

I am writing to provide a response from the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) to the Internal Academic Review of Queen's School of Religion Theology Programs. Our comments are limited to those issues that pertain directly to graduate studies.

The reviewers and the IAR team commend the many program strengths, for example, the boldness of its re-organization, and its active research culture. Despite their recognition of many positive aspects of the program, the reports also identify some concerns: flagging enrolments in graduate theology programs, a decline in funding from the United Church of Canada, a need for more comprehensive and systematic curricular and program changes, and more extensive diversification of the student body. The unit has begun a comprehensive review of its graduate program offerings in light of the need for the Master of Divinity and the Master of Theological Studies to obtain approval from the Provincial Quality Council. This is required because these programs, under the merger agreement with the university will be a part of the School of Graduate Studies.

The SGS will support the School of Religion as it re-examines its Theology graduate programs in light of the present day challenges and societal demands. The program leaders are committed to delivering vibrant graduate programs and developing strategies to broaden, deepen and diversify their applicant pool for graduate programs in theology.

The School of Graduate Studies welcomes the theology graduate programs and looks forward to working with the Queen's School of Religion at this important juncture in its evolution.

Sincerely,

Brenda Brouwer, PhD.  
Vice-Provost and Dean  
School of Graduate Studies

**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY**

**REPORT OF THE REVIEW TEAM  
FOR THE  
INTERNAL ACADEMIC REVIEW  
OF  
QUEEN'S SCHOOL OF RELIGION  
THEOLOGY PROGRAMS**

For

The Internal Academic Review Committee

Queen's University Senate

25 November 2011

Kingston, Ontario

## **REPORT OF THE REVIEW TEAM FOR THE INTERNAL ACADEMIC REVIEW OF QUEEN'S SCHOOL OF RELIGION THEOLOGY PROGRAMS**

### Executive Summary

Initially, the Review Team found its mandate unclear because: (1) negotiations for the purpose of materially changing the nature of the relationship between Queen's Theological College and Queen's University were on-going, and (2) the team was not made aware at the outset that the review covered only the programs in Theology and that the Religion programs had been reviewed earlier. These factors generated a degree of initial confusion for the review team.

At the time of the Internal Academic Review (IAR), the Theology degree programs were undergoing a cyclical external accreditation review by the Association of Theological Schools. The Office of the Provost had agreed to use the self study materials submitted to this external accreditation board in lieu of the Unit Self Study required for the Internal Academic Review. The external evaluation team sent by the accreditation board, by mutual agreement, also served as the external panel for the Internal Academic Review, and a copy of their site visit report was provided to our IAR Review Team. This arrangement worked well, but added several months to the Internal Academic Review time frame and contributed to instability in the review team's membership.

### Key Strengths

- Queen's School of Religion is to be commended for its boldness in reviewing and renewing its organizational structure, its relationship with Queen's University, and its theology programs, courses and curricula over the past decade. This exercise included the discontinuation of four of its under-enrolled theology programs.
- Both the School and Queen's Library System are to be commended for their cooperation in significantly improving the Library's theology holdings over the past decade.

### Key Areas of Concern

- Enrolment in the Theology programs has been steadily declining over the past number of years. Efforts to stabilize or reverse this trend have not produced results.
- At the same time, outside funding from the United Church of Canada has also been declining.
- While the School has in place programs for assessment of individual student learning outcomes, it needs to put in place more systematic evaluation processes for its curricula and programs.
- Efforts to diversify the student body have produced some results. The School would like to do more, but feels the Kingston location makes this challenging..
- Theological Hall requires a lot of maintenance that has been deferred.

### Key Opportunities

- Queen's School of Religion may wish to consider and evaluate the possibility of moving beyond the Kingston campus through greater use of distance learning. The technology and expertise to do this is readily available at Queen's University as various faculties are already broadening their reach through the use of these technologies. Possibilities include on-site courses, online courses, "blended" courses (a combination of on-campus or on-

site classes and on-line modules) webcasting of courses, teleconferencing and video conferencing. If successful, the outcome might be increased enrolments as well as a more diverse student body.

## **REPORT OF THE REVIEW TEAM FOR THE INTERNAL ACADEMIC REVIEW OF QUEEN'S SCHOOL OF RELIGION THEOLOGY PROGRAMS**

### The Review Team

Members of the IAR Review Team were confirmed by a letter from Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) Robert Silverman, dated 13 December 2010. Initial members included the following.

- Dr. LeRoy Whitehead, Faculty of Education (Chair)
- Professor Nick Bala, Faculty of Law
- Dr. Caroline-Isabelle Caron, Department of History
- Dr. Kathleen Norman, Department of Rehabilitation Therapy
- Ms Linda Horton, Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)
- Mr. Ian Fanning, Department of Religious Studies
- Ms Mary Smida, Department of History

However, because of unforeseen circumstances, Dr. Caron, Dr. Norman and Mr. Fanning retired from the team before the team began substantive work. The two retiring faculty members were replaced by Dr. Jacalyn Duffin, Hannah Chair of the History of Medicine, and Dr. Katharine Smithrim of the Faculty of Education. Because of the length of the review process, Ms Smida graduated from her program and relocated shortly before the team completed its work. For most of the team's life span, therefore, the team consisted of four faculty members, one staff member and one student, as follows.

- Dr. LeRoy Whitehead, Faculty of Education (Chair)
- Professor Nick Bala, Faculty of Law
- Dr. Jacalyn Duffin, Hannah Chair of the History of Medicine
- Dr. Katharine Smithrim, Faculty of Education
- Ms Linda Horton, Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)
- Ms Mary Smida, Department of History

We trust that the word 'normally' found in the Senate document description of the composition of the Review Team will cover this situation of the team being short of one student member, and short both student members briefly near the end of its work.

### Mandate of the Review Team

Initially, the IAR Review Team found the scope of its mandate to be unclear, for two reasons. The first was the negotiations then taking place between Queen's Theological College (operating under the identity of Queen's School of Religion) and Queen's University for the purpose of materially changing the nature of the relationship between the College and the University. At the time the unit self study document was written, it was not clear what the final outcome of those negotiations would be. Hence, the self study document was somewhat vague about the nature of the negotiations and what the resulting relationship would be. That lack of clarity was confusing for the Review Team. Second, the team was not made aware initially that the review covered only the programs in Theology, and that the Religion programs had been reviewed earlier. This also led to some confusion at the beginning of our review process. However, this was eventually clarified in discussions with personnel of Queen's School of Religion and the Office of the Provost. It is our understanding that this Internal Academic Review process covers only the programs in Theology, and does not include programs in Religion.

### Concurrent Accreditation Review



In addition to the above, the Theology degree programs were undergoing a cyclical external accreditation review by the Board of Commissioners of the Commission on Accreditation of the Association of Theological Schools at the same time the Internal Academic Review was scheduled. The Office of the Provost had agreed to use the self study materials submitted to the accreditation board in lieu of the Unit Self Study required for the Internal Academic Review. The evaluation team sent by the accreditation board, by mutual agreement, also served as the external panel for the Internal Academic Review, and a copy of their site visit report was provided to the IAR Review Team. This arrangement worked well, with one exception: our Internal Academic Review time line had to be altered (i.e., lengthened considerably) to coincide with the timing of the external accreditation review. There was a delay of several months while we waited for the external evaluation team to make its visit, and an additional delay while we waited to receive the final report of the external team and the final decision of the accreditation body.

One issue that will need to be dealt with in future if similar arrangements are to be made for joint accreditation/ internal review visiting panels for professional programs is whether the visiting panel report to the accrediting body may be used as soon as the panel submits its report to the accrediting body, or whether the report may not be used until the accrediting body finalizes its accreditation decision. In this case, the Principal/Head of Queen's School of Religion asked the IAR Review Team to wait until the accreditation body had rendered its accreditation decision. The Review Team complied with this request, but in doing so added several months to the time frame. (These extensions of the Internal Academic Review timelines are part of the reason for some of the retirements from the IAR Review Team.) As it happens, in this case the accrediting body did make one important change from the recommendations of its evaluation team: the evaluation team had recommended renewal of accreditation for a five year period, but the decision of the accrediting body was for an eight year renewal.

### The Basis of This Report

Our report is based on the following.

- Queen's School of Religion Unit Self study Document (USS)
- A meeting of the IAR Review Team and the evaluation team from The Board of Commissioners of The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools
- A de-briefing meeting of the evaluation team and faculty members of Queen's School of Religion during which the evaluation team presented orally their draft recommendations (the chair and another member of the Review Team were present by invitation)
- Review Team chair's conversations with both Jean Stairs and Pamela Dickey-Young (out-going and in-coming heads of Queen's School of Religion) following the de-briefing meeting
- (Draft) "Report of a Comprehensive Visit to Queen's School of Religion by an Evaluation Team from The Board of Commissioners of The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools"
- Queen's School of Religion's response to the draft "Report of a Comprehensive Visit to Queen's School of Religion by an Evaluation Team from The Board of Commissioners of The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools"
- "Institutional Peer Profile Report 2010-2011" prepared by The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools, comparing statistical data from Queen's School of Religion with similar data sets from seven other theological colleges including: Atlantic School of Theology, Emmanuel College of Victoria University, Knox College, Lutheran Theological Seminary (SK), McMaster Divinity College, Vancouver School of Theology and Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

- (Final) “Report of the of a Comprehensive Visit to Queen’s School of Religion by an Evaluation team from The Board of Commissioners of The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools”
- Queen’s School of Religion’s response to the final “Report of a Comprehensive Visit to Queen’s School of Religion by an Evaluation team from The Board of Commissioners of The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools”

All of the IAR Review Team’s requests for information were promptly addressed by Queen’s School of Religion Principal Jean Stairs, and by her successor, Pamela Dickey-Young. The Review Team’s work has been guided by the Senate Document *Internal Academic Review* with adjustments necessary to accommodate the situation in which Queen’s School of Religion was undergoing external accreditation for its Theological programs at the same time as the Internal Academic Review was taking place.

The Senate document *Internal Academic Review* indicates that “an invitation to comment on the units under review is posted by the chair of the IARC in the Queen’s Gazette and the Journal. The unit will be asked by the VP (Academic) to identify the unit student organizations that will then be asked to send comments directly to the review team.” This process was followed, but the IAR Review Team received no comments from these sources.

### The Programs

As noted above, this review is concerned only with programs in Theology offered by Queen’s School of Religion. These programs are as follows.

- Master of Divinity/Bachelor of Theology
- Master of Divinity/Bachelor of Theology (With a concentration in Restorative Justice)
- Master of Theological Studies (General)
- Master of Theological Studies in Spiritual Care
- Certificate in Theological Studies
- Certificate in Spiritual Care

The main focus of the external accreditation evaluation team was on the Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies programs.

Four programs have been discontinued since 2002, listed below.

- A Joint-Diploma in Stewardship (offered jointly by St. Stephen’s College in Edmonton and Queen’s), discontinued in 2002, because of insufficient registrations
- Master of Divinity (With a Concentration in Rural Ministry), because of insufficient enrolments and reallocation of faculty to the Department of Religious Studies
- Diploma in Rural Ministry, because of insufficient enrolments and reallocation of faculty to the Department of Religious Studies
- Master of Theological Studies (With a concentration in Restorative Justice), lack of enrolment, and a perception that interested students would be better served by the Master of Divinity (With a concentration in Restorative Justice)

### Assessment Criteria

The Senate document *Internal Academic Review* indicates that the central issue to be addressed by the Review Team is the quality of the programs which are being assessed. Appendix B of the Senate document identifies the criteria that have been approved for the assessment of academic programs. The criteria will be listed below with the IAR Review Team’s comments on each one. Statements in quotation marks, with page numbers, are taken from the report of the external accreditation evaluation team.

**Objectives** The programs currently offered appear to be consistent with Queen's mission and the academic plans of Queen's School of Religion, including its teaching and research strengths, the relation of the unit to other academic units and the standards, educational goals and learning outcomes and objectives of the degrees/diplomas/certificates. The external accreditation evaluation team found that "for the most part, broadly communicated purpose and direction appear to be creating a cohesive institutional character at QSR." (p. 3) The IAR Review Team was impressed with the intense levels of activity in the unit in each of the following areas: strategic planning, administrative reorganization, curriculum review and renewal, the move to reintegrate Queen's Theological College with Queen's University, and the adoption of the Queen's School of Religion as a new identity that have taken place over the last decade. All of these actions speak to the concern of the unit to keep curriculum updated and provide more relevant programs while providing a broader base of student services and securing a stable financial/resource base for the programs under review.

**Admission Requirements** The admission requirements for the various programs appear to be appropriate and effective for the learning objectives of the institution and the programs to ensure the appropriate quality of student applicants. The external accreditation evaluation team found that "the admissions policies and procedures of the institution are clearly laid out and followed and appear to be yielding academically-capable students who are eager to learn and serve. Distinctions between admissions criteria for the MDiv and BTh programs are clearly articulated in promotional documents." (p.9) The external accreditation team also expressed some concern about the classroom ratio of MDiv and BTh students. (p. 9)

Clearly, the key issue with regard to admissions is a history of declining enrolments in the Master of Divinity programs (which are preparation for the clergy). This decline is not unique to Queen's, but appears to be the result of a general decline in religiosity in the general public and the decline in church attendance and the number of congregations for many faiths, most significantly for the Queen's School of Religion, the United Church of Canada. The unit has already deleted some programs because of low enrolments, and has tried a number of strategies (as described in the self study document) to increase enrolments, but so far to little avail. Queen's School of Religion is to be commended for the bold steps it has taken over the past decade to reverse the trend of declining enrolments; however it appears continued vigilance in this area will be needed. Queen's School of Religion may have to undertake even bolder actions to somehow widen their catchment area for these programs. Given the School's stated concern about the relative isolation of Queen's campus, it may be necessary to take the programs to where the numbers of potential students are, either through offering on-site programs in metropolitan areas, through on-line courses, or perhaps through a "blended" model offering a combination of on-campus or on-site meetings and on-line modules, web-casting and/or teleconferencing. There is technology for these approaches, and there is expertise as to how this could be done and has been done by other departments and faculties at Queen's. An aggressive funding campaign to provide a higher level of financial aid to full-time students might also be considered to bring more full-time students to campus.

**Curriculum** As noted above, the structure and curriculum of the programs have recently undergone a thorough review and re-mapping. The curriculum seems appropriate for its discipline specific outcomes and objectives. Queen's School of Religion is to be commended for its considerable efforts in this regard over the past decade. The renewal of accreditation for an eight year period by the Association of Theological Schools appears consistent with the view that the curriculum is up-to-date and comprehensive in its coverage of topics and issues.

However, the external accreditation evaluation team found that “there are no identifiable assessments of the curriculum or even of the several components of the curriculum as such. This absence means that there is no overall reflection on the suitability and effect and its several elements.” (pp. 6-7) With regard to evaluation of the programs as a whole, the external accreditation evaluation team found that “actual educational assessment of the theological programs appears less developed than planning procedures. Information is gathered primarily through entrance and exit questionnaires. Student learning outcomes for theology programs have recently been identified (2010), but not all the accompanying assessment tools that that will be used to measure outcomes.... The team encourages the school to prioritize educational assessment as an integral dimension of its comprehensive institutional planning and evaluation.” (pp.3-4) The IAR Review Team suggests that expertise exists at Queen’s in program evaluation which the School could draw upon.

**Teaching** The mode of delivery and standards of instruction seem appropriate for the School’s current on-campus approach. The Theology programs offer a very limited number of on-line courses. In light of declining enrolments and the need to attract more students, the School may wish to consider increasing the number of on-line courses and/or “blended” courses (in which a combination of on-campus or on-site class meetings and on-line instruction is used) in either synchronous or asynchronous format. Such an approach might be especially useful in part-time programs. Webcasting and teleconferencing/videoconferencing might also be assessed for their possible usefulness. Again, there is experience and expertise in these approaches in other units at Queen’s. The external accreditation evaluation team observed, “There is apparently no consistent distance education to improve the global outreach of the QSR courses or programs, and QSR may wish to explore the possibility of using distance learning tools to improve their global involvement.” (p. 5)

**Evaluation of Student Progress** The external accreditation evaluation team found that, “the entire curriculum has been identified through a ‘curriculum map’ and is clearly tied to identifiable learning outcomes. Assessment of the individual student outcomes is well-defined and able to be tracked. The curriculum map clearly identifies how individual student outcomes can and will be assessed and QSR has put in place a series of measures to assess these outcomes.” (p. 6)

**Level of Achievement** The documentation suggests that the students’ level of achievement is consistent with the educational goals of the program and the degree/diploma/certificate, and the institutional standards. Especially in regard to the Master of Divinity programs, the faculty is in constant contact with the United Church of Canada, the main employer of its graduates, and receives continual feedback as to the skills and knowledge of the graduates employed by the Church.

**Equity** The programs appear to be consistent with the equity goals of Queen’s University. Queen’s School of Religion endeavors to avoid direct, indirect or systemic discrimination, particularly against members of disadvantaged groups. The external accreditation evaluation team noted that “diversity of race, ethnicity and culture is not an obvious area of strength, although this is not a result of a lack of desire on the part of the school.” (p. 4) Queen’s School of Religion has been making strides toward a more diverse faculty, but is concerned that the Kingston location of the campus does not lend itself to a more diverse student body for the program offerings. Earlier suggestions regarding taking the programs to where the potential students are and generating better funding for full-time students might also be considered for increasing diversity in the student body.

**Human Resources** The documentation shows that the quality and academic expertise of the faculty that teach in the Theology programs are appropriate and effective to meet the demands of the program. The external accreditation evaluation team found that “all faculty members possess the appropriate credentials for graduate theological education, and a number have ministerial experience. Faculty members have doctorates from a variety of schools, and represent diverse points of view.” (p. 8)

With regard to long-term staff, the IAR Review Team believes that every effort should be made to fully integrate them into Queen’s University staffing system. The external accreditation evaluation team found that one of the two “areas of greatest concern” with regard to institutional resources is the perceived weakness in human resources related to student recruitment. (p. 11)

**Physical Resources** The main concern here is that Theological Hall needs renovation and upgrading. The external accreditation evaluation team found that the second of the two “areas of greatest concern” with regard to institutional resources is the “long overdue maintenance related to Theological Hall,” (p. 11) and encourages that these maintenance issues be given “high priority.” (p. 12) The external accreditation evaluation team found, in particular, that “professors’ office space varies in size and quality, with some offices showing some signs of significant wear and age.” (p. 8) However, any renovations should be planned in light of any contemplated changes in course delivery methods.

**Information Resources** The external accreditation evaluation team noted that “the integration of QSR’s library resources with the consolidated Library of Queen’s University has provided QSR with an excellent resource. The theological holdings of the Library have improved dramatically in recent years, due to faculty attention to the holdings, the generous support of resource personnel in the Library... [and] a growing reliance on electronic serials, and consistent supplier ordering.” (p. 7) Queen’s School of Religion seems generally happy with the level of service and acquisitions for the Theology programs. However, they would like the Queen’s Library System to acquire a librarian with expertise in Theology. While this would be ideal, it likely will not be a priority in the current financial climate, given the size of the enrolments in the Theology programs. Current efforts of librarians and Queen’s School of Theology faculty members to work cooperatively to ensure that the collection is updated appropriately are to be commended, and, hopefully, continued with cooperation of all faculty members teaching in the Theology programs. It might be noted that the availability of electronic serials is compatible with distance learning.

**Financial Resources** The IAR Review Team are not accountants, nor did we do anything resembling a financial audit. However, information provided in the self study document appears to indicate that the administration of Queen’s School of Religion is appropriately and effectively managing the financial resources for the Theology programs. The external accreditation evaluation team noted that “the school has demonstrated wise financial management.” (p. 12) A key issue has been the recent decline in funding from the United Church of Canada. Nonetheless, the financial reporting in the self study claimed a modest positive balance at the end of the year. The recent negotiations between Queen’s School of Religion and Queen’s University have helped to stabilize the School’s financial situation as both enrolments and funding from outside institutional sources have declined. However, in the longer term, additional student enrolments or additional outside funding may be needed to ensure financial stability for the Theology programs.

**Societal Context** The professional clergy, for which the Queen’s School of Religion Master of Divinity programs prepares its graduates, is not regulated by government or quasi-governmental

bodies. However, these programs prepare graduates specifically for employment by the United Church of Canada. Many, if not most, of the students seek ordination to the ministry, but those who do not use their preparation in other ways. Queen's School of Religion does not offer a formal career placement service, but does keep in constant contact with the United Church of Canada. This contact, along with periodic accreditation reviews by the Association of Theological Schools, helps to ensure that the clergy preparation programs are producing graduates that are competent for the clerical role as it evolves. The key societal issue here is a perceived decline in religiosity in Canada, or at least in Christian religiosity. If this trend continues, with both the number of congregations and the number of members of congregations growing smaller, the need for ordained clergy may also decline. The self study documents some efforts by Queen's School of Religion to increase the number of Christian denominations that will accept its graduates as ordained ministers, but so far these efforts have not borne fruit. In the short term, there may be significant numbers of "baby boom" clergy retirements that will open up positions for graduates. Graduates from the Master of Theological Studies programs use their preparation in a variety of ways.

**Learning and Program Outcomes** While the data provided show the numbers of new students and the number of graduates in each program, by year, they do not appear to show graduation rates or average time to program completion. In any case, the numbers of students involved are so small that such statistics would be essentially meaningless. As noted above, the small numbers in the programs allow the faculty to be personally acquainted with every student, thus encouraging them (students) to complete. The documentation provided did not mention any concern with drop-outs or long completion times. As noted above, it appears that most graduates are using their preparation in one way or another. This does not appear as a concern in the documentation. External scholarships and awards for graduating students do not appear in the documentation. One suspects that there are not that many available. There are no professional certification or licensing examinations to be taken as a result of the Theology programs. We as a University need to think in terms of more relevant learning outcomes to use in assessing these (Theology) programs. These programs produce graduates who are thoughtful, caring and compassionate.

The Unit Self Study document did not provide any comparative data for other Theological colleges. However, such data is available in a document from the Association of Theological Colleges. Titled "Institutional Peer Profile Report 2010-2011," it provides comparative data for Queen's School of Religion, Atlantic School of Theology, Emmanuel College of Victoria University, Knox College, Lutheran Theological Seminary (SK), McMaster Divinity College, Vancouver School of Theology and Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. A copy of this document was provided to the IAR Review Team.

#### Teaching, Research and Scholarship

The external accreditation evaluation team observed as follows. "The strength of the school in the area of research is seen not only in the evaluation of individual student outcomes resulting from faculty members' teaching, but also in the extensive research grants and the publications of this relatively small faculty.... The integrity of professors' research is strongly supported through the school's intentional support for faculty members' freedom of research." (p. 5)

#### Conclusions

##### Key Strengths

- Queen's School of Religion is to be commended for its boldness in reviewing and renewing its organizational structure, its relationship with Queen's University, and its

theology programs, courses and curricula over the past decade. This exercise included the discontinuation of four of its under-enrolled theology programs.

- Both the School and Queen's Library System are to be commended for their cooperation in significantly improving the Library's theology holdings over the past decade.

#### Key Areas of Concern

- Enrolment in the Theology programs has been steadily declining over the past number of years. Commendable efforts to stabilize or reverse this trend have not produced results.
- At the same time, outside funding from the United Church of Canada has also been declining.
- While the School has in place programs for assessment of individual student learning outcomes, it needs to put in place more systematic evaluation processes for its curricula and programs.
- Efforts to diversify the student body have produced some results. The School would like to do more but feels the isolated nature of the campus militates against this.
- Theological Hall requires a lot of maintenance that has been deferred.

#### Key Opportunities

- Queen's School of Religion may wish to consider and evaluate the possibility of moving beyond the Kingston campus through greater use of distance learning. The technology and expertise is readily available at Queen's University as various faculties are already broadening their reach through the use of these technologies. Possibilities include on-site courses, online courses, "blended" courses (a combination of on-campus or on-site classes and on-line modules) webcasting of courses, teleconferencing and video conferencing. If successful, the outcome might be increased enrolments as well as a more diverse student body.