



TSA Gazette

The newsletter of the United Faculty of Theology
Theological Students' Association Inc.

November 2009



A Word from Our New President

Greetings to all students at UFT. Like many of you, I am in the midst of the final assessment for what has been a very busy semester. I pray that, at this time and in the months ahead, you will all be able to take moments of rest and renewal – however brief – and that 2010 will bring new and exciting challenges.

I am in my third year of an MDiv and am also in the ministry formation programme at Trinity College, but began my time at UFT as an independent student. I am also a research assistant at the School of Population Health at the University of Melbourne, and was a member of the University of Melbourne Postgraduate Association council when I was studying for my Master of Public Health.

What I value about UFT is the space to discuss serious issues of faith in an open and ecumenical setting, and the small size of the school which contributes to a sense of community and fellowship that is hard to find in a large university. As president of TSA in 2010 I hope to continue and strengthen the fellowship that we enjoy across church traditions and personal backgrounds.

It was a privilege and a pleasure to begin my term as TSA president by helping to plan this year's UFT valedictory service. This was an opportunity to say farewell to old and more recent friends, and to wish the valedictorians well in their future ministries. I thank the Dean, Peter Sherlock, for inviting students to play an active role in the life of UFT. The TSA helps to connect and support students across the three colleges of UFT along with independent students, fostering the ecumenical spirit that is at the heart of UFT. The TSA also facilitates communication and representation between the student body and UFT faculty.

The TSA committee is beginning to plan activities for 2010. The year will begin with a casual social event early in first semester. Details will appear in the UFT e-news in early 2010.

Students also have an opportunity to participate in or lead the UFT midday prayer service initiated by the Dean this year. This will continue on Thursdays in 2010. If you are interested in helping to plan or lead this service, please contact the Dean or myself via the UFT office.

Membership of TSA is free and open to all students at UFT. Joining TSA enables the committee to keep up to date with members and also gives you voting rights at the TSA AGM in second semester. You can join by completing the membership form available from the UFT office.

We are always open to feedback or suggestions about how TSA can help you. We are planning a survey of students for early 2010, but you can always contact us with feedback via the UFT office. Please also get in touch if you would like to be involved in the TSA committee or in any other way.

Best wishes for the exam period, and see you in 2010!

Claudine Chionh

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Report from the outgoing UFT TSA President



I must begin with a word of gratitude to the TSA Committee members, Tina Lyndon Ng from Uniting Church Theological College, Emmanuel Carrington from Trinity College and Lee Jin-hyon from Jesuit Theological College.

2009 was a quiet year for TSA activities. We assisted in the Valedictory Service 2008 and organized the hospitality at JTC afterwards.

The academic year began with the Orientation programme which Tina spoke at and as a result we were contacted by one student who asked about mentoring. I referred this student to the relevant college.

We produced one Gazette. We had planned to produce four; however, efforts to employ a Gazette editor were frustrated with the only suitable candidate needing to withdraw from all UFT activities due to family reasons.

We also looked at continuing the English Tuition programme for International and Migrant students. We had one willing volunteer to help with this programme; however, I found that I was unable to get in touch with this volunteer during the process of gauging if there was a need for such a service.

We were also involved in a new service offered by the DML to allow students to print class notes and essays at the DML.

We organized two BBQs in the first semester. The first had about 30 people including CTM staff come and the second was not as successful.

The second semester has been very quiet with the commitments of the Committee overlapping so much that we have met via email this second semester.

I am encouraged by the enthusiasm already evident in the new committee, who you will be able to meet during the Valedictory Service,

I look forward to helping the new committee throughout the next year.

Thanks.

Steve Colbert

TSA President 2009.

2009 Valedictory Service

The UFT Valedictory Service took place on 23rd October 2009.



The following students made their valedictory.

Gavin Blakemore
 Patricia Byrnes
 Emmanuel Carrington
 Heather Cetrangolo
 Jill Cox
 Dennis Rose
 Anne Hill
 Deborah Kottek
 Thomas Leslie
 Daniel Martin
 Plinio Martins
 Lauren Mosso
 Doan Trung Nguyen
 Aung Khaing
 Susan Pearse
 Elizabeth Pemberton
 Matthew Smedley
 Susan Southall
 Barbara Strickland
 Jennifer Sumpter



The Deans List Awards for 2009

Margaret Campbell graduated with a Master of Divinity (Honours) at the MCD Graduation Ceremony on the 8th of May this year. She was awarded the Dean's List award for the UFT alongside Gregory Bellamy from CTC, Fiona Hill from Whitley and William Firth-Smith at Yarra Theological Union.



Margaret Campbell

Margaret was a private student and works in pastoral care at Monash Hospital.

Congratulations, Margaret!

Susan Pearse

40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

UFT celebrated its 40th Anniversary at a Joint Formation Day attended by representatives, faculty and students from all the colleges on Friday 15th May 2009.

DEVOTIONS

The day began with worship with the opening devotions being led jointly by Geoff King, who was the first TSA president and Steve Colbert the TSA President for 2009, (both from Jesuit Theological College).



Geoff King and Steve Colbert

When the TSA began in 1972 Geoff was invited to attend Senatus and has now been attending Senatus for over 37 years and during this year Steve has also been attending Senatus.

CELEBRATING THE UFT – ITS BEGINNINGS

Geoff King, Andrew Hamilton, Andrew Oddy and Randall Prior were students during the early days of UFT and they offered their testimonies. (Transcripts of some of the testimonies are available in the online journal called “Conversations” on the Centre for Theology and Ministry website which is accessed through the Uniting Church Website-<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/conversations/vol3-no2>) After the testimonies we were asked to break

up into small groups and discuss what was significant for us in the presentations. We then gathered together again and shared some insights.

UFT is a unique theological college in the world. It is an ecumenical union, rather than a federation. An ecumenical union of Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Churches, offering a unified program for students and its present form dates from 1973. Some of the lecturers at the time of the formation of the UFT were Andy Hamilton, John Scullion, George Yule and Brendan Bryne. The Bachelor of Theology was first offered in 1974 and at that time all students were college students.

The early days of UFT were exciting times where fellowship amongst faculty and students from the three traditions and academic excellence stand out, as they do today. They were also challenging times where there was a student strike at one stage when Geoff was president and a demonstration against the Vietnam War in the streets where two exit students from a theological college were arrested and imprisoned.

CELEBRATING THE UFT PRESENT AND FUTURE

After a delicious lunch at JTC, representatives from three of the theological colleges and an independent student offered us perspectives from their own community about their experiences of UFT – its benefits and challenges.

We heard from Lauren Mosso from the Uniting Church theological College, Jin-hyuk Park From Jesuit Theological College, Grace Sharon from Trinity Theological College and Esther Crocker an Independent student with UFT. (Transcripts of some of the testimonies are available in

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Geoff King



Andrew Oddy



Randall Prior

the online journal called "Conversations" on the Centre for Theology and Ministry website which is accessed through the Uniting Church Website - <http://ctm.uca.edu.au/conversations/vol3-no2>)



Jin-Hyuk, Lauren, Esther and Grace

Lauren who is an exit candidate with the Uniting Church revealed that she has Catholic roots and her sister-in-law is studying to be an Anglican Priest. She praised the team teaching at UFT and the fact that we are blessed with the best theological library in the Southern hemisphere.

Grace also praised the library. She loves the collegiality between independent students and ordinands. She offered two suggestions for improvement of student conditions.

Extended library hours to allow students who are working to use it in the evening and on Saturday's and a chaplain appointed to meet the needs of the independent students.

Jin-hyuk said that: *"In UFT I learnt more about myself through encountering the differences, though there are challenges sometimes. One thing that I'd like to suggest to the UFT is to offer some courses on African/Asian theology, since there are several students who come from this background. I suppose that it would be beneficial not only for those who come from this background, but also for Australians."*

Esther was taken to Sunday School as a child but left the church as a teenager. Now she is studying at UFT. She doesn't go to church or belong to a denomination but likes having the opportunity to develop her awareness of different traditions and perspectives and grow in understanding of the bigger issues in life.

LOOKING AHEAD

Peter Sherlock

Peter's parents are both Anglican Priests and he comes from an evangelical Anglican background. He doesn't have a formal theological education and was a historian from the University of Melbourne. He is very passionate about finding about student needs, making connections and meeting student needs. He is aware of the challenges facing students today, especially students who are working full time. He wants to encourage us all to "dream larger" and to also encourage academic inquiry.



Small Groups

We broke up into small groups to discuss the question: *How the existence of the UFT today impacts on my personal formation for ministry.*

This was followed by a Plenary or evaluation of the day.

WORSHIP

Worship was at Trinity College where Sean Winter, Professor of New Testament at the Uniting Church Theological College preached the sermon.



Trinity College Chapel

(A transcript is available on the online journal called "Conversations" on the Centre for Theology and Ministry website which is accessed through the Uniting Church Website - <http://ctm.uca.edu.au/conversations/vol3-no2>)



The Worship Service

Worship was followed by a lovely afternoon tea hosted by Trinity Theological College.

The TSA Gazette is produced by the Theological Students' Association of the UFT. The next edition will be produced early in the new year.

Contributions from UFT students and faculty are very welcome; please email tinalyndon@hotmail.com.

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