

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

PRESENTED BY: Roy Dobson, Chair, Academic Programs Committee of Council

DATE OF MEETING: January 24, 2013

SUBJECT: **Arts and Science: termination of Bachelor of Arts in Studies in Religious Traditions**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the termination of the Bachelor of Arts in Studies in Religious Traditions.

PURPOSE:

University Council approves terminations of academic programs.

SUMMARY:

The College of Arts and Science is terminating its program in “Religious Traditions” and maintaining its program in “Religion and Culture”. The content of the two programs was similar and this caused confusion with students. Following a review of both programs, the department determined that one program would be sufficient.

REVIEW:

At its December 12, 2012 meeting, the Academic Programs Committee discussed this proposal with Vice-Dean David Parkinson and Program Coordinator Alexis Dahl.

ATTACHMENTS:

Report Form for Program Termination

Report Form for Program Termination University of Saskatchewan

Department: Religion & Culture

College: Arts & Science

Program(s) to be deleted: Studies in Religious Traditions

Effective date of termination: May 2013

1. List reasons for termination and describe the background leading to this decision.

The Department of Religion and Culture currently offers two programs in religious studies:

Studies in Religion and Culture

Studies in Religious Traditions

Over many years, the Department's resource uncertainties have been ongoing, and this has become even more accentuated in recent years. This situation has makes it unsustainable for the Department to maintain two programs. As a result of this, the Studies in Religious Traditions program, formerly known as the Religious Studies program, will be discontinued, and the Religion & Culture program will be sustained, with minor revisions which will bring the remaining program more into alignment with other religious studies programs in Canada.

Rationale

Students have indicated that they find choosing between the two religious studies programs difficult, which sometimes even deters them from considering a major in the discipline. The Department has struggled with the advising process, finding it difficult to provide appropriate guidance so that students considering the two programs can determine the relative merits and value of the two programs for their long term academic goals and aspirations. To consider these challenges the Department has undertaken a full curriculum review of the two programs. The review was undertaken with constant dialogue and input from colleagues at STM, which is a major partner in the delivery of the programs; the student body has been consulted at various stages in informal and formal ways; and information from comparable programs across Canada was gathered and analyzed. The outcome of these consultations and processes has resulted in the decision to offer only one program in religious studies. This program will give students at the University of Saskatchewan the depth of a traditions-based model comparable with programs across the country, while at the same time allowing students to have some exposure to the interdisciplinary approaches to religion and culture that the Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines have to offer.

Transition

Students enrolled in the Studies in Religious Traditions major will be allowed to complete their program, within the normal time constraints for all Arts & Science students.

2. Technical information.

2.1 Courses offered in the program and faculty resources required for these courses.

No courses are unique to this program.

2.2 Other resources (staff, technology, physical resources, etc) used for this program.

All resources used in this program will be redirected to the Religion & Culture Program.

2.3 Courses to be deleted, if any.

None.

2.4 Number of students presently enrolled.

13 students have declared this Major (includes students declared in the Religious Studies program).

2.5 Number of students enrolled and graduated over the last five years.

	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Students enrolled	16	16	11	12	13

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Degrees granted	19	10	4	5	6

Data taken from Information Strategy and Analytics *uView*.

3. Impact of the termination.

Internal

3.1 What if any impact will this termination have on undergraduate and graduate students? How will they be advised to complete their programs?

Students currently in the program will be able to finish, within the normal time constraints for all Arts & Science students. Little, if any, difficulty is anticipated in registering in the necessary courses, but if necessary, substitutions will be made to allow students to graduate in a timely manner.

3.2 What impact will this termination have on faculty and teaching assignments?

None anticipated.

3.3 Will this termination affect other programs, departments or colleges?

Students interested in religious studies may choose the Religion & Culture program.

3.4 If courses are also to be deleted, will these deletions affect any other programs?

N/A.

3.5 Is it likely, or appropriate, that another department or college will develop a program to replace this one?

No. The Religion & Culture program will cover this area of study.

3.6 Is it likely, or appropriate, that another department or college will develop courses to replace the ones deleted?

N/A

3.7 Describe any impact on research projects.

No impact.

3.8 Will this deletion affect resource areas such as library resources, physical facilities, and information technology?

No.

3.9 Describe the budgetary implications of this deletion.

None. All resources will be redirected to the Religion & Culture program.

External

3.10 Describe any external impact (e.g. university reputation, accreditation, other institutions, high schools, community organizations, professional bodies).

Students may be unhappy to learn that this program will be unavailable in the future, but we anticipate that once they learn about the revisions to the Religion & Culture program they will be equally satisfied or better.

3.11 Is it likely or appropriate that another educational institution will offer this program if it is deleted at the University of Saskatchewan?

No. Similar programs exist at other institutions, and the Religion & Culture program will continue to exist here.

Other

3.12 Are there any other relevant impacts or considerations?

No impact.

3.13 Please provide any statements or opinions received about this termination.

No statements were received.