

THE INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY OF THE EELC
Research & Development Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019
(TAL strateegiline kava 2016 – 2019)
Project Leader Randar Tasmuth

Introduction

The results of the project:

- (1) The Academic staff of the institute is trained to publish articles, create research projects and raise funds.
- (2) Institute has a system of supervision and spiritual mentoring.
- (3) Scholastic proficiency of the students is improved and graduation rates are higher.

The three main R & D areas which correspond to the needs of the owner (EELC) and the developmental plan of the Institute are:

- * Biblical Theology (incl. Semitics, Antiquity, Exegetic, Hermeneutic);
- * Social and Cultural Studies (incl. Systematic Theology, Sociology of Religion, Contemporary Religions etc);
- * Practical Theology (incl. Pastoral care and counselling, Diaconia etc)

1) Objectives

1.1. Institute of Theology has a working system of research, supervision and spiritual mentoring.

Research process will be focused to the three general areas above by combining efforts of the teaching staff in order to develop:

- (a) personal research and publication activity of the lecturers / assistant professors etc;
- (b) planned and focussed supervising of Diploma and Master theses by our staff personally, but also in student research groups and forums;
- (c) based upon the integral system of supervising, spiritual mentoring and academic mentoring of the students in their life and academic progress will be supported and graduating rates increased.

1.2. Publication activity of the Institute works systematically both externally (in refereed magazines) and internally (through Institute's own publications / printed materials).

To achieve this objective we are going to:

- (a) Promote lecturers and support them that they can publish in Domestic and International peer-reviewed magazines;
- (b) Raise the publication activity of the Institute to the level that our own peer-reviewed annual printed proceedings will be granted with Estonian ETIS classification No 1.2. It will provide our students, but also other universities in Estonia, with domestic contextual research and study materials.
- (c) To present the results of research at forums, life-long-learning courses and conferences.

1.3. Institute has clarity about the possibilities of creating a sustainable and realistic English MA Program in Theology.

Prerequisite to start planning international MA program in English is the certificate issued by the external evaluators that the Institute is institutionally accredited for seven subsequent years beginning from 2016. In June 2016 we receive the report of the evaluators and the decision about the duration of accreditation. If accreditation will be given for three years, this objective will be changed and activities turned to carry out improvements suggested by the accreditation agency.

2) Parts of the R&D Strategic Plan

Part One

The objectives above (1.1. and 1.2.) are combined and constitute an integral whole. The elements of the activities are:

- (1) Individual research plans of the lecturers for the years 2016-2019, approved by the council of faculty;
- (2) Teaching plans of the lecturers with the thematic topics (provisional titles) prepared for the students in connection with their Diploma and Master Theses;
- (3) Implementation of research forums and student's conferences;
- (4) Implementation of spiritual mentoring, supervision and academic mentoring of the students. Later on mentoring activity will be extended to pastors and chaplains.

A note in regard to the financial aspect: Permanent costs of the new personnel during the time of the project. Institute's own additional funds will be used and additional means from the Nordic Church applied for.

One academic secretary (0,5 – one half time worker who is responsible for coordinating research and editing process of publications) will be needed for the years 2016-2019 and one chaplain (0,25 or 0,5 - another half time worker) will be permanently needed for the years 2017-2019.

Institute's own publication activity. The Institute issues research & study materials through two different series:

- *Proceedings of the Institute of Theology (EELK UI Toimetised)*
- *Text-books of the Institute of Theology (EELK UI õppekirjandus).*

An extended council / editorial board will be formed for the Proceedings. In regard to study materials and text-books emphasis will be laid to our own authors (lecturers, assistant professors).

A note in regard to the financial aspect: Permanent costs of the personnel - one permanent secretary / acting editor will be needed and printing costs calculated.

Part Two

1.3., see above.

In the case the results of institutional accreditation in June 2016 are favourable, a half time (0,5) project secretary for the Theology Master programme in English will start from 2017 who makes clear what are the academic, social, financial, legal preconditions for an English MA program in Theology. Duration of the employment of this new worker is 2017-2019.

The questions that need an answer are:

- (a) Where and who are potential students in the neighbouring Churches;
- (b) Which positions do the neighbouring Churches have in regard to the MA programme in Tallinn;
- (c) To sort out, what kind of practical conditions are need in order to make it possible for them to study in Tallinn during appointed sessions.

A note in regard to the financial aspect: Permanent costs of the new personnel. One project leader secretary (0,5 – half time) is permanently at work from the year 2017. Part of these additional costs are provided by the Institute and part applied for from the Nordic Church.

3) Activities / implementation of the Plan

Part One.

See 1.2. above. As is already stated, our policy of the research and publication activity is to turn from translated study materials to the self produced materials created by the lecturers and students of the Institute in cooperation with Tartu University and other possible partners.
Provisional publication plan:

2016.

New Testament Environment. Series: *Text-books of the IT.*

Lecturers of the Institute in cooperation with different co-workers: (possible candidates for authors; Jonas Jakobson, Kalle Rebane, Ergo Naab, Jaan Lahe, Urmas Nõmmik, Vallo Ehasalu, Silja Härm). Results of student research papers included. Principal investigator and editor: Randar Tasmuth.

2017.

Introduction to the New Testament. Exercises and vocabulary of key-words. Series: *Text-books of the IT.*

Results of student research papers included. Principal investigator and editor: Randar Tasmuth.

2018.

Collection of Studies in Systematic and Practical Theology, Ethics, Pastoral care. Part One. Series: *Proceedings of the Institute of Theology.*

Parts of the Master Theses and practical guidelines and manuals are adapted to be used as study materials. Results of student research papers may be included. Edited by the board of scholars in cooperation with Tartu University. Principal investigators: Thomas-Andreas Pöder and Naatan Haamer.

2019.

Collection of Studies in Systematic and Practical Theology, Ethics, Pastoral care. Part Two. Series: Proceedings of the Institute of Theology.

Parts of the Master Theses and practical guidelines and manuals are adapted to be used as study materials. Results of student research papers included. Edited by the board of scholars in cooperation with Tartu University. Principal investigators: Thomas-Andreas Pöder and Naatan Haamer.

Activities for introducing and developing supervising, spiritual mentoring and academic mentoring of the students (see 1.1. (c) would be extended to four years (2016 – 2019). The three main areas of activities are:

- * Spiritual mentoring: students will be divided into groups of 3 - 4 persons who get together 2 - 3 times a year under the guidance of the chaplain;
- * Supervision: students will be divided into groups of 3 - 4 persons who get together 4 times a year under the guidance of the lecturer of pastoral care;
- * Academic mentoring: two specially appointed persons (a lecturer and a staff member) will meet at first once and later twice a year each student of the institute and discuss / analyse / advise their study process.

Part Two

See above 1.3.

If the activities for creating an International MA programme in English will begin in 2017, the plan will be worked out in detail and finances specified.

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Institute's own funds and resources include running costs of the permanent personnel, infrastructure, and special technical equipment. In addition to that, during the years of the project (2016-2019) part of the wages of the additional workers will be covered by additional own funds of the Institute. In addition to that, additional resources for new personnel are needed. Financial resources duly asked from The Nordic Church (€ **67.308,36**) will be divided between all the activities of Part One (and Part Two, if implemented from 2017).

The funds applied from the Ev.-Lutheran Church in Northern Germany for four years will be distributed as follows:

2016	-	16.000
2017	-	17.654,18
2018	-	17.654,18
2019	-	16.000

	-	67.308,36

During the years 2016 - 2019 sustainability of the activities of the project will be secured and personnel equipped with skills needed for carrying on research and development process.