

**University of Toronto
Quality Assurance Process
Toronto School of Theology**

Commissioned by Office of the Vice-President and Provost

Reviewers

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Preamble

The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2019 affected this review in two major ways. First, it meant that the self-study was largely conducted and produced remotely, and reflected relevant COVID adaptations for teaching, communication and collaboration. Second, it fundamentally altered the process by converting all conversations from in-person conversation on a site visit to virtual conversations across the globe. The visit was conducted through a series of virtual meetings for five consecutive mornings during the week of March 8-12, 2021.

We were able to meet virtually with all of the relevant parties: from the U of T we met with the Vice President and Provost and the Vice-Provost of Academic Programs, the Vice-Dean for Programs and Innovation (School of Graduate Studies), and the Heads of Cognate Units; from TST we met with a large number of administrators including the Director, the Senior Executive Council, the Governance Committee and Faculty Assembly Executive, the Basic Degree Council, the Graduate Studies Council and Center for the Study of Ministry, representatives from the Directors/Coordinators of specific TST programs, some of the Academic Deans of the member colleges, representatives of the Directors and Coordinators of the GCTS staff, the Library Committee, and some of the Registrars; representatives of the faculty from Trinity, Wycliffe, and Saint Augustine; representatives of TST Basic Degree Students and Graduates; and representatives of TST Graduate students and Graduates.

While we were able to have all of the necessary conversations, we do not believe that we were able to develop a feel for TST in the same way that we would have had we been able to conduct an on-site visit. The 2012 reviewers noted that they “lacked the data and, during our visit, the time to do a full academic assessment (e.g., visits to classes, review of syllabi, etc.)” We sympathize with the previous review team, and note that we lacked even a campus visit. At the same time, the Self-Study and the TST Director herself acknowledged data collection difficulties that resulted in absent or uncertain data points. As we have tried to be thorough in reviewing all reports and in keeping detailed notes of our meetings, we have felt disadvantaged that we were not able to experience the TST personally.

In this context, we were impressed, uniformly, by the quality of the individuals who were serving in the various capacities and – perhaps even more – by the spirit of cooperation demonstrated. The TST is an extraordinarily complex administrative entity – one of the most complex that any of us have encountered – that has functioned and continues to function well as a result of the good will and talent of a large number of people. We offer the following analyses and recommendations, then, with the hope that they will enable the flagship program in theology in Canada and a leading international program in theology to advance, at a clearly crucial moment in its history.

Review Summary

The high quality of the consortium, and the programs, is evident and unimpeachable. TST, in itself and through its relations with UT, possesses a historical tradition of excellence and a current, resource-rich situation that most other theological institutions can only hope for. The attainment of *quality* in program delivery is not in doubt. In fact, TST sets a standard for quality in theological education in Canada, and is one of very few institutions that can aspire to this same profile internationally. This should be understood to be the unanimous and considered judgment of the reviewers, throughout the comments that follow. The *qualities* of the programs, however, in the sense of the characteristics that define the programs for the member institutions, can be improved and should be addressed. These include aspects of the life of TST that are well-known to the institutions and members thereof; unsatisfactorily low levels of student funding, a high teacher-student ratio, relatively low entrance criteria and, not least, an unmet need, now an imperative, to diversify, across a period of generational change and real strategic importance. Each of these qualities will become thematic in different moments throughout this report.

The UTQAP terms of reference request review of, and reflection upon, several particular characteristics of TST's current life. We identify these not to impugn the high quality and importance of work at TST, but to identify areas in which TST can focus ongoing self-review and self-reflection.

The first of these concerns the “appropriateness and effectiveness of the program’s structure, curriculum, length and delivery to its learning outcomes and degree level expectations,” and the “clarity with which these have been communicated.” It is clear to the reviewers that there is a less than ideal entrance criteria in the degrees; there is a less than ideal level of graduate funding for the degrees, and there is less than ideal communication regarding the distinctiveness of the degrees. The last review suggested that “the number of master’s level programs is large by any standard known to us. At least at the level of the TST, the programs do not appear to be clearly differentiated in publications or on the website.” In our view, this remains the case. We comment in various ways on these issues – as depict the characteristics or qualities of TST today rather than impugn its high quality – throughout this report.

The second of these concerns regards “evidence of innovation or creativity.” We saw abundant good will. We also saw innovation, across the life of TST and in the individual lives of each of its member colleges, in particular degree program contexts such as the new Ph.D. and the MSM. We saw less innovation with respect to some problems identified by the past reviewers and by TST faculty members. In fact, several aspects of historical concern have remained unchanged, and some may have worsened. (We are aware of a relevant structural issue; executive authority is not localized in the TST directorship. On that we comment below as well.) We hope that our concern is misguided, and that this will not be seen as a habit or tendency by future reviewers.

The third of these concerns regards “quality indicators” such as “student funding” and “program promotion.” We note that funding is low. As a percentage of cost, it is unsustainably low for international

students in particular. The make-up of current students thus is predominantly local, which is inappropriate for a consortium in constitutive relation with a University such as UT and in a cosmopolitan context such as Toronto. (We note that such program promotion would require a greater budgetary allotment to the office of the TST Director. On that we comment in the following report as well.)

The fourth of these concerns curriculum and program delivery, and whether these “reflect the current state of the discipline or area of study.” The high quality of TST’s academic programs, particularly in the Canadian context, is evident to the reviewers. For this reason, we judge no degree program to be sub-standard (even though we will note that the DMin, which was judged to be below standard during the last UTQAP review, remains in some well-understood respects problematic.) This is not the case with respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We discuss the importance of this fact in the context of the task of faculty renewal below.

Similarly, regarding “Faculty Research,” we were asked to evaluate “the level of activity [grant and publication] relative to national and international comparators.” It is not uniformly strong and should be addressed in the context, *entre autres*, of a faculty renewal plan. Here as often, we agree with the previous review team; program judgements cannot be issued or evaluated in abstraction from wider institutional and structural characteristics unique to the complex ecosystem and economy that is TST. A satisfying level of competitiveness, and inclusivity, will best be reached through a consortium-wide resolve and initiative. We intend our comments not as directives but as suggestive: we hope that, by identifying areas of possible attention and improvement, TST itself will be able to imagine ways toward ulterior self-reform.

Program Evaluations

The TST offers six different undergraduate degrees (the Master of Arts in Ministry and Spirituality, the Master of Divinity, the Master of Pastoral Studies, the Master of Religious Education, the Master of Sacred Music, and the Master of Theological Studies) and two certificates (the Certificate in Theological Studies and a Category 2 Certificate in Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy). In addition, it offers four graduate degrees (the Master of Theology, the Master of Arts in Theological Studies, the Doctor of Ministry, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies). We offer our impressions about each, and recommend that future reviews include a master dashboard completed by all programs to allow more detailed internal and external comparisons of the programs at each of the seven member institutions.

We know that, in large part, the UTQAP is intended to evaluate academic rigor and scholarly excellence, especially in the conjoint degree programs. At the outset, we want to highlight that their successful delivery, whether at the basic degree or the advanced degree level, requires a great deal of coordination, and the commitment of each implicated institution. We were pleased in this regard to learn that UT faculty members are represented on all PhD committees and defense hearings. We were encouraged that those faculty members expressed high praise for the TST doctoral students’ preparation and scholarly excellence. We hope that review processes such as these serve as occasions for the University to learn about, and to affirm, the TST’s identity, mission, its professional degrees and accreditation procedures. We believe that TST proffers the “transformative education” that the University announces as its own mission, and that this provides a basis for a renewal of understanding and collaboration across the UT-TST alliance.

It was clear from our conversations that faculty member investment is thoroughgoing, and that the level of student engagement and appreciation of all programs is very high. Students value small courses, extensive access to engaged faculty, and a vital combination of intellectual enquiry and professional experience. Recent graduates appreciated the ecumenical nature of the consortium, the close sense of

community, and excellent libraries. They generally felt well-prepared for their working lives. The Basic Degree Council would do well to continue to advance curricular reform, cross-registrations, and co-teaching across the consortium. Such developments would further realize the ecumenical spirit of the consortium and emerging inter-faith opportunities as well as better serve a changing student body. At the same time, the quality and the coherence of these degrees is clear. In what follows, we will offer some broad comments about the programs with some specific observations about individual programs where possible.

First, we want to reiterate an observation made by the previous set of reviewers: there probably are too many master's degree programs (see under 2). We reiterate their recommendation that TST reduce the number of different degrees and find ways to use streams or tracks within degree programs as a means of offering a wider variety of programs and foci. A stream or track in the same program does not require the same amount of infrastructure needed for separate degree programs. The presence of so many degrees creates a bureaucratic structure that is unnecessary and unwieldy. TST clearly needs the M.Div., a M.A. or an equivalent academically oriented degree, and a professional master's degree—although some institutions use the M.A. for both the academic and professional programs. TST's default move appears to be the creation of another degree rather than a track or stream within a degree. We understand the intellectual and market reasons why the member colleges want and need broad offerings. We think that there are more economic ways of providing for intellectual breadth without creating a costly infrastructure.

We have similar reservations about the number of graduate degrees. We commend TST and UT for eliminating the Th.D. and concentrating efforts on a conjoint Ph.D. It is not easy to eliminate a degree. It is worth noting that Harvard Divinity School recently converted its Th.D. to a Ph.D. TST needs at least two graduate degrees: an advanced professional degree and the Ph.D.; it is not clear that it needs four. Nor is it clear that the D.Min. is the optimal choice for the advanced professional degree. As the process of revising the D.Min. unfolds, we would urge you to consider whether an advanced one-year master's degree would be preferable. This is the only degree program about which we have real reservations.

Second, the 2.7 GPA requirement for admission to the undergraduate programs risks appearing as a very low standard. This risk is both internal, given UT's requirement of and high value upon academic rigour, and external, with regard to international peer institutions. We understand that the GPA is not the sole means of evaluation. We understand that there can be reasons why applicants to a professional degree may have a lower GPA; e.g., for second career students, the GPA reflects an earlier stage in their life rather than the present stage. We know that a student may have a lower GPA during the first few years of a university career and then raise it appreciably during the last two. We know also that lower minima afford admissions committees desirable flexibility in their evaluations. We still think that a 3.0 GPA may function as a better indicator, realizing that you will need to interpret GPAs against the full record in the application.

Third, some of the schools' admissions selectivity could be more rigorous. We understand that at the basic degree level, this is impacted by ecclesial accountabilities as well as purely academic assessments. Even at the doctoral level where selectivity is more stringent, there is room for improvement.

Fourth, one challenge that every theological school in North America faces at present is levels of funding for professional degree students. We commend Knox College for providing 100% of tuition for its M.Div. students. We understand that others are simply not able to do this. Student financial aid needs to be a major goal for all seven member colleges. The more financial aid that schools provide, the more freedom students have to devote themselves to their studies. It will also enable the schools to be more selective.

The disparities in tuition between national and international students in the various schools needs to be reconsidered. If this is a provincial requirement there can be no discussion. If, on the other hand, it is an institutional requirement – as was suggested to us – we recommend that it be more balanced. International students feel unfairly treated.

One area where funding needs to be increased is in doctoral education. Here the distinctions among the funding levels of the six member colleges who participate in doctoral education create differences that are not healthy. It is also the case that the levels of funding do not compete with those at elite American universities. This means that the doctoral program will frequently lose the best applicants to their neighbors in the south. You will always be able to attract those who want to work with specific faculty or who want to live in Toronto. You will, however, frequently lose the very best students who know that the funding levels are considerably better elsewhere. Graduate funding levels, then, render TST unable to attract a student population that mirrors UT's own; they also limit TST's ability to recruit domestic and international students who would increase the diversity of TST's student cohort in important ways. Current minimum levels of doctoral funding of \$6000 each year for four years are unsustainably low.

It is important that the TST (and the member colleges) evaluate ethically the ideal number of doctoral student admissions, considering their future career prospects. TST has been successful in placing Ph.D. graduates in a wide variety of settings. This is fine as long as placements are intentional and the program is set up to prepare individuals for a variety of settings and vocations. This is a conversation that is taking place in earnest across the board in higher education in North America. During COVID, a number of top schools have cut back or altogether suspended PhD admissions for the next year or more. The conversation is driven by the decreasing number of faculty positions (especially full-time tenure-track). For example, since 2015 the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature have tracked the number of faculty jobs in religion advertised in North America.¹ Here are the numbers of the advertised positions (including for administrative appointments) and the number of the institutions advertising for those positions by the year. The institutions come from a number of countries: in 2020 they came from thirteen countries in North America and Europe.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Positions	450	404	420	403	403	331
Institutions	256	248	272	268	276	223

The numbers for 2020 are decidedly lower. While the economic downturn at the beginning of the pandemic forced the closure of many searches and the postponement of many others, this impact is not fully reflected in the numbers above; the impact will be seen in the 2021 report. Most of the searches reflected in the 2020 data were posted long before the pandemic struck. This is simply to say what we all know: academic positions will be fewer and more difficult to come by in the future. We recognize that this impacts some fields more heavily than others, in which some students prefer to seek jobs that combine teaching, research, and practice of a particular vocation (such as psychotherapy, or non-seminary education). Decisions about Ph.D. numbers need to be realistic about academic placements and help prepare students for a broad range of career options.

Last, but by no means least, we see a need for a far more robust effort to promote racial, cultural, gender, and LGBTQ+ diversity. The city of Toronto is very diverse; TST is not. The self-study notes that the TST MDiv

¹See <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/JobsReportAy20.pdf> for the numbers in 2020. The site provides links for the reports from 2015-2019.

trails even Canadian averages regarding student gender comparisons; in fact, the ratio is worsening. Racial diversity is still less evident. We understand that there can be challenges in promoting diversity, but we did not find this to be a point of emphasis. It should be. We also want to underscore that diversity represented solely by international students can obscure the lack of domestic and indigenous diversity, especially racial-ethnic diversity. Both measures of diversity – international and national – are important. One does not offset the other. We understand that there are some constraints imposed by some ecclesiastical and theological traditions, particularly in the area of gender and LGBTQ diversity. We think that all schools should nevertheless provide tracks within programs that foster full participation of students of all genders and gender identities. We suggest a two-pronged approach to increasing diversity:

- 1) TST, as an umbrella, could provide well-vetted programs for faculty and administration on implicit bias (such a program, Director Pam Couture suggested, is used within UT), and use the Faculty Assembly perhaps as a forum to discuss how this knowledge could then amplify voices of marginalized groups in curriculum planning and syllabi.
- 2) It is difficult to attract and recruit a more diverse student body without a more diverse faculty and administration. With anticipated faculty vacancies in the near future, we recommend that each search employ a strong level of intentionality not only to receive CV's but to reach out to potential candidates of color and women candidates, and to be proactive in recruitment for diversity across all faculty ranks.

Faculty/Research

TST has one of the largest theological faculties in the world. The range of appointments is broad: it includes faculty of the highest international standing and faculty who are passionate instructors but are not well-known beyond their immediate context. This is to be expected, as the faculty includes teaching and research faculty members as well as teaching faculty members. We offer the following broad observations about the faculty.

First, faculty appointments are at the level of the member colleges. This means that the member colleges set the specific terms of the appointments. We wonder if it would be possible for the Senior Executive Committee of TST to make the ranks of the faculty appointments relatively uniform, and to bring them into alignment with the faculty ranks at UT. This need not be a perfect one for one match (e.g., a number of TST schools do not have tenure), but the ranks for teaching and research faculty and the ranks for teaching faculty might be aligned. We recognize that three member colleges are parts of larger universities and subject to their requirements. Since these three universities also have ties to UT, it is still worth considering this. If this has been done already, it is not obvious.

Second, one of the great concerns that faculty members and administrators both raised was over the appointment of faculty members to the graduate faculty. We received different explanations of the process and the authority to appoint. The TST Self-Study (p. 181) notes that “eighty-eight faculty hold graduate status in the GCTS with either Full or Associate status. Thus, the pool of supervisors and committee members is deep.” However, the reviewers heard anecdotally of challenges identifying supervisors and composing doctoral committees. What appears as a resource rich strength from one point of view appears to be a situation of paucity from another. This feedback suggests the process is not clear in the minds of a significant number of stakeholders. The appointment process needs to be straightforward as well as widely and well-understood. This is a matter of improved communication. Other faculty members whom we interviewed expressed frustration that very distinguished faculty who were hired to assist with the doctoral

program have been forced to wait five years before they are eligible—an odd arrangement when someone is a proven director of dissertations.

One possible solution would be to connect the appointment to the graduate faculty with the rank of a faculty member. For example, if someone is a member of the teaching and research faculty and reaches the rank of associate professor, they should be considered for appointment. If someone is hired in as a full professor, this should be part of their consideration at the time of hire. If someone is in the teaching faculty, there should be provision for a special case to be made, but presumably most of these faculty will not direct dissertations. At present, there appear to be too few faculty directing dissertations (see p. 184). However this will be worked out, the process needs to be better communicated and the Director of the TST should be involved in appointments of faculty to graduate status which is not the current practice (see below).

Third, to support research productivity, the course load for teaching and research faculty should be 2/2. We also recommend a generous sabbatical policy if TST wants to mirror the norm among leading universities and schools. Faculty in the teaching ranks may have a higher course load (3/3) provided that they are not expected to produce the same level of research as their peers in the teaching and research faculty. The fact that “some member schools award legal tenure; others do not” illustrates the problem of establishing a uniformly high faculty quality commensurate with the standards of an international research university such as UT. And yet, as per the MOA, TST is to demonstrate that “the quality of their faculty is consistent with the standards of the UT.”

Fourth, several faculty members mourned the loss of departments, as a result of and as a response to the last UTQAP. The Self-Study report (p. 227) asks whether meeting in research groups to discuss publication plans and recent outputs, perhaps every six months, might help to stimulate a more vibrant research culture. We would very much support this. We would encourage academic colleagues to broaden their remit to discuss opportunities for external grant income and dissemination of research. This would be an invaluable way of mentoring more recent appointments, and some groups might include colleagues from the Department for the Study of Religion and other cognate units, strengthening links between TST and UT even further.

Fifth, too many TST courses are taught by non-core faculty. This problem would probably be made worse by lowering teaching loads from 3/2 to 2/2. Only Field Education (80%) and Biblical Studies (74%) have a significant number of core faculty teaching courses. Other areas have a significantly lower percentage: Theology (58%), Practical Theology (48%), and History (41%). The last is particularly worrisome. We understand that some fields require a large number of scholar-practitioners to teach, but these numbers seem excessive.

One way to address this is to have more courses that are common courses for two or more member colleges. We recognize that some courses must be unique to the member college as a result of the ecclesiastical requirements. However, we suggest that there could be more sharing of courses across the colleges than currently exists. We applaud the report from the most recent Faculty Assembly; we want to encourage further creative conversations along these lines. Schools from a common tradition (e.g., Anglican or Roman Catholic) should make an effort to maximize common courses (recognizing that some theological differences *within* traditions can be as much of a barrier as those between traditions). Standardising the teaching of Greek and Hebrew is essential, as is maintaining high standards throughout. More positively, teaching a number of denominations in one class would only add to students' awareness of other traditions and appreciation of the distinctiveness of their own. New faculty appointments might be asked to

demonstrate how they will work across the various schools, promoting the shared interests of TST as well as their own school.

Sixth, the student to faculty ratio (16:1) is very high. The average ratio for ATS schools (FTE) is 8.4:1 (and declining).² This is particularly worrisome in light of 30 impending retirements of faculty. There are no simple solutions to this matter since students represent income and faculty represent expenses on a budget ledger. A major faculty renewal exercise will soon be essential; it will require a long-term plan. According to the Self-Study, TST anticipates twenty-four graduate school level retirements before the UTQAP in 2028. In this context, it is most worrying that “TST does not currently have a composite faculty renewal plan.” The faculty-student ratio, the schedule of anticipated retirements, the strategic moment of their replacement, and the desideratum of increasing faculty diversity combine to require a coordinated strategic plan for the recruitment of TST’s next generation.

Finally, diversity should be a priority in faculty appointments, as noted above. Students need to see themselves reflected in the ranks of the faculty. It was typically only mentioned by BIPOC and women representatives in our conversations. Reviewers heard of a sense of loneliness and lack of mentoring in the PhD program. As noted above, implicit bias training and proactive recruitment are necessary to reach a substantial level of racial-ethnic and gender diversity, and leaders of every TST member school should make this a priority.

Relationships

The *esprit de corps* within TST is impressive. There is a common commitment to ecumenical exchange and collaboration on the part of all whom we interviewed. We have perceived that TST is pulled by both centripetal and centrifugal forces that many who are associated with it feel. The centripetal force is a common commitment to create and sustain a theological enterprise that can compete and make a difference on an international level. The success of TST to date is due to this common commitment which should be celebrated. What has been accomplished has been done out of an ecumenical spirit and a spirit that the whole must be more than the sum of its parts. All should be commended. The centrifugal forces are largely external to the member colleges and reflect the response to the decline in the Christian traditions that founded and support the schools. Some ecclesiastical bodies have responded to the decline by entrenching rather than uniting. It is important for UT to recognize that these forces are real for the member colleges. Their continued commitment to the common core of TST represents a spirit worth celebrating.

TST has many structures in place that promote this centering orientation. Yet there is room for improvement. We have already mentioned the need for greater collaboration in curricular offerings, and will mention the administrative structure of TST below. These are two of the most important ways that more could be done to unify TST.

TST and UT enjoy good relations, again a fact that should be noted and commended. There is good will on both sides towards the other. At the same time, there is room for improvement here, too. At present there is a tendency on the part of the faculty at TST to view UT as imposing requirements but not providing resources to meet those requirements. On the part of UT, there are questions about the academic rigor of TST.

² <https://www.ats.edu/uploads/resources/publications-presentations/documents/tenure-and-other-faculty-facts-part-1.pdf>.

It would be helpful if UT thought of relating to TST in terms of providing incentives and resources, as well as monitoring academic rigor. We recognize that this is complicated legally because TST is a legally separate organization, but we are confident that there are ways to provide incentives for closer mutual collaboration and cooperative governance. UT might look to TST to contribute to some of its wider facilities and programs, such as the Wellness Program. Extant good will could be confirmed also through a strategic hire. We agree with the past review committee; the Department for the Study of Religion could appoint a faculty member in the History of Christian Thought, alongside members in History of Islamic Thought and History of Jewish Thought, to afford additional teaching and research synergies with TST and increase the range of collaborative academic relations. While students in conjoint TST/UT programs have access to UT student services at UT, faculty do not. We believe that one-on-one research or grant support from UT Research Services, and full access to the Centre for Teaching and Learning Innovation, would encourage UT level teaching and research success that ultimately will benefit everyone.

At the same time, it would also be helpful if TST would consider ways that it could better fulfill its own mission by making maximal advantage its unique connection with UT. Belonging to one of the world's great research universities is an enormous advantage. We think that TST has not taken full advantage of the resources that already exist, especially, e.g., encouraging students to take courses in related fields that would broaden their outlook, or developing programs that would appeal to UT students (some already exist). In other words, there are organic ways that the relationship could be strengthened through existing channels.

Organization and Financial Structure

The success of the TST has been impressive, especially in light of the complexity of its structure. We want to commend the work of all who have collaborated to enable the TST to function as well as it has. In particular, it is worth noting that the current Director is held in high esteem by virtually all with whom we spoke. TST will be hard pressed to find a successor who will be as talented and committed. At the same time, we agree that the office of the TST Director suffers from insufficient funding and still less jurisdictional or executive authority.

We learned from the Self-Study and from our conversations that TST “has little economic authority ... has no advancement staff, does not fundraise independently for fear of hampering the development of member colleges, and has a small donor base.” In this context, “the TST Director shoulders decanal responsibility for quality assurance of both graduate and second-entry undergraduate degrees.” The “Board of Trustees has limited powers: it appoints the Director and oversees a small budget for central services.” The Director’s decanal level of responsibility is accompanied by department chair levels of authority. The committee worries that the center cannot hold. All of the pressures of the complex system, that involves the member colleges and UT, converge upon the central point of the TST Director’s office, which is in certain respects the weakest rather than the strongest node in the system.

There is a need for the TST and for the U of T to reconsider the role of TST as an administrative unit, a point also made by the previous review (1.7). The challenge that TST faces is that it must be a Janus-like structure that faces two ways simultaneously: it must address the academic rigors that a major research university like UT expects, and it simultaneously must address the needs of the constituent bodies that support each of the seven member colleges. This is made even more complex because three of these member colleges are embedded in larger universities that also have ties with UT. Similarly, the differences in the constituents who support the seven member colleges vary appreciably. As we noted above, each of these is influenced

not only by their immediate situation but by larger national and international movements over which they have little control.

More specifically, we recognize three major factors that should be considered when considering the future structure of TST. First, there should be a distinction between the needs of the advanced graduate programs (the Ph.D. and the M.A.) and the others (we would include here the basic degree programs along with the ThM and D.Min. The former are closely linked to the mission of UT. The latter are professional programs that serve different ecclesial bodies and societal needs. Both sets of programs are important, but each responds to different agenda. Second, the central administration of the TST needs to be strengthened. This is evident in the challenge that the TST has in finding directors. As long as the TST is an administrative support structure for the programs of the member colleges, it will struggle to bring the advanced graduate programs to the level where all aspire. Third, the independence of each of the member colleges must be respected. These should include the points in the latest draft of the MOU which we have modified to meet the recommendations below:

- Each member college has its own distinctive mission, established under its own authority.
- Each member college has the authority to admit students into professional programs, grant professional degrees, and to create new professional programs.
- Where denominations have requirements for degrees leading to the practice of ministry, those requirements should be met by the individual institutions.
- Each member college has the authority to appoint faculty.
- Each member college may determine, on its own, to co-operate with another institution to share resources.

With these three factors in mind, we propose the following for consideration. We say for consideration because we realize that our understanding of the complexities of the situation is far from complete.

1. We recommend bringing the advanced graduate programs (the Ph.D. and the M.A.) under the aegis of the TST. This will require that UT support the right of TST to offer these degrees with the Province (a complex undertaking which will require an Act of Parliament), and that TST itself seeks accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools.
2. The TST needs its own revenue stream which is independent of the seven member colleges. We recognize that currently UT flows government funding to TST in accordance with the MoA, funding which is then distributed by TST to the member institutions. This means that TST has no independent budget and so is unable to provide for the salaries of central staff. We recommend that UT consider phasing in a new financial plan for TST that is similar to the financial plan that it uses for other units in which a percentage of the funds is reserved for the central administration of the unit. This will need to be worked out in collaboration with the seven member schools who depend on the funds that come from the government via UT. An abrupt shift could be financially ruinous and unfair: it could have unequal consequences among the different schools.
3. The Director's position needs to be strengthened. The Director should receive a salary from a central TST budget (see above), a move that will relieve the current challenge of setting a salary based on the Director's faculty position in a member college. So as to make it possible to hire externally as well as internally, an external appointee should be guaranteed a faculty appointment in a member College. The Director's role will need to be expanded. Not only will the Director be a full member of graduate faculty, but the appointment of faculty to graduate status should be a core responsibility.

4. There should be an effort to make the support of doctoral and masters students in the academic programs level for each degree. At the present, their support can vary appreciably from one member college to another. Member colleges would need to contribute to the TST program which would administer the programs.
5. The Basic Degree, ThM and D.Min programs should remain in the full control of the member colleges. This will allow them to meet the needs of their constituents and ecclesial affiliations, and experiment with professional degree and certificate programs that meet the evolving needs of society.
6. UT needs to assist in the implementation of this shift by offering some additional resources that enable TST to make the transition.
7. TST needs to create its own development program that is independent of the programs for the seven member colleges. There will need to be a memorandum of understanding developed that recognizes that TST would not “poach” from the alumni and established donors of the member colleges. Most major universities that have multiple schools and colleges have programs that coordinate development efforts and allow all to function. This is also an area where UT might be able to assist.

We recognize that this moves the TST from a strict consortium to a federation. At present there is simply too little of the federal component in the structure to permit the advancement of the conjoint academic degrees, at both basic and advanced level.

Long-Range Planning

UT has a long-range plan, “Towards 2030: A Long-term Planning Framework for the University of Toronto.” The last external reviewers recommended that TST develop an analogous long-range plan (see 1.4-6 of the previous review). While TST has and is engaged in strategic planning, it has almost all been planning for the immediate future. We applaud a number of the initiatives underway, both those in individual member colleges and the work of TST. In particular, we commend the discussions between individual colleges towards greater integration of the curricula, the work of the Assembly to foster discussions among faculty in similar fields across the colleges, and the Revised Draft Memorandum of Understanding among the seven colleges. These illustrate but do not exhaust the spirit of collaboration among the seven colleges and TST and are to be applauded.

In 2020-21, TST will begin a search for a Director to succeed Pamela Couture. We strongly recommend that TST develop a long-range plan that takes into consideration UT’s “Towards 2030” plan once the new Director is in place and settled. We note that the past reviewers recommended that TST produce its own ‘Towards 2030’ planning document to parallel that of UT. We hope that some of our suggestions will be taken into consideration in that planning.

North American Comparators

There are two institutions or arrangements that are obvious comparators. First, the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, CA, consists of a consortium of schools and centers along with the University of California at Berkeley. Today there are seven schools and a group of centers that comprise the GTU. Structurally, it is the closest analogue to TST. The main differences are that the GTU is a degree-granting institution in its own right and is the entity that confers all PhD’s. Faculty meet by field from the separate schools to collaborate in PhD teaching and program development for a unified PhD in each field. The GTU also has a strong geographical center and a single common library. It is also more diverse religiously than

TST, especially when considering its many affiliated institutes representing other religious traditions beyond Christianity, and cross-registration with the University of California at Berkeley. On the other hand, some of the member colleges of TST appear to be in better shape financially giving TST a distinct advantage over the GTU and some of its member schools that struggle financially.

Other analogues worth serious consideration are several urban theological consortia, e.g., Boston, New York, and Chicago. The Boston Theological Institute (BTI) brings together nine schools in the metropolitan Boston area. Some of these schools are departments or schools within major universities, e.g., Boston College, Boston University, and Harvard University's Divinity School. The New York Theological Consortium consists of 7 schools (4 Christian, 2 Jewish, and 1 Christian and inter-religious). The Association of Chicago Theological Schools ("ACTS") includes 12 schools (11 Christian and one Unitarian-Universalist), and two of its member schools are embedded, respectively, in Northwestern University and Loyola University. There are smaller consortia and cooperative relationships in other cities, such as Atlanta and Minneapolis-St. Paul. These consortia do not offer consortium degrees and are not tied to a single university in the same way that TST is linked with UT. Each school offers its own degrees, but students may take courses at any of the member schools. It is truly a consortium.

TST has the opportunity to be a leader among this group. Administratively it sits between the GTU and the BTI. We think that it needs to move more towards the GTU administrative model for the sake of advancing its degree programs.

Conclusion

The TST is a bold experiment that has proven its worth exponentially over its existence. We commend the strong tradition of quality education and collaboration that has characterized it. We offer these recommendations with the hope that they will enable the TST and UT to advance even beyond the high status that they have achieved nationally and internationally.