



# QUEEN'S COLLEGE

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## Office of the Provost

**To: Corporation of Queen's College**

**From: Rick Singleton**

**Date: May 04, 2020**

**Subject: Provost's Report**

This report provides highlights of activities since our meeting on October 16, 2019, as well as overall progress on our programs and activities, with specific attention to the impact of the global pandemic and the Fall Semester of the Academic Year 2020 - 2021 at Queen's College.

We are now in planning mode for the Fall 2020 Semester. At this point, we will plan as if things will be back to the regular schedule, and we will plan for other options, if operations cannot resume for the start of the term.

### **Global Pandemic Consideration**

This time of global pandemic prompts some interesting considerations from the perspective of theological education. The impact of Covid 19 will be felt in every realm. The awareness of our global connectedness and mutual responsibilities provide insights. The drain on the economy will likely prompt many to reconsider fulfillment that is not so reliant on consumerism. Faith communities, including Christian denominations, will have new insights on their relevance. From my perspective, at Queen's College, we will need to continue with theological education and training for ministry leadership with skills and competencies to enhance spiritual resilience, missional engagement, spiritual entrepreneurship, and community renewal.

Planning and operations of all organizations have been drastically impacted by the current global pandemic. This report will include examples of how Covid 19 has impacted Queen's College during the Winter 2020 Semester. It will also predict some impacts for the future. At Queen's College, our main directives for planning, response and recovery from the global pandemic interruptions will come from the Government of Canada and the Government Newfoundland and Labrador as interpreted by Memorial University of Newfoundland. MUN has initiated its emergency operations centre (EOC)

<https://www.mun.ca/covid19/> as outlined under the [emergency management plan](#).

Planning is focused on minimizing potential exposure while preserving the academic and research integrity of the current semester. MUN has an oversight committee that communicates with all units of the University. I am included in the communication and consultation structure. For the first month of the emergency measures, we were expected to submit daily reports. That is now once per week. Significant measures taken at MUN

- No on campus classes;
- On line and correspondence classes only;
- Suspension of internships and clinical placements;
- Essential workers (those needed for cleaning and maintenance, etc.) are on campus;
- Critical employees (for the academic and administrative continuity) are permitted on campus;
- Essential and critical employees access to campus must be approved at Vice President level;
- The Administrative Assistant and Provost are approved to work in the General Office to sustain the administrative and academic operations of the Faculty of Theology.

At present, there are consultations happening within the University regarding options for the Fall 2020 Semester.

### **Recap of Winter 2020 Programs and Enrolment**

The Winter 2020 Semester was challenging in several ways. Here are some highlights  
The space refurbishment project, scheduled to be finished prior to the start of the semester was delayed due to asbestos in the sub-floor. Asbestos abatement caused delay in reopening our space for the start of the Winter Semester. We did start on schedule with on line classes. The contractors and MUN Facilities management team were most cooperative in working with us to access spaces with the goal to have the project completely wrapped up for Monday, January 19. But, the storm of the century came on January 17. It caused a state of emergency. It further delayed the completion of the refurbishment ... we were able to continue with classes in our degree programs. Then, Covid 19 was declared a global pandemic. We had to make prompt adjustments to all operations. Fortunately, our Administration, faculty members and students are well used to on line programs, they are flexible and cooperative ... so we were able to complete all courses for all students.

So, in spite of the asbestos abatement that prevented access to the College for the start of semester, Stormageddon-shutdown, sequential snowstorms, and the global pandemic we have been able to complete our term and we are launching on-line courses in our Masters, Bachelors, and Associate Programs for the spring and intersession. We are making the necessary adjustments to complete the Diploma program sessions on line.

- Total enrolment of 333 students;
- 163 individuals completed the Pastoral and Palliative Volunteer Training Certificate program sponsored in collaboration with eastern Health and the Order of St. Lazarus;
- The space refurbishment project was completed;
- Convocation, planned for May 14, has been postponed until after Covid 19;

- Fifty-two students will graduate from their respective programs;
  - Our 2020 graduates reflect the Queen's College mission and ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our graduates include lay people, deacons, priests, a bishop, Pentecostal pastors and a SA officer. We have a married couple graduating. We have representatives of six denominations: Anglican, Moravian, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Salvation Army.
  - Student Enrollment by Program
    - Master of Divinity 8
    - Master of Theological Studies 18
    - Master of Theology 13
    - Bachelor of Theology 12
    - Bachelor of Theology (D& M, C&G) 25
    - Associate in Theology 30
    - Diploma in Theology and Ministry 40
    - Diploma in Theology and Ministry (RC) 8
    - Continuing Studies 16
    - Volunteer Training 163
- Total 333**

### **Academic**

We continue to do our academic planning based on our 2017 Curriculum Review. While Covid 19 will have some impact, most of our academic courses are already delivered on line and by webinar, so it will not necessarily impact course offerings. The need for courses will be examined, as if we have lower than usual enrolment, we will need to adjust the course offerings to ensure we sustain efficiency while having adequate variety for students to complete their programs. We may need to set a minimum number of students in elective courses. This will require close monitoring of course selection and adequate academic advising.

At Queen's, we are fortunate to have made such advances in our webinar real time and asynchronistic course delivery, thus we will be able to offer on line courses. We will need to give special attention to the practical aspects of our programs, such as community placements and internships. *Pastoral training and practice* and *Faith-based learning community* are two essential pillars of our programming. The other two pillars are *Theological education* and *Spiritual development*.

Right now, I am drafting a full Fall 2020 Semester Program, as if everything will be back to normal, with a selection of on-line courses, if we are not operating on campus. I am also considering options for a late start and an on-line start with ramp-up to normal functioning later in the semester.

Accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) is being pursued. Dr. Bell and I are working on materials for submission for full accreditation. This venture is leading us to examine our operations, processes and standards quite closely, and it gives opportunity to flag matters that will need closer attention. We are pleased with the efforts by faculty and students to improve research methods and academic writing during the Winter Semester. We look forward to sustaining that and continuing to improve. We also see the need to address our processes for academic evaluation of

students and faculty, this is an important component within ATS Accreditation Standards.

Our two non-degree programs are important to Queen's College mission and mandate. Our Associate Program enrolment is strong and will continue to be a stream to prepare people for ministry in the Church. It is also important to note that many people, who get a taste for the study of theology through the Diploma and Associate programs, continue with degree programs.

The enrolment in the Volunteer Training Program was strong and encouraging. It illustrates the number of people willing to offer themselves as volunteers and their insight on the need for training. We are confident some will pursue further studies in our degree and non-degree programs.

The Discipleship and Ministry Program in Cyprus and the Gulf continues to be strong. This initiative is a wonderful outreach venture for Queen's College. I foresee integration of some course material developed for the Discipleship and Ministry Program being available for courses in our Associate and Degree programs.

We have maintained a focus on Continuing Education for Clergy and Pastoral Workers. We offer regular sessions. In the Winter, in spite of the other disruptions, we offered a session by Rev. Dr. Boyd Morgan on the Lenten and Easter Liturgies, we had a three-part series by Rev. Mark Nichols on Environmental and Creation Theology and initiatives, and we had session with Rev. Alan Roxburgh to explore current and future impact of global pandemic on missional initiatives.

### **Pastoral Training and Practice**

Covid 19 is causing major disruption to the practical components of all programs at colleges and universities as measures to control contacts to prevent spread of the virus continues. Most colleges are looking at ways to reconfigure the design of programs by adjusting the sequence of courses and practicums. At Queen's, we had to postpone our Supervised Practice of Ministry (SPM) for the summer and we are doubtful about the (Supervised Parish Internship Program (SPIP) in the Fall 2020 Semester.

This past year, we had four students complete Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in partnership with Eastern Health and Western Health. This venture of CPE in a distributed model was a new initiative for the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC). We are pleased to have led them to this option.

Equipping people for ministry requires more than academic programming. We have practicum components built into all our diploma and degree programs. We continue to encourage clergy and suitable lay people to build their competencies to supervise pastoral trainees. This strategy is becoming more important, especially for situations where individuals will not be on campus for courses. We look forward to more growth in this area, as we build strong support teams and student cohorts in their areas and local faith communities.

We appreciate the support for clergy and others who offer supervision and support to our students.

### **Spiritual Development**

We continue to place strong emphasis on spirituality as the core of our program and essential to the joy, resilience and effective ministry of those preparing for pastoral roles in the Church. We endeavor to lead students into practices and routines that will allow them to have a strong prayer life and skills to help others. We require students to have a spiritual director, and we make them accountable to pursue spiritual guidance. We have regular days of awareness; we have monthly sessions on the *Experiencing Prayer and Spiritual Conversations*, led by Fr. Earl Smith, SJ. . We have continue the practice of contemplative community morning prayer once per week. We had planned to have a silent retreat at the end of the Winter 2020 Semester for all students in ordination stream ... it had to be cancelled due to Covid 19. Our Chaplain, Fr. John Courage, has been a wonderful guide and support for our students and faculty members. He has taken on the lead role with the Vocational Development Seminars, as well as coordinating chapel activities, scheduling presiders and preachers, and coordinating spiritual direction for ordination stream students.

### **Community**

Community life within the college is quite dynamic. We have a wide array of students and faculty members: some are full-time and some are part-time; some are in ordination stream but most preparing for fuller lay ministries. We had Anglican, Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, United Church, Baptist, Moravian, non-affiliated Christians, and Buddhist students with us this semester. We have some who are here daily, others occasionally and some who always and only connect on-line. We try to provide the experience of a Christ-centred and Spirit-filled community. We insist on hospitality and respect. We welcome and encourage participation in the chapel, common room, and classrooms. We monitor behaviours and coach students to be self-aware of their habits and practices of engaging with visitors, supporting colleagues, and being present to those with them. We emphasize respect! We are pleased to sustain weekly on-line Community Gatherings for Mid-day Prayer and Sharing ... Tuesdays at noon.

Our community is strengthened by the support of the Bishops and clergy. We are blessed to have frequent visitors and willingness of numerous clergy to preside and preach at Holy Eucharist on Mondays and Wednesdays. Parish clergy have been very supportive and welcoming in facilitating parish internships and Sunday parish placements for our students. We are pleased that our students recognize that they are not an isolated community, but part of broader and deeper community of faith.

We make efforts to connect with the broader community through a monthly newsletter and occasional updates to students, alumni/ae, parishes, clergy, benefactors and friends. We have worked to enhance our presence through social media.

### **Budget**

Our Financial Statement is included in the Meeting Materials. The Chair of Finance Committee will review it.

### **Current Initiatives**

It had been my plan to complete my term as Provost on July 31, 2020. I agreed to stay until September 30 to allow for transition of the new Provost. Due to Covid 19, the availability of the new Provost will likely be delayed. In any event, our current initiatives will primarily focus on planning to maintain a stable program. This will require ongoing monitoring of Covid 19 restrictions, program design options for the Fall Semester. Engagement with officials at MUN, our faculty members and students to ensure we are considering and responding to matters of relevance and importance.

### **Closing**

I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the numerous people who collaborate, participate and support our work at Queen's. Our students are wonderful individuals who bring joy and excitement to the College and the Church. Our faculty members generously teach, coach, mentor, challenge and guide our students in academic, spiritual and pastoral formation. Our Leadership Team, Dr. David Bell our Dean, Fr. John Courage our chaplain, and Dr. Carmel Doyle our Director of Student Programs enrich Queen's by their presence, example and attention to detail that sustains the 179 year old spirit and character of Queen's College. Ms Dana Bishop continues to be a wonderful support and asset to the College. She keeps us all in order and is cheerful while doing it. She maintains the administrative activities by working from home most days and at the College one day per week, as per our arrangement with MUN during the time of Covid 19.

Finally, I thank the Corporation of Queen's College for the support of the College and our initiatives to make theological education available and relevant in the Church and beyond.

Respectfully,

Rick Singleton