APPENDIX B

THE CURATORIUM OF THE DR CHURCH OF TRANSVAAL[1] AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

REPORT TO THE NORTHERN SYNODS

BACKGROUND

Northern Synods[2] and Theological Training

The DR Church of Transvaal on 9 December 1937 nominated four persons to be appointed by the Council of the University of Pretoria as lecturers in theology. The four persons began in 1938 to prepare students at the University of Pretoria (UP) for ministry of the Gospel in the DR Church. Because the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK) had already begun in 1917 with theological training at UP, the NHK's training was done by Section A, and the DR Church's by Faculty of Theology Section B.

The configuration at the faculty changed after 1994. The two sections merged and the faculty was changed in 2000 into a multi-denominational faculty.

The curatorium of the DR Church of Transvaal

The DR Church of Transvaal did not initiate theological training for the DR Church at the University of Pretoria, but from early on supervised theological training by means of a curatorium. In time, when the DR Church of Transvaal divided into four synods, the configuration of the curatorium changed to contain an equal number of representatives for each synod. Currently each of the four synods may appoint four members (with alternates). Vacancies are filled as it becomes necessary. The four synods are:

- the Northern Synod (formerly the DR Church North Transvaal),
- the Eastern Synod (formerly the DR Church East Transvaal),
- Hoëveld Synod (formerly the DR Church South Transvaal) and
- Goudland Synod (formerly the DR Church West Transvaal).

Ander synods of the DR Church may also, for their own account, appoint one representative. The following synods are currently involved:

[1] Although the province of Transvaal no longer exists after 1994, the DR Church of Transvaal still exists as a legal entity.
[2] The name *Northern Synods* is used in this report for the four synods that arose out of the DR Church of Transvaal.

- Synod South and West Cape
- Synod North Cape
- Synod Free State
- Synod KwaZulu Natal

The Chair of the Lecturers' Council (or an alternate) and the Chair of the Commission for Candidate Ministers are members of the Curatorium. The Head of Ecclesial Training and the Head of Excelsus (Continued Training Development) are advisory members of the curatorium.

The curatorium of the DR Church of Transvaal performs it functions according to its own regulations as well as according to Regulation 10 of the General Synod (Church Order 2023), *Regulations for training and legitimising minsters, auxiliary ministers, and located ministers.* Except for the support of the University of Pretoria, the curatorium supervises, guides, and supports students. The Head of Ecclesial Training and the Head of Excelsus are respectively responsible for presenting programmes for ecclesial training and formation and the presentation of programmes for Continued Ministry Development.

The agreement with the University of Pretoria

The Northern Synods made an agreement with the University of Pretoria that has been in force since 8 Julie 2009. Although the agreement stipulated that the four Northern Synods of the . DR Church would contribute 30% of ten lecturers' salaries, the curatorium currently only contributes to the salaries of eight lecturers.

The Faculty of Theology's name changed on 1 January 2018 to the Faculty of Theology and Religion. It is a multi-denominational faculty, and the ecclesial partners are currently the DR Church, the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHK), the Uniting Reformed Churches of South Africa (URCSA), the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (UPCSA), and the United Congregational Church of South Africa (UCCSA).

DEPARTMENTS AND CENTRES AT THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Although the name changes have already been referred to above, other changes have also taken place in the past number of years. Former students of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria remember six departments in the faculty, but in a previous report of the curatorium it was already noted that there are currently only five departments.

Five departments

The faculty houses the following five departments:

- Department Systematic and Historic Theology (Department head – Prof. Tanya van Wyk)
- Department Religion (Department head – Prof. Jaco Beyers)
- Department Old Testament and Hebrew Literature (Department head – Prof. Dirk Human)
- Department New Testament and related literature (Department head – Prof. Chris de Wet)
- Department Practical Theology and Missiology (Department head – Prof. Christo Lombard).

Centres

The faculty also houses two centres:

- The Centre for Faith and Community with prof. Stefan de Beer as its director;
- Oxford (UP) Centre for Religion, Public Life and Security in Africa with Prof. Maniraj Sukdaven as director.

Staff of the Faculty

Prof. Rantoa Letšosa in 2023 followed up prof. Jerry Pillay as Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Religion. Prof. Jaco Beyers (Doctrine and Teaching) and prof. Dirk Human (Research and Post-Graduate Students) are the deputy directors of the faculty.

DR Church lecturers

Since 2022 there have been changes to the DR Church lecturers. Some have resigned:

- Dr H (Han) Janse van Rensburg (2023) – New Testament – resigned;
- Prof. DP (Danie) Veldsman (2025) – Systematic and Historic Theology – retired

New appointments:

- Dr A (Annette) Potgieter (2023) – New Testament and Related Literature
- Prof. M (Manitza) Kotze (2026) – Systematic and Historic Theology

Except for the two lecturers mentioned above, the other church[3] lecturers are:

- Prof. DJ (Dirk) Human – Old Testament and Hebrew Writings
- Prof. JM (Johan) van der Merwe – Systematic and Historic Theology

[3] Ecclesial lecturers are persons who are appointed according to the agreement between the DR Church and the University of Pretoria. There are also other legitimised persons of the DR Church who are academic personnel at the Faculty of Theology and Religion.

- Prof. EE (Sias) Meyer – Old Testament and Hebrew Writings;
- Prof. CJS (Christo) Lombard – Practical Theology and Missiology;
- Prof. JJ (Hannes) Knoetze – Practical Theology and Missiology;
- Dr D (Dieter) de Bruin – Practical Theology and Missiology.

Prof. Hannes Knoetze is the chair, and dr Annette Potgieter is vice-chair of the Council of Lecturers of the DR Church. Prof. Danie Veldsman was chair until he retired. The Council of Lecturers is a committee of the curatorium. All the abovementioned lecturers, other lecturers associated with the faculty who are also congregants of the DR Church, the Head of Ecclesial Training, the Head of Excelsus, and a representative of the day management of the curatorium are members of the Council of Lecturers.

Although the curatorium tries to converse with the members of the Council of Lecturers annually, it was not possible in 2025 and 2026. Prof. Hannes Knoetze and dr Annette Potgieter who regularly attend the meetings of the curatorium, facilitate contact with the lecturers. ,

Kerkbode published an article entitled, “Focus on Theological Training” that give a good overview of the lecturers at all the DR Church faculties. The article can be read here.

International and local liaising

The Faculty of Theology and Religion enjoys wide international and local recognition and have active agreements with similar institutions in Africa and internationally.

Lecturers attend local and international conferences, produce papers and publish books and articles in local and international academic journals. Thanks to these agreements, lecturers and researchers from abroad also visit Faculty of Theology and Religion.

Students

The students of the DR Church who study at the Faculty Theology and Religion mainly register for a 4-year B. Div with Greek 2 and Hebrew 2, a 1-year M. Div, plus a Congregation Year. This was initially linked to a Postgraduate Diploma but was later changed to a BTh Hons.

As the numbers below indicate, the DR Church students are part of a greater group of students who study at the faculty. For 2026 the numbers were as follows:

Undergraduates

- BDiv 48
- BTh 180
- Dip 224

- Total 452
- Not degree purposes 22

Postgraduate

- **Honours** 75
- **Masters'** 126
- **Doctoral** 157

832 students of different churches and groups are enrolled for study at the Faculty of Theology and Religion.

ECCLESIAL TRAINING

Th table below shows the number of students who are preparing to minister in the DR Church and enrolled by the curatorium:

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026
1 – B.Div.	5	3	7	8
2 – B.Div	3	5	3	7
3 – B.Div	3	3	6	3
4 – B.Div	11	3	3	4
5 – M.Div	11	11	3	5
6 – BTH Hons	5	8	12	3
Candidates for auxiliary ministers		6	1	4
Articulation			2	9
Hugenote 1 year			19	6
Hugenote 2 years			9	17
Hugenote 3 years			3	7

Note that the table above shows the students who are enrolled for the different years of B.Div, M.Div and BTh Hons at the University of Pretoria. The students at Hugenote College are shown separately.

Dr Kobus (JA) Myburgh, formerly Head of the Church-specific Theological Training, retired in September 2024 and the curatorium nominated dr Wicus (JL) van der Merwe to replace him.

The curatorium fulfils its responsibility for ecclesial training within the framework set in the document, *Geroep, gevorm, gestuur* (Called, Formed, Sent) published by the General Curatorium in 2022. Not only does it map out theological training in the DR Church; it also indicates which aspects have to be attended to:

- Ethos (Who I am and who I am becoming)

- Logos (What and how I believe)
- Pathos (Who and how I serve)

Under each point there are specific ministry capacities to be developed for, respectively, people who want to qualify to serve as ministers, auxiliary ministers, and ministers with limited competency in the DR Church. *Geroep, gevorm, gestuur*, can be downloaded here.

The Head of Ecclesial Training has several persons to assist him in the process of ecclesial training for students. Before students are legitimised to be called as auxiliary ministers or ministers of the DR Church, a commission of the curatorium, the Commission for Candidate Ministers, interviews the students.

The Commission for Candidate Ministers is also responsible for conducting the *colloquium doctum* of persons who have lost their competency and want to return to the ministry in the DR Church.

As from 2025, the curatorium also takes responsibility for the students who are studying at Hugenote College, but who live in the synodal regions of the Northern Synod, Goudland Synod, Eastern Synod, and Hoëveld Synod. This means that the Head of Ecclesial Training and his office are responsible for more students than before and must often contact the staff at Hugenote College.

CONTINUING MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT – EXCELSUS

Dr André Bartlett, who was Head of Excelsus since 2012 Hoof Excelsus, retired in February 2024 and the curatorium appointed Dr Tom Smith as his successor.

Dr Smith not only continues the work that has been developed at Excelsus over the years but actively cooperates in the development or programmes by the General Task Team for Continued Ministry Development. The annual Spring Conferences of 2024 and 2025 were very fruitful but did not take place in 2026 because of the Ministers' Gathering. Excelsus' programmes and courses work together to deepen the knowledge of legitimised persons, to enhance and deepen their joy of ministry and spiritual growth. It hones their ministry skills and helps them to stay true to our reformed tradition and theology. The FMT-ecology is discussed extensively in the new prospectus *Sent, Formed, Called*. The prospectus can be downloaded here.

FINANCES

Although the curatorium is involved in the training of persons to serve as ministers and auxiliary ministers in the whole of the DR Church, the four Northern Synods' monthly contributions make up the most of the curatorium's income. The Joint Funds Commission of the Northern Synods determine what contributions the synods have to make. The curatorium thanks the synods for

their contributions to the formation and training of students and the continued ministry development of ministers and auxiliary ministers.

Another source of income is the monthly grant from the De Jager Steyn Fund. The De Jager Steyn Fund allocates money for theological training and bursary loans. Other donors include individuals and the Hartmann Trust. In the past congregations were requested to take a collection for theological training, but it appears that many congregations did not accede to the appeal.

The curatorium is fully responsible for the salaries of the staff, the office costs, and the services rendered by Ecclesial Training and Excelsus. The curatorium's financial responsibilities also include the payment of 30% of the remuneration of the 8 lecturers as per the agreement of the four Northern Synods with the University of Pretoria.

BURSARY LOANS

Students who sign up at the curatorium for theological training can apply for bursary loans. The bursary loans are awarded out of the money received from the De Jager Steyn Fund. Students undertake to repay the curatorium 50% of the bursary loans received.

The University of Pretoria make available, in consultation with the curatorium, bursaries for theological studies out of funds donated to the University for this purpose.

GENERAL CURATORIUM

Except for the fact that each Synod is represented at the General Curatorium, the Curatorium of the Northern Synods (the DR Church of Transvaal) is represented by a member on the General Curatorium. The discussions about, and the ongoing reflection on, theological training and continued ministry development are indispensable to the curatorium.

In the past four years the sustainability of theological training has been considered. The General Curatorium will, DV, report on its work at the General Synod of 2027.

THANKS

The curatorium thanks the dean, prof. Rantoa Letšosa and his predecessor, prof. Jerry Pillay, for their hearty cooperation and their willingness to involve the curatorium and its staff in activities and functions of the faculty.

The curatorium thanks the lecturers. Thanks to Prof. Danie Veldsman and Dr Han Janse van Rensburg for their commitment not only to the faculty but also to the DR Church. Thanks to the current lecturers for their positive attitude their cooperation with the curatorium.

Our thanks to Dr Bartlett and Dr Myburgh who retired in 2024 for their service to the curatorium and the DR Church. Thanks to the staff of the curatorium: Dr Tom Smith, Dr Wicus van der Merwe, Ms Lizette van der Kooi and Ms Rika van Rensburg.

Thanks to all who were members of the curatorium and the Candidate Minister Commission between 2022 and 2026.

This report was compiled by Rev. JH Windell (chair) on behalf of the curatorium.