

Faculty of Theology Huron University College 2015-2018 Academic Plan



(Approved: Faculty of Theology Committee, September 14, 2015)

Introduction

The following provides a framework for academic planning over the next three years so that the Faculty of Theology can better realize its mission.

A: Vision and Goals for 2015-18

General Vision:

The Faculty of Theology values its role as part as part of Huron University College's overall educational mission. Where possible, this plan will support the five primary goals from our larger Strategic Plan, "Critically Engaged";

1. Focus on Student Engagement and Advantage
2. Emphasize Critical Thinking
3. Increase Public Awareness
4. Mobilize Alumni Support
5. Safeguard our Future

Goals 1 and 2 are supported by our academic programs and goals 3, 4, and 5 are supported by the work of: students, faculty, faculty committees, and the office of Dean.

All academic programs in the Faculty of Theology provide students with opportunities to develop competencies in the following areas that will prepare them to be resourceful, adaptable, compassionate, informed, generous members and leaders of their communities, prepared to see issues from a multiplicity of perspectives and to exercise careful judgment in decision-making:

*Critical Thinking;
Creative/Constructive Thinking and Expression
Engagement, Responsibility, and Accountability;
Global Awareness and Engagement;
Contextualized Knowledge;
Effective communication.*

Building on these foundations, each Faculty of Theology degree program has distinct purposes and desired outcomes. Therefore, each degree will be treated under its own heading in what follows. Our non-degree and continuing education formats will also feature in this plan under a final heading.

Faculty of Theology Mission Statement (revised January 2015)

The mission of the Faculty of Theology is to provide theological education of the highest standards through its undergraduate, professional, and graduate degree programs, and through its non-degree and continuing education programs.

All academic programs in the Faculty of Theology form and empower leaders to serve faith communities, the university, and society in Canada and abroad by preparing them to be resourceful, adaptable, compassionate, informed, imaginative, and generous people.

Building on these foundations, each Faculty of Theology degree program has distinct purposes and desired outcomes:

Huron's Bachelor of Theology (BTh) program promotes educational excellence in theology and religious studies, while complementing Huron's other programs in Arts and Social Science.

Huron's Master of Theological Studies (MTS) program provides post-baccalaureate professional education to people of diverse faith traditions, preparing them for positions of leadership and responsibility in society.

Huron's Master of Divinity (MDiv) program fosters a knowledge and love of God, personal, spiritual, and vocational development, and the competencies needed for faithful and creative leadership in the churches of the Anglican Communion, churches of other denominations, and in a variety of other ministry settings.

Huron's Master of Arts (Theology), as a program located in Western's School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, is dedicated to excellence in graduate education, providing advanced knowledge in theology and related fields, fostering intellectual curiosity, and enabling research to the benefit of society.

Strategic Imperatives:

- A• To consolidate the achievements of the past plans and to deepen excellence in our educational mission
- B• To increase student recruitment both through new resources and intensified activity following a three-year recruitment plan
- C• To support faculty effectiveness and satisfaction based on their unique gifts, contributions, and interests
- D• To develop new partnerships and to attract participants and investment from a wider circle
- E• To seek ways of collaboration with HUC Faculty of Arts and Social Science and Western faculty and departments/centers
- F• To assess and invest in the next steps for the Centre for Public Theology, and for Islamic Studies, Christian-Muslim and/or Interfaith Studies, and Jewish Studies in the BA, MTS, and MA (Theology)
- G• To continually develop excellence, specialization, and flexibility in the MDiv program so that it continues to be the “gold standard” for post-baccalaureate professional education in theology.
- H• To assess the legacy of the successful “Ask and Imagine” program and to make youth and young adult ministry educational programs a high priority through the proposed “Youth Ministry Institute”
- I• To continually develop excellence in spiritual and vocational formation (for those who seek it) and to make the worship life (lives) of the community a beacon and blessed sign of God’s goodness

B: Goals for All Programs:

Priority: Assessment

- To learn from 2015 Self-Study Recommendations (Association of Theological Schools Accreditation Self-Study and the IQAP Cyclical Review of BTh)
- To implement changes according to the Reports of the Visiting Teams (and the Board of Commissioners of the Association of Theological Schools)
- To further develop tools of assessment and clearer statements of outcomes, and to follow the schedule of regular assessment plans

Priority: Enrolment

- To develop and begin to implement a three-year Recruitment Plan (2015-18) for each program and Faculty of Theology as a whole
- To support the recruitment plan with new resources making better use of HUC-wide human and financial resources
- To make recruitment a shared responsibility and an urgent priority for all

Priority: Research-Teaching Support

- To support faculty research, especially as it relates to the classroom, making use of student assistants, collaborative grant-writing where possible, and other established supports

Priority: Student Support

- To design a new model for academic advising of students
- To standardize course outlines/descriptions for outcomes and program outcomes
- To develop a course-offerings plan on a two-year cycle (e.g., in June of any year students can predict likely course offerings for the next two academic years)
- To develop a vision for, and initiate a plan to, facilitate global engagement, recruitment and exchange
- To restore the “Theology Centre” (formerly housed in “the Attic”, then in the John Morden Room / V210), or an equivalent, to its original role as common space for community formation, community learning and development
- To develop, articulate, implement, and support opportunities to strengthen spiritual and vocational formation through a “Rule of Life” and/or other covenants.
- To provide support for, and assessment of, student leadership (especially BHTS) and engagement

Priority: Administrative Support

- To consider ways to share “service” load for faculty in new ways
- To assess the “Dean’s Office” and “Theology Office” for workload, priorities, efficiencies, etc., and make recommendations for the best use of, and/or increase in, administrative support.
- To continue to find HUC-wide administrative solutions that are mutually beneficial for students, faculty, and staff.

C: Goals by Program Area

This section will be updated twice a year (September and March) to assess progress and it will be reconsidered for changes annually by the Faculty of Theology Committee.

BTh:

Year 1 Goals:

- > To make BTh-specific recruitment recommendations to FTC, reporting to Academic Council, drawing from the HUC Enrolment Management Report (Fall 2015), and to adapt the Recruitment Plan (BTh) accordingly
- > To complete the IQAP cyclical review (2016) and use recommendations to increase quality and focus of program, majors and minors, and to begin the process planning for a new program proposal
- > To assess the Faculty of Theology's role in the Jewish Studies program (Huron, King's, Western) and to use the 2016 cyclical review as an opportunity to consider administrative changes
- > To increase efforts to complement other HUC BA programs/departments (e.g., developing mutually beneficial "constellations" of courses for students who seek to include some study or Theology/Religion in study, increasing the number who choose to do a major or minor, to seek opportunities for collaboration in academic advising, recruitment, etc.)
- > To focus on "online" opportunities to promote our courses and programs

Year 2 Goals

- > To follow and/or adjust Enrolment/Recruitment plan
- > If proposed, to lay groundwork for implementing a new program/department

Year 3 Goals

- > To continue to resource new program/department and to develop and implement a schedule of assessment

MTS:

Year 1 Goals

- To follow Year 1 of Recruitment Plan with a marketing focus on: two-year program, concentrations (especially promoting new concentration in Islamic Studies when approved)
- To use recommendations from the ATS Self-Study and accreditation visit to increase quality of the program
- To clarify the distinctiveness of the degree
- To assess the areas of concentration, Islamic Studies (2015-16), Christian-Muslim relations, Jewish Studies, new or renewed discipline-specific concentrations (2016-17).

*specific recommendations have been developed for Islamic Studies “Appendix I”

- To rename Pastoral Counselling to “Pastoral Care” (2015)
- To assess the (integration seminar) outcomes and integrity of program
- To assess the national offerings and demand for similar programs

MDiv:

Year 1 Goals

- To follow Year 1 of Recruitment Plan (Canada), to maintain or increase MDiv enrolment in: Diocese of Huron, all denominations within two-hour drive of London, Anglican students across Canada, Aboriginal/First Nations students
- To follow Year 1 of Recruitment Plan (International) to increase “International” student access to MDiv by making a case for offering visa students the “Domestic” tuition rate
- To develop a vision for national and international engagement
- To use recommendations from the ATS Self-Study and accreditation visit to increase the coherence of the program with a focus on program outcomes
 - measure effectiveness of the change to the distributed curriculum
 - embark on a constructive integration and alignment of curriculum
- To develop an assessment schedule and processes
- To investigate student workload especially as it relates to ongoing assessment of Spiritual and Vocational Formation programs, consider 0.5 credit for MDiv program-length Formation Activities
- To implement a three-year plan to re-envision the Field Education program: e.g., 0.5 course expansion for Ordination Stream students, new ways to develop and support supervisors and ministry sites, consider alternative methods of Community Based/Experiential Learning, consider 0.5 credit for basic CPE. (2016-17)
- To assess alignment to denominational expectations: ACC “Competencies for Priesthood”, TEAC Grids, UCC Competencies, etc. (2016-2018)
- To make decisions regarding possible “Streams” for MDiv (e.g., Anglican Ordination, UCC Ordination, Evangelical Ministry, Clinical Ministry, NGO, Non-profit, etc.) (2016-17)
- To assess requests for new courses: e.g., Stewardship Theology and Resource Management; Anglican Theology/History; Mental Health, Addictions, and Pastoral Care, Catechumenate: Making Disciples, etc., and consider how these courses could support a “Centre” for Parish/Congregational Ministry – study for those already ordained.
- To continue to develop funding for scholarship and bursaries
- To assess pathways and support for Part-Time or “distance” students (2016-18)

- To assess possibility of using intensive courses, May-August period, and other ways to offer shorter (heavier) or longer (lighter) pathways. (2016-18)

To establish ongoing dialogue with the Rector and Dean of Studies at St. Peter's Seminary about shared teaching/courses etc. (2016-17)

MA:

Year 1 Goals

- To assess program for: who has been attracted to this program, and who could be attracted to it, developing clear pathways into the degree. To promote and recruit accordingly
- To identify changes to the program that might encourage new academic areas of interest and enhance the interdisciplinary nature of the program
- To extend planning cycle to include "key" planning for 2-year or 3-year cycle of courses, supervisors
- To bring greater balance to the faculty workload, or adjust for imbalance

Year 2 Goals

To investigate the feasibility of a DMin program in one or two select areas

Year 3 Goals

To prepare for cyclical review

Non-degree and Continuing Education:

The Faculty of Theology is committed to developing and offering educational opportunities beyond our degree programs. These will continue in the following categories according to their distinctive modes of delivery. Year Two and Three of this Plan will include a schedule of assessment and, by the end of the of 2017, a vision and plan for the following three years (beginning mid-2018).

1. Non-Degree Program (LTh):

To develop a plan for supporting a part-time director/coordinator of Non-Degree and Con. Ed. Programs.

To continue to develop course and instructors in the core and elective areas

To invest in marketing and promoting the program

To seek partnerships in other geographical locations

To investigate on-line and distance feasibility

2. Sabbatical/post-doctoral program for visiting scholars

To develop a vision for such a program, or programs

To work with CEP (the national Continuing Education Plan for the Anglican Church of Canada) and OPCOTE, to promote our programs, perhaps developing sabbatical program to support this clergy benefit

3. Continuing Education Workshops for “Best Practices”

To continue to develop these offerings to meet the needs of our several publics

To work with the Diocese of Huron and other church bodies to increase requirements and support for continuing education

4. General Interest courses through “Western Continuing Studies”

To continue to develop these general interest offerings

Appendix I: Islamic Studies Concentration in MTS

NOTE: these are draft suggestions for discussion in Year 1 of the plan:

Area I Biblical Studies

- Change the name of this area to “Sacred Texts” or something similar.
- Establish a 5000 level equivalent for RS 3100 “Studies in Sunnah and Hadith”.
 - Add this class as an alternative required course
 - Change the name of the course from “Studies in Qur’an, Sunnah and Hadith”
- Add a Qur’an interpretation class to the required list.
- Interpreting the Qur’an 2310/5310 is too basic with the 2000 level; needs higher level:
 - Qur’anic Hermeneutics (reading course?) Or can we drop the 2000 level portion? Or make it 3000 level instead of 2000?
- Add 2nd or 3rd year Arabic to the required classes.
- 3rd year Qur’anic Arabic has been added to our offerings (Yahya Kharrat).

Area II: Theological Studies

- Establish a 5000 level equivalent to RS 3121 Introduction to Islamic Ethics; call it “Islamic theological ethics” (2015 course is offered as Special Topics at 5000).
 - Add this class as an alternative required course
- Add a 3000/5000 Islamic Theology class (replace RS 3110 “Classical Islamic Thought”?).

Area III: Historical Studies

- Add some Islamic Studies courses to the courses listed in this area.
- Islam and Politics 3130 (needs a 5000# - 5130?)
- Establish a 5000 level course for the MA course “History of Islamic Law and Legal Theory”.

Area IV: Public Leadership and Ministry

- Add PT 5235 The Muslim Voice to this area.
- Add “History of Christian-Muslim Relations” to this area (or area III)

Area V: Contextual and Formational Studies

- The courses listed here are flexible enough to accommodate Muslim students, but the Field Ed. Director might need some help with placements.
- Is this where the spirituality courses should go? I would like to add a 5000 level to my class RS 3131 “Spirituality of Muslim Women”.

Area VI: Comparative and Cultural Studies

- Can we add a course here, something like, “The Practice of Interfaith Engagement”?