

(e)-newsletter - August 2011

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ANZATS / ANZSTS Conference 2011

Issues in translation - scripture, liturgy, living

Lively discussion marked each of the plenary papers at the 2011 ANZATS conference, held at Wesley College, University of Sydney.

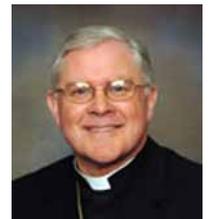
Professor Mark Strauss (Bethel Seminary - San Diego) on the Monday morning delivered a stimulating address on 'Translation as Communication: the holistic and functional nature of language and its implications for contemporary Bible translation'. Critiquing the widely-accepted 'code theories' of language, with the consequential ideas of 'formal' and 'dynamic equivalence' principles in translation, he argued that 'relevance theory' in communication gave a more satisfactory basis, highlighting the importance of the function of linguistic forms.



In his second plenary, Dr Strauss told the story of his own being drawn into 'Gender Wars and Bible Translation: a report from the trenches', around the 'inclusive-language' *Today's New International Version*. Controversy arose when a popular magazine dubbed it the 'Stealth Bible' (banned over a photo of the Stealth bomber), and the translation was banned by the Southern Baptist Convention. This involvement led to his chairing the Committee which prepared the revised NIV in March 2011. He took up this issue at a more popular level in his evening well-attended Public Lecture (co-sponsored by the Bible Society) on 'Bible Translation and the Myth of Literal Accuracy', including a critical assessment of current translations (notably the *English Standard Version*, a light revision of the RSV).

Professor Strauss was an exemplary conference participant, attending members' papers at every opportunity, and concluding the conference with a round-table discussion about theological research with students and faculty.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge delivered his engaging plenary address on the Monday afternoon, entitled 'Words between Worlds: Missal, Bible, Mission'.



Drawing on his work as a biblical scholar, and in particular from his experience of chairing the committee which has prepared the new English-language translations of Roman Catholic service texts from their Latin bases, Dr Coleridge articulated the distinctive features of liturgical translation, and the ways in which these shed light on what is going on in translating the scriptures. In the process, he shed light on the close interactions between the Church of God and the Word of God, not least in relation to gender issues.

These plenary sessions set the stage for twenty papers by members, several of which focussed on issues of translation (notably in relation to indigenous Australian languages) as well other issues of theological research.

A Wednesday morning 'round table' plenary shifted the emphasis towards ANZATS's role as a network of theological schools, and so concerned to improve pedagogy. Four short presentations were made on case-studies, followed by plenary discussion: teaching systematic theology (Charles Sherlock), research processes (Graeme Chatfield) and on-line learning (Diane Hockridge and Len Smith). An afternoon round-table took up 'Current Issues in Missiology and Mission', chaired by David Claydon. Panel members Robyn Claydon, Stuart Devenish, Richard Hibbert and Patrick McInerney offered a wide range of perspectives, with case studeis drawn from Russia and Bulgaria as well as the post-modern West.

Warm thanks were expressed to the local committee which organised the conference, and especially Professor Diane Speed, whose graced energy made it all happen! □

Your secretary writes ...

Welcome to another ANZATS Newsletter, with news from around the region, updates on changes in Australian Higher Education, and more details on the merger with ANZSTS.

Several issues have shaped the first half of 2011 for me. One was **writing submissions**:

One on behalf of the Council was to relevant Ministers and MPs regarding the killing off of the *Australian Learning & Teaching Council* (ALTC, formerly the Carrick Institute). The outcome of many protests across the Higher Education sector was the retention of funding in train for 2012-13 (including the *Transforming Theology* project led by Les Ball).

The draft TEQSA Bill was circulated for comment, and ANZATS made a submission, particularly around the 'Self Accrediting Institution' category.

Related to this, the second and third rounds of comment took place for the draft Provider Standards element in TEQSA, to which ANZATS responded (much more briefly for the third, since significant improvements were made).

The **annual ANZATS Conference**, planned and organised by a local committee in Sydney, led by the indefatigable Diane Speed, involved me in support (but not nearly as much the 2010 Melbourne event - thank you Diane!).

The **Threshold Learning Outcomes** project continued, in which ANZATS is assisting the *Council of Deans of Theology*. Draft Five, which separates out the BMin, is attached to this Newsletter, along with an explanation of the processes involved. Please ask faculty to consider this and respond, so that it can be finalised and work commence on the next stage, TLOs for the BMin and coursework Masters.

As previously, I am glad to have been able to assist some member colleges in reviewing AUQA and re-accreditation submissions, to engage in ongoing dialogue with AUQA (including being again a member of the Joint Steering Group for its Forum), and correspond and consult with a wide variety of people and places regarding theological education in New Zealand and Australia. I value highly these opportunities for networking.

ANZSTS to merge into ANZATS

The *Australian and New Zealand Association for Theological Studies* (ANZSTS) was established as a twin body to ANZATS, embracing individual scholars rather than schools. The main activities in its four decades of work have been co-sponsoring conferences with ANZATS, and publishing *Colloquium: the Australian & New Zealand Theological Review*. With the growth of opportunities for discipline-based conferences and journals in recent years, the need for a body such as ANZSTS has lessened. Its Executive approached ANZATS in 2010 suggesting that the two bodies now merge, a possibility after ANZATS's 2009 Constitution update provided for individual members.

The ANZATS Council responded warmly to the proposal, and the 2010 ANZATS and ANZSTS AGMs agreed to

appoint a joint working group work on the details. Its report was considered in detail at the ANZATS Executive meeting in December 2010, which decided to proceed, with several outcomes:

- a) *Colloquium* will continue to be edited by its current Auckland-based team until the second half of 2012;
- b) All existing ANZSTS individual subscribers will be invited to become Individual Members of ANZATS;
- c) All ANZATS members will receive *Colloquium* (institutions will be sent multiple copies, depending on their category and subscription level);
- d) Expressions of interest are being sought for an Editorial Board, Panel and Editor (*see separate story*).

The ANZATS Council expressed its thanks for the excellent work done over the past four years by the *Colloquium* team: Nicola Hoggard-Creegan and Tim Meadowcroft (Editors), Derek Tovey (Book Review Editor), John Owens (Business Manager), and the Editorial Panel: Tim Bulkeley, Laurie Guy, Douglas Pratt, Bill Osborne and its Chair, Elaine Wainwright.

AUQA Good Practice database

Quite a few entries have been made in this database from theological institutions over the past five years, arising from AUQA Reports on theological HEPs. Some have to do with governance, networking relations in consortia and similar 'big picture' areas. Two added in the latest 'batch', however, relate closely to student learning:

Australian Lutheran College has its assessment practice noted: a unique 'rubrics' form is designed for every unit, staff have three training sessions each year in their design, revision and use, and they are evaluated regularly.

Tabor Adelaide uses AUQA's OADRI approach to student evaluation, in three levels: its own Student Evaluation Survey for units, ACER's Student Experience Questionnaire annually, the GCA's Course Experience Questionnaire for graduates. These three sources are integrated using standard forms which track the actual deployment of the feedback received.

These and other Good Practices can be found at www.auqa.edu.au/gp - a very useful resource.

ANZATS and the Council of Deans of Theology

The ANZATS Council also reflected on how the now well-established *Council of Deans of Theology* relate to each other. In a wide-ranging discussion, it was agreed that whereas the Council functions with a view to external relationships, ANZATS concerns theological education itself, assisting its life through conferences, professional issues, networking and now a journal. Discussion continues!

Charles Sherlock,
Executive Officer / Secretary



AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



The 2011 AUQA Auditors' Meeting, and the tenth (and final) *Australian University Quality Forum*, took place in Melbourne from June 29 - July 1, 2011. Along with half a dozen others from the theology sector, Charles Sherlock took part (who was again on the Joint Steering Committee for AUQF).

With AUQA being rolled into TEQSA from July 30, this was the final AUQF, but strong hopes were expressed that something like it continues. AUQF has proved to be a valuable time of networking across the breadth of Australian higher education, sharing ideas around quality improvement, and engaging with the rapid changes in government relationships.

The reports on this and following pages come from these adjacent meetings. But first, a reprise -

So - what is TEQSA?

TEQSA, which start operations from July 30, is an acronym of which each initial is significant:

- TE - the new body will cover **'tertiary education'** - the public universities (of which ACU, Charles Sturt, Flinders, Murdoch and Newcastle have theology programmes), public institutions such as TAFEs who offer tertiary diplomas and degrees, and the diverse range of private HEPs, whether Self-Accrediting (ACTh, MCD, Notre Dame) or Non-SA HEPs approved for FEE-HELP (Alphalink, Avondale, Christian Heritage, Moore, the Tabor and Harvest colleges, SCD, Wesley Institute.
- Q - the new body will take over all the **'quality'** audit work of AUQA.
- S - is for **'standards'**: the new body takes over from the existing nine *Government Accreditation Agencies* from January 1, 2012, and includes a *Higher Education Standards Framework Panel*.
- A - TEQSA will be a statutory Commonwealth 'agency', using the Commonwealth's Corporations power. (What reserve powers state Ministers might retain in relation to accrediting a new HEP is unclear.)

Achieving agreed, publically understandable 'standards' is the aim. This is now being put as an 'outcomes-focussed' approach, with minimal additional compliance loads being placed on HEPs: but 'quality assurance' and 'accreditation' functions do not sit easily together.

TEQSA will be overseen by a board of Commissioners: a CEO who will chair it, and two others being full-time, plus two part-time. These positions, along with a full-time Chair of the new Higher Education Standards Panel, were advertised in May, and the appointments are expected to be announced in the next 4-6 weeks.

Existing AUQA staff are being taken up into the new body, which is expected to have around 80 personnel in time. □

This series of articles from the AUQA Forum were prepared by Charles Sherlock.

Available AUQF papers and workshop outlines are available online at www.auqa.edu.au/auqf/2011/program/. Each session has a hyperlink to available papers - a very valuable resource.

US 'for profit' expert offers wisdom drawn from experience

Visiting US expert on 'for profit' higher education in the USA, Michael Lambert, gave an engaging and 'tell it like it is' account of accreditation and quality assurance issues in the United States.



Michael is the Executive Director of one of America's oldest and largest accreditation agencies, the *Distance Education and Training Council*. He used his four decades of experience to offer wise and nuanced counsel about dangers in private tertiary education. That he came from overseas, and from a style of higher education hardly known in Australia, meant that his observations somehow 'rang bells' all the more loudly.

Michael acknowledged that 'for profit' schools in the US were largely focussed on work-oriented learning rather than being research-related, using easily 'replicable' units prepared by one set of academics. However, he argued, they are filling a much-needed function for many people (e.g. those unemployed due to the Global Financial Crisis) for whom access to traditional universities was impossible - and "these days they are in any case full", he said.

Michael noted particularly the rapid expansion of online courses in distance learning: some of his member schools have 400,000 students online. It was fascinating to hear that many troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example - having no bars to frequent, as in Vietnam - study online in their off hours. And word soon gets around among the troops as to which online schools gave the best service.

Michael also highlighted the importance of understanding the finances of any organisation - unethical owners, hidden funds and dodgy accounting practices were in his experience the most frequent reasons for the failure, of a college. This often had little or nothing to do with the management or quality of the faculty. He stressed in particular the importance of personal integrity on the part of owners and key leaders in any educational body - they carry the 'soul' of the school, he noted.

His 'bad practice' lists covered all areas of higher education - nearly every person present grimaced as they recognised an item that struck home! They are instructive, and reproduced in the following pages for all ANZATS members to consider. □

AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



TEQSA now in place

The next chapter in Australian Higher Education has now opened. *The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards (TEQSA) Bill* passed the House of Representatives and then the Senate in late June, with royal assent to the Act given on Tuesday June 28. This means that the new body now takes over from AUQA on July 30, 2011 and the nine Government Accreditation Agencies from January 1, 2012.

TEQSA brings into one national agency the tasks of registering higher education providers (both 'academic' and 'vocational'), accrediting their courses, checking compliance, collecting data, assuring quality, supporting the *Higher Education Standards Framework* (which includes governance and information as well as learning and teaching), advising the Minister, and cooperating with international counterparts.

The hope is for greater integration and transparency, better allocation of resources and less burdensome regulation in Australian tertiary education - the dangers included too much power in one agency, a shift towards an overly quantitative regime of accreditation and standards. The really interesting question is whether in future the universities will have to seek re-registration and course accreditation: the Act has at present a clause exempting them, but the Bradley Review recommended that all HEPs be on the same footing, and small revision to the Act would see this happen.

TEQSA will be run by five Commissioners (a Chief, two full and two part-time), whose positions are currently being filled - and a lot hangs on who is appointed. Its Interim Chair is Professor Denise Bradley, whose review of Higher Education initiated the changes under way; the Interim Director is Mr Ian Hawke, a well-respected academic with strong AUQA contacts: both addressed the Forum.

What does TEQSA mean for theology?

Theological institutions not related to a university have long sought integration between the demanding tasks of re-accreditation (mostly the 'stick' approach) and quality assurance (more 'carrot' but some 'stick') audits - but a close eye will be kept on how things work out over the next couple of years.

Outgoing AUQA Director, Dr David Woodhouse, addressed both the AUQA Auditor's meeting and the tenth AUQA Forum. David has led AUQA in a delightful 'laid-back' style, with an impressive grasp of the diversity in higher education. Whereas he once contrasted 'accountability' (which relates to accreditation) with 'improvement' (which is what quality assurance is about), he now sees the latter as having come to have a strong influence on the former.

More significantly, David argued that focussing on 'achievement' is a more positive and student-oriented way forward than just being 'accountable', which tends to be backward-looking and focus on minutiae. If he is right, this would be a welcome shift of government attitudes towards theological institutions. □

'Telling the story' - the task of the CEO

"I think I'm AUQA-d out," one lecturer wrote in an email to me recently. My correspondent acknowledged that it was a couple of years since they'd had contact with AUQA or other government bodies. And admitted that though the work involved in preparing for audit had been significant, the effect on the institution, most notably its greater awareness of focussing on students and learning, had been really good. So - how can staff be engaged with quality improvement?

Professor **Jane den Hollander**, Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University for the past year, urged AUQA participants to keep working at this. As the CEO of Deakin, she sees her task as sustaining its 'narrative' - the big picture reasons as to why the institution exists at all.



"Why do we get up in the morning?" is a question that focusses these issues, she maintained. She quoted the Millennium Goals to eliminate extreme poverty - now part of the 'canon' of western culture? - as a useful 'big picture' response. She cited as an example a professor at Deakin's Warrnambool campus who is researching how wild fishes' Omega3 - a key element in child health - is best utilised.

"Ask him why he is putting a lot of himself into the work, and he will start telling you about his love of fish research, But it won't be long before you hear, 'and I'm doing it to help reduce child poverty'.

"Ask his IT assistants what they appreciate about their work, and they will say 'I enjoy applying my computing skills - and especially because they are helping my professor reduce child poverty.'"

From this example, Professor den Hollander explored two major issues in her first year at Deakin - one taking forward a positive initiative for better student feedback, the other a major crisis when trimesters were introduced. In both cases, she argued, positive outcomes resulted from staff (whether academic, technical or administrative) being engaged with the 'narrative' of why Deakin exists, and seeing their work in this light.

Sustaining such a culture meant for her, as CEO, putting priority on personal contacts, doing a lot of listening - "what the story means often comes from below" - and hastening slowly. Professor den Hollander stated that all involved need a sense of beauty interwoven with utility in their work, of delight and joy alongside productivity.

"Higher education's narrative is teaching and creating knowledge in service of the wider community," she summed up. "To do this we need these sorts of people, these resources and these programmes - all viewed and reviewed in terms of how these contribute to the big story."

All of which sounded very much like the task of a bishop / parish priest / pastor! □

AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



Some ideas worth pondering from AUQF papers

The Forum included two panel discussions (looking back on AUQA's decade, and forwards to TEQSA) as well as many short papers, workshops and of course opportunities to network with the 250 or so participants. Here are a few ideas / comments which I found useful:

Feedback to students: what works!

Lorraine Bennett (UBallarat) and **Chenicheri Sid Nair** (UWA) reported their research on feedback given to students, especially but not only from assessments.

Their conclusion is that learning is best set forward when

- feedback informs a student how they can improve (rather than being just negative, or giving a bare grade),
- feedback is planned across all face-to-face contacts (such as tutorials) as well as written, and
- students are told when feedback is coming – some only think their grade matters, rather than a marker's comments, and quite a few do not realise that a tutor's response to them is part of feedback, for example.

During question-time they indicated that 'rubrics' tables scaling particular assessment goals help clarity areas of improvement but do not of themselves assist improvement. And they suggested that the whole area of feedback makes a great professional development topic.

Professional associations and HE institutions

Professional association work closely with universities in disciplines like law, medicine, nursing and accounting, 'licensing' graduates and thus protecting the public from malpractice. How will they work in the new system?

Professor **Dick Smallwood** is President of the *Australian Medical Council*, which accredits medical schools. (AMC is under the *Australian Medical Board* and reports to the Minister of Health.) He explained that accreditation is based on a panel considering a detailed self-evaluation by a hospital against standards set by the AMC. This mix of quality improvement and standards-based regulation was close to the TEQSA model: the reporting processes may differ, but not the method of assessment for accreditation.

Which raised in my mind: how might a 'professional association' model work for the licensing of clergy, spiritual directors, youth ministers and the like in Christian ministry?

Thematic reviews

AUQA was only authorised to audit individual HEPs, but from time to time similar issues come up in several Reports – international students and English learning, for example. A number of times participants were informed that TEQSA will have the power to authorise 'thematic' reviews of a particular issue across a range of HEPs – an assurance welcomed by Forum participants.

What's in a name?

It is often said that 'language forms one's world', and I became increasingly aware of the importance of this in three areas in particular:

- Several times there were objections to the 'non' identification of other than university HEPs: as Tony Heywood from Champion College, chairing a session, jokingly put it, "I am a non-academic managing a Non-Self Accrediting HEP – but I am not non-professional!" 'Non-Self Accrediting' is not only negative, it says nothing about what a body does! My own suggestion, made in a submission on Provider Standards, is that just as there are three categories for 'university' (plain, special and university college) so the NSA HEPs could be referred to as Tertiary Education Institutes (TEIs), TIs of specialisation, and Tertiary Education Colleges. [VET institutions could then be Tertiary Training Schools (= RTOs).]
- The way the TEQSA principles are given shorthand titles can invert their meaning. In particular, the principle of 'regulatory necessity' sounds like regulation (and lots of it) is necessary, whereas the intent is that regulation is only imposed where necessary ... similarly for 'reflecting risk', when the intent is to reflect lack of it!
- And special care is needed when TEQSA is described using other words. It is not *just* a 'regulatory agency', not *just* a 'quality assurance' body, but a new entity that is not easily summed up.

We won't know what that is until some time has passed – and there may be some surprises in store! Meanwhile, the full name gets its three aspects right: TEQSA is about *Tertiary Education*, about *Quality* and about *Standards* – presumably in that order!

The standing of theological providers

I have come to realise that many involved in theological education – whether in seminary, theological college or Christian tertiary institution mode – do not realise the respect in which the sector is generally held in AUQA.

Yes, some AUQA reports have been more critical than others, but – not least in comparison to some private colleges, as well as universities – theology HEPs have a good reputation. They are seen as working in a tradition that spans centuries rather than triennia, has the 'big picture' constantly in view, benefits from a consistently high commitment of staff to learning, and seeks to sustain a student-focussed, whole-person oriented education.

So – fear not, little theological flock! Be strong and of a good courage, open to share what you offer with the wider world of higher education. ☐

AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



TEQSA – what lies ahead?

Professor Denise Bradley, author of the Bradley Review of Higher Education and now Interim Chair of TEQSA, spoke at the final plenary of AUQF on Friday afternoon – very few participants had drifted away!

She began by announcing that she had just learnt that the TEQSA Bill, having passed both Houses of the Australian Parliament, received royal assent on 28 June, so that

- TEQSA will commence operations on July 30, and be the sole regulatory authority for all Australian higher education from 1 January 2012, as planned;
- AUQA Cycle 2 audits of Self-Accrediting Institutions would be completed, by the end of 2012;
- AUQA audits in train for other bodies will continue until the end of the year, when TEQSA will take them up.

She also noted that the VET parallel body to TEQSA, the *Australian Skills Quality Authority*, is working to streamline how the new system will work for dual-sector institutions.

AUQA's 20 staff become the core staff of TEQSA (a fact warmly welcomed by AUQF participants), which expects to grow to around 80, and is likely to include former staff of the nine *Government Accrediting Agencies* (GAAs).

Professor Bradley recalled three main points from her 2008 Review, now expressed in the new system:

- Higher education today operates in a more open and competitive sector, both in Australian and internationally;
- A single national regulator will replace the fragmented, under-resourced and sometimes inconsistent system of nine GAAs; and
- The national regulator must protect students, and Australia's international reputation.

AUQA had been highly effective in seeing a quality improvement culture grow across higher education, she noted, but its only regulatory power was to 'name and shame'. AUQA has had a wide impact on higher education internationally, she emphasised, naming China, Hong Kong, India, New Zealand, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia and several Middle Eastern nations. This impact is seen in the number of visitors attracted here, many invitations from AUQA staff to offer consulting overseas, and changes in government policy.

Against this background, the coming about of TEQSA is a 'routine' development, Professor Bradley stated – but Australia is the pioneer in bringing together regulation and quality improvement. It is also a 'brave' political decision (with bilateral support), because the new body might comment on government funding!

"It is essential that the good of the past be sustained", she stated, but TEQSA must be allowed to grow and develop in new ways. "The status quo, whether of regulation or quality assurance, must not be entrenched."

TEQSA – assumptions and principles

Professor Bradley next outlined a number of assumptions from which TEQSA has been formed. It will operate *transparently* (as AUQA has done, but not always the GAAs), have power to *intervene and enforce compliance*, but will regulate with a *focus on risk*, be *standards-based*, and utilise both *quality assurance* and regulation to secure minimum standards and a *culture of ongoing improvement* in Australian higher education.

These assumptions are built into the TEQSA Act Part II as three 'principles', thus giving them legislative backing – an unprecedented step:

- 'regulatory necessity': that is, regulation must not burden a HEP more than is necessary to ensure minimum standards of compliance;
- 'reflecting risk': that is, HEPs with a good history of scholarship, student experience, compliance, financial stability etc. will be seen as low risk, while more effort will be put into assessing HEPs where there are questions about one or more of these areas;
NB: TEQSA will make all information public except that relating to an institution's risk rating.
- 'proportionate regulation': a HEP's past compliance record and likely future will be taken into account.

Further, all DEEWR regulatory activity will cease (including ESOS): the Department's role will be to collect data and administer funds.

In sum, TEQSA will pay more attention to HEPs whose track record leaves much to be desired, and not make 'across the board' requirements. HEPs with good internal systems of records, risk management, performance benchmarking, peer review etc. have a lot to gain from the new regime: "Show us how well you promote learning and how your bench-marking demonstrates this" is the advice Professor Bradley gave listeners.

The Higher Education Standards Framework

'Standards' is a term used a lot in the TEQSA documentation, to the point where some at the Forum wondered whether it was becoming too broad a term. Five areas apply, or which the first two are 'threshold' standards, governed by legislation:

- *Provider Standards* (derived from the National Protocols) define the minimum standards for Provider Registration, Categories and Course Accreditation.
- *Qualification Standards* are set out in the *Australian Qualifications Framework* (AQF), which will also have legislative backing (a new thing for the universities).
- *Teaching & Learning Standards* are still being finalised: a draft paper was released recently.

AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



Trust and funding: now on an outcomes focus

‘Trust me, I’m an academic ...’ was how Dr Carol Nicoll (CEO, *Australian Learning & Teaching Council*) introduced her plenary address. In a lively and punchy style, she spoke of the importance of ‘trust’ in higher education – another theme with a closely tie to theology.

“There is trust in the general outcomes of higher education,” she stated, “and trust in the people involved – but these are not the same as trust of the institutions involved.” Trust needs to be rebuilt, not least from government and the general public.

Higher education in Australia is currently caught in a ‘double whammy’, she argued: strong pressure for greater public accountability, alongside significantly higher expectations of students, parents and employers. And both revolve around money, as funding (from government or students) is increasingly the vehicle by which accountability is applied and expectations assessed.

TEQSA – what lies ahead? (continued)

- *Information Standards* concern record-keeping, including security and privacy, and their suitability for offering data such as retention / progress / completion rates.
- *Research Standards* will take up the work of the *National Health & Medical Research Council*, and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

These Standards will be established by the Ministers concerned (EEWR, currently Mr Chris Evans and IISR, currently Senator Kim Carr) after a further round of consultation. In the longer term they will be overseen by a *Higher Education Standards Panel* (HESP), an independent body which will consult with TEQSA and the *Ministerial Council on Education and Employment* (MCTEE) and report to the Ministers.

Professor Bradley acknowledged that there are challenges in this area: forming appropriate minimum standards (while encouraging aspirational ones), avoiding ‘standardisation’, being able to monitor the readily and enabling consistent and fair data collection.

“This is a great opportunity,” Professor Bradley concluded. “Communicate and participate!”

This closing address gave confidence that the new system will indeed be better than the present fragmented regime, but was also realistic about the challenges ahead.

NB: the *Threshold Learning Outcomes* project developed by the Council of Deans of Theology and ANZATS, now near completion for a BTh, exemplifies the approach which TEQSA and HESP envisage, and positions Theology well for the new system.

Want to know more? See www.deewr.gov.au/teqsa. □

“Higher education funding remains under constant scrutiny,” she noted. “And national budgets are a ‘zero sum’ game – more money for education means less for defence” (as the ending of ALTC’ funding shows painfully).

Drawing on her own experience as a ministerial advisor, Dr Nicoll explained that the criteria used by governments in funding are that it must be *appropriate* (moving policy objectives forward), *effective* (achieving its purposes) and *efficient* (the least costly means of delivery).

TEQSA represents a shift of policy here: government no longer sees its role as a ‘micro-manager’, focussing on *inputs* (where the money goes), but is rather looking for *outcomes* – which is why regulation (the former role of the state accrediting agencies) is joined with quality improvement (what AUQA has been doing) to come together in TEQSA.

So – how should theological education respond to this new situation?

What follows is my reading of Dr Nicoll’s further points to this part of higher education in Australia, but the main point is crystal clear: *keep a clear focus on outcomes*.

Personally, how confident are we that new graduates have the knowledge, attitudes and skills which their courses claim to deliver? As well as being equipped for immediate life-situations, how well are they prepared for medium-term outcomes, such as being able to keep doing theology ‘on the run’, or longer-term hopes like growth in wisdom?

And institutionally, how do we know what our outcomes are? Collecting data which seeks to measure this is important – not only numbers and figures, but qualitative data. But, as Dr Nicoll cautioned, many places collect mountains of data but do not analyze it, or use it to make changes which improve outcomes.

Towards the end of her address she asked, “Who is responsible for keeping a focus on outcomes?”

It is not just the Dean / Vice-Chancellor / Principal, not just the Board or Council. While they are there to foster good outcomes, in a healthy HEP *every academic has an outcomes focus in relation both to their own teaching and research, and to how this contributes to the whole*.

Questioned about whether ‘ordinary’ academics should bother about issues like TEQSA, Dr Nicoll conceded that involvement takes energy, and will mean accepting compromises ... but “it is your passion for learning that will make the difference”.

In closing, she returned to her opening sentence:

“Trust me – I’m an academic. I can give evidence of my outcomes. I work as a professional and am happy to be accountable to my students, my college and my society.”

Which is the outcome she evoked and demonstrated in her own invigorating address. □

AUQA Forum 2011: the latest on Australian Higher Education



The Australian Quality Framework: how does its update relate to theological education?

The Honourable John Dawkins AO addressed the AUQA Forum on Thursday morning, explaining the changing role of the *Australian Quality Framework*, whose Council he has chaired for the past decade. As Commonwealth Minister of Education two decades back, Dawkins ushered in the processes that led to the National Unified System in Australia's public universities.



He opened his address by noting the shift in the years since, from primarily quantitative measures, focussed on ticking boxes, to more qualitative ones concerned with improving learning, epitomised in the work of AUQA since 2001.

The AQF, around for 15 years now, initially had a strong presence among non-university institutions, but it took AUQA's audits to make it well known in universities. Under the TEQSA Act, it will now be the norm for shaping awards across senior secondary, VET and Higher Education providers. John Dawkins expressed the opinion that he is confident that it will be accepted widely, drawing attention to its three key dimensions:

The Australian Qualifications Framework specifies

- **learning outcomes** (related to knowledge, skills and application) for
- nine **levels of study**, from senior secondary to doctoral level, in order to
- facilitate **pathways** between institutions and across awards, thus
- promoting an ethos of **life-long learning**.

A revised version of the AQF has just been released, paying particular attention to integrating what had become an unsustainable diversity in Masters' degrees.

One feature the AQF Council espouses is that "every course has within it preparation for further learning". This is designed to ensure that, while immediate learning outcomes will be to the fore, the contribution of a course to medium and long-term perspectives.

"When someone graduates with a law degree, they need to be able to practice," he explained.

"But 25 years later, I hope that the lawyer can look back on their degree as having contributed to the gaining of wisdom as the years have gone by.

"The Human Resources person will want a new graduate to be able to get to work right away," he admitted. "But the

CEO will be looking for someone who can grow into wider and deeper responsibilities."

Academy and profession

Questioned about the place of professional associations like those which authorize a law graduate to practice, Dawkins commented that they tended to focus too much on 'inputs' - has the graduate studied this, done that? - rather than outcomes: can the graduate specify the Act of Parliament relevant to this case?

Which made me reflect: congregational members rightly expect a freshly-graduated minister to be able to make a reasonable fist of a sermon - but the bishop (or equivalent) will be looking for signs of wisdom, teachability and depth of learning.

And, since "baptism doth represent unto us our profession" (as the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* puts it), what might the equivalent be for a theology graduate looking to practice that profession?

Does the way we teach theology fit such a model? And how do the responsibilities and expectations of college (representing the 'academy') and church (the 'professional association') interact? □

New Zealand 2012 Residential Scholarship

Vaughan Park Anglican Retreat Centre (Auckland) invites applications for its 2012 scholarship for three months' full time study at the Centre. Applicants may be lay or ordained graduates, be committed to an approved area of study.

Applications close on 19 August 2011 and must include a short biography, abstract and context of the proposed study, supported by two or three referees.

Enquiries to email@vaughanpark.org.nz

www.vaughanpark.org.nz

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010 - 2011

Each year a major feature of the ANZATS Council meeting is hearing reports from each regional member on what is happening in their state / nation. What follows is a precis of these reports and the discussion that they stimulated.

Western Australia (Brian Harris)

Theological providers in WA continue to experience warm collegial relationships, which find tangible expression in our annual Theological Passions Colloquium, which was hosted by Harvest West Bible College, and at which the key 7 theological providers in WA participated. The day provides an opportunity for both academic staff and research students at the different institutions to share the fruit of their research.

Changes to the legislation governing Higher Ed and Voc Ed are causing some concern for local providers who are uncertain of the implications of the move from a State controlled reporting regime to a Federal system. It is not that they are necessarily opposed to the changes but more that so much remains unclear.

Here is an institution by institution report, by enrolment trends, institutional changes and staff news.

Harvest West

Students: 180 EFTSL: 135

Enrolment up, with more full time students: number of different students down but EFTSL is up.

Harvest introduced an MA (Ministry) in own right as a stand-alone HEP, and hosted the Perth Consortium 'Theological Passions' Colloquium. Two staff members are working on their doctorates.

Perth Bible College

Students: 80 EFTSL: 50

Undergraduate enrolments are slightly down but with the introduction of a new graduate programme, student numbers have grown overall.

PBC is in its first year of offering the MDiv, MTh and MA courses, via the SCD, and employed an additional staff member to introduce these programmes.

Brett Muhlhan gained his ThD through the ACTh. Dr Andre van Oudtshoorn will present a paper on 3 John at the SBL Conference in London. The Principal, the Revd David Smith, presented a paper at the International Brethren Conference in France on 'Relaunching Growth in the Developed World'.

Tabor WA

Students: 70 EFTSL: 45

Enrolments are slightly down, with overseas numbers slightly up. Most students are in our counseling course.

Tabor has introduced two prayer retreats each year, which students have greatly appreciated.

Five staff are busy with PhD research, and staff have upgraded their qualifications to train in the VET sector.

Trinity College WA

Students: 89 EFTSL: 46

Enrolments are very slightly down for semester 1, 2011.

Trinity made the final payment on the debt outstanding on our building, and added a new faculty member, Dr Matthew Malcolm, who was recently awarded his PhD.

Matthew is attending the International Meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature in July 2011, presiding over two sessions and presenting a paper, "Method in New Testament Studies".

Vose Seminary

Students: 185 EFTSL: 110

Enrolment are up, and seen steady growth for several years.

Vose has renovated some old buildings to create additional offices, seminar rooms and student leisure space - a \$250 000 project.

Vose had its first ThD graduate (via the ACTh) since being registered to offer (in consortium with Trinity) the ACTh;s research degrees.

Staff publications have included Cohen and Parsons, *In Praise of Worship* (Pickwick, 2010); Cohen and Parsons, *Beyond 400: Exploring Baptist Futures* (Wipf and Stock, 2011) and Harris, *The Theological Method of Stanley J Grenz: Constructing Evangelical Theology from Scripture, Tradition and Culture* (Mellen, 2011).

The Principal, Dr Brian Harris, was invited to deliver the annual TBMAston Lecture in Social Ethics at Carson Newman College in Tennessee in April 2011.

Vose College (as opposed to Vose Seminary) was formed to introduce a range of non-theological subjects, and application for NSA-HEP status is currently being evaluated. It is looking to teach in education, to prepare teachers for Baptist and other Christian schools.

A Certificate IV Ministry Internship for 18-25 year olds has commenced, seeking to address the large drop-off in Christian adherence in this age-group (including those from Christian schools).

Vose raises a question for the theology sector:

Students now make far greater use of e-journals and ebooks: is this a trend across the country? E-purchases represent a rapidly growing percentage of the library budget. We now supplement lectures with Moodle On Line forums - is this also a trend?

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

Queensland / Northern Territory (David Pascoe)

Nungalinya College (Rob Haynes)

Nungalinya welcomed Dr Judith Long as its new Principal in 2011. The college continues to look towards the creation of future pathways for Indigenous Australians through provision of high quality training and assessment; a skilled, flexible and valued workforce and a supportive, culturally appropriate educational environment.

Citipointe Ministry College, Brisbane (Sam Hey)

Citipointe Ministry College, as the School of Ministries (SOM) of Christian Heritage College (CHC), in 2010-11 continued in its mandate of educating and training people for the work of the ministry. Within the larger CHC College campus, the School continued to provide diploma, bachelor and postgraduate ministry courses that met ministry training needs, particularly among charismatic evangelical Christians.

Overall, the School had a remarkable year, with both increased enrolments and completion rates. This growth was supported through the development of new programs, refurbishing and development of new classrooms and offices, and opening of new library facilities.

Accreditation was granted for SOM courses in the Diploma, Bachelor, Post Graduate and Master of Ministries programs. (New enrolments into the Diploma of Practical Ministry and Diploma of Biblical Studies were suspended, since they ceased to be offered after their 31st December 2010 accreditation period.)

Overall enrolments increased significantly from 122 in 2009 to 156 in 2010 (21%) and from 404 units to 613 units (34%). The Student Retention Rate increased by 30% from 60% in 2008 - 2009 to 90% in 2009 - 2010, significantly surpassing the national benchmark (78%) and the previous high of 72% in 2006-2007. Course completion rates increased by nearly 100% from 2009 to 2010, from 15 to 29. The percentage of graduates who were employed or continued to further study was 73% (19/26): Grad Cert/Dip: 80% (4/5), BMin 100% (8/8) and Diploma 46% (7/13).

Student satisfaction levels identified through the Unit Evaluation forms reflected the positive nature of student learning experiences, and continue to provide a mechanism to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Unit Evaluations also provided constructive feedback on improvements that could be made to respective units.

SOM staff continued to attend conferences, presented papers, continued to upgrade their qualifications and networked with other institutions so as to lift their engagement with wider scholarly networks.

NB: David Pascoe was part of the panel for CHC and found it to be a good experience. It is now regarded by Queensland authorities as "one of its most open and responsible bodies", he told the ANZATS Council.

Nazarene Theological College (Bruce G Allder)

This past year has been a year of change and challenge as we have moved into our new classroom facility on campus. We now have 8 new classrooms, a large student centre, chapel and computer lab. This has increased our delivery efficiency and we are grateful for the way in which God has provided the resources. A number of the classrooms are set up as video conference classrooms.

NTC has also begun an English School (*New Horizons School of English*) which is in the process of getting established. NHSE offers a Certificate IV in TESOL, and is in the process of obtaining NEAS accreditation for several English courses. We already provide free English classes, cultural tours and short-term English classes using qualified teachers as a way of building profile. It is hoped that our TESOL courses will provide a ministry platform for many people both here within Australia as well as overseas.

Our continued membership with the Sydney College of Divinity has meant that we have been able to offer a Diploma in Christian Studies for students exploring faith and ministry in more general terms along with our usual array of Dip Theology, BTh, MA, MDiv. etc.

NTC has initiated a partnership with several other like-minded colleges by establishing the *Australasian Centre for Wesleyan Research*. Dr David McEwan, NTC's Director of Research, is the Director of the ACWR which holds annual conferences. The next conference is to be held in Brisbane on August 5 & 6, 2011.

Crossway College (formerly Bible College of Qld)

Two Crossway College research students, Ellie and Grahame Scott, were awarded scholarships to participate in the 2011 ANZATS Conference, and offered a paper. The conference theme, 'Found in Translation', was relevant to their research related to Bible translation in Indonesia (West Papua) .

Trinity Theological College (now related to ACU)

An Affiliation Agreement between the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod and ACU was put in place in January 2010. This provides for TTC lecturers to be Affiliate Lecturers with ACU's Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, and for Uniting Church formation students to complete their required undergraduate theological course of study with ACU. This agreement has continued into 2011.

A further staff appointment was made by TTC in 2011: Dr Jason LeCruex, who has a speciality in Old Testament.

St Francis College (now related to CSU)

St Francis is working well in its new relationship with Charles Sturt University, through St Mark's National Theological Centre, Canberra.

Dr Greg Jenks had his new book, *The Once and Future Bible*, published in early 2011, and St Francis is now hosting a biennial research conference.

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

Victoria (John Capper)

New leadership of three Victorian theological colleges and two audit visits shape this year's report. Probably of greatest interest nationally, however, is the MCD's application for specialist university status.

Trinity College Theological School

TCTS appointed the Revd Dr Dorothy Lee as Dean in March, after a period in which the Warden of Trinity College, the Revd Dr Andrew McGowan, had been acting.

Dorothy, one of Australia's New Testament scholars of international standing, has been teaching for many years in the United Faculty of Theology (of which the Uniting Church and Trinity Theological Colleges are members, along with the Jesuit Theological College). She was ordained deacon and priest in the Anglican Church in 2009 and 2010, having been a Minister of the Word in the UCA for some years.

Ridley Melbourne

Ridley is settling down well into its renewed facilities with a strong Foundation, following the sale of half its Walker Street property. Its internal reshaping into six 'Institutes' to focus its offerings is now in place, and there are very good enrolments for 2011

After a decade as Principal, Canon Dr Peter Adam leaves Ridley Melbourne mid-year, with a formal retirement date of early 2012. The Revd Dr Timothy Foster is acting while a new Principal is being sought.

The Melbourne School of Theology

Relocated to a new and more hospitable and accessible location in Wantirna, which now locates all departments together – the Chinese Department was previously away from the main campus – MST (the former Bible College of Victoria) has discontinued on-campus residential accommodation.

MST will also be looking for a new Principal from early 2012, due to the resignation of the Revd Dr Mike Raiter. New academic staff include the Revd Dr Scott Harrower, teaching Theology.

Tabor College Victoria

The co-location with the Churches of Christ Theological College at Mulgrave is now complete. The two institutions remain discrete entities, while sharing property, libraries, internet connections, and facilities such as cafeteria, but continuing to offer their own units and courses and employ their own staff.

A restructure has three Heads of Schools taking stronger day to day management and leadership roles, supported by two Deans, one of Quality (also Registrar) and one of Learning, Teaching and Research. Both Deans teach in the School of Theology and Context. A Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) will be offered from 2012. New

areas of study in the Master of Vocational Practice include Aid and Development, Therapeutic Practice, Media and Business, as well as Church Practice. The BA has been revised for re-accreditation and will, subject to approval, include Business and History as majors for the first time.

An ALTC Research Grant in the area of using Second Life and online resources to develop counselling skills is progressing well. The 'Year in the Son' school leavers' programme is now well integrated into the BA, as well as offering a VET option.

Churches of Christ Theological College

The College is gathering strength under the ongoing leadership of Dr Andrew Menzies, and seems to be benefitting from the co-location of Tabor Victoria to the same site. The library collection and staffing have increased significantly through the merging of resources.

Melbourne College of Divinity

The first application from any Higher Education body, for University of Specialisation status, under the National Protocols of Australia's *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, was submitted by the MCD in early 2011. A panel visited the Kew administration and several campuses in mid-June: their Report is expected in September.

Harvest Bible College

Following its AUQA audit and Report, Harvest has focussed on developing its systems further. Numbers are strong, and international networks are developing. The distance and VET offerings are becoming a mainstay of the college.

Tasmania

Tabor Tasmania (John Capper)

John Morse and team led the College through the joint AUQA audit and TQA accreditation visit in May, and await the final reports. Enrolments are steady, and plans are in train to offer a coursework master's degree to complement the undergraduate and graduate diploma awards.

Worldview Centre for Intercultural Studies (Denise Jarman)

Situated in Launceston, Worldview at present has 32 students (with 29 children). For 2012 we have already accepted a student from Egypt and just received applications from a couple in China. Serious enquiries have also come from South Africa, PNG, Indonesia, Korea and Australia so numbers for 2012 look to be about 45 with more to come.

Current offerings are a Diploma, Assoc Degree, Bachelor, GradCert and GradDip in Cross-Cultural Ministry (CCMin), plus a one-year Bridging English course for those looking to do further study at Worldview or to join a mission agency. The CCMin courses are taught using four week modules, which works well for our learning context and enables us to invite visiting lecturers with expertise in particular fields who stay on campus for the module.

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

In September 2010 a new staff member was added to manage our farm. Janine, a veterinary surgeon from Queensland, came with her five children (two of whom are students in the BCCMin). She has implemented the integration of planting and harvesting with the professional practice part of our modules. In January 2011, two new academic staff were added – Olive Kobuthi, a lecturer from Kenya, and Denise Jarman from NSW as Academic Dean.

In 2012 the faculty will receive and correct all assignments online and are looking to use Moodle for academic management - we are committed to using less paper!

New South Wales (Dianne Speed)

Alphacrucis College (Jacqui Grey)

In the past twelve months, Alphacrucis College (formerly Southern Cross College) has received accreditation for two new Higher Education awards: Master of Arts (Christian Studies) and Bachelor of Applied Theology (Korean) and two new VET qualifications.

We are currently preparing to move to our new campus in Parramatta, which will function as the hub for our administration services and growing online programs.

Australian College of Theology (Mark Harding)

The ACTh is involved in two significant projects:

1. Preparing for the AUQA Cycle II audit, which will take place in mid October. We have developed two drafts of the institutional self-review, and shared this with general support and endorsement from affiliated colleges at our Consortium Conference on 25 June, to assist in writing the Performance Portfolio.
2. Preparing documentation for the re-accreditation of our courses. Course assessment panels are scheduled to meet on 9 August (research degrees) and 23 August (coursework degrees and diplomas). The ACTh took the view that we need to become compliant with the newly revised *Australian Qualifications Framework* (AQF), incorporating changes where required by this: undergraduate diplomas are those courses that change most in terms of volume of learning. The concept of a 'capstone' experience has been introduced as one of the learning outcomes in the MDiv and the three MA courses. Among other initiatives, we are proposing Graduate Certificates nested in our Graduate Diplomas, a one year Diploma of Theology at undergraduate degree level, a PhD, and a re-worked DMin that converts this course into a research degree (i.e. one that requires 67% of the volume of learning given over to the research project).

Avondale College (Robert McIver)

Avondale has been restructured to have a Faculty of Arts and Theology in the School of Ministry and Theology, with Associate Professor Robert McIver as Dean. Re-accreditation of courses is due in 2012, and the goal of becoming a University of Specialisation remains.

Sydney College of Divinity (Diane Speed)

In dealing with the many applications being received from HEPs, the NSW DEC has extended the registration of the SCD from 31 December 2011 to 31 January 2013. This brings our accreditation and registration cycles together, as everything moves on towards TEQSA.

In the last twelve months two new campuses have been added to Emmaus Bible College, whose new Principal, Dr Leonard Smith, is enabling its renewal:

- i) as well as its base at Epping, Emmaus has entered into an arrangement with Perth Bible College, which has been approved to offer the SCD postgraduate awards; and
- ii) Emmaus management has taken over the management of Tabor College NSW, which has begun to bring undergraduate students into the SCD.

In October 2010, the SCD re-opened its Korean programme delivering the BTh (Korean Medium) directly from the central office, in premises leased from Emmaus in Epping. The programme is led by Dr Honam Kim, Dean of Studies (Korean Programme).

As well as marking its first 25 years in 2011, St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College is celebrating the recent consecration of the first Bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australasia to be born in these parts and have taken his degree from St Andrew's / SCD – His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, based in Melbourne.

South Australia (Stephen Haar)

Significant change is taking place across all colleges, and creative space is being made in the churches for new thinking. A good level of co-operation continues: in particular, a joint Research Methodology unit is under way between Tabor, ALC (MCD) and the ACD.

Tabor Adelaide (Stephen Spence)

Tabor Adelaide was audited by AUQA at the end of 2010 and the report was published in January of this year. We were pleased with the result of the audit. The process highlighted a number of areas of strength (e.g. student support, online learning, developments in the area of learning and teaching) as well as confirming a number of areas in which we need to improve (e.g. attrition, moderation, integration across Schools).

The main area in which recommendations were made concerned governance, which is in transition from a small group of pastors to a Board that contains specific competences and wide representation.

The School of Ministry, Theology, and Culture was particularly pleased that the report noted, with respect to our area of teaching, Tabor's good standing in the sector, the high academic standards, and the level of research and scholarship being conducted (source of a Commendation).

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

In February, DFEEST recommended the approval by the Minister of Education of a Master of Divinity to be taught by Tabor Adelaide. Students are currently being enrolled into the MDiv course. Initial indications show an interest from current MACS students and some BTh students.

Tabor Adelaide has initiated a benchmarking project with six similar (multidenominational, multi-discipline HEPs) colleges. This project will seek to benchmark administrative as well as academic procedures and practices. There is already a level of partnership with Fuller Theological Seminary (USA) that allows doctoral subjects to be dual-badged. We have been approached by St John's College (Durham, UK) to explore joint delivery of a post-graduate ministry degree.

Both Dr Graham Buxton and Dr Aaron Chalmers have signed book contracts with international publishers this year, for publication in 2012.

In 2011 several visiting international scholars will teach in the postgraduate program: Dr Colin Greene (St John's College, Durham University), Dr Edith Humphrey (Pittsburgh Theological Seminary), Dr Soong-Chan Rah (North Park Theological Seminary), Dr Pete Phillips (St John's College, Durham University), and Drs John and Olive Drane (UK).

Tabor Adelaide will launch the *Graham Clarke Centre for Religion, Science, and Culture* in August. As part of the centre's program, a three-day conference on 'Science and Religion', featuring speakers from the UK and the USA as well as Australia, will be held in Adelaide August 30 - September 1. This conference is being offered in partnership with the *Faraday Institute for Science and Religion* (Oxford).

Adelaide College of Ministries (Tom Golding)

ACOM has reaccredited its programme with the South Australian government in the past year. ACOM now offers a Bachelor of Ministry Degree, an Associate Degree, and a one-year Diploma of Ministries (a change from ACOM's previous Degree and Advanced Degree).

ACOM is also offering six streams within its degree: biblical languages, leadership, women's ministry, youth ministry, missions, and church planting. The curriculum aims to maintain a sound balance of academic, character, and ministry development.

Australian Lutheran College (Stephen Haar)

ALC was audited by AUQA in October 2010 and the report was published in December of the same year. The audit process highlighted a number of areas of strength (e.g. a culture of open intellectual inquiry; the quality of graduates; governance initiatives to build a sustainable future; student centred and holistic approach to learning and teaching; development and systematic implementation of assessment policies and procedures; the breadth, relevance and depth of ALCs theological collections in the Loehe Memorial Library, and ALCs commitment to a culture of continuous quality improvement) as well as confirming a number of areas in which we need to improve (e.g. a stronger research

culture, clarification of organisational structure and lines of accountability, greater internal communication of strategic direction). The main areas in which recommendations were made concerned governance, and the integration of strategic and operational plans.

In December 2010, ALC became a Recognised Teaching Institution of the Melbourne College of Divinity through the signing of a formal Memorandum of Understanding. This historic event is a milestone in the five-year journey between the two bodies, and marks the beginning of an exciting new era of cooperation and collaboration.

ALC stands in 170 years of tradition of Lutheran education in Australia, and shares that cultural and theological character. ALC has enjoyed a unique position as the only Lutheran school of our kind in Australia and New Zealand and now through its participation in the MCD it is ready to engage further with other theological educators, and also to learn from their experiences. ALC has joined a federated community of scholarship which is in the process of expanding and diversifying.

ALC will retain its HEP status until the end of 2012, when it will surrender its NSAI registration and accreditation of its current list of degrees will expire.

Two senior members of academic staff retired at the end of 2010: Dr Malcolm Bartsch, Head of the School of Educational Theology (former Dean of Studies), and Dr Meryl Jennings, Head of the School of Theological Studies. In addition, Dr Greg Lockwood (New Testament and Spirituality) retired, and Ursula Franck (Executive Dean) and Juanita Lieschke (Registrar) ceased employment at ALC.

St Barnabas' Theological College (Matthew Anstey)

In 2011 SBTC began to teach the awards of Charles Sturt University's School of Theology, through an affiliation agreement with St Mark's National Theological College. This move and the many other changes have resulted in a threefold increase in enrolments in 2011 and anticipated further growth in the coming years.

SBTC has successfully gathered an excellent faculty from six denominations, and more Anglican lecturers than in the past. In 2011 it is both more Anglican and more ecumenical than it was in the Flinders School of Theology. New appointments are expected to be made in the coming years, our online presence is increasing, and a major marketing campaign will be undertaken in the second half of 2012.

SBTC is forging stronger links with the broader Christian community and actively seeking partners to work in strengthening the College. A partnership has been formed with Anglicare SA which will see further development of our educational programs. Planning our relocation in 2012 is in process, as we prepare to leave the Brooklyn Park site.

Academic Dean, the Revd Dr Phillip Tolliday, has sabbatical leave in second semester, which will take him to Germany for several months.

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

Uniting College for Leadership & Theology (Andrew Dutney)

A great deal of cultural and organizational change has taken place in the Uniting Church's approach to theological education in South Australia. In 2008 Coolamon College (the UCA's national distance education provider) was wound up by the Assembly, and Parkin-Wesley College accepted responsibility for its students. Then in 2009 Parkin-Wesley College was amalgamated with a proposed Leadership Institute to form *Uniting College for Leadership & Theology*. The traditional shape of the curriculum around biblical studies, historical and systematic theology, and pastoral care was set aside, and a new curriculum was formed around biblical studies, missiology, leadership, and discipleship. Corresponding changes were made to the composition of the faculty.

A new ACD Bachelor of Ministry degree was designed and accredited in 2010 with options for majors in leadership, missiology, and missional innovation. It also has a practice-based stream in which students' learning and assessment is organized around real, innovative ministry. A new ACD Master of Ministry program in missional leadership was developed with its first intake of students in 2011. A new Certificate IV in Christian Life and Ministry is also taking its first intake of new students this year.

The process of change has been remarkable and has been accompanied by a very encouraging increase in the numbers of UCA candidates for ordained ministry in South Australia.

Bible College of South Australia (Peter Lockery)

BCSA is an interdenominational college offering a range of ministry and theology higher education awards through the Australian College of Theology, from Diploma level to that of Graduate Diploma. In 2012 the College plans to introduce the Master of Divinity for which it is currently seeking approval from the ACTH.

BCSA also offers postgraduate theological education for MAs in theology and ministry, and the MTh research award, through its postgraduate arm, the South Australian Graduate School of Theology. The College is currently undergoing a major review of its programs as part of forming its next five-year business plan.

Catholic Theological College (Stephen Downs)

Archbishop Philip Wilson recently informed the faculty, staff and students of CTC SA that for financial reasons the archdiocese is not able to continue funding the College. For a transition period of 2-4 years, the College will continue to work with its partners, notably *Uniting College for Leadership and Training* and Flinders University, to ensure that all students are able to complete their studies. The archdiocese has begun discussions with ACU about the future provision of theological education: Uniting College and Flinders have also indicated their interest in continuing to work with the archdiocese in some way.

New Zealand (Paul Trebilco)

NZATS held its Annual Meeting from 20-21 June 2011 in Auckland, hosted by the School of Theology, University of Auckland and the Catholic Institute of Theology.

The theme of the meeting was "The implications of multiculturalism for theological education". We had three papers:

- "Toward Becoming Intercultural in Western Theological Education: Engaging with Calabash Breakers" by Rosemary Dewerse, PhD candidate (who has submitted), University of Auckland.
- "Ko te mea nui, ko te aroha: Maori Theological Perspectives on Theological Education and Ministry Formation" by the Revd Dr Rangi Nicholson Acting Te Ahorangi / Dean (Tikanga Maori), The College of St John the Evangelist, Auckland.
- "The Tuakana Programme at the University of Auckland", by Moana Oh and Sereana Patterson, Faculty of Arts Equity Team, University of Auckland.

In 2011, our Annual Meeting will focus on "Theological Education in Aotearoa New Zealand in the next 10 years".

The following are brief notes about our member institutions.

Bishopdale Theological College (Anglican), Nelson

The College offers Laidlaw College papers, and is currently working towards site approval for the Laidlaw Bachelor of Ministry degree. Bishopdale is also developing courses for a Graduate Diploma with a denominational flavour, to be offered through Laidlaw. The Revd Dr Sue Patterson has been appointed Registrar at the College.

Booth College of Mission (Salvation Army), Wellington

Booth College, which has a strong relationship with the Salvation Army College in Fiji, has three training components: biblical/theological formation, denominational formation, and discipleship formation.

David Noakes is now the Principal and Vyvyenne Noakes the Senior Training Officer. Twenty officers were commissioned at end of 2010.

Carey Baptist College, Auckland

Carey has around 400 students in total (55% of whom are Baptists), and a new Principal, Charles Hewlett.

A Masters in Applied Theology has been developed, to follow on from the Bachelor of Applied Theology: Carey has applied for its accreditation to the *New Zealand Qualifications Authority* and hopes this will be completed in time to be offered in 2012. It is intended to be for professional development for those in ministry and mission roles.

The relationship under the Laidlaw/Carey Graduate School with Auckland University of Technology for a PhD program is gaining traction, with six students now involved.

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

George Wieland (formerly NT lecturer) is taking up a new role as Director of Mission, Research and Training. Derek Christensen (Missions) and Tim Bulkeley (OT) are due to retire soon: new positions will be advertised in OT and NT.

Catholic Institute of Theology, Auckland

The Catholic Bishops of New Zealand are establishing a Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand from 2012. This Institute will offer Certificates and Diplomas as well as the Master of Religious Education and Master of Educational Leadership (both through ACU). The academic arm of CIT will be incorporated into the new Institute, so this is a time of transition. CIT will maintain a relationship with the University of Auckland.

Ecumenical Institute of Distance Theological studies, Christchurch

Bruce Hansen has retired after ten years as Director, and Linda Cowan has been appointed to the position.

In 2011 104 students are involved in the 34 courses on offer. EIDTS is seeking to set up a new office. Like other private training establishments in NZ, they have been involved in the "Targeted Review of Qualifications" with NZQA.

Good Shepherd College (Catholic), Auckland

The number of seminarians has increased, mainly through an increase in international students, although the NZQA cap on enrolments is constraining. The College will not be involved in the new Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand. Stuart Sellar has moved from full-time to part-time and Elizabeth Sneed will replace him.

Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (Presbyterian), Dunedin

The internship programme preparing ordinands for the ministry of word and sacrament is working very well, with an overwhelmingly positive response from the Presbyterian Church. Eighteen students are currently involved in this, with another eight accepted this year.

The average age of ordinands is dropping. The Centre also has a role in leadership development among young people, youth ministry training and continuing formation for clergy.

A Presbyterian Church Schools Resource Office has been established. Relationships with the Pacific Island Synod and the Council of Asia Congregations have been strengthened: consideration is being given to the possibility of establishing a Pacific Study Hub in Auckland.

Simon Rae has just written *Challenge and Change*, the story of theological education at Knox from 1975 to the present.

NZ Association for Clinical Pastoral Education

For a number of years around 40 students per year have been taking a CPE Course. There continues to be concern about the small number of accredited CPE supervisors in New Zealand.

Laidlaw College (formerly Bible College of New Zealand), Auckland and Christchurch

Rod Thompson has been appointed as the National Principal and he is working on developing the community context of the College. Tim Meadowcroft has been appointed as Head of the newly formed School of Theology, Mission and Ministry.

Student numbers are good, although the College is adversely affected by the enrolment cap. The College continues with four degree programmes: BMin BTheol, BCouns, BTeaching and Worldview Studies.

St John's College (Anglican), Auckland

St John's is in a time of transition. In 2011, the General Synod of the Anglican Church established a Commissioner to oversee the three colleges at St Johns. Gail Thomson was appointed to this role, and she will report to General Synod in 2012. As a result of this change, the three Colleges were 'suspended', along with the governing body. A future planning exercise is under way - 'St John's College 2020'.

The College's Diploma in Anglican Studies has been approved by NZQA; students are undertaking papers with University of Otago and University of Auckland. There are 60 students in total, one-third of whom are postgraduates.

Several staff changes have taken place. Winston Halapua has become the Archbishop of Polynesia and Le Vaotogo; Dr Frank Smith has taken over as Leader for Tikanga Polynesia; the Revd Dr Rangi Nicholson is Acting Leader for Tikanga Maori while Jenny Te Paa is on sabbatical. Canon Jim White continues as Leader for Tikanga Pakeha.

Theology House (Anglican), Christchurch

Theology House was comparatively unaffected by the September 2011 earthquake in Christchurch, but has been damaged in the most recent aftershocks and may need to seek further accommodation.

The Revd Dr Peter Carrell is now the Director of Education.

Trinity Methodist College, Auckland

Trinity has around 48 ETFSL and offers a Diploma in Practical Theology, a Licentiate in Ministry Studies and a new probation-minister programme.

It is re-establishing a lay training centre, likely to be located at Trinity-at-Waiake Methodist Church, Torbay, Auckland.

The recent NZQA External Evaluation and Review was very positive about all aspects of the College's life and work.

University of Auckland - School of Theology

In 2010 the School became part of the Faculty of Arts, and is now the "School of Theology in the Faculty of Arts", reporting to the Dean of that Faculty. This has led to a strengthening of relationships with the Faculty and increased visibility in the wider University, and also involved some administrative changes in the School,

What's been happening in theology down under?

Regional reports for 2010-2011 - continued

which will move into Arts Faculty accommodation in 2012. More students are doing conjoint degrees and more are doing one or more papers in Theology as part of other degrees. Additional papers will also be available to Arts students.

In 2010 there was a programme review of the Bachelor of Theology and the Graduate Diploma in Theology which led to some curriculum changes.

A collaborative project co-teaching Hebrew and Greek with the University of Otago will commence in 2012.

Dr Caroline Blythe, who completed her PhD at the University of Edinburgh, is the new Lecturer in Old Testament Studies. There are now four full-time University-appointed staff in the School.

University of Otago - Dept of Theology & Religion

Student numbers in the Department have increased and are now around 210 ETFS.

The distance programme has been reshaped, with the move to more of a blended learning model. This means there are now teaching days in different locations around the country, fewer audio-conferences and an additional online learning component. St John's College has become a teaching hub for the Department's distance programme in Auckland, and Theology House Christchurch a teaching hub there.

As mentioned above, collaborative teaching of Greek and Hebrew with the University of Auckland will begin in 2012.

The *Centre for Theology and Public Issues* has been thriving with Professor Andrew Bradstock as Director. Dr Taneli Kukkonen, currently at the University of Helsinki, will commence his appointment in Islamic Studies at Otago in January 2012.

Australia - multi-campus:

ACU Faculty of Theology and Philosophy

Initiatives in 2011

2011 initiatives include the launch of the *Australian eJournal of Theology* (AEJT - <http://aejt.com.au/>). AEJT is a peer-reviewed, open access journal of Catholic theology sponsored by the Faculty. It provides a forum for interdisciplinary, ecumenical and interfaith exploration appropriate to Australian regional connections with Asia and the Pacific, and with the wider international theological community.

From 2012, the Faculty's suite of offerings will include a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master in Theological Studies, and a Master of Theology (higher degree by research). This set of courses was approved by ACU's Academic Board in February, and by the Senate in April.

The first trial of cross-campus flexible delivery of two theology units between Brisbane and Canberra, and Brisbane and Ballarat, was conducted in first semester. Initial unit delivery was through video-conferences, then moving to *Adobe Connect*, a tool for direct interaction online. This trial will continue in second semester: in general, student feedback on using *Adobe Connect* has been very positive.

New teaching and research staff

A strong team of new Academic Staff were appointed to ACU's various campuses in 2011:

In first semester, ACU welcomed Dr David Kirchhoffer (moral theology) and Mr Ren Perkins (Indigenous Studentship Scholarship) to the Banyo Qld campus; the Revd Dr Joseph Lam OSA (systematic theology) to Strathfield NSW; and Professor Kevin Hart, Dr Nick Trakakis, Dr Jeff Hanson (philosophy - SPRT Team) in Melbourne.

Second semester saw Dr Jonathan Tan (systematic theology), Dr Dermot Nestor (Old Testament) come to Strathfield; and Dr Edmund Chia, Dr Gemma Cruz and Dr Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer (all systematic theology) to Melbourne. Dr Steve Matthews was appointed Research Fellow / Senior Lecturer at the Plunkett Centre for Ethics in Sydney.

New arrangements have also been put in place at the faculty's Schools, with new administrative and academic appointments. In Theology, Head of School is now the Revd Associate Professor David Pascoe, with Assistant Heads of School being Associate Professor David Sim in Melbourne, Professor Raymond Canning in Canberra and Dr Anne Tuohy in Strathfield. In Philosophy, the Head of School is Dr Richard Colledge.

University-wide changes

A new online learning environment will be introduced across ACU from January 1 2012. This will consist not only of *Moodle* - the Learning Management System that will replace *Blackboard* at the end of 2011 - but also *Equella*, the Learning Content Management System where online resources will be stored, along with *Adobe Connect* and *Turnitin*, a tool for helping students avoid plagiarism.

Of particular significance for the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy is the core curriculum being developed for introduction for all ACU students from first semester 2012. This will consist of

- two units common for all students, in human person and social justice, team taught across faculties;
- two faculty specific units (i.e. core for each faculty - theology has prepared eight possibilities); and
- a Christian community engagement unit. □

New Zealand author takes on popular 'end-times' religion

Alistair Donaldson's new book, *The Last Days of Dispensationalism: A Scholarly Critique of Popular Misconceptions* has just been published by Wipf and Stock. Alistair teaches in the School of Theology at Laidlaw College.

Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* signalled a new wave of popular 'end-times' speculative writing, little of which appears on theological curricula! 'End of the world' scenarios are heralded across Christian books / radio / films / TV and especially the internet, urging people to be ready for the 'rapture' or be left behind to endure horrific 'tribulation' suffering. You might even find some on your parish bookstall ...

But - is this really what the Bible teaches about the purposes of the God "who so loved the world that he gave his only son" in order that all things might be reconciled in Christ?

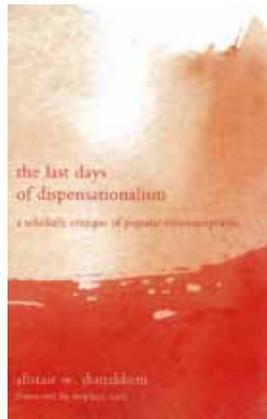
The Last Days of Dispensationalism puts such popular beliefs under critical scrutiny. It urges readers to think again, and see within the Bible's grand salvation narrative, and in the person of Jesus Christ, a better message of redemptive hope for the future, and a greater sense of meaning and purpose for the present.

"Alistair's work offers a refreshing and much-needed approach to biblical hope," writes Peter Walker, Associate Vice-Principal and Lecturer in New Testament Studies, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University. "He combines a lucid grasp of the main contours of biblical theology with an attention, where necessary, to exegetical detail."

"My newspaper reported recently on Western Christians in Israel celebrating the resumption of Jewish settlement activity in the West Bank, probably unaware that this is a major obstacle to peace," said Philip Church, Senior Lecturer at Laidlaw College. "They imagine that their support of Israel will speed the return of Jesus."

"This is a much-needed corrective of an unbiblical stance on Israel that actually causes considerable global harm to Western interests," added Laidlaw's Bob Robinson. "The book is cogently but charitably written, well-argued, and, above all, biblical in its conclusions."

For further details, see https://wipfandstock.com/store/The_Last_Days_of_Dispensationalism_A_Scholarly_Critique_of_Popular_Misconceptions. □



The ANZATS conference - student scholars respond

Carlos Olivares is a PhD student at the University of Auckland, working in New Testament.

"My participation in the 2011 ANZATS conference was a real blessing," he wrote. "The organization was excellent and the papers given were very stimulating. I also enjoyed the moments of spirituality as well as the friendly atmosphere of the conference."

"As a PhD student, I have to say that my participation helped me to engage with ideas and establish dialogues with various biblical, practical and systematic scholars, which, I am sure, will have an impact in my academic performance."

"I would like to thank ANZATS not just for giving me the opportunity of presenting a paper, but also for having received a scholarship to attend the conference in Australia. God bless you!"

Carlos presented a beautifully organised paper on 'The identity of the Centurion's *pais* in Matthew 8:5-13'.

And in a first, one scholarship was shared between the two members of a couple, Eleonora (Ellie) and Graham Scott. They have served in Indonesia (West Papua) with *Wycliffe Bible Translators*, and are currently on extended study leave at Crossways College, Qld in their initial research year, working towards doctorates in biblical studies. Graham's research emphasis is focused around translation theory, exploring discourse issues in 1&2 Samuel, while Ellie's research centres on mission in Isaiah.

"Thank you for a great conference," they have written. "We were touched by the warm welcome we received, and we were encouraged in so many ways by the conference."

Graham and Ellie presented a well-received paper on 'Worship, Heart Language and Mission', and wrote that they particularly appreciated the comments made in the final discussion session about doing research. □

ANZATS 2012 Conference

1-4 July, Brisbane

Theme: *Hermeneutics*

The 2011 Conference had 'Found in translation' as its theme. The Brisbane planning committee, convened led by David Pascoe, has decided that a good follow-through theme would be a focus on hermeneutics

The Conference will begin with a reception on the evening of Sunday 1st July and conclude on the evening of Wednesday 4th July.

It's never too soon to put an ANZATS / ANZ-STS conference into your diaries!

Fuller details, and the 'Call for Papers', are expected to be announced by October 2011.

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Threshold Learning Outcomes in Australian Theological Education

Draft 5 [July 2011]

Background

The Council of Deans of Theology, in cooperation with the Australian and New Zealand Association of Theological Schools, is seeking to compose a set of Threshold Learning Outcomes for degrees in Theology at bachelors and coursework master's levels, covering three academic / professional fields. The purpose of this exercise is to place Theology within the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Standards Project.

The document was prepared by a representative Steering Committee, which drew on responses from Australian Higher Education Providers offering degrees in Theology.

The decision was made by the Steering Committee at its September 2010 meeting to:

- i] focus at this stage on the Bachelors' degrees;
- ii] make a distinction between a Bachelor of Ministry and a Bachelor of Theology, mindful of the need to consider articulation into Master and Doctorates of Ministry and Theology;
- iii] confine the focus for this initial document on the Bachelor of Theology;
- iv] construct two documents, relating to different audiences: the first is external and concentrates on generic outcomes for Theology as a whole; the second is designed for theological providers, fastening on the outcomes for the respective fields (see Appendix).

Further work

The Steering Committee made the following decisions at its meeting on 18 March, 2011:

- i] Work should now proceed on similar standards for the degrees of Bachelors of Theology (Honours) and Master of Theology (coursework).
- ii] TLOs for a Masters would only be created once agreement had reached on the BTh. It was agreed that the Masters would be an MTh, and not a Master of Arts in Theology or Master of Ministry.
- iii] The Council of Deans of Theology was requested to set up a sub-committee whose particular brief is to determine a set of minimum threshold learning outcomes for the degree of Bachelor of Ministry.

NB:

- i] What is the next step for the first, generic document? Should it now be converted into the format followed by the history and geography disciplines? There is need to receive advice from an overseas expert as well as a recent graduate. There is a further need to describe what kind of employment graduates in theology might do.
- ii] How often should TLOs be reviewed? (3-5 years is suggested).

Threshold Learning Outcomes in Australian Theological Education:

Bachelor of Theology

The nature and extent of the discipline – what is 'Theology'?

The word 'theology' combines the Greek words 'theos' (God / the divine) and 'logos' (learning / reflection / study). The discipline of theology is classically described as the 'knowledge of God', in the interwoven senses of 'exploring what is known about God' and 'reflection on what knowing God means'. The distinctively Christian understanding of Theology [as pursued in this document] is essentially a response to the revelatory claims arising out of the confession that God is reconciling creation to himself in and through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Theology is a discipline with a long tradition as well as an energetic engagement with the present. The practice of theology involves 'faith seeking understanding' and the responses this quest evokes. Its centre lies in considering the significance of Jesus Christ, and the understandings of the triune God, creation and humankind which flow from this revelation. The study of theology is informed at a foundational level by the authority assigned to the Bible and how these scriptures are subsequently interpreted in the light of a range of other sources – tradition, reason and experience.

The discipline of Christian theology speaks into a three-fold audience – namely, the church, academy and the public domain. It is expressed in an Australian context which embodies a mix of Christian, post-Christendom, secular, spiritual and multi-faith dimensions. The discipline of theology is inseparable from questions of allegiance, world-view, ethical and social commitments. Engaging in theology involves relationships, often supportive, sometimes sharply contested, since the questions explored touch personal identity, the nature and direction of society and the meaning of life – human, organic and cosmic.

The study of theology plays a key part in the preparation of Christian ministers. In contemporary Australia most students engage in the study of theology for a range of wider reasons. These may include the desire to deepen their Christian understanding, to explore spirituality and religious practice out of curiosity, or a need to consider fundamental questions which society does not or is not able to address. The student body is culturally diverse, and across Australia women and men are roughly equal in numbers; students from disadvantaged backgrounds are welcome, some theological providers make available alternative entry pathways.

In this discipline of theology, rigorous methods of exploration and critique have been developed over the centuries. These methods include philosophical, textual, historical inquiry and (during the last century) in the social sciences. Particular church commitments are respected though, at the same time, they are not shielded from scrutiny – critique and commitment go hand in hand.

Threshold Learning Outcomes in Australian Theological Education

continued

Bachelor degrees in Theology

Bachelor degrees in Theology as a broad discipline come under two main nomenclatures – Bachelor of Theology and Bachelor of Ministry. They are normally built around three inter-acting loci of study:

- a) 'Biblical Studies' engages with the foundational texts of the Christian tradition, comprising the Old / First and the New Testaments, the Church's 'canon' of authoritative writings ('scriptures'). This involves genre analysis of the highly varied literature involved, study (at appropriate levels) of the original Hebrew / Aramaic and Greek texts, and learning a range of critical tools for their interpretation and use.
- b) 'Systematic Theology' and 'Historical Studies' deal with understanding the path of Christian faith in its historical engagements ('Church History'), and the ways by which the beliefs arising from such faith have been systematised into integrated worldviews ('Systematic Theology'). These studies engage with philosophy and other critical disciplines, and constantly interact with alternative perspectives, whether from other Christian traditions, other faiths or ideologies.
- c) 'Ministry and Mission Studies' explores the implications of Christian faith for living, and – conversely – the impact on Christian beliefs of changing and varied contexts, especially in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Such theological reflection can be considered in relation to the life of the churches ('ministry' – e.g. homiletics, liturgy, pastoral care, personal ethics, religious education, spirituality) and wider society ('mission' – evangelisation, social ethics, media studies, pastoral care, inter-faith dialogue), though the line between these is blurred, as these discipline lists reflect.

The Bachelor of Theology as a whole involves more than the study of particular theological disciplines separately – it seeks to help a student integrate these into his or her person, so equipping them to be able to continue with a lifestyle of integrity and the possibility of further higher studies in theology. Attitudinal outcomes are therefore sought, alongside knowledge and skills, but how these are assessed, or thresholds set in place, is a complex matter.

Theological education is classically set in the context of a community of learning that embraces students, faculty and staff, and regards study, worship, prayer, reflective practice and living as a formative whole. Experience shows that this setting does not distort academic freedom: rather, it fosters the (seemingly paradoxical) reality that only as students have a sense of safety and integrative growth do they find themselves open to explore new ideas openly.

Draft 5 [July 2011]

Threshold Learning Outcomes for Graduates holding a theological degree

Upon completion of a Bachelor's degree in Theology, a graduate will be able to

- i) demonstrate an ability to engage in the study of the primary texts of the Christian faith, and describe a range of historical and contemporary reflection on those texts;
- ii) demonstrate knowledge of the Christian tradition in one or more of its central and varied forms;
- iii) demonstrate an awareness of key themes, debates and methods of the discipline of theology and its sub-disciplines;
- iv) demonstrate a range of study skills that will support a life of continued theological learning;
- v) attend to, reproduce accurately and critically reflect upon the ideas and arguments of others;
- vi) communicate theological knowledge, ideas and arguments to specialist and non-specialist audiences using appropriately selected written, oral and visual means;
- vii) reflect upon and communicate the implications of the Christian faith for personal and communal life to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using appropriately selected written, oral and visual means.

Appendix: Threshold Learning Outcomes in the three professional fields

The audience for this Appendix is theological providers. It is designed to identify a set of theological Learning Outcomes for the three professional fields or sub-discipline areas of Theology.

The original drafts included these Learning Outcomes inside the document above. Following further reflection on the ALTC consultations with the disciplines of Geography and History, it was decided to adopt a more simplified approach and propose a set of generic attributes. It was recognized that Theology differs from History and Geography insofar as it is made up of a series of sub-disciplines.

Threshold Learning Outcomes for three Academic / Professional Fields

The following Threshold Learning Outcomes are also indicative for significant study taken in other Bachelor's degrees – for example, a BA with a major in Biblical Studies.

1 Biblical Studies

Graduates with a major in Biblical Studies will be able to

- i) interpret and demonstrate an understanding of biblical texts in their historical, social, linguistic, canonical, inter-religious and cultural contexts;
- ii) describe, identify and reflect critically upon the contents and shape of the Bible as a whole and its nature as a text;

ALTC recognises Outstanding Contributions of two staff

Two staff of ANZATS member schools were recognised recently by Citations from the *Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC)* for “Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning”.

ANZATS Life Member, the Revd Professor **Norman Young**, was recognized for “sustained, distinguished and collaborative teaching in an ecumenical context, and for leadership in the development and enhancement of theological education, nationally and internationally”.



Dr Young was a Foundation Professor of the United Faculty of Theology, and since his retirement in 1995 has been teaching at Yarra Theological Union. During these years he has sustained creative research contributions, and supervised many research degrees.

In the 1960s and 70s, Professor Young played a major part in paving the way for a Bachelor of Theology becoming possible in Australia, and was a key contributor to the work of ANZATS for many years, recognized in his being made a Life Member.

He has held Visiting Professorships at Drew University, Yale Divinity School, Princeton Theological Seminary and Duke Divinity School in the USA, and at Wesley College, Bristol and Wesley House, Cambridge in the UK. His wider ecumenical commitment is reflected in his having been a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, and of the World Methodist - Roman Catholic International Commission for 25 years.

Dr Young’s main fields of interest are biblical and contemporary theology, social ethics and ecumenical theology. His major publications are *History and Existential Theology*, and *Creator, Creation and Faith*, and he has written numerous journal and ministry-related articles.

“We are indeed pleased that after fifty years of excellence in teaching, research and supervision, Norman’s outstanding contribution at so many levels of theological education will be publicly recognised and applauded,” said Dr Catherine McCahill, Dean of Yarra Theological Union.

“Congratulations, Norman!”

All who know him will join warmly in these words.

The Manager of Online Learning at Tabor Adelaide, Ms **Trudy Stoddard**, was recognised for her dedicated work in implementing the commitment the college has made to developing its online learning programme, which was the subject of an AUQA commendation.

Congratulations, Trudy!

The Citation awards, competition for which extends across the whole of Australian higher education, will be presented at the Sydney Opera House on 16 August, 2011. □

Threshold Learning Outcomes in the three professional fields (continued)

- iii) reflect theologically on biblical texts and integrate biblical studies with other theological disciplines;
- iv) explain, evaluate and apply appropriately a variety of methodologies in interpreting biblical texts;
- v) where biblical languages are studied, read basic biblical texts in the original language(s) and use knowledge of issues in morphology, syntax and grammar in producing an idiomatic English translation, and in better understanding of the biblical texts.

2 Systematic Theology and Historical Studies

Graduates with a major in either Systematic Theology or Historical Studies will be able to:

- i) describe the purpose of a systematic theology, its sources, norms and methods, as an integrative system of Christian belief;
- ii) describe and critically evaluate key doctrines of Christian faith, recognising ways in which they relate to one another and contribute to a coherent account of the whole;
- iii) display a nuanced appreciation of the role and relevance of philosophical, historical, socio-political, linguistic and cultural influences in the development of Christian doctrine;
- iv) demonstrate a critical sensitivity to how the Christian faith has been expressed in and through the history of the world;
- v) demonstrate an awareness of the breadth of the Christian tradition and be able to explain how one or more theological perspectives is situated within the whole;
- vi) reflect critically on how history and theology inform the contemporary practice of Christian living, both personal and communal, and foster the communication of Christian perspectives;
- vii) describe the nature and purpose of a Christian theological ethic.

3 Ministry and Mission Studies

Graduates with a major in one or more of the discipline(s) in Ministry and Mission Studies will be able to:

- i) articulate and assess the biblical and theological foundations of ministry and mission;
- ii) demonstrate a capacity for critical reflection, and be able to articulate a mature and authentic awareness of self, others and creation;
- iii) explore effectively her or his experience and practice (personal and/or professional), appropriating, evaluating and integrating the insights of the social and behavioural sciences and/or cultural studies, and engaging with the written, contextual and living texts of ministerial practice;
- iv) demonstrate an ability to celebrate, contextualize and communicate the Christian faith within the diversity of multi-cultural and multi-faith Australian society;
- v) articulate the nature and purpose of Christian discipleship. □