



The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

June 19, 2009

William Tabbernee
Phillips Theological Seminary
901 North Mingo Road
Tulsa, OK 74116

Dear Dr. Tabbernee:

The ATS Board of Commissioners met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in June 2009 and included on its agenda Phillips Theological Seminary's the report of the joint comprehensive evaluation committee. After appropriate deliberation, the Board voted as follows:

1. To reaffirm accreditation of Phillips Theological Seminary for a period of ten years (spring 2019).
2. To approve the following degree program(s):

Master of Divinity (MDiv)
Master of Theological Studies (MTS)
Master of Arts in Ministry and Culture (MA in Ministry and Culture)
Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

3. To approve the following extension site(s) and/or distance learning program(s):
 - a. To grant approval for an ongoing course extension site in Fairway, Kansas, to offer less than 50 percent of the DMin with a concentration in pastoral care and counseling.
 - b. To grant *preliminary* approval for a comprehensive distance education program including the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Ministry and Culture, and the Master of Theological Studies, subject to the residency requirements of each approved degree program.
4. To encourage that attention be given to maintaining and enhancing the following distinctive strengths:
 - a. The remarkable growth of financial resources achieved by the Seminary in a relatively short period of time.
 - b. The strength of and commitment to teaching, learning, and research by faculty.
 - c. The strong sense of community among faculty, students, staff, and administration in a nonresidential campus environment.
 - d. The creative transformation of its physical space particularly in the context of the Seminary's relocation from Enid, Oklahoma, to Tulsa, Oklahoma.
 - e. The establishment of a unified library collection with broad access.
 - f. A high-quality, supervised ministry program despite the distances that students have to travel.
 - g. A dedicated and hard-working staff.

5. To encourage that attention be given to the following area(s) of needed growth during the next period of accreditation:

a. To demonstrate concerted efforts to develop faculty, staff, student, and trustee racial and ethnic diversity (ATS Commission Standard 2, section 2.5; Standard 3, section 3.2.3.2; Standard 6, section 6.1.3; and Standard 8, section 8.3.1.3).

b. While the Board of Trustees has exercised commendable leadership in the governance of the Seminary, continuing attention needs to be given to enhancing the capacity of the Board to educate, orient, and evaluate itself about the issues it faces (ATS Commission Standard 8, section 8.3.1.11).

c. To attend to the global context of Christianity as a worldwide movement (ATS Commission Standard 3, sections 3.2.4, 3.2.4.2, and 3.2.4.3).

d. While the Seminary recognizes the importance of assessment of student learning outcomes and program evaluation, continuing attention needs to be given to the development and implementation of the Seminary's assessment plans with greater alignment to best practices in this area (see 6.b below).

6. To require the following report:

By April 1, 2011, regarding a comprehensive Seminary-wide process of (strategic) planning and evaluation that creates for the Seminary a clear set of goals and a commitment to evidence-driven decision-making (ATS Commission Standard 1, sections 1.2.2 and 1.2.3; and Standard 9, section 9.4.0). The report should address the following:

(a) Short- and long-term trends in enrollment, how the Seminary interprets those trends, and how it is responding to them (ATS Commission Standard 9.4.0).

(b) Progress on alignment of program assessment with best practices (ATS Commission Standard 1, sections 1.2.2; 1.2.3; ATS Commission Standard A, section A.5.2; Standard C, section C.5.2; Standard E, section E.5.2; and Standard F, section F.5.2).

(c) Progress on broadening the Seminary's donor base (ATS Commission Standard 9, section 9.2.1.2).

(d) An update on the revenue mix of temporarily restricted resources and income from unrestricted and permanently restricted assets (ATS Commission Standard 9, section 9.2.1.4).

(e) Additionally, the Seminary may include with this report the November 1, 2011, report to accrediting staff required by the Board in its February 2009 meeting regarding the status and plans for the ongoing course extension site in Fairway, Kansas, as a site for coursework toward the DMin with a concentration in pastoral care and counseling.

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

As of July 1, 2009, I am responding to a call to serve as a Professor of Moral Theology at St. Patrick's Seminary and University, Menlo Park, CA, and will be leaving ATS with profound gratitude and many, cherished friendships. It has been a special grace and privilege to serve on the staff of ATS, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to work with Dan Aleshire and the wonderful colleagues who so ably staff the work of the Association and the Commission on Accrediting. I am also especially grateful to you and all of the member schools for all that you do to make ATS the premier organization on behalf of theological education in the U.S. and Canada. I hope that our paths cross often in the future. For any

Cornelis Venema
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accrediting-related issues or concerns, please contact the excellent ATS Commission staff members: Tisa Lewis, Bill Miller, and Lester Ruiz.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jeremiah J. McCarthy".

Jeremiah J. McCarthy, Secretary
Board of Commissioners

/sb

C: The Higher Learning Commission of NCA

