



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

August 3, 2020

Greetings from a hot, humid Toronto!

We begin this academic year in unprecedented times. In spite of the challenges posed by the Covid19 pandemic, our goal is that students progress through your programs with as little disruption as possible.

Here are a few details to keep in mind as you make the transition back:

Day of Welcome: I hope everyone will be able to join us via Zoom for our Day of Welcome on September 9 at 4:00PM. The gathering for AD students (PhD/ThD, ThM, MA) will be from 4:30-5:20PM. This important gathering gives us a chance to meet one another, new and returning students, faculty (including two new faculty members), librarians and staff. We will gather with the whole Faculty of Theology community for a prayer service at 5:30PM. Look for more information on the website.

Advising: If you have not yet heard from your advisor, please do contact her/him in the next few weeks to review your course selections for the upcoming year or the next phase of your program. You should meet at least twice a year with your advisor, if not your whole committee. Feel free to initiate that meeting! If you are an MA or ThM student who has not yet identified an advisor, I will continue to act in that capacity for you.

Language exams are scheduled for September 8, with September 9 and 10 as reserve dates. Due to Covid19, all exams are scheduled to be proctored remotely. More information is available at <http://www.tst.edu/academic/language-exams-courses>.

Applying for SSHRC & OGS scholarships: A program expectation is that all students, as qualified, will apply for government scholarships. Canadian citizens and anyone with landed immigrant status are eligible for SSHRC funding (more information here: <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/fellowships/doctoral-doctorat-eng.aspx>). All students, regardless of citizenship, may apply for OGS scholarships. (See info here: <https://osap.gov.on.ca/OSAPortal/en/A-ZListofAid/PRDR019245.html>). Applying for these scholarships is worth the effort, not only because of the monetary incentive, but because the application process helps you to refine your research project. *This past year about half of all the domestic OGS scholarships at the TST were awarded to St Mike's students. In addition, one St Mike's PhD student received a SSHRC scholarship.* Keep an eye out for grant writing workshops, they are very helpful.

Advanced Degree Seminar: This seminar is a forum for St Mike's graduate students to present their work to one another and receive feedback from peers and faculty alike. Doctoral students in particular will be invited to present at least once during your program, potentially at the point of a landmark in your studies, e.g. presenting your thesis proposal, or a paper that has been

accepted for a conference. The seminar also provides a setting to celebrate these milestones. Such an academic community is a valuable part of graduate study. Seminars are usually held on Wednesdays after the common prayer. Until further notice, seminars will be held remotely.

Race, Privilege and Power: A small group of students with research commitments to issues of race, privilege and power was formed in the light of recent events to reflect on the race, privilege and power in the theological academy. If you wish to be a part of this group, please let me know.

Covid19 supports: There still remains a great deal of uncertainty because of Covid19. The health of our students is very important to us. In addition to support that you may access through the University of Toronto and the Toronto School of Theology, please remember the supports and resources that are available to St Mike's students during this pandemic:

Covid19 Emergency Financial Aid: Emil Iruthayathas: emil.thas@utoronto.ca

Kelly Library Theological Librarian: Noel McFerran: noel.mcferran@utoronto.ca

Writing support: James Roussain: <https://stmikes.utoronto.ca/library/online-learning-support/>

St Mike's Health and Wellness Counsellor, Nicole Leblanc: Nicolem.leblanc@utoronto.ca.

Pastoral care and spiritual support:

Fr. Morgan Rice, CSB: morgan.rice@utoronto.ca or 416-926-7121

Fr. Norm Tanck, CSB: ntanck@basilian.org

Sr. Anne Anderson, CSJ: ane.anderson@utoronto.ca.

As always, please contact me with any questions you might have about these points or others related to your study. I wish you well in the remaining weeks of summer and look forward to seeing you virtually on September 9, if not sooner!

Best wishes for a safe start to the school year.

Darren Dias, OP, PhD
Associate Professor
Director of Academic Programs