

Summary of Agreement between the United Theological College and Montreal Diocesan Theological College

This is a summary of the main commitments in the Memorandum of Agreement approved by the Boards of Governors of the United Theological College and Montreal Diocesan Theological College in April 2021. This is not a legal document.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum is to set out the terms of agreement between UTC and Dio to explore and plan together for the formation of a single college in Montreal that offers theological education to Anglican, United, and other students. This agreement is both aspirational in its intent and practical in its specific terms and invites each party to enter into a process of mutual discernment that is open to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Dio and UTC acknowledge that they are located on the unceded traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe and the Wabenaki people. They remember this land's history and its Indigenous people in respect, seek to honour their lives, strength and resilience, and ask that God guide all towards reconciliation, justice and peace.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Dio and UTC share a long history of collaboration in theological education since the formation of UTC in 1925, including their participation in the Joint Board of Theological Colleges (also known as the Montreal School of Theology). This collaboration has consisted, over the years, in mutually beneficial arrangements such as combined classes, shared use of space, and coordinated teaching and programming.

Since 2019, UTC has been engaged in a strategic planning and self-study process leading to a renewed commitment to its mission and taking steps to settle debts and reduce its deficit. This resulted, in 2020, in a decision to sell its property at 3521 University, to seek a new location, and pursue new institutional partnerships.

In the same period, Dio saw the advantage of exploring a closer relationship. In 2020, Board members of Dio and UTC engaged in a series of conversations that revealed and reinforced similar visions of formation of leaders for the church and world, a common recognition of the changing context in which both institutions operate, and the need to ensure that theological education is forward-looking and responsive to the times.

The two colleges recognize an alignment in their vision, mission and values. Elements of this alignment include:

- Theological education that combines academic rigour and contextual ministry placements within an ecumenical context
- Theological education that serves both lay and ordained people in the church
- Theological education that is enriched by diversity, including of gender, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, gender and sexual identity, and economic background

- Theological education that takes place in an environment that is open to and affirming of LGBTQ+ students
- Theological education that values French and bilingual education and prepares students for ministry informed by the cultures and context of Quebec.

The two colleges also recognize that where their visions for their work do not align, there is room for mutual enrichment and growth.

AGREEMENT PERIOD

Dio and UTC shall enter a strategic alliance lasting initially from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 (“the Agreement Period”). During the Agreement Period, the two colleges will operate as a combined theological college (“the Combined Entity”) located in Dio’s existing building at 3475 University, Montreal, QC.

The purpose of the Agreement Period shall be to explore the creation of a single college that provides for theological education for students from Anglican, United, and other backgrounds and does this work in collaboration with McGill University, The Presbyterian College, the Montreal School of Theology, and other such partners as may be deemed desirable. The name “UTC at Dio” will be informally used during the Agreement Period to refer to the United Church studies program at Dio.

The two colleges make the following COMMITMENTS during the Agreement Period:

Montreal Diocesan Theological College

- The Principal will serve as the head of the Combined Entity with a mandate to embody its aspirations and values, and to lead efforts to articulate and achieve a common vision and mission.
- The Principal will oversee the resources, academic integrity, relationships and reputation of the Combined Entity, including the supervision of faculty and staff, oversight of a curriculum to prepare students for United Church ministry, relating to The United Church of Canada, and the recruitment of United Church students.
- Dio will offer the necessary courses and other programming sufficient for a United Church *testamur* to be granted in the United Church of Canada.
- Dio will offer employment to UTC’s Director of Pastoral Studies with the title of Director of United Church Studies for the duration of the Agreement Period. The mandate of the Director of United Church Studies shall be to maintain a robust United Church ethos in the Combined Entity and to lead United Church educational programming.
- Dio will create a United Church Studies Council with responsibility for United Church academic and formation program, assisting with recruitment strategies, and development of French language programming.
- Dio will ensure the continuation of the Director of French Leadership Development position and the ongoing provision of French-language and bilingual programming for theological education.

United Theological College:

- Students enrolled at UTC as of 1 July 2021 and students who enrol after this date shall become students enrolled at Dio, with all the rights and responsibilities of Dio students.
- UTC agrees to transfer funds to Dio needed for the operations of the Combined Entity, and to contribute proceeds from fundraising and donations to the flourishing of the Combined Entity.

GOVERNANCE

During the Agreement Period, the Combined Entity will be governed and overseen by the Corporation and Board of Governors of Montreal Diocesan Theological College, operating in compliance with its Constitution and Act of Incorporation.

UTC will continue to exist as an independent legal entity with its own Board of Governors and will be responsible for maintaining this legal existence, including the costs of compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.

The principal of Dio will be invited to all meetings of the UTC Board of Governors and the United Church Studies Council and given voice but not vote. Likewise, one member of the UTC Board of Governors shall be invited to meetings of the Dio Board of Governors and given voice but not vote.

FUTURE PLANNING AND END OF AGREEMENT

During the Agreement Period, Dio and UTC will conduct a strategic planning process to research and determine the conditions and resources needed to create a single entity with a sustainable future, and to discern whether this is feasible and desirable. Strategic planning will give due attention to vision, mission, and resources, as well as to critical measures of success and other relevant issues.

Dio and UTC recognize that as a result of this strategic planning process the formation of a single legal entity may not be deemed feasible or desirable. Each party to the agreement may give written notice to the other by 30 April 2022 that it withdraws from any future relationship at the end of the Agreement Period. It is understood that each party will have opportunity to discuss and reach such a decision independently of the other.

In the event of a decision to withdraw from any future relations, it is agreed that Dio will assume responsibility for teaching out current students in the United Church Studies program at its own expense and ensuring that the academic program for these students meets the requirements of *testamur* for The United Church of Canada.