

Atlantic School of Theology Senate

I was excited to be returning, even briefly, to the campus of Atlantic School of Theology on February 5, 2020. My role is as a new member of the Senate. [N.B. This has been my only meeting to date, because of cancellations of upcoming meetings due to COVID-19].

Atlantic School of Theology is governed through a two-chamber system: a Board of Governors responsible for the overall life of the School, and a Senate responsible for internal discipline and the academic integrity of the School's programs.

The chief role of the Senate is the development and implementation of programs in theological education. These include programmes which prepare persons for entering the ordination stream, as well as other ministries in the church.

In addition, programming is provided for those persons interested in expanding their awareness of theological disciplines for personal growth and development rather than for specific ministry.

The Senate also oversees continuing education options made available at or through the School. Senate membership is broadly representative. This consists of all full-time faculty members, one sessional faculty representative, two alumni representatives, one representative of each of the founding churches, three student representatives, the Library Director, the Academic Dean (Secretary of Senate), and the President (Chair of Senate).

At this February meeting:

- ~Ongoing faculty and librarian reviews
- ~A new search process to begin for a Professor of Scripture Studies with the retirement of Sister Joan Campbell.
- ~Honorary degree recipient selection for presentation at the upcoming [now cancelled] Convocation
- ~Update on the Capital Campaign and the ongoing concerns re: lack of finances
- ~Increase in the offering of online programmes

Like the majority of AST alum, my day-to-day life is lived out in the work of pastoral ministry within a particular community. But arriving on campus as a senator in February, I most deeply appreciated the opportunity to dwell in and among the rich and robust dialogue of the academy, even for a day.

I must note the sadness I feel for the students who have just completed their time at AST, and yet will be short shrifted, due to the pandemic, when it comes to the power of rituals that normally accompany such a momentous occasion. But I have no doubt that such creative and intelligent creatures will devise new ways to mark and celebrate their transition. May it be so.

Kelly Burke