

The UTS New York City Campus is Now the Main Campus of UTS

Robin James Graham
June 12, 2019



UTS Faculty and Staff at 4 West 43rd Street. The official new main campus for UTS as of July 1st.

The news came that the NY Board of Regents had approved the change of the main campus for UTS from Barrytown, NY to New York City. From July 1, 2019 the new name of the UTS main location will be the UTS New York City Campus located at 4 West 43rd St. Barrytown will be an "instructional site".

The Board of Regents then held its meeting on May 7.

Master Plan Amendment – Unification Theological Seminary - Relocation of main campus from Barrytown, NY to NYC - The Board of Regents voted to 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.

Dr. Spurgin, UTS president, had anticipated the reshuffle of the main campus from Barrytown to 4 W43 and made some personnel changes with a renewed emphasis on the marketing of academic programs, recruitment of students, and student retention.

In October 2018, Dr. Drissa Kone was appointed Director of Enrollment Management. With oversight for Admissions, Recruitment and Student Life, Dr. Kone has been steadily working on the reorganization of the Enrollment Management staff. He remains an Assistant Professor of Ministry.

In October, Dr Spurgin determined to work closely with Dr Kone in recruitment, and he urged the [Board of Trustees](#) to launch a Committee for Institutional Advancement with key functions to support fund-raising, church and alumni relations, internal and external communications, and student recruitment as a top priority. In 2019 that committee, led by trustee Rev. Richard Buessing, has been carefully assessing recruitment imperatives and coming up with strategies and solutions. Rev. Buessing enrolled Naokimi

Ushiroda, [Director of YAYAM - Youth and Young Adult Ministry](#), to help facilitate and guide the committee through the complex issues of recruitment and marketing. As many people know, Naokimi (an MA student at UTS) has a unique talent in helping teams to define goals and responsibilities, and establish accountability. The leadership of the Board in this area has encouraged the UTS administration to make constructive efforts to achieve greater success.

In the staffing of UTS, President Spurgin has made the following changes:

Emiljun Rapada was hired as Director of Recruitment and Marketing

Joy Theriot was appointed Director of Student Life and Interfaith Outreach.

Bob Wagner, the UTS Librarian, has assumed increased greater responsibility for the technical aspects of the UTS Online Learning Management Platform.

UTS-Online is now in its third year and has steadily been growing in popularity. In the summer of 2019 the UTS administration will petition the New York State Education Department to grant permission for a fully online Master of Arts in Religious Studies (MA).

When asked about his vision for the coming academic year Dr. Spurgin said,

"Since being elected in January 2015 as president of UTS, my priority has been to reorganize, restructure and adapt our seminary. There are three areas in which I have invested a lot of prayer, study and planning with UTS stakeholders:

The challenge of the seminary location in Barrytown and the costs to maintain the facility

The need for UTS to offer appropriate programs for a changing world, including fully online degrees

The need to support UTS by: bringing new levels of trust between UTS and the sponsoring church, and extending that confidence to our alumni and friends.

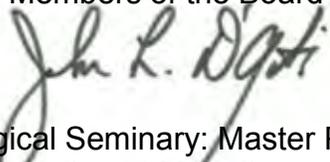
"I have attended several [Association of Theological Schools](#) conferences and seen other seminaries facing similar challenges too. Some have sold real estate, including their main campuses; secondly, seminaries have had to adapt to the needs of the marketplace with remodeled degrees and online opportunities; and thirdly, seminaries have also been faced with changing church demographics with the ensuing challenges of both financial support and relevance to their communities."

"The latest Strategic Plan (2017-2022) has tackled these issues. It also highlights the need for a greater connection in urban outreach to partnering organizations. Being fully present and operational in [4W43](#) will anchor our seminary in service to the city and to the wide diversity of potential students who live throughout its boroughs. I see UTS emerging as an increasingly relevant and significant player in the New York City landscape. A seminary can provide a moral compass to the worlds of politics, business, and not-for-profits too. NYC is a natural location for a forward thinking seminary like UTS. Our relationship with the United Nations, which is only a few blocks from our new home gives UTS the opportunity to engage with the UN vision for achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) by 2030."

"Our courses continue to expand, and our [Doctor of Ministry](#) program is attracting a lot of attention. The [UTS-Online](#) program is continuing to grow and reach out to graduate students worldwide. UTS serves both the needs of the sponsoring church but also the wider needs of a world which can benefit from the leadership and thought of our Founders. The next decade will be an exceptional opportunity for UTS to emerge as a catalyst for peace, prosperity and human development. With God's help our future is bright."



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: 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): 

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.