

# Implementation Plan

## 1. Cover memo

*Department of* Theological Studies *Year of appraisal* 2014

To: Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning  
From: Faculty Dean  
Faculty of : Arts and Science  
Date: 14 December 2016

Please find enclosed the finalized Implementation Plan for the Department cited above as part of the academic program appraisals process. This Plan was duly discussed with:

- The Department Chair
- The Dean of Graduate Studies (if applicable)

As mentioned in the Concordia University Academic Program Appraisals Manual, 5<sup>th</sup> edition revised, the Faculty and Department will follow-up on this Plan in two years, when prompted by your office.

Sincerely,

Faculty Dean's name Dr. André Roy

Faculty Dean's signature



# Implementation Plan: The Department of Theological Studies

When this appraisal was initiated, the Department of Theological Studies offered graduate (MA Theological Studies, Thesis Option and MA Theological Studies, Project Option) and undergraduate (BA Major in Theological Studies, BA Honours in Theological Studies) programs and a Minor in Theological Studies and a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry. In delivering these offerings, the department is dedicated *to training professional theologians and researchers while expanding the horizons of those who wish to appreciate their heritage*. Moreover, the Department provides service courses for students from other disciplines and Faculties *to explore contemporary issues and questions through the lens of ethics and spirituality and to explore issues close to their hearts always using rigorous academic methodologies and standards*.

The complement of faculty and staff responsible for delivering these academic and research goals included six tenured faculty members, one LTA, two affiliate professors and several part-time faculty members (typically 12-17) with a single administrative assistant/secretary. The Department has office space, two seminar rooms, two small lounges (for students and faculty) and some shared office space for part-time faculty, teaching assistants and doctoral students in the D and K annexes on the Sir George Williams campus.

The Department offers teaching and research experience in five main areas of concentration: Scripture, History, Systematics, Christian Ethics and Spirituality. The success of the Department in these areas is evidenced from the publications and conference presentations of the faculty members, graduate student supervisions, and external funding from private, provincial and federal sources as principal investigators and as members of multi-institutional collaborative research teams. In terms of teaching, the faculty members in the Department of Theological Studies pride themselves on their teaching and the level of personal engagement that their students receive. In this context, they offer special initiatives for students both within and outside the classroom (ranging from tutorials and workshops to fieldtrips and pilgrimages). In addition to working closely with their students in the classroom, the Department also has embraced new methodologies and has implemented three successful online courses.

To advance and improve the Department of Theological Studies, a number of suggestions have been put forward as part of this appraisal process. With this in mind, the Faculty of Arts and Science has reviewed the DAC, External Evaluators' and UAC Reports and our comments on the recommendations from the reports follow.

Recommendations	Prioritized timeline for completion	Responsibility	Dean's comments and resource implications
1) The Department produces a Mission Statement and Strategic Plan that defines its identity, unified vision and plan for the future.	Mission statement, immediate, Strategic Plan, October 2017	Chair, all stakeholders within the Department	This discussion can be initiated immediately and particularly in the context of the recent University Strategic Planning exercise and the Faculty of Arts and Science FAS 2025 living document. This will aid in defining where the Department wishes to concentrate its energies and resources and could include discussions of possible new program offerings and centres, <i>e.g.</i> , Lonergan Centre for Ethical Reflection, Centre for Pilgrimage Studies.
2) The Department continue its assessment of program and course offerings and maintain continuous curriculum review and renewal.	Ongoing	Chair, Curriculum Committees, Associate Dean, Academic Programs, Centre for Teaching and Learning	Curriculum renewal and reform is necessary to articulate how individual courses contribute to the programs offered. Program and course offerings can be defined by their core purposes and learning outcomes. This information should be made obvious to students who can construct their courses of study in an informed way. Program directions can be developed and defined as part of the Strategic Planning exercise while considering the potential audience and expected learning outcomes. Faculty should take advantage of the Centre for Teaching and Learning to explore best practices, optimize course delivery and their own professional development. Part-time instructors should be consulted as a part of this process. This process also could involve assessment of teaching practices and increased opportunities for recognizing faculty achievements.
3) The Department needs to assess its administrative processes. This concerns both the role of the Department's administrative assistant/secretary and the sharing of administrative duties among faculty.	Immediate and ongoing	Chair, Faculty of Arts and Science, Associate Dean, Student Academic Services, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, Human Resources	The job description of the administrative assistant/secretary must be updated to reflect actual duties and responsibilities. This is particularly important given the opportunity that the recent Voluntary Retirement Policy has provided the Department. The Dean should be approached with a reasoned report defining why additional administrative assistance is needed. There should be formal and regular meetings to divide existing administrative responsibilities equitably among faculty members. The Chair can look to other departments and to the Associate Deans Student Academic Services and Research and Graduate Studies to explore existing models. The distribution of administrative tasks among faculty can be assessed regularly and modified as needed.
4) The Department must integrate itself more fully into the	Ongoing	Chair, Faculty of Arts and Science, Faculty of Arts and	The Department should reach out to appropriate departments at the University to develop collaborations in research and teaching. Now is a good time to

<p>University and Community to define its position, distinctive features, and identity.</p>		<p>Science Communications Advisor, University Communication Services</p>	<p>explore non-traditional methods (beyond cross-listing and team teaching) to bring a broad expertise and different visions to specific courses and programs. This will expose more students to Theological Studies and what these programs can offer. Given the connections that Theological Studies already has established with the community, it is important that they continue to explore with community stakeholders course offerings and opportunities and directions for community involvement.</p>
<p>5) The Department maintain and strengthen its recruitment and retention strategies.</p>	<p>September 2017 and ongoing</p>	<p>Chair, Faculty of Arts and Science Communications Advisor, University Communication Services, Recruitment Services, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Arts and Science, Associate Dean, Awards and Recruitment, School of Graduate Studies</p>	<p>The Department can build on the initiatives that it has begun to strengthen its recruitment and retentions strategy. They should take full advantage of the Faculty of Arts and Science Communications advisor and University Communication Services to define their target audiences and develop an appropriate communications strategy.</p>
<p>6) To develop a detailed space plan. Given the current status of the existing annexes, the Department needs to explore options for repair and updating.</p>	<p>October 2017</p>	<p>Chair, Associate Dean, Planning and Academic Facilities</p>	<p>A comprehensive space plan should be developed to present to the Associate Dean, Planning and Academic Facilities. Resource implications will only be obvious once the space plan has been developed.</p>