



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Unification Theological Seminary: Master Plan
Amendment for Relocation of Main Campus in Barrytown,
NY to New York City, NY

DATE: April 25, 2019

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Margaret Elin*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment for Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) to relocate its main campus in Barrytown, NY to New York City, NY?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute and State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full board at its May 2019 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken. A related petition to amend the Unification Theological Seminary's charter will also be before the Board at the May 2019 meeting.

Procedural History

Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) has filed a master plan amendment for approval of its proposal to relocate its main campus currently located at 30 Seminary Drive, Barrytown, NY (Dutchess County) to its current extension center at 4 West 43rd Street, New York City, NY (New York County). The proposed move requires a master plan amendment because it entails the move of the main campus to a different county.

Background Information

Unification Theological Seminary (UTS) seeks to relocate the site of its main campus from 30 Seminary Drive, Barrytown, New York, to its current extension center at 4 West 43rd Street, New York, NY. This past year, UTS enrolled 103 students in the following registered programs:

- Master of Arts (M.A.) in Religious Studies
- Master of Divinity (M.Div.) in Divinity
- Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) of Theological Studies
- Master of Religious Education (M.R.E.) in Religious Education
- Advanced Certificate (Adv. Cert.) in Foundation Program

In recent years, numerous theological seminaries, which have relied on free-standing, brick-and-mortar residential models, have found these to be unsustainably expensive and ill-suited to current needs. Many have sold off dated buildings and chosen to either become embedded in more stable institutions or shift to leaner learning models.

Beginning in 2000, UTS began shifting its focus to the urban market and opened an extension site at 4 West 43rd Street, in midtown Manhattan, which was later approved by the Department as an extension center and, by 2009, shifted the bulk of its educational programs to the center.

The 260-acre main campus, located in the semi-rural Mid-Hudson Valley, with a 120,000 sq. ft. main building that is 90 years old, requires substantial investment both to deal with deferred maintenance and to modernize the facility, and sits largely unused. The campus has historic legacy and sentimental value to the sponsoring church and alumni/ae, but the carrying costs at over \$600K per year have become unsustainable.

As a core objective in its strategic planning, the sale of UTS' 260-acre main campus, currently a financial liability, will generate an endowment that will be a foundation for the ongoing financial viability of the institution. To that end, on February 3, 2018, the UTS Board of Trustees directed the UTS administration to sell the main campus and use the proceeds to fund an endowment for the future needs of UTS and approved a motion to relocate the main campus to the New York City extension center.

The center currently occupies 8,000 sq. ft. of a building owned by the sponsoring church of UTS. On July 1, 2018, UTS signed a 10-year lease with a lease extension as an option to confirm UTS' continued tenancy. The center contains two classrooms, a 5,000+ volume library (plus 7,000 e-books), a student lounge, and offices for the President and other administrators, faculty and staff. UTS has the option to expand to additional classrooms and offices on other floors of the building as the need arises.

There will be no change to the mission, programs, faculty, curricula, admission requirements, projected enrollment, student services, the nature of the student body, etc., of UTS as a result of this relocation. UTS currently runs partial programs at the site, and the few courses still taught at the main campus will relocate upon Regents approval.

The move to the extension center will provide students with better access to employment, internships, and clinical pastoral education by virtue of the vast opportunities of the New York metropolitan area as compared to rural Barrytown. Moreover, for renewing the purpose of UTS, proximity to the sponsoring church's headquarters will provide for more interaction between UTS and the sponsoring church and better access to employment opportunities within the church.

UTS is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, which has already approved a substantive change request to include the relocated main campus within the scope of the Seminary's institutional accreditation.

Following standard protocol, the Department conducted a canvass of institutions of higher education in the New York City region. No objections were received.

Related Regents Items

N/A

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize the Unification Theological Seminary to relocate its main campus in Barrytown, New York, to 4 West 43rd Street, New York, NY.

Timetable for Implementation

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Department will update the registration of the Seminary's programs to reflect the new location of the campus.