Meeting of the ATS Steering Committee  
September 12, 2011  
Goodwin Board Room

In attendance:
  Ian Markham  
  Sissy Poland  
  Judy Fentress-Williams  
  Rebecca Edwards – by phone  
  Timothy Sedgwick  
  Katie Glover  
  Linda Lanam  
  Nick Roosevelt

Absent:
  Matthew Kozlowski, class of 2011 (matthew.koz@gmail.com)  
  Oran Warder, Rector St. Paul’s, Alexandria, alumnus (oran@stpaulsalexandria.com)

Dr. Sedgwick informed the Committee of the proposed changes in degree standards which will be voted in May 2012. Because of the timeline for our accreditation visit VTS has a choice to work within the current or the new standards. Changes in the learning outcomes and assessments need particularly close attention. Working Group 2 will provide input to make the decision and the Steering Committee will be charged with responding.

Linda there are degree committees within vts who focus on continual process of focusing on standards to determine in synch with standards. Some work will be done by those committees.

Tim those committees will write that part of self-study, pushes them forward. Work in process of faculty governance and oversight of curriculum.

Linda question of distance learning being addressed. Will come up in disussio and preparation of self-study. Level of collaboration. What does it look like. Will show up as recommendations for consideration.

Linda-quantitative stage of data, point each group will focus on qualitative interviews, focus groups, to be sure data matches perceptions.

Questions and discussion

Suggested Discussion Questions for Self-Study Steering Committee Meeting

STANDARD 1:
* How is the VTS mission statement evaluated? /How does VTS know if its mission is being accomplished?

Strategic Plan  
Approved by Board of Trustees  
What is the mission statement  
Where is it?  
Reviews—are we thinking about how an individual job supports the mission of the Seminary? If not, we should.

Initiatives emerge from discussions around mission statement to inform strategic plan, should be delivering mission as a result.

* How has the mission statement influenced recent decisions about (a) institutional change or innovation; (b) allocation of institutional resources?

*Can VTS demonstrate that we have made changes to programs or developed new initiatives based on the results of our evaluation system?

New MA Program  
Bishop Payne scholarship  
International students from other provinces with the AC  
August term writing class  

Center for Anglican Communion Studies  
Jenzabar  
ICFL  
AASL  
Financial Aid program  

Board reorganization  

STANDARD 2:  
* What efforts have been undertaken to enhance the participation of racial/ethnic minority persons in VTS?  
Promoting well-being within the community  
Beginnings of program of clergy/theologians in residence – what happened with that?  
Ran parallel to MJH visiting scholar that brought Rosemary Gooden  
Carpenter Grant –

Funding – if ended, what have done to substitute or continue

Not just focusing on Episcopalians, MLK commemoration
International students – cross-cultural colloquy,

How is racial/ethnic minority defined? An international student may not identify with MLK.

Forums, heritage months,

Movement from anti-racism to intercultural competency training.

Joseph’s book

* What is VTS’s commitment to women in religious leadership roles and how is this demonstrated?
  Judith McDaniel book

Hires, Convocation speakers, Commencement speakers, honorary degree recipients

Does VTS support minority and female graduates beyond graduation?

Incorporating assessment of racial and female component in syllabi, curriculum What are ways to have systemic review: faculty continuing education, syllabi

STANDARD 3:
* How does VTS demonstrate the importance it places on student learning?
  Grades – as state in handbook, explains model on which built B as first grade
  Learning first before grades

Access to writing center
Extensive library orientation
Gathering after thesis project, share, go into library small but significant ways

Honors thesis concept and students are encouraged to write one in senior year

Consortium libraries, online resources beyond what accessible
Some courses require going to Library of Congress

Continued access to online resources, books by mail for alums – part of ministry helpful when no access

All-star faculty-resources put into faculty searches

Merit scholarships

Class size, course offerings

Jenzabar
Forming study groups

Teaching Assistants

* How does course development reflect patterns of faculty collaboration and interaction?
Team teaching – cross-disciplinary teaching in MA program
Kathy and Judy doing intro bible courses, doing collaboratively. Talked about learning goals, coordinating due dates for papers, coordinated exegesis passages. Forums to speak to topics not covered in course.

Practical theology curriculum created through collaboration
Program degree committees
Evening School courses open to MA, MDiv students

* How does VTS assess the quality of the learning, teaching, and research that is done here?
Matching assignments to outcomes and what students were to learn – assessing the assessment

Adding aspect to course evaluation

Technology – mandatory evaluation – no evaluation, no grade

Individual faculty members assess outcomes and whether assignment meets them.

Faculty – outstanding areas. Peer relationships, sharing, and do work together.

ATS perspective emphasizes this kind of ambition, we are here, where we want to go is (evulutate course evaluations, evaluate syllabi, etc.) Vision for where we want to go.

Evaluations need to be edited in terms of type of course – traditional course evaluation doesn’t work for immersion course (example)

* How does VTS understand the concept of “globalization” and how does it demonstrate attention to this issue?
Immersion courses – evidences conscious decision, how easy to have access to funding, CACS coordinator,

Wasn’t sure about VTS involvement, and moderating feedback to leader (comments made went unheard)
No aid without taking for credit, more formal process of academic reflection/work to receive credit.

STANDARD 4:
* How do the educational programs at VTS seek to cultivate theological understanding (as described in Standard 4)?

* How are the educational goals of the degree programs being met at VTS?

STANDARD 5:
* How does VTS assess the success of the Bishop Payne library in meeting the needs and supporting the overall learning goals of students and faculty at VTS?

* What part does the library professional staff play in the process of curriculum development?

STANDARD 6:
* How does VTS understand, practice and ensure freedom of inquiry for its faculty?

* How does the faculty exercise its responsibility for the academic oversight of the various programs of study at VTS?

* How does VTS support the development of faculty as teachers and encourage the practice of good teaching?

* How do the practices of faculty members contribute to students’ capacity to think theologically?

STANDARD 7
* How do the criteria for admission to VTS support the cultivation of quality in religious leadership?

* How does VTS evaluate student services?

* How does VTS advocate on behalf of graduates who may be disadvantaged in vocational employment because of race, ethnicity and/or gender?
STANDARD 8:
* How well does VTS’s governance structure serve its purpose and mission?

* How does VTS’s system of governance deal with the overlapping responsibilities and roles of the trustees, faculty, administrators, students, and other partners in the leadership of the institution?

* How does the board assess the success of VTS in achieving its stated mission and goals?

* How do those serving as administrative leaders reflect the constituencies of VTS and the desired level of diversity in race, ethnicity and gender?

STANDARD 9:
* How does VTS seek to enhance the quality of the lives of students, faculty, administrators, staff and support personnel?

* How does VTS develop and implement its budget?

* How does VTS attend to the safety and security needs of those who work and study here?

* How do the physical resources of VTS contribute to or detract from achieving the school’s mission?

STANDARD 10:
* How is VTS approaching the concept of “distance education” and its impact on the character of the school?

How we narrate this important
We don’t tell the story
This class was created in response to this, it fulfills a need – not relayed to students, we simply say “take this course.”
Show where come from and where we are going.

Section 5
Section 8
Consult gives sense where ATS going in terms of “is this a place that inculcates a respect of academics delivered and lifelong learning”