



Toronto School of Theology Memorandum of Understanding Among the Member Colleges

Adopted by the Toronto School of Theology Board of Trustees, April 26, 2021

Mission Statement: *The Toronto School of Theology is an ecumenical federation of Christian theological schools working together at the heart of the University of Toronto to achieve excellence in research, in scholarship, in teaching, and in the formation of leaders for service in ministry in the Church and the world.*

The Toronto School of Theology (TST) shares a common vision of excellence in ecumenical theological education and enrichment through shared resources, especially for graduate theological education. At the time of our second University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) review, we seek to renew and realign the principles of that relationship, adopting the commitments and responsibilities needed to ensure those principles are lived out in our common work.

History

In 1944, the Toronto Graduate School of Theological Studies (TGSTS) was formed to promote collaboration in the Doctor of Theology and Master of Theology programs at Emmanuel, Knox, Trinity and Wycliffe. St. Michael's joined TGSTS in 1964 after the Second Vatican Council leading to renewed efforts to set out the principles of this expanding ecumenical endeavor. The result was the incorporation of the Toronto School of Theology in 1970 with an expanded vision for ecumenical theological education now including St. Augustine's and Regis Colleges.

In 1978, TST and its member schools entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the University of Toronto, establishing the granting of conjoint degrees in theology by the University and the member schools of TST. This relationship made it possible for the Colleges to receive provincial funding. Through this relationship TST also became the way in which the University of Toronto could claim theology as one of its disciplines. In return, TST committed itself to the University's academic standards, and began appointing the University's representatives to its Board, its academic councils and its faculty appointments committees.

In 2012, as a result of the provincial government's changed system for accrediting academic programs, TST and the Colleges formally came under the same process of quality assurance as the academic units of the University of Toronto. This review, which identified significant program strengths, also identified significant opportunities for program improvement and enhancement. This led directly to TST developing and receiving approval in 2014 to launch a conjoint PhD program in Theological Studies. Approval for a conjoint MA followed in 2016. During this process TST moved to a more centralized structure for its graduate degrees, revising its academic

governance to reflect greater interdependence even as the member schools continue to admit students, hire faculty, create programs and grant degrees. At present, faculty across Colleges collaborate on shared teaching for the cohort courses in our graduate degrees and student supervisory committees. This collaboration enables students in these programs to develop a strong sense of inter-collegial community.

At the present moment, many factors – including finances, enrolment, and quality assurance - have encouraged us to assess and renew our commitment to ecumenical theological education within TST. As a framework for that cooperation, we have articulated new or reframed principles and, equally important, the commitments and responsibilities that accompany such principles. These principles do not supplant those originally laid out but allow us to continue to achieve excellence in the changed and changing context in which we do our work.

In April 2021, the Member Colleges of TST include Emmanuel College, Knox College, Regis College, Trinity College Faculty of Divinity, St. Michael's College Faculty of Theology, St. Augustine's Seminary, and Wycliffe College.

Principles

Member Colleges remain distinctive in the following ways:

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

Member Colleges collaborate in the following ways:

- to foster formal and informal ecumenical exchange, within and outside the classroom, such as common worship, extracurricular programs, and student associations at the graduate and second-entry undergraduate degree level;
- to promote academic, professional, and interdisciplinary collaboration among the faculty of the member institutions, such as the TST Virtual Forum;
- to administer and coordinate a variety of academic programs, such as the academic research and teaching degrees and advanced professional degrees;
- to enter into and manage a variety of collaborative relationships, especially with the University of Toronto; and
- to enhance the resources available for academic programs in theology and for lifelong learning in ministry.

Responsibilities and Commitments of the Consortium

Committed to the above principles, Member Colleges agree to collaborate on:

Governance, Senior Executive and Academic Council:

As a general principle, the Board of Trustees has primary responsibility for TST's governance; the Senior Executive Council (SEC) has primary responsibility for the use of resources; the Academic Council has primary responsibility for academic policy, as per terms of reference in the TST By-law.

Curriculum Planning:

Conjoint graduate (advanced) theological degrees as follows:

- Any degree program offered conjointly with the University of Toronto must be approved by the official governance bodies of those members involved in offering it, by the Academic Council of TST, and by the Governing Council of the University of Toronto.
- Graduate degree programs will have a curriculum that includes some cohort classes, the staffing of which is shared by all Member Colleges offering the degree.
- The TST Administration and SEC will coordinate academic planning for graduate degree programs in consultation with Member Colleges and area planning groups, such as Theology, Biblical Studies, Church History, and Practical Theology, as well as Interdisciplinary groups, such as those currently organized for academic interests in spiritual care and psychotherapy, liturgy, or the arts.
- Member Colleges agree annually to assign one graduate cohort course, and/or TST 5000/6000 level course, and/or TST administrative role to every full-time eligible faculty member. That is, one course (or equivalent administrative responsibilities beyond committee work) would be offered at the graduate level for the MA, ThM, DMin, or PhD program. Faculty with reduced teaching loads would teach correspondingly.

Basic theological (SEUG) degrees and certificates as follows:

- Any degree and certificate program offered conjointly with the University of Toronto must be approved by the official governance bodies of those members involved in offering it, by the Academic Council of TST, and by the Board of Governors of the University of Toronto.
- Member Colleges will collaborate to foster ecumenical understanding in both curricular and extra-curricular ways.
- Member Colleges encourage students to take courses outside their own college.

Complement Planning:

- Faculty workload, including teaching assignments, supervision, and committee work, remain under the authority of Member Colleges.

- Faculty appointed to graduate status from Member Colleges will contribute equitably to graduate supervision, as agreed upon by SEC.
- Faculty and staff from Member Colleges will contribute equitably to committee work [GCTS, BD, Academic, ad hoc committees, as agreed upon by SEC].
- Faculty will collaborate on research, sharing resources, identifying common academic standards and values, working together in governance and administration in matters of mutual advantage, and recognizing common academic and spiritual interests and kinship.
- As part of complement planning and in order to collaborate where possible, when Member Colleges seek to appoint faculty to new hires, they will share their intention to hire in a particular area with the SEC for information and discussion prior to commencing a search. They will also submit the final search posting to TST when requesting a Provostial assessor.
- The needs for TST administrative roles will be considered as part of complement planning.
- As per the Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Toronto, Item 29.i: The Director of TST should convene at least annually a complement planning meeting with the heads of the Member Institutions to coordinate effectively each Member Institution's contribution to the faculty resources supporting the conjoint degree programs.

Finances:

Member Colleges commit to a financial contribution based on a model developed by the financial officers of the Member Colleges and the TST financial officers and approved by SEC.

Member College financial contributions will be sufficient to enable TST staff to provide oversight of shared curricular and administrative functions. The question of sufficiency should be reviewed every three years for institutional flexibility.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation:

UTQAP and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS): As of 2020, the Member Colleges carry primary responsibility for ATS accreditation and TST carries primary responsibility for UTQAP.

- Between self-studies, TST and Member Colleges will cooperate to collect data needed for UTQAP and ATS.
- Between self-studies, TST and the Member Colleges will engage in ongoing faculty development through the Basic Degree Council, Graduate Studies Council and the Faculty Assembly so that faculty are kept current on accrediting and quality assurance standards.
- Between self-studies, the primary responsibility for collecting data satisfying UTQAP requirements for all degrees will rest with TST.
- Between self-studies, the primary responsibility for collecting ATS-oriented data for non-centralized degrees will lie with the Member Colleges.
- Between self-studies, the primary responsibility for collecting ATS-oriented data for the centralized degrees will lie with TST.

During the process of preparing a UTQAP self-study, each Member College will contribute toward drafting the UTQAP report and note those contributions in its faculty service contributions.

- During the process of preparing ATS self-studies, the Member College will take primary responsibility for writing the ATS self-study and making recommendations that pertain to the Member Colleges.
- In the years of ATS self-studies, TST will organize the writing of drafts for centralized degrees and vet the drafts in the appropriate councils and committees (currently, BD, CSM, GSC). Recommendations will be forwarded to SEC and the Academic Council.
- The TST Executive Director has final authority over the UTQAP report. For centralized degrees, the Member Colleges, in collaboration with the TST Executive Director, have final authority over their ATS reports.

TST is governed by By-law No. 1 and the MOA with the University of Toronto. Should conflicts between this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the MOA be found, those documents take precedence until such time as this MOU is reconciled with either of those documents. This MOU is intended to express the relationship among the TST Member Colleges and is not intended to contravene either of those binding documents.

This agreement will be in effect from the time of its adoption, may be amended upon recommendation of the governing council of a Member College or the TST Board of Trustees, and will be reviewed as warranted by the results of any Member Colleges's ATS Accreditation or the results of any UTQAP review.