

**Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Otago**  
**Report to the New Zealand Association of Theological Schools**  
**June 2009**

### **1. Teaching and Research**

Student numbers for 2009 should be around 185 EFTS, which is slightly down on 2008. There has been an encouraging increase for PhD and Masters by thesis students, who now total 40. At the end of 2008, eight students received University of Otago Postgraduate Award or Scholarships.

In 2008 new papers were offered on the following topics: Fellowship in Early Christianity; The Theology of Karl Barth; Theology in the Company of the Arts; Communication and Ministry; Ministry and Society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; Love and Heroism: Religions of South India; Religion and the Internet; Zen Buddhism; Charisma and Healing in Alternatives Religions.

In 2008, staff research lead to the publication of one single authored book, six chapters in books, seven refereed journal articles, eleven non-refereed journal articles or dictionary articles; 14 papers were given by staff at conferences.

### **2. Staffing Changes**

In January 2009, Andrew Bradstock BA, MA (Bristol), MTh (Otago), PhD (Kent) took up his appointment as the first Howard Paterson Chair in Theology and Public Issues, and Director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues. He had formerly been the co-Director of the Centre for Faith in Society at the Von Hugel Institute at the University of Cambridge, England. Andrew is now involved in establishing the new Centre here at Otago.

Professor Ivor Davidson has been appointed to a Chair in Systematic and Historical Theology at the University of St Andrews. This is an excellent appointment for Ivor, but a huge loss for our Department. A position of Lecturer/Senior Lecturer in Systematic Theology has been advertised, and applications close 15 June.

Greg Dawes has recently been promoted to Associate Professor and Tim Cooper to Senior Lecturer. Professor Paul Trebilco's will conclude his term as Head of Department in July 2009; Associate Professor Murray Rae will then become the new Head of Department.

### **3. Departmental Review**

The Department was reviewed in November 2008, with the external members of the review panel being Professor Chris Mostert (from Melbourne College of Divinity) and Professor Michael Pye (from Heidelberg University). The Report of the Panel was released in February 2009, and the Department has been considering its recommendations. The main change is the appointment of a "programme coordinator" for Religious Studies, and "subject area coordinators" for Biblical Studies and Christian Thought and History, with the later role being filled by currently by Murray Rae.

### **4. New Developments**

Work continues on developing the New Zealand Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim Cultures which will be co-hosted by the University of Otago and Victoria University of Wellington. In conjunction with the development of the Centre, the Department will host a

conference from 6-8 July, 2009 on “The Role of the Study of Islam in the Western University”. Details are given at [www.csimcnz.ac.nz](http://www.csimcnz.ac.nz).

The Department and the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership will co-host a Conference to mark the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth. This will be a two-day conference on 24-25 August, focusing on Calvin’s legacy in church and society. It will feature two international keynote speakers – Professor Randall Zachman (from the University of Notre Dame) and Professor Elsie McKee (from Princeton Theological Seminary), as well as local contributors, including Peter Matheson, Murray Rae, Alison Clarke, John Stenhouse and Angela McCarthy.

Paul Trebilco  
Head of Department