



TO: Higher Education Committee
FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*
SUBJECT: Change in Scope of Institutional Accreditation:
Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary
DATE: September 6, 2018
AUTHORIZATION(S): *MaryEllen Elin*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents approve a change in the scope of institutional accreditation of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the Higher Education Committee for action at its September 2018 meeting,

Board of Regents members with a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest on this application are asked to recuse themselves from participating in the deliberation and decision.

Procedural History

Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary (the Seminary), Jordanville (Herkimer County), is accredited by the New York State Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Education. Its accreditation was renewed on June 13, 2017 and expires June 13, 2020. On April 10, 2018, the Board of Regents approved a master plan amendment, which authorizes the Seminary to offer a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program in Theology. The Board of Regents

also approved a change to the Seminary's charter on the same day, which authorizes the institution to confer the M.Div. degree. The Department's Office of College and University Evaluation subsequently registered the M.Div. in Theology program.

As a result of those authorizations, the Seminary has applied to the Regents for a change in scope of its institutional accreditation. A Regents-accredited institution that undergoes a substantive change must apply for a change in its scope of accreditation, as required by Section 4.1-5(d) of the Rules of the Board of Regents.

Background Information

Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary applied for a change in scope of accreditation for the following reason, as defined in Regents Rules:

- The addition of courses or programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation.

Specifically, the Seminary added degree authority and a program at the master's level.

The purpose of the change in scope application is to document that the change does not adversely affect the institution's capacity to meet the accreditation standards defined under Sections 4-1.3 and 4-1.4 of the Regents Rules.

The Seminary's progression to the master's level comports with its mission "to serve the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia by preparing students for service to the Church." The new 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 will provide graduates greater opportunity for employment and further study.

The Department finds that the Seminary's expansion to the master's level does not adversely affect the institution's capacity to continue to meet Regents accreditation standards. As a result, the Department recommends approval of the requested change in scope of accreditation for Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary.

Related Regents Items

[March 2018 Regents Item](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/418brca4.pdf>)

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a change in scope of the institutional accreditation of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, in recognition of the institution's authority to award degrees at the master's level.