

Unification Theological Seminary campus in Barrytown on market for \$18 million

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BARRYTOWN, N.Y. >> The 260-acre Unification Theological Seminary campus in the town of Red Hook has been put up for sale.

The asking price: \$18 million.

Seminary President Hugh Spurgin said Friday that the Barrytown campus hasn't been used for undergraduate studies since 2015. The seminary's undergraduate classes are taught in New York City, where the institution has had a presence for 17 years, he said.

"That's where most of our students are," he said.

"We do a one-credit course [in Barrytown] for anyone in any of the master's programs," Spurgin said. "So they come up there on one Saturday during their program ... In order to get their degree, they have to take one class up there because that's still listed with the state of New York and our accrediting body."

The Barrytown property, which has been the Unification Theological Seminary since 1974, is being listed by the real estate firm Marcus and Millichap. The Freeman reported in 1977 that the Unification Church bought the site for \$1.5 million.

[The institution's website](#) says the purchase of the Barrytown property marked start of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's effort to create a seminary for his church.

The real estate listing for the Barrytown property -- which sits between state Route 9G and the Hudson River, west of the village of Red Hook -- says it has a 120,000-square-foot, four-story main building, as well as several ancillary buildings that total more than 150,000 square feet.

The main building has offices, classrooms, guest rooms, dormitory rooms, an infirmary, a two-story gym, a two-story library, a 400-seat auditorium and a 100-seat lecture hall, the listing states.

Marcus and Millichap says the property dates to the 1700s and was purchased by John D. Rockefeller in 1929. It was during Rockefeller's ownership that the main building was constructed, for use by the Christian Brothers, the listing agency says.

The Unification Theological Seminary began offering classes in the fall of 1975 and had 56 students the time, the seminary's website says. In 1980, it says, the seminary added a three-year divinity program "to better prepare students for ministerial leadership."

Moon was viewed by many of his followers as a messiah, but critics, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, characterized his flock as a cult that they called the Moonies.

The Barrytown site was prominently featured in reports about parents seeking to take their children out of the facility, which led Moon's supporters to contend they were victims of religious persecution.

Therse Steward, who was dean of the seminary in 1977, said at the time that the worst acts against the school's students were the "terrible and harrowing" attempts at "deprogramming" by specialists who were hired by parents.

Ultimately, the Unification Theological Seminary grew to become part of the Northern Dutchess community, and by 2005 it had worked with the town of Red Hook and the Winnakee Land Trust to allow a portion of the property to be come part of a trail system.

Moon died in 2012 at age 92.