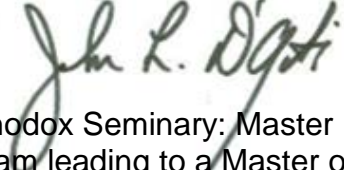





TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati 

SUBJECT: Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary: Master Plan Amendment to Offer a Program leading to a Master of Divinity (M. Div.) in Theology Degree

DATE: March 28, 2018

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents authorize Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary to offer its first master's degree program?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its April 2018 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, Jordanville, NY (Herkimer County) submitted a proposal to register a program in Theology leading to a Master of Divinity degree. A master plan amendment is required because this will be the Seminary's first program at the master's degree level.

Background Information

Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary (the Seminary) is a Regents–chartered independent institution offering students a single program of study in Theology leading to a Bachelor of Theology degree. Three certificate programs are also offered. The Seminary received a provisional charter in 1948 and was granted an absolute charter in 1962. The Seminary is accredited by the New York State Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education. Its accreditation was renewed in April 2017. The Seminary’s mission is “to serve the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia by preparing students for service to the Church.” The proposed M.Div. program, as a graduate professional degree program in theology and ministry, will fulfill the mission of the Seminary at a higher professional and academic level and provide graduates more opportunities for employment and further study. The proposed program is seen to offer a positive impact on the existing bachelor level program, raising professional and academic standards for all students.

An academic review of the proposed degree program has been completed by the Department. The Department determined that the proposed program meets the standards for registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. In addition, following the standard protocol, the Department conducted a canvass of degree-granting institutions in the Mohawk Valley region. Of those canvassed, there were no objections or statements of negative impact should the program be registered.

Related Regents Items

N/A

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary to offer a program in Theology leading to the M.Div. degree. The amendment will be effective until April 2019, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case the master plan amendment shall be without term.

Timetable for Implementation

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Department will register the program and the institution will proceed to recruit and enroll students.