

ANZATS
THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND
ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS

enewsletter June 2006

CONTENTS

- Why regulation and compliance demands grow and grow
- Report of Council meeting
- Next Conference 2007
- 2nd Principals' Conference 2006
- New Deans for Brisbane and UFT
- New Member Colleges
- Sanderson Research Fellowship

WHY REGULATION AND COMPLIANCE DEMANDS GROW AND GROW

Over the last decade or so the OECD countries and the World Bank have identified education as one of the keys to economic growth. To have an educated work force is the key to success in this new world of globalization. So governments opened up the higher education 'market' to more than the previous traditional players who were, in most cases, the public universities deriving their status from traditional British models. The result has been that, in Asia, 80% of those providing higher education do so 'for profit' as against the traditional 'not for profit' educational sector. The inevitable consequence has been the rise of 'consumer protection', hence increasing regulation. Theological colleges, despite their long history and involvement in higher education, have been caught up in this. Demands will inevitably keep growing. Just this year at least two institutions have been closed because their owners decided that insufficient returns (dividends) were being generated for their shareholders and so over 700 students were left without a course to go to until the tuition assurance provider stepped in and found them places where they could complete their degrees. While we applaud the recognition afforded the private higher education sector in the last few years, spare a compassionate thought for the regulators who must manage an increasingly complex and diverse sector that includes over 200 private providers in Australia and NZ.

The increasingly complex need of compliance with government regulations has become very costly. One consortium estimates that the cost of re-accreditation, authorisation to conduct courses in various states, and endorsement for overseas students will amount to \$200,000. This, and the demands to satisfy the requirements of the Australian Federal Government's Fee-Help program has led a number of formerly independent colleges to join consortia. The security offered by such membership can sometimes be offset by the lack of flexibility. Governments are holding consortia responsible for quality assurance and placing heavy demands on Deans and administrative staff.

(Below) Council Members at the meeting in Melbourne 26 and 27 May 2006 (from left) Peter Lockwood (SA), Chris Mostert (President) Paul Beirne (Victorian Executive Member), Brian Harris (WA), Ray Nobbs (NSW), Harold Pidwell (Secretary), Ken Booth (NZ and Vice President), James Gibson (Queensland), Richard Treloar (Victoria Executive Member).



COUNCIL MEETS IN MELBOURNE

The Council met for its yearly meeting on 26 and 27th May in Melbourne. Reports from regional members revealed an increase in enrolments in many cases, and a diversifying of the curriculum. The history of ANZATS, written by Geoff Barnes and completed just weeks before he died, has been edited and awaits some final indexing and proofing before being published. The Council also received notice from both the President and Secretary that they would like to relinquish those positions at the end of this year. A relocation of the Executive and office to Sydney is under consideration.

The New Zealand Vice-President, **Rev Dr Ken Booth** also indicated that he will be retiring in July from his position as President of the NZ Association of Theological Schools and also as Director of Theology House, Christchurch. Ken has had a long association with both ANZATS and NZATS reaching back into the 1970's. His experience and thoughtful contributions will be missed.

A significant part of the meeting was the presentation of "Trends in Higher Education Regulation" by **Ms Sian Lewis**, Manager of the Higher Education and Regulation Division of the Victorian Office of Training and tertiary Education, and formerly head of the quality assurance unit, DEST, Canberra. Among a number of issues addressed by Sian was the adoption of national protocols which will require all Australian higher education providers to conform to criteria such as a commitment to free inquiry in academic endeavours; teaching and learning that engage with advanced learning and inquiry; qualifications that conform to those of the Australian Qualifications Framework; and quality assurance, infrastructure and staffing appropriate to academic purposes. "The trend", said Sian "is to more regulation rather than less but we are simply asking you to articulate and demonstrate what you already know to be true. We will not be asking questions to which you should not know the answers." What are the challenges for private providers? Sian suggested the following:

The need to strengthen

- Quality assurance systems

- Monitoring of students achievement (retention, graduation, employment, transition to further study)
- The capacity to demonstrate good practice

And give heightened attention to

- Staff qualifications, scholarship and discipline currency (e.g how do you know/demonstrate that the person you hired 20 years ago is still up with current trends)
- Library and information resources
- Data to support claims.

Most of us know the answers to these questions but in an evidence-based environment such as accreditation it is important to be able to produce the data to support the answers. It is why review panels see conference attendance, net working and engaging with the wider theological scene as so important.

While Sian's presentation was focussed on the Australian scene the contextualising of the trends and identification of global issues was recognised as being relevant to the NZ scene also.

(Below) ANZATS President Chris Mostert with Sian Lewis



NEXT CONFERENCE CANBERRA 2007

The next ANZATS/ANZSTS Conference will be held in Canberra in 2007. It will coincide with the 50th anniversary of the founding of St Mark's National Theological Centre. Conference Theme: "Global Neighbours & Faithful Citizens: Theology in the Public Domain." Three keynote speakers:

Professor Will Storrar, Centre of Theological Inquiry, Princeton

Professor Elaine Graham, Centre for Public Theology, University of Manchester

Dr. Nico Koopman, Director, Beyers Naude Centre for Public Theology, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

Date: 8-12 July

Venue: University House, Australian National University, Canberra

In 2008 the Conference will be held in Auckland and be part of the International Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature.

2ND PRINCIPALS' CONFERENCE 2006

Following the success of the first Heads of Colleges Conference in Melbourne last year a second such conference will be held in Brisbane at the Riverglenn Conference Centre 21-23 September 2006. **Dr Charles Foster** from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Learning will be featured. Charles led the recently completed *Study of the Clergy* the report of which has been hailed as the most important book on theological education in the last 50 years. Registrations are now open and invitations have been sent out to heads of colleges. If you plan to come, please register quickly as places are filling fast.

NEW DEAN FOR THE BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY

Dr Les Ball, Academic Dean and Lecturer in Church History and New Testament at Malyon College (formerly Queensland Baptist College of Ministries) has been appointed Dean of the Brisbane College of Theology and will commence this full time position in July. The United Faculty of Theology, a Recognised Teaching Institution of the Melbourne College of Divinity, has appointed **Rev Dr Janet Crawford** as Dean. Janet previously taught at the College of the Southern Cross, St John's College, Auckland. This is a one year appointment.

NEW MEMBER COLLEGES

Five colleges were admitted to membership of ANZATS at the Council meeting and one college had its status raised from associate to full membership. Following procedures adopted some time ago a Membership Commission of three persons is appointed to consider each application against criteria adopted by the Council. Usually a visit is paid to the applicant college and discussions held with staff and an inspection of facilities and resources made. The Chair of each Commission then reports to the Council. The following colleges were welcomed into Full Membership.

Broken Bay Institute, Wahroonga, NSW. Principal Dr Gerard Goldman.

Kingsley College, Melbourne. Principal Rev Peter Dobson

Southern Cross College, Chester Hill, NSW. Principal Pastor Stephen Fogarty

Nazarene Theological College, Thornlands, Qld. Principal Rev Bruce Allder. The Nazarene College has been an Associate Member since 2000.

The following colleges were admitted to Associate Membership

Citipointe Ministry College, Mansfield, Qld. Principal Pastor Brian Mulheran. Citipointe is the theological and ministry training arm of Christian Heritage College.

Tahlee Bible College, Tahlee via Karuah NSW. Principal Rev Geoff Case.

Welcome to everyone and thanks to those who formed the Membership Commissions for these colleges.

SANDERSON RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Uniting Church Theological College, Melbourne

Applications are invited for the Sanderson Research Fellowship in the Uniting Church Theological College, Melbourne.

The Fellowship is tenable either half-time for one year or full-time for six months, commencing in mid February 2007.

Particulars about the Fellowship may be obtained from www.theohall.vic.uca.org.au (Research and Resources) or from the Faculty Secretary, Uniting Church Theological College, Ormond College, College Crescent, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia.