

# Deputies Theological Training (Curators, DC)

## Report to Synod 2021

### 1. Executive summary

We praise the Lord for the students that He has called to the ministry in the last few years, He has blessed the FRCSA greatly to be able to have 7 theological students at various stages of tuition. We are also grateful for all the work that was performed by Rev Hannes Breytenbach and Rev Jopie van der Linden who functioned consistently as lecturers and mentors in the last few years.

We had guest lecturers from CRTS and other professors to lecture our students and develop them to the best of our ability. Our relationship with CRTS has grown significantly over the past few years and we believe that it is a gift from God to train our theological students to a high standard in line with the profile approved by Synod 2006.

The Deputies Curators (DC) have been in a very dynamic environment to determine and implement theological training in the FRCSA with very limited resources. In this report the Synod will find our journey over the last few years, with a proposal to return to the basic components of a Bachelor's degree (languages), and a Master's in Divinity. Several other paths and trajectories have been followed with limited success. The basic model makes provision for various ways of preparing a student to commence theological studies. Such provisions will have to be determined on a student-by-student basis to ensure every competent and motivated student's successful completion of his studies. This implies a careful and consultative consideration of the student's family, educational and socio-economic contexts and ways to overcome them in a sustainable way.

Another significant departure from our previous report is that the appointment of an anchor theologian for curators has been abandoned in the short term. Our focus has shifted to a solid academic tuition, strong mentorship of the students under our care, and to ensure that students have a well-structured Pastoral Training Program (PTP) during summer holidays and university vacations.

The event of Covid 19 has brought significant shifts in the education community and at CRTS as well. Even though "face-to-face" studies in theology remain the most effective and powerful method in tuition, it is most likely that hybrid and blended models of education that include online tuition, are here to stay. DC are part of the Distance Education Committee with CRTS, the CanRC and the FRCA, our sister churches, with the mandate to develop new modalities and methodologies in theological education.

This report consists of three parts:

- An overview of how DC have implemented decisions and mandates by Synod 2017 (Sections 2 and 3);

- Proposals for future directions in the development of theological training models that respond to the Profile of a Minister of the Word, as adopted by Synod 2006 (Sections 4-11);
- Annexures A-D

## 2. Synod 2017 instructions and results

The numbering in Section 2 follows the *original numbering in the Synod 2017 Report* and *original text appears in italics*.

2 *To set an APS of 25 as the admission requirement for theological studies in the FRCSA.* DC have maintained the requirement of an APS of 25, but also required from all applicants 2-3 psychometric tests to ensure that they have at least the aptitude, competency and intellectual skills to follow the studies successfully:

- a) *Personality test*, to ensure that the student's personality generally fits the requirements of ministry and to indicate in which area students need more growth; where relevant students were tested and results were positive; in future this test will be compulsory for all applicant students;
- b) *Aptitude test*, to ensure that the student's aptitude fits the requirements of the ministry; and
- c) *National Bench Mark test* to ensure the student has the necessary academic skills for theological studies. This test applies to students who have not yet been admitted for applicable courses to a university, or when DC are in doubt about the student's learning ability.

3 *Prospective students for theological studies must apply for access through admission procedures set by curators.*

A pamphlet has been developed to inform prospective students about the nature of the theological training programme and requirements for admission (Annexure A). This pamphlet was disseminated as widely as possible in the bond of churches. An application form has been designed to obtain relevant information from students. The application form for financial support has been updated. The following applications have been received and processed through the admission procedures: Jakob Mars, Jonatan Boon, Gwilym Hesselman, Arjan van der Meer, Marco van Rensen, Johann Snijder. Rofhiwa Rampabana was already a registered student.

4 *In cases where deputies curators and mentor(s) conclude that the applicant for theological studies lacks basic competencies for theological studies, the student will follow a foundation course that is determined by the curators and pass this course successfully.*

The foundation course has not been designed and completed. This arrangement has not been necessary for any of the new students.

5. *Theological students are to follow one of the trajectories mentioned below:*

*5.1. Trajectory A: Three years BA language studies (Hebrew III, Greek III mandatory and English and at least Latin I advised) at an accredited tertiary education institution (university) close to a FRCSA congregation.*

*This will be followed by dedicated language tuition (Hebrew and Greek) for six months since the SA academic year ends in November and the Canadian academic year starts in August.*

*Deputies should ensure that the student's language proficiency is sufficient for entrance in Hamilton.*

*This will be followed by a four-year MDiv course at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton. This will include practical work in South Africa during the CRTS summer recess.*

- Two students completed the required Biblical language qualifications online at the International BibleMesh Institute, for entry into the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS): Jakob Mars for the full MDiv programme, and Rofhiwa Ramphabana for elective courses. Both were accepted by CRTS. They applied for a Study Visa from the Canadian government to commence studies in January 2021. The approval process will hopefully be completed by April 2021. The students will only be able to travel after the Canadian government has opened its borders, due to Covid-19.
- Five students are at various stages of their language studies, of which probably three, Arjan van der Meer, Jonatan Boon and Marco van Renssen, aim to enter the CRTS MDiv programme in 2022.
- Students are made aware of the need for English proficiency, for which the international Toefl exams will be used (as required by CRTS). DC will assist students in acquiring the necessary levels. The two students who were accepted at CRTS did not have to do the Toefl exam.

5.2. *Trajectory B: A BTh study at either George Whitfield Theological College or Mukhanyo Theological College (3 or 4 years).*

*This will be followed by dedicated language tuition (Hebrew and Greek) for a minimum of one year.*

*This will be followed by facilitating the content of the MDiv CRTS (Hamilton), possibly to be followed by a conclusion at CRTS in Hamilton for one or two semesters.*

*Deputies should ensure that the duration of trajectory B should not be much longer than trajectory A (7,5 years) by preventing duplications in trajectory B.*

Two students have followed trajectory B in an amended form to suit their specific situation.

- One student has obtained a BTh at Mukhanyo Theological College and completed Greek II and Hebrew II courses at the University of Pretoria. He then followed the CRTS MDiv courses in Pretoria, plus mentoring for practical work and sermon making, to a total of nine years. The student withdrew from the programme at the end of 2019.
- One student has completed BTh at Mukhanyo and has completed BibleMesh online Greek II and Hebrew II in 2020. From 2019 he followed video-recorded courses of the CRTS MDiv programme in Pretoria. He has enrolled for elective courses at CRTS from September 2020 online.

6. *To mandate Deputies Curators to work towards the appointment of an anchor theologian in cooperation with a local congregation of the FRCSA, who will ordain him as their pastor with a special task (by making use of either Trajectory A or B).*

- Since 2017 Rev Breytenbach has partly fulfilled the role of anchor theologian (AT) by teaching with CRTS recordings, organising guest lectures, and guiding

spiritual growth, e.g. by involving students in the pastors' seminars/ conferences.

- In 2018 discussions were held with Rev Pieter Boon as one candidate who could be appointed, although only part-time. This discussion was not concluded as the consistory of Pretoria-Maranata was reluctant to approve the arrangement.
  - In 2018 discussions were held with consistory FRC Johannesburg which in principle agreed to call Rev van Alten if funding were secured. Discussions were then held with Deputies Churches Abroad of the FRCA, for additional funding. Deputies FRCA could not guarantee funding due to other commitments of the FRCA to foreign churches. Rev van Alten accepted a call to FRC Pretoria in May 2018.
  - DC decided to develop a framework and task description for the Anchor Theologian and to continue searching for an anchor theologian. However, as indicated in Section DC do not foresee the need for an anchor theologian over the medium term.
7. *To mandate Deputies Curators to continue with the current Mentorship program during the period 2018-2020, in which Rev. J. van der Linden is made available for one day per week. Deputies Curators have to report to the next synod as for the need for the continuation of the mentorship program in its current form.*
- Rev Breytenbach has led the mentorship programme since 2017 through teaching using the CRTS video material and other material, and through mentor discussions. He also was an auditor for the classes at CRTS for which the two FRCSA students were enrolled.
  - Rev van der Linden continued to co-mentor two students, through teaching and discussions about the students' spiritual growth.
  - Rev Van Alten had classes with one student on practical work: Catechism Class, Home Visit, Planning and Time Management
  - The following general guest lectures were organised in collaboration with CRTS:
    - Prof Jason Van Vliet 2017: Systematic Theology – The Church
    - Prof Arjan De Visser 2018: Practical Subjects – Preaching and Pastoral Work
    - Prof Ted Van Raalte 2019: Introduction to the Church Order
    - Rev Wildeboer 2020: online Introduction to Missions and Evangelism
    - Prof Dolf Britz 2020: online Method of Church History
  - The following guest lectures were organised for senior students:
    - Dr Bruce Button: 2019 Advanced Study Skills
    - Prof Dolf Britz: 2019 South African Church History
    - Dr Pieter Boon: 2019 African and SA Mission History
  - In view of the proposed amendments to the tuition programme as discussed under points 4 and 5 below, the role of mentors will be adapted if Synod 2021 accepts the proposals. Alternatively, mentors will be allocated tasks as required.

- It is proposed that guest lecturers continue as part of a summer holiday program involving all SA students.
  - Guest lecturers will be used to address identified gaps in students' development, including languages.
  - Local courses identified with CRTS will be developed and presented in South Africa
8. *To mandate Deputies Curators to continue with the Project Curators Support to Churches during the period 2018-2020, in which the churches contribute to pay as per agreement of the costs related to this project.*
- Rev Breytenbach continued his work in the mission field in the Tshwane municipal area, with regard to assisting with the tuition of office bearers and church members until 2019, as follows:
    - working with the Mission Team on revising mission policies;
    - supporting the Mission Team in planning;
    - organising training on critical aspects by guest speakers;
    - organising a mission conference with the missionaries;
    - attending Mission Board meetings;
    - preaching and tuition (for example on the Church and the Church Order) in the mission field and the instituted churches. Preaching and tuition normally occurred two to three times per month in the mission churches; and
    - preaching once or twice per month in the Afrikaans-speaking churches.
  - Due to the decreasing financial support for mission work from the Netherlands since 2018, the Mission Board could not fund Rev Breytenbach anymore and ended his involvement in the mission work in 2019. The result was that the financial burden for Rev Breytenbach was directly cast upon DC without any allocated funding.
9. *To present on an annual basis a tuition opportunity for office bearers, a men's conference, and a pastors' seminar.*
- Rev Breytenbach was involved in the tuition of elders in the Tshwane Mission Field and with the Pastors seminar and retreat of 2019.
  - The mission board of FRC Bellville and Belhar have initiated training of teaching elders, in which several church members and theological students became involved. The model of teaching elders is developing in a way that DC can support, as is requested below in Section 8 below.
  - Pastors Seminars were held as follows:
    - 2017: 500 years Reformation
    - 2018: 400 years Dordt
    - 2019: Church Discipline
10. *To financially support approved students according to the parameters set by synod for the study towards the ministry of the Word, in accordance with Article 19 CO and the synodical regulations.*

Deputies Curators have financially assisted seven students through funding from Art 19 as and when they applied, to an amount of R865,252. We are most thankful to God that He

provided the means through his love in the congregations, so that we could assist where necessary. Statements for 2018-20 are included in Section 10.

11. *To partly approve the budgets for the period 2018 – 2020 as proposed in the report of Deputies for Theological Tuition:*

11.1. *For Article 19 CO (needy theological students): Annexure C on page 26 of the Report of Deputies Curators.*

11.2. *For Deputies Curators: Annexure D on page 27 of the Report of Deputies Curators. Synod however decided not to approve the budget for an anchor theologian, but to increase the contributions of the churches for Deputies Curators as far as possible according to the sustainability model. (See Art. 40 for detailed amounts).*

*Important note: The budget, as approved by synod, is not sufficient to cover the cost of an anchor theologian. In order to make decision 6 (above) possible, deputies should search for other financial support sources.*

*Ground:*

*Synod decided that, by approving the proposed budget for an anchor theologian, the required financial congregational contributions would exceed the financial capabilities of the congregations.*

- Curators could not manage their mandate within the constraints of a limited budget. Nevertheless, they realised that the churches trusted them to use these funds for the optimal development of theological tuition, providing an environment and structures for students and mentors to grow and work, and to be held accountable for expenditures to the churches.
- We are also very thankful for the financial support that was provided by our sister churches in Australia; the Lord who governs his church world-wide, has made us benefit from the care and love of our brothers and sisters in Australia; without these gifts it would be impossible to execute our mandate.
- We are also most thankful to the CRTS that through a Memorandum of Cooperation is providing access to their tuition programme through video-recording of their lectures, provision of guest lecturers at limited costs and especially in funding the living costs of our students while they study at CRTS.
- It must be noted that, while the budget as approved by synod was not sufficient to cover the cost of an anchor theologian, the same applied to the costs of the mentors, particularly the unbudgeted full-time costs of Rev Breytenbach after the Mission Board ended their contribution.
- As is shown in the financial statements, two cost items significantly impacted on the subsequent deficit for 2020-21 and their resolution led to a crisis with Deputies Art. 11:
  - *The ending of financial contribution of R250,000 per year by the Mission Board, which made the curators responsible for these funds as part of Rev Breytenbach's stipend;*
  - *The shortfall on Rev Breytenbach's retirement funds, which resulted in a request from the Retirement Committee of the FRC Pretoria to curators in terms of the Memorandum of Cooperation of 26 February 2016, to contribute an additional cash amount of R600,000 to the retirement fund; curators agreed to this payment as the request was urgent, although they considered the retirement fund as a responsibility of the church federation.*
- As the income from the churches was at that stage not sufficient for the additional cost of R250,000, curators through the Treasurer approached

Deputies Art 11 for a loan of R250,000, which was approved; this amount would be repaid from 2020 funding from the FRCA;

- After payment of the additional retirement funds of R600,000, curators experienced immediate cash-flow problems due to the monthly stipend of Rev Breytenbach; the Treasurer then agreed to arrange a temporary additional loan from Art 11, resulting in a total loan of R890,000. This loan would also show a considerable positive bank account, which was required by the Canadian government when our students applied for a study visa.
- As agreed with Deputies Art 11, Curators will have to repay the loan with Deputies Art 11 of which R600,000,00 was unplanned during the Covid 19 lockdown. This additional loan resulted in a situation where Deputies Art 11 had to revise their ability to execute their mandate, and to adjust their future planning; this will have an impact on their ability to support needy churches in future;
- The matter of the irregular loan was discussed with Deputies Art 11 and it was agreed that curators would report to synod 2021 with a request for sufficient funding that would enable curators to pay back the loan through instalments over the next three years. The repayment is reflected in the budget for the period 2021-24 (Section 10). We encourage the Synod to apply their minds and if they can find a better way to deal with the unfortunate loan, we will appreciate their wisdom and determination in this regard.
- In order to address future shortfalls based on Rev Breytenbach's stipend, curators advised consistory of FRC Pretoria, who had formally called Rev Breytenbach as missionary with special tasks, to place Rev Breytenbach on retirement; if and when implemented this extraordinary cost item on curators' budget would diminish and allow repayment of the loan.
- Consistory of FRC Pretoria in consultation with Rev Breytenbach agreed to curators' request and a process of retirement was initiated; however, at this stage Rev Breytenbach's retirement funds are inadequate, and it was agreed between FRC Pretoria and curators to find a solution for the shortfall. A number of meetings between FRC Pretoria, DC, Art 11 and the retirement commission have been held, but no conclusion reached yet. This is in fact a legacy problem and should be addressed by the FRC of South Africa as a collective.
- **Synod 2021 is humbly but urgently requested to find solutions for the loan from Deputies Art 11 and the costs of Rev Breytenbach's retirement.**

*12. To assess the churches as follows for Deputies Curators: for 2018: R 650,000, for 2019: R680,000 and for 2020: R680,000 to be collected according to the differentiated contribution model.*

We thank the Lord that He has opened the hearts of the church members to contribute to the increased costs for theological tuition! This happened both in the way of prayer and by contributing financially. The financial statements for the period 2017-2020 are included in Section 10.

*13. To assess the churches for the calendar years 2018-2020 for CO art. 19 (needy theological students) with the equivalent of an amount per member of R 140 for 2018; R 220 for 2019 and R 240 for 2020 (according to the old system, to be calculated for the various congregations according to the differentiated contribution model).*

Curators thank the Lord that the required amounts were also received, which enabled us to fund students, and to budget for the costs of enrolment and attendance at CRTS. The

financial statements for the period 2017-2020 are included in the general financial statements appear in Section 10.

14. *To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2018 or beginning 2019.*

The Indaba was held on 1-2 March 2019. The 2019 report of curators is attached as Annexure B.

The discussions on theological training at the Indaba included the following issues and proposals:

- Churches in general had started contributing positively to the increased budget for theological training.
- The Lord has given us at least six new students from the Afrikaans-speaking churches, which resulted in new planning by the curators.
- The Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary has concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation with curators which provided for our students' enrolment at CRTS and sharing costs. In the meantime, CRTS allowed curators to video record lectures, for use with students who are not able to study for four years in Hamilton.
- Curators had initiated a process of finding an Anchor Theologian, but not called someone yet.
- Future funding from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia seems to become less secure due to a new funding model in the FRCA. However, FRCA was still dedicated to support the FRCSA theological tuition.

### 3. Meetings

Deputies Curators met on the following dates:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - 3 May 2018  | - 24 Jun 2019 with Prof T van Raalte, CRTS Dean and guest lecturer |
| - 24 May 2018   |  |
| - 12 Jul 2018, with Prof Arjan de Visser, CRTS                    | - 25 Jul 2019  |
| - 19 Jul 2018, with Prof Arjan de Visser and prospective students | - 5 Aug 2019   |
| - 23 Aug 2018   | - 3 Oct 2019   |
| - 25 Oct 2018   | - 24 Oct 2019  |
| - 22 Nov 2018   | - 30 Jan 2020  |
| - 24 Jan 2019   | - 27 Feb 2020  |
| - 14 Mar 2019   | - 17 Aug 2020  |
| - 23 May 2019   | - 8 Oct 2020   |
|   | - 19 Nov 2020  |
|   | - 26 January 2021  |
| -   |  |



## 4. Programme Plan 2021-27

### 4.1 Problems with the two-trajectory model of training

The two-trajectories model that was accepted at Synod 2017 was logical at that stage for the following reasons:

- The few Afrikaans-speaking applicant students always came from schools that prepared them for university tuition (BA Languages) and the successful student would be accepted at CRTS.
- Applicant students from communities where the school system did not prepare them adequately for access to universities and where other contextual problems made studying at university level a major challenge, would be accommodated through Trajectory B. This trajectory made provision for an academically less-demanding route, covering less tuition material over more or less the same number of years as Trajectory A.
- The leading factors for the decision to offer Trajectory B were the unequal contexts and opportunities at the beginning of the study trajectory (see point 4.5 below), rather than equality in outcomes to ensure the churches would receive the best ministers of the Word.

DC now propose that planning of future tuition must in principle remove the *inherent* inequality in the structure of two trajectories towards the ministry, and therefore in its outcomes. The two trajectories approach does not result in equal capabilities and spiritual formation of students at the end of the trajectory. Curators believe that the two-trajectory choice disadvantages both students and churches, for the following reasons:

- a. The two-trajectory model is based on the assumption that students from the mission field would inevitably start at a lower and more general level of BTh tuition, e.g. at Mukhanyo Theological College. One reason would be the weak educational system in the students' communities, which would not enable them to enter a formal university. Another reason would be the family and social context, which are not amenable to studying. Living in the townships thus adds a significant challenge to the students, as will be discussed below again. After completing two years at Mukhanyo Theological College or George Whitfield College students should master Hebrew I and II and Greek I and II at a university. This would enable them to enter the MDiv programme offered by mentors in South Africa. If possible, the students would go to CRTS to follow elective courses during one or two semesters. These students thus start at a lower level, only master two years of biblical languages, and then follow a two year programme that is in fact a reduction of the four-year programme of CRTS. Thus these students do not get the advantages of a) a more comprehensive and intensive theological training, both at undergraduate and MDiv level; b) of being members of an international student peer group community; and c) doing practical work in English-speaking and "normally-functioning" congregations under mentorship of a well-trained local mentor. The question also remains how many mentors will be available in South Africa to teach the MDiv course with or without video material from CRTS. Lastly, the student will not get a

formal qualification, which disadvantages him if he is not called by a congregation and has to look for employment.

- b. What is problematic in the decision to start at a lower level, is that it is assumed that these students will inevitably end in a mission church in South Africa. This assumption is short-sighted, and a 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. Curators believe that it is the Lord who will determine where He will send his servants. Furthermore, the reality is that mission churches are in fact more demanding on a minister of the Word than an institutionalised church, as mission churches live in a complex socio-economic context and do not have a consistory to assist the missionary. By allowing students to follow trajectory B, these churches will not receive the best-trained ministers that they deserve as the body of Christ.
- c. A factor that weighs heavily on the considerations by DC is the need of the churches as the first priority. Planning for theological training should not only involve students and their challenges and needs, but even more the congregations that will be served by the student after completion of the studies. From the beginning of DC's planning of theological tuition in 2006, the needs of the church of Christ, as much as the students' needs, were the guiding principle,. It would be irresponsible to give the churches ministers of the Word who have not been adequately trained.
- d. Students from other congregations will obtain a formal BA with 3 years of languages and other subjects, and are then eligible for four years of formal tuition at CRTS, an internationally recognised seminary, with a well-developed study programme, five professors and more supporting staff, and other contextual advantages. Another advantage is that the successful student may be called to any sister church in the world.
- e. While the two-trajectory approach aims at providing equal opportunities for disadvantaged young men, it could be interpreted as discriminatory, as the outcome remains unequal. Deputies Curators strongly believe that disadvantages can be resolved in better ways within a single theological training framework. Simultaneously, DC realise that a single model will set many challenges, and that they will have to provide for the needs of disadvantaged students.
- f. Since Synod 2017 opportunities for tuition in languages and MDiv have considerably increased, offering variations in the methods of tuition that can accommodate students with a weaker educational background, and bring them at the same level at a BA level, as will be explained in the next sections.

## **4.2 Proposed approach towards theological training 2021-27**

In principle DC propose for the future to offer one generic basic theological training. Nevertheless, DC realise that this model must be able to address the persisting disadvantages and challenges of some students. The proposed generic theological training will include support programmes and programme adaptations to address challenges of individual students. The theological training model therefore consists of a core component (BA and MDiv) with amendments and adaptations where appropriate and needed to provide the best ministers to the churches:

- *Undergraduate programme*: all students complete a BA with Biblical Languages at a registered university, selected in consultation with curators. Students who already

have a B-degree, can complete Biblical language studies via BibleMesh or similar on-line programmes approved by CRTS. Support programmes are developed for students when needed, e.g. to achieve university admission levels.

- *MDiv programme*: students enrol at CRTS for the full MDiv programme in which *as much as possible* Face-to-Face (F2F) or classroom tuition is followed, while online tuition is used *when necessary*.
- Students do not start with a *choice* in the trajectory that they want to follow, but follow one that is designed by DC. DC and the mentors will facilitate adaptations in consultation with CRTS and the student to accommodate challenges that cannot be overcome through normal F2F tuition. The proposed approach could be a combination of F2F and online, called hybrid tuition.
- Curators have decided to limit the choice for MDiv to the CRTS, thereby excluding other institutions, for the following reasons:
  - Since the Theologische Universiteit Kampen (TUK), of the Gereformeerde Kerk Vrijgemaakt (GKv) in the Netherlands conforms with the decisions of their synod to open the office of minister and elder for women, and in general accepts the underlying hermeneutical approaches, curators recommend that students will not be allowed to follow their theological studies at TUK. Such theological tuition should not be recognised by the FRCSA.
  - CRTS is the only theological seminary in our international bond of churches that belongs to the churches. CRTS offers tuition to several students from China, Korea, South America and Africa. This seminary is also used by our sister churches in Australia. The teaching and spiritual development of the students is in line with the FRCSA synod 2006 decision on the profile and outcomes needed for the ministry.
  - Based on this understanding, curators have concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation with CRTS that fits the specific needs of the SA students and optimises the type of theological tuition that is pursued and developed by DC. It ensures that the SA churches receive the best-trained pastors that they deserve as church of Christ.
  - Sending all our students for MDiv at CRTS ensures that they become part of a world-wide fellowship of students and pastors functioning within our bond of churches and sister churches. This promotes unity in the church, both in SA and internationally. Particularly for the SA churches with their cultural variety of congregations, this unity is of prime importance.
  - Part of the agreement with CRTS, and also required in study visa applications is the condition that South African students return to South Africa to fill vacancies. Only if such vacancies do not exist, is the student allowed to accept calls from other churches.
- Brother Ronald Meeske and Rev Hannes Breytenbach have been involved with brothers of CRTS and of the FRCA in the Distance Education Committee of CRTS, for the past few years. Because of Covid-19 a hybrid mode of teaching was used during the fall and spring semesters (Sep 2020 - May 2021). Although the preference is still face-to-face instruction, circumstances may prevent some students from studying in Hamilton (especially students from abroad), and online instruction may be an option

for them. Therefore the Board of CRTS mandated the Senate and the Distance Education Committee to continue working on the implementation of a distance education program:

“The Distance Education Committee gave an extensive report on its work. Due to COVID-19, CRTS has moved ahead with a hybrid method of teaching for at least the fall semester, and probably for the 2020-21 academic year. Yet this report considers the long-term desirability of teaching at least some of our students via distance education. The committee recommended approving a guiding principle for distance education that: “CRTS should make an accredited, hybrid mode of its programs available to prospective students when a good argument can be made that this is the best option available for their particular circumstances.” Face-to-face instruction is extremely valuable because tuition for the ministry involves whole person growth. Being part of a seminary community and participating in the spiritual formation program are critical parts of CRTS’ program, and these things are difficult to replicate on-line. Nevertheless, there are students who cannot get a Canadian visa, or who cannot come to Canada because of extenuating circumstances such as health, persecution, etc. There may also be circumstances where there are significant differences between the cultural context and the standard of living in a student’s home country and Canada. In such circumstances it may be necessary or preferable to teach students from a distance. The Board mandated the Senate and the Distance Education Committee to continue working on the implementation of a distance education program, and to provide a brief update on their work in January 2021, and a full report to the Board in September 2021. ”

- The practical implementation of DC’s proposal for a single training model is discussed in more detail in the following sections.
- At this stage, the DC submit a principled proposal to the synod. The proposed model or approach will be further discussed with the churches within the next year.

### **4.3 Admission requirements**

As was decided by the previous synod, a man who wants to enter the ministry, must approach the curators with a statement of intention or application form early before the study programme starts. Curators assess the applicant through a personal meeting, consultations with the person’s pastor and consistory and 2-3 psychometric tests conducted by a qualified person. The admission requirement of an APS of 25 remains. Such an APS would allow the applicant student to enrol at a local university. Young men who intend to study theology should preferably be identified in Grade 11 so that they can be assisted in preparation for the studies and to ensure their academic performance allows them university entrance. In addition, prospective students must be aware that the closing date for enrolment at universities is usually before 1 September of the year preceding the studies. Universities generally do not accept late applications. Thus, the meeting with DC and the tests should take place before June of the year preceding the studies. Where contextual factors exist, curators will support or advise the applicant to overcome challenges and eventually to enable him to enrol at a university.

#### 4.4 The generic study trajectory

The dual model adopted at the 2017 Synod would be changed to a single trajectory, but with adaptations to address challenges that cannot be overcome. Typical trajectory models are as follows:

##### Standard trajectory

- A prospective student applies to DC to be allowed into the programme. He completes the necessary documentation and meets with DC to plan his trajectory and to do the tests.
- If the applicant's application is approved, he is assisted in enrolling at a local university close to his home congregation. The **university is selected in consultation with the curators**. This will allow for proper mentoring, preferably by his home pastor. Also, as the curators aim to develop a student community, students will be encouraged to study at the same university where possible. This will develop peer group strengths and a shared burden of remaining true to the Word of God and the Confessions.
- Curators appoint a mentor to assist the student in two ways:
  - Academic development (theologian)
  - Spiritual formation (pastor of student's congregation)
- The student completes his BA with Biblical languages, and other relevant subjects in 3-4 years, and obtains a formal qualification needed to enrol at CRTS.
- If the applicant already has a recognised B-degree, he may either enrol at a university or follow online BibleMesh courses in Hebrew I-III and Greek I-III which are accepted by CRTS.
- The student prepares for admission to CRTS. Because CRTS studies start in September, while the student finishes in October/November of the previous year, the student will be offered additional classes in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English to ensure he is at the required standard for CRTS. Of importance here is the use of this additional tuition to introduce the student to the methodologies that are used at CRTS, which may differ from the ones at South African universities.
- The student enrolls at CRTS and travels to Hamilton, Canada. He follows the four-year MDiv programme but will do his Pastoral Training Programme (PTP) in South Africa, or in Canada if advised by CRTS. The PTP will last two months per year, and will enable the student to remain in contact with his own congregation.
- The student completes his MDiv and returns to South Africa. If there are no vacancies in the FRCSA, the student can be called by any sister church world-wide.

##### Hybrid model

- The student obtains a BA Degree with Biblical Languages as described above.
- The student enrolls at CRTS for the MDiv programme and is accepted.
- If the student cannot travel to Canada for reasons that are beyond his or the curators or churches' ability, the student can follow the hybrid model. Two typical reasons could be:
  - If the Canadian government does not approve his application for a study visa, the student can then apply for a five month Temporary Residence Visa, which is easier

to obtain, and study one semester at CRTS, the next semester online in South Africa, etc, until the full MDiv programme has been followed. The student obtains a qualification that enables him to be called anywhere. However, such students need intensive mentoring during their studies in order to manage the demands of a hybrid course.

- If the student's family conditions, or his health do not allow him to travel overseas, the student enrolls at CRTS but follows the online programme. He is assisted by his mentor and engages with CRTS and its student community as much as possible.
- CRTS is currently considering and studying the various alternatives within the hybrid model and is in the process of accreditation with the Canadian Association of Theological Seminaries. As new opportunities arise, the model will be adapted. First choice, however, remains the F2F tuition at CRTS.

#### **4.5 Contextual factors that may impact on the study trajectory and how DC intend to assist**

The following are examples of situations where DC will assist the applicants or students in order to obtain the necessary qualifications.

- *An applicant wants to enter the theological study programme, but does not have a matric certificate with an APS of 25.* DC will encourage the applicant to rewrite matric. If in doubt about the applicant's academic or personal ability to follow the study programme, the applicant may be psychometrically tested.
- *The applicant has an APS of 25 but is not ready for a formal BA study at a recognised university.* DC will assist the applicant to prepare himself for formal studies. This can occur by advising additional or bridging tuition at a recognised institution or through a contracted mentor/tutor; or by enrolling for fewer courses during the first year at university; or by providing additional support during the formal studies. The implication of the latter is that curators would appoint a mentor or tutor, e.g. a final year student. Students with such challenges may also be encouraged to do the BA degree in four years
- *Interested young men want to apply for entry into the DC's study programme but are not aware of time requirements.* Young men in the churches must be made aware of the trajectory early enough for them to enrol at a local university. It must be stressed that most university application dates close in July or August, for the following years. This means that interested young men must apply to curators before May of the preceding year, so that the necessary assessment and preparations can be made in time. The revised brochure, if approved by Synod 2021, will be widely disseminated in all churches (Annexure C). DC also intend to visit the various congregations for a presentation on theological tuition.
- *The applicant experiences challenges that may arise from his family situation, such as limited space for studies, noise and transport.* This is a general problem with students from the townships. DC or mentors will discuss this challenge with the applicant and his parents/household. The issue will also be part of the discussion within the churches over the next years. DC recommend that a student should report to a study centre with

support to facilitate an environment conducive to learning with onsite support, for example at the Reformational Study Centre.

- *The applicant is uncertain or afraid of going to Canada to study at CRTS.* Culture shock is a known phenomenon among African students and cannot be ignored. Students will be made aware of the necessity to move to Canada to follow the MDiv programme in the brochure, through discussions with DC at the beginning of their language studies, and through presentations and contact with visiting CRTS professors. By including the overseas studies as a normal part of the studies from the beginning, and involving students who have been at CRTS, students will be less reluctant to go to Hamilton after concluding their BA degree studies.
- *The application for a Study Visa for entry into Canada is a complex and demanding process and students are uncertain how to apply.* DC will contract a legal firm specialising in immigration in Canada to represent the student in his application. For example, the law firm REKAI in Toronto represented the two students who applied in 2020, and submitted the application on their behalf. From the process through which the two students have gone, it is clear that such a contract is the only way to have a chance of success. For future students, a similar appointment will be made.
- *A student is not able to travel due to health or family problems, or cannot get a study visa due to such problems.* CRTS offers the opportunity to follow their programme online. While studying online, the possibility of going to Hamilton will be continuously investigated. Relevant decisions will be taken in consultation with DC, who will make provision for an effective support system.
- *Covid-19 prevents South Africans to enter Canada.* Indeed Covid-19 has created special circumstances for foreign students. Currently most foreign students of CRTS study on-line. South African students attend on-line classes in real-time, which allows them to participate in the classroom situation. We pray that the Lord will ultimately open up borders and opportunities to travel.
- It can be considered to get all students who cannot go to CRTS and who study on-line, together in one locality with a mentor, which can assure that the tuition is in line with CRTS's distance/hybrid tuition model.
- DC do not have all solutions for these and other challenges that students may encounter, and undertake to consult widely with the churches, mentors and experts in the educational field over the next years to ensure that promising young men will not be excluded from the ministry due to contextual challenges. The principle of one theological tuition "for, by and through the churches" will be respected.

## **5 Mentorship project**

The objectives and content of our mentorship program for our students will be as follows:

### **5.1 Undergraduate students**

During Languages studies students are mentored as follows:

- The student's local pastor will mentor his spiritual formation and normal family conditions, particularly if the student is married;

- The student’s local pastor will mentor academic progress where possible; if not possible, a mentor with specific tasks will be appointed by curators;
- Students are encouraged to form a study group at their university or on-line and assist each other in their studies, and engage on challenges together; this will also allow for collective mentoring by the mentors;
- DC will also task a specific mentor to offer or arrange regular meetings of the students, where necessary through internet (Zoom, MS Teams meeting) to share experiences and discuss study material. A typical example was the monthly seminar offered by Dr Breytenbach and Rev Bruintjes during which Dr Van Vliet’s *Growing in the Gospel* was studied. Another example are the discussions on John Calvin’s *Institution*. Such discussions can take place F2F where possible, and via internet where necessary.
- It will be expected from senior students to assist new students where necessary. This improves the fellowship among students. Curators will appoint a tutor for students if they need them for specific academic challenges or courses.

## 5.2 During the CRTS programme

- CRTS appoints a mentor at CRTS for each student, usually a Professor;
- When students come to South Africa for their PTP (Pastoral Training Programme), a local mentor is selected for a specified period; this mentor will be trained by CRTS similarly as to how these mentors in Canada are trained, to optimise the benefits to the student;
- If the student prefers to do his PTP or part of it in Canada or even another country, CRTS will appoint a mentor for the PTP period;
- The Canadian and South African PTP arrangements will be combined to optimise students’ experience.
- During the Covid-19 closure of borders and SA students studying online, Rev Breytenbach and van der Linden were mentoring and supporting the two SA students, in consultation with Prof Ted van Raalte, Students Dean at CRTS.

## 5.3 General planning of mentorship

The following table provides a typical example of a general mentorship programme. Such a programme will be finalised by DC in the next months.

<b>Time Budgeted Mentoring, PTP 2021</b>	<b>Mentor 1</b>	
<b>For Whom</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>When</b>
Language students	Mentoring meeting with group Gauteng, including preparation	Once Monthly
	Mentoring meeting of both mentors with individual student Gauteng	Quarterly
	Mentoring meeting with group: Spiritual Formation G & CT students, including preparation	1 week during June holidays 1 week in January during summer holidays
	Arranging & Organising Guest Lectures G&CT students	1 week during June holidays



2 CRTS students	PTP in SA, online or F2F, including preparation	8 weeks during Canadian summer recess, May to August
	Spiritual Formation and Support of on-line CRTS <u>student</u>	Winter semester – CRTS online Jan-Apr

## 6. Recruitment of theological students

Currently six students are enrolled in the programme as indicated in spreadsheet Annexure D. In the strong belief that the Lord will call more young men, an increase in students is expected after 2023. Curators intend to engage with all churches, including mission churches, to present the requirements and study programmes. Curators realise that such engagements are of primary importance for the planning of student intake over the next decade. However, curators also want to emphasize that the federation has to deliberate together about the future of the ministry on the mission field, especially with regard to mission churches that have become self-governing. Curators notice a trend that these churches do not call ministers of the Word, whether on their own or in cooperation with Deputies Art. 11. Curators deem it important that the federation think creatively and develop new solutions for the future, in order for the ministry of the Word to continue on the (ex) mission field. It is a contradiction when curators train young men for the ministry, while subsequently vacant churches postpone calling available candidates for the office in their congregation.

Over the past three years curators have done the following to recruit students:

- Publication of a pamphlet that explains the Synod 2017 decisions on theological tuition (Annexure A);
- Presentations at local churches in Pretoria, Pretoria-Maranata, Johannesburg, Bellville;
- Article in Kompas;
- Meetings with students at the beginning of each study year to discuss their progress, challenges, etc.
- Discussions with young men who are interested in theological studies; in such cases the local pastor or a curator try to find out the young man's motivation and explain the trajectory for tuition and potential financial support; the purpose of these discussions is to enable young men to take a decision and make a firm commitment to enrol in the program- During the last years curators had contact with several young men from the churches, some of whom have started to study theology, others who are undecided. Where possible, potential students are invited to discussions with visiting lecturers.
- However, curators realise that more can be done to promote the recruitment, and particularly want to visit congregations and / or consistories to present the various aspects of tuition.

## **7. Search and calling of an Anchor Theologian**

The changes in the trajectory for theological tuition and the standard approach to send students to CRTS for the MDiv programme both impact on the idea and decisions about the search and calling of an Anchor Theologian. As the developments around distance education are dynamic, and new opportunities may arise, it is proposed that curators be mandated again to reconsider the appointment of an Anchor Theologian part-time or full-time if our student community grows significantly and can only be trained on a hybrid or distance basis. It is not expected that the Anchor Theologian is required in the immediate future, as study trajectories are clear and current students can follow them without special oversight. Curators will re-assess the situation in a current dynamic environment.

## **8. Support of Mission Churches and Tuition of teaching elders**

Curators have been instructed by previous Synods to support the mission churches and missionaries. DC have also been asked to consider support for the development of a teaching elder model.

### **8.1 Support of Mission Churches in Gauteng**

Support of Mission Churches in Gauteng has been provided by Rev Breytenbach and Rev Boersma. However, DC are uncertain whether they will be able to provide this service for the following reasons:

- Rev Breytenbach will be on retirement DV from April 2021.
- DC do not have additional funding for the costs of such support, e.g. stipend and transport.
- Rev Boersma is supporting F4 as allocated by Consistory of FRC Pretoria-Maranata. In addition he was working in Johannesburg and at the time of writing has received a call from that congregation.
- Previous attempts in supporting congregations showed the challenges of such a task, such as finding the right time/day of the week and language limitations.

### **8.2 Teaching elders**

The concept of teaching elders has been raised by the consistories of FRC Belhar, Wesbank and Belville, but could also be applicable to Gauteng. The role of the teaching elder would be mainly relevant to the mission field for the following reasons:

- Past and current approaches in the mission field resulted in limiting the mission churches to the number of missionaries available. When a missionary leaves the mission field, the mission church becomes vacant and enters into a crisis situation. Because the fathers not equipped or capable of fulfilling the tasks in the mission church. In reality the work of preaching and pastoral work are divided or allocated to the missionaries that are available. Such situations are seldomly planned, structured and regularly evaluated.
- The Lord has given the commandment to go out and make disciples of all nations. The churches should thus find ways to start more mission points, and where possible

mission churches rather than retaining a static model. This would only be possible if more men would be available for leading services and pastoral work.

The proposal to develop a mission model that is based on teaching elders is supported by curators. However, the model itself must be thoroughly developed and structured, with clear objectives, functions and limitations to ensure that teaching elders do not function as pseudo-pastors.

The approach to use the teaching elder could function as follows:

- A missionary is made responsible for establishing a mission point/church. Competent and capable men would be elected or appointed as fathers or elders-in-training. Eventually elders would be formally ordained.
- Elders who are available and competent to become teaching elders, are identified and trained theoretically and in practice to assist the missionary in establishing further mission points and churches.
- In practice the missionary would prepare sermons for the next week(s), discuss them with the teaching elder(s), who would then read these sermons in the mission points/churches in a rotational way. Teaching elders would also do home visits, joined by the missionary on a rotational basis. The model would include formal evaluation of teaching elders and their functions on a regular basis.

During discussions the following options of DC support in tuition of teaching elders were suggested:

- Supporting the churches in the development of appropriate local models for missionary work through teaching elders.
- Development of material for the tuition of teaching elders, for example by using relevant and appropriate video material from CRTS that is in the digital depository of the curators.
- Guiding the process of training teaching elders in areas that are identified by the mission churches, mission boards and missionaries.
- Offer and arrange courses for teaching elders through contracting of mentors.
- Creating links between formal theological tuition and training of teaching elders. For example, theological students could become part of the tuition of teaching elders and do their PTP in mission churches as colleagues of teaching elders. In such situations the missionary would be the mentor for the theological students within the CRTS framework. As students enrolled at CRTS have preaching consent, they could collaborate with the missionary in the making of sermons that are appropriate for the specific mission field.

Curators have engaged with the Mission Committee in Cape Town, particularly at the 2019 Indaba, but no formal conclusions about their involvement have been reached. The matter of support to Mission Churches remains to be properly investigated, especially in view of the limited capacity of DC, and lack of presence in Cape Town.

## **9. Members of Deputies Theological Training**

Synod Soshanguve appointed the following persons as curators:

Br. R. Meeske (convenor), Johannesburg, Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata; Br. A. de Lange, Pretoria (specifically for Art 11); Sr. C. Hagg (secretary), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. H. Schuring, Pretoria; Br. T.W. Tamane, Soshanguve-GG; Br. W. R. Hoving (treasurer)-

Br. A. de Lange ceased to be a curator, when he withdrew from the FRC Pretoria. Due to personal constraints, br. Tamane often could not attend meetings. Br. W.R. Hoving is currently in the Netherlands for his work, however he continues to be very much involved as treasurer and we sincerely appreciate his commitment.

In general, the Deputies functioned well, as evident from the number of meetings and work done. However, it was felt that no-one from Cape Town was part of the deputies, which hindered communication with Capetonian students and pastors.

Curators propose that the following Deputies Curators be appointed for the next term:

Br. R. Meeske (convenor), Johannesburg, Rev. P.G. Boon, Pretoria-Maranata; Rev. George Mnisi, Missionary Nellmapius; Rev. Carl van Wyk, Belhar; Rev. Erik van Alten (particularly for his experience in Ukrain); Br. G. Hagg, Pretoria-Maranata; Sr. C. Hagg (secretary), Pretoria-Maranata; Br. H. Schuring, Pretoria; Br. T.W. Tamane, Soshanguve-GG; Br. W. R. Hoving (treasurer),

## **10. Financial Statements and Budget 2021-2024**

### **10.1 Financial statements**

The Curators realised significant shortages in the last 3 years, which resulted in a cash flow predicament towards the end of 2019 and the subsequent need for the loan from Deputies Art 11. The shortages were due to unforeseen and unbudgeted expenses (R300 000 for both 2019 and 2020) towards Ds Breytenbach retirement fund and secondly due to the reduction in contributions received from the Mission Deputies since 2019. As agreed upon in the Agreement of Cooperation (7 October 2016), Missions Deputies agreed to contribute 40% of the costs towards Ds Breytenbach. This was however reduced to 20% in 2019 and 0% in 2020, due to a reduction in funds from the Netherlands. Please refer to the note below the balance sheet in the financial statements for calculations on what the financial situation of the Curators would have been without these unforeseen expenses.

Furthermore, the Curators would like to express their appreciation for the donations from our sister churches from FRCA.

For further details about the financial statements, please refer to the detailed financial statements with accompanied notes of both Theological Training and Art 19 – Needy Students in the report from the Synod Treasurer

## **10.2 Budget 2021-2024**

The budget for 2021-2024 is based on calculations that reflect the work of DC over the past years. As indicated earlier, it also makes provision for repayment of the loan from Deputies Art 11. While the expenditures for DC will decrease, the costs of needy students has increased, and will increase in relation to the number of students who will study F2F at CRTS. Student costs involves travelling once a year to or from Hamilton, study book costs, tuition fees and medical insurance. For 2021-24 we expect at least four students to go to CRTS. We see this as a great blessing by the Lord, and strongly believe that He will also provide for material and spiritual needs.

**Curators**

**Synod 2021 - Budget**

		<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Budget - 2021</b>	<b>Budget - 2022</b>	<b>Budget - 2023</b>	<b>Budget - 2024</b>
<b>Income</b>		<b>979,732</b>	<b>1,615,544</b>	<b>1,738,494</b>	<b>1,570,500</b>	<b>1,500,500</b>	<b>1,400,500</b>	<b>1,200,500</b>
Income from Churches		811,594	885,601	904,965	900,000	900,000	800,000	600,000
Income from Australia	1	-	559,946	752,103	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000
Income from ZAM	2	100,000	300,000	70,000	70,000	-	-	-
Interest earned		6,306	5,550	5,624	500	500	500	500
Rental income - Bethal	3	61,832	64,447	5,802	-	-	-	-
<b>Expenses</b>		<b>1,124,882</b>	<b>1,844,815</b>	<b>2,395,427</b>	<b>1,321,700</b>	<b>1,113,567</b>	<b>1,215,372</b>	<b>970,295</b>
<b>Lecturers cost</b>		<b>747,427</b>	<b>1,078,150</b>	<b>1,590,143</b>	<b>575,000</b>	<b>209,000</b>	<b>218,405</b>	<b>228,233</b>
Mentor 1		119,963	129,653	144,828	150,000	156,750	163,804	171,175
Mentor 2		627,464	948,497	1,445,314	425,000	52,250	54,601	57,058
Ds Breytenbach - Retirement contributions		-	300,000	300,000	-	-	-	-
Rental - Ds Breytenbach's housing fund	3	116,634	61,832	70,249	-	-	-	-
Management and Administration	4	-	-	-	60,000	62,700	65,522	68,470
<b>Travel</b>		<b>82,860</b>	<b>25,736</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,000</b>	<b>50,160</b>	<b>52,417</b>	<b>54,776</b>
Guest Lecturers	5	75,132	20,520	-	40,000	41,800	43,681	45,647
Curators		7,728	5,215	-	8,000	8,360	8,736	9,129
Pastors conference		26,027	34,529	-	30,000	31,350	32,761	34,235
Lectures cost	6	4,876	30,053	6,437	15,000	15,675	16,380	17,117
<b>Students</b>	7	<b>146,703</b>	<b>300,706</b>	<b>417,843</b>	<b>650,200</b>	<b>803,724</b>	<b>891,587</b>	<b>631,939</b>
Stipends		136,800	212,000	227,112	167,200	174,724	182,587	212,000
Study		9,903	75,939	171,984	325,000	365,000	365,000	75,939
Travel		-	12,767	18,747	108,000	164,000	204,000	204,000
Medical insurance		-	-	-	50,000	100,000	140,000	140,000
Video/Sound equipment		-	13,017	7,200	-	-	-	-
Bank Charges		355	793	3,555	3,500	3,658	3,822	3,994
<b>Surplus / (shortage)</b>		<b>-145,150</b>	<b>-229,271</b>	<b>-656,933</b>	<b>248,800</b>	<b>386,934</b>	<b>185,128</b>	<b>230,205</b>
<b>Opening Retained earnings</b>		<b>319,877</b>	<b>174,727</b>	<b>-54,544</b>	<b>-711,476</b>	<b>-462,676</b>	<b>-75,743</b>	<b>109,385</b>
Opening Bank Balances		319,877	174,727	5,456	8,524	57,324	44,257	109,385
Art 11 - Loan		-	-	-60,000	-720,000	-520,000	-120,000	-
<b>Closing Retained earnings</b>		<b>174,727</b>	<b>-54,544</b>	<b>-711,476</b>	<b>-462,676</b>	<b>-75,743</b>	<b>109,385</b>	<b>339,591</b>
Closing Bank Balances		174,727	5,456	8,524	57,324	44,257	109,385	339,591
Art 11 - Loan		-	-60,000	-720,000	-520,000	-120,000	-	-

**Notes:**

- Income from our sister churches in Australia.
- Income from Zuid Afrika Mission from our sister churches in the Netherlands.
- The rental income received from the Bethal vicarage (pastorie) is earmarked for Ds Breytenbach's retirement fund. The vicarage was sold in the beginning of 2020 and the last rental income paid over to the retirement fund.
- From 2021, we would like to remunerate a brother/sister for administrating the work of the curators.
- Guest lecturers usually from CRTS, but also elsewhere.
- Cost for organising lectures for students in July and November.
- Cost towards Theological students (administrated under Art 19 by the Curators) will increase from 2021 onwards as students will be travelling to CRTS (Hamilton, Canada) to study.

Budgeted amounts: CRTS Study cost: R40 000 per student, Travel cost: R40 000 per student, Medical insurance: R25 000 per student.

## 11. Instructions Synod 2021

- 11.1 To set an APS of 25 as the admission requirement for theological studies in the FRCSA, and to test applicants' aptitude, competency and intellectual skills where applicable.
- 11.2 Prospective students for theological studies must apply timeously for access to the study programme through admission procedures set by curators.
- 11.3 In cases where Deputies Curators and mentor(s) conclude that the applicant for theological studies has the potential to successfully complete the programme but lacks basic competencies, the student will follow a supportive programme that is determined by the curators, and pass this programme successfully.
- 11.4 As a rule theological students will follow one trajectory, consisting of:
  - a. Three years BA language studies (including Hebrew III, Greek III, English I and Latin I) at an accredited tertiary education institution (university) close to a FRCSA congregation.
  - b. This will be followed by dedicated language tuition (Hebrew and Greek) and/or other preparatory studies for six months since the SA academic year ends in November and the Canadian academic year starts in August. Deputies should ensure that the student's language proficiency is sufficient for entrance in Hamilton.
  - c. This will be followed by a four-year MDiv course as offered by the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Hamilton. This course will include practical work in South Africa during the CRTS summer recess.
- 11.5 Trajectory B, as adopted by Synod 2017, will only be implemented for students who have followed this trajectory over at least the past three years.
- 11.6 DC will in collaboration with CRTS investigate and implement models of on-line or distance tuition as offered by CRTS for students who are legitimately prevented from travelling to CRTS. DC will support students who follow on-line or hybrid models of tuition to ensure that such students are not disadvantaged by the on-line or hybrid model. Such support includes intensive mentoring.
- 11.7 DC will adequately engage with the churches in the FRCSA and other informed parties to investigate matters and situations that may negatively impact on students' ability to satisfactorily follow the training programme as proposed under 11.4, and find solutions to these inhibitors. DC will report to the next synod on the findings of these engagements.
- 11.8 To mandate Deputies Curators to continue the investigation towards the full-time or part-time appointment of an anchor theologian in cooperation with a local congregation of the FRCSA, which will ordain him or make him available for this special task.
- 11.9 To mandate Deputies Curators to continue with a Mentorship program during the period 2021-2023 that is appropriate for the various implementations of the study programme. Deputies Curators will appoint the necessary individuals as mentors. Rev. J. van der Linden is made available for one day per week. The mentorship will include arranging guest lectures for the theological students.
- 11.10 To mandate Deputies Curators to continue providing support to Churches that is related to theological training, during the period 2021-2024, in which the churches contribute to pay as per agreement of the costs related to this project. This support is dependent on the capacity of DC and their mentors to implement the support programme.
- 11.11 To present on an annual basis support for the organisation of a men's conference and a pastors' seminar.

- 11.12 To financially support approved students according to the parameters set by synod for the study towards the ministry of the Word, in accordance with Article 19 CO and the synodical regulations.
- 11.13 To approve the budgets for the period 2021 – 2024 as proposed in the report of Deputies for Theological Training
- 11.14 To assess the churches as follows for Deputies Curators: for 2021: R 900 000 , for 2022 R900 000, for 2023: R800 000 and for 2024: R600 000. This will be split towards Theological Training - 2021: R400 000, 2022: R300 000, 2023: R200 000, 2024: R100 000. Art. 19 (needy theological students) - 2021: R500 000, 2022: R600 000, 2023: R600 000, 2024: R500 000.
- 11.15 To submit an interim report for discussion during an Indaba to be held end 2022 or beginning 2023.



## Annexure A: Brochure on Theological Training

***Do you consider or experience a calling to become a minister of the Word? Did others recommend you to consider this ministry?***



*“It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service ... “ (Ephesians 4: 11, 12)*

**This brochure provides you with basic information on theological training in the FRCSA in cooperation with Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary**

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### **Jesus Christ calls brothers to proclaim His Word**

Our Lord Jesus Christ in his grace uses the ministry of the Word so that the body of Christ may be built up. For that purpose He calls brothers to be trained and prepared as shepherds who gather and strengthen his flock through the proclamation of his Word and pastoral care.

### **Deputies Curators are responsible for delivery of theological training**

Synods of the FRCSA have mandated Deputies Curators for curriculum development, implementation and quality assurance in theological training.

Our theological training curriculum uses course material of the **Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary** (CRTS) of our sister churches in Canada. In addition, **visiting guest lecturers** are used for specific parts of the curriculum. Mentors provide guidance and practical training in the FRCSA churches.

### **Admission requirements and application process**

Prospective students apply for admission as follows:

1. National Senior Certificate with an APS of at least 25, and a copy of the applicant’s latest academic results.
2. A completed enrolment form *“Notice of Intention for Theological Studies”*, including a motivation letter from the prospective student.
3. A recommendation letter from the applicant’s consistory which confirms that the prospective student has the right aptitude and Christian life.
4. Deputies Curators have a discussion with the prospective student on his motivation and prospects.
5. Deputies Curators arrange for psychometric aptitude, personality and competence tests to estimate whether the student will be able to complete the studies. If Deputies Curators are satisfied they will recommend, in consultation with the dean, a study programme and educational institution that fits the student’s circumstances.
6. Student enrolls with the selected institution for the first phase of his studies with assistance of the dean.

## **Selection of Study Programme**

Students must follow one of two study trajectories (See [www.vgk.org.za/sinode](http://www.vgk.org.za/sinode), *Acts Synod FRCSA 2017, Article 52*, for complete text):

1. Three years BA Languages studies (Hebrew III, Greek III compulsory, English and Latin recommended) at an accredited tertiary education institution (university) close to a FRCSA congregation, or an approved on-line language course. This is followed by a four year MDiv course at the CRTS in Hamilton, Canada. A language competency test in Hebrew, Greek and English must be passed for admission to CRTS.
2. BTh studies with Hebrew and Greek at a local academic institution selected in consultation with curators. This is followed by additional language studies and MDiv studies, making use of the video-taped material of the CRTS, under responsibility of the curators. The study programme is, where possible, concluded at CRTS in Canada.

Both trajectories include the practical theological program (PTP) in South Africa under responsibility of Deputies Curators and with local pastors as mentors.

## **Funding opportunities for students**

The responsibility for funding of the studies begins with the student and his parents, then the student's local congregation, and if additional funding is required, Deputies Needy Students can be approached.

## **Contact details for additional information**

Chairman Deputies Curators: Br R Meeske, tel. 083 627 6713; email: [Ronald@ctuttraining.co.za](mailto:Ronald@ctuttraining.co.za);

Enquiries and information on programmes, academic institutions and requirements: Dean Dr. H Breytenbach, tel. 0834147053; email: [hmbreytenbach@gmail.com](mailto:hmbreytenbach@gmail.com)

Administrator: Mrs C Hagg, tel. 012 3322946 or 0832716338; email: [corahagg@yahoo.com](mailto:corahagg@yahoo.com).

## **Annexure B: 2019 Indaba Curators' Report**

Below follows the summary of the discussions around theological training as it appeared in the Indaba Report.

### **Deputies Curators**

Br. Ronald Meeske presented the interim report. The financial contributions of the churches towards Curators have increased drastically since Synod Soshanguve 2017. One and a half years later it is clear that the churches have stepped up to the challenge and paid what was asked of them. During the Indaba Deputies Curators sincerely thanked the churches for their willingness. Moreover, the Lord was thanked for sending new students to study theology, having the desire to enter the ministry of his Word. After years of several vacancies in the churches, Curators started to specifically encourage brothers to consider the ministry. Presently six to eight young men have started to study or will soon start.

Curators also reported on the growing cooperation with the *Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary*. A Memorandum of Agreement was reached according to which:

- South Africa will pay the travelling costs, tuition fees and medical insurance of SA students studying in Hamilton;
- Canada will pay the living costs of SA students studying in Hamilton.

This favourable agreement makes it financially possible for students from South Africa (with its weak Rand) to study in Hamilton.

Furthermore Curators installed video recording equipment in the lecture rooms of CRTS and received permission to make use of the recorded lectures for those SA students (from the mission field) studying according to Trajectory B (not being able to go to Hamilton). Curators were asked, though, to reconsider the desirability of Trajectory B for the future, in order to secure the same expectations and the same quality of training for all students from the federation.

Synod Soshanguve gave Curators the green light to start working towards appointing an anchor theologian, either fulltime or part-time. Curators reported on their activities in this regard. In the coming years they will continue to investigate and work towards fulfilling this mandate. Currently Dr Hannes Breytenbach is fulfilling this role to a large extent.

Curators receive a considerable annual amount from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, which is used at the moment to fund the work of Dr Breytenbach. The feedback received from Australia is that they are willing to continue with this funding in future, although the South African churches do not have to expect big increases in this funding, because of the fact that the Australian churches have several other financial obligations as for mission work elsewhere in the world.

## Annexure C: Revised Brochure

***Do you consider or experience a calling to become a minister of the Word? Did others recommend you to consider this ministry?***



*“It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service ... “ (Ephesians 4: 11, 12)*

**This brochure provides you with basic information on theological training in the FRCSA in cooperation with Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary**

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### **Jesus Christ calls brothers to proclaim His Word**

Our Lord Jesus Christ in his grace uses the ministry of the Word so that the body of Christ may be built up. For that purpose He calls brothers to be trained and prepared as shepherds who gather and strengthen his flock through the proclamation of his Word and pastoral care.

### **Deputies Theological Training (Curators) are responsible for delivery of theological training**

Synods of the FRCSA have mandated Deputies Theological Training (Deputies Curators) for curriculum and programme development and implementation and quality assurance in theological training.

Our theological training curriculum includes the MDiv as offered by the **Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary** (CRTS) of our sister churches in Canada. In addition, **visiting guest lecturers** are used for specific parts of the curriculum. Mentors provide guidance and practical training in the FRCSA churches.

### **Admission requirements and application process**

Prospective students apply for admission as follows:

1. Submit their National Senior Certificate with an APS of at least 25, and a copy of the applicant’s latest academic results to Deputies Curators.
2. Submit a completed enrolment form “*Notice of Intention for Theological Studies*”, including a motivation letter from the prospective student.
3. Submit a recommendation letter from the applicant’s consistory which confirms that the prospective student has the right aptitude and Christian life.
4. Deputies Curators then have a discussion with the prospective student on his motivation and prospects.
5. Deputies Curators arrange for psychometric aptitude, personality and competence tests to estimate whether the student will be able to complete the studies. If Deputies Curators are satisfied they will recommend a study programme and educational institution that fits the student’s circumstances.
6. Prospective students must remember that enrolment at formal universities closes between July and September, for acceptance in the next academic year. As a rule late applications are not considered. **Applicants must thus approach Deputies Curators before April so that the process of acceptance and the enrolment at a formal institution can be adequately completed.**

## **Selection of Study Programme**

As a rule students follow the following programme:

- If the applicant's application is approved, he is assisted in enrolling at a local university close to his home congregation. The **university is selected in consultation with the Deputies Curators**. This will allow for proper mentoring, preferably by his home pastor. Also, as the curators aim to develop a student community, students will be encouraged to study at the same university where possible. This will develop peer group strengths and a shared burden of remaining true to the Word of God and the Confessions.
- Curators appoint a mentor to assist the student in two ways:
  - Academic development (theologian)
  - Spiritual formation (pastor of student's congregation)
- The student completes his BA with Biblical languages, and other relevant subjects in 3-4 years, and obtains a formal qualification needed to enrol at CRTS.
- If the applicant already has a recognised B-degree, he may either enrol at a university or follow online BibleMesh courses in Hebrew I-III and Greek I-III which are accepted by CRTS.
- After completion of the BA degree, the student enrolls at CRTS and travels to Hamilton, Canada. He follows the four-year MDiv programme but will do his Pastoral Training Programme (PTP) in South Africa, or in Canada if advised by CRTS. The PTP will last two months per year, and will enable the student to remain in contact with his own congregation. MDiv students must apply at least nine months in advance for access to CRTS, as study visa applications generally take six months.
- The student completes his MDiv and returns to South Africa. If there are no vacancies in the FRCSA, the student can be called by any sister church world-wide.

## **Alternative modes in the study programme**

Curators are aware of several problems that may arise from an applicant or student's background, such as inadequate school education, limited study space at home, family circumstances, health, refusal by Canadian government to approve study visa application, etc. Where such problems are legitimate, curators will make arrangements to overcome them in such a way that the outcome of the student remains at the required standard. Such support may consist of additional or preparatory study courses and mentor assistance. The CRTS has created opportunities for online studies for students who cannot enter Canada. Online studies can be combined with face-to-face studies in a hybrid model. **Alternative modes of study will be determined by curators in consultation with the student, parents, pastor, mentors and CRTS. Students are not allowed to design their own study programme.**

## **Funding opportunities for students**

The responsibility for funding of the studies begins with the student and his parents, then the student's local congregation, and if additional funding is required, Deputies Needy Students can be approached.

## **Contact details for additional information**

Chairman Deputies Curators: Br R Meeske, tel. 083 627 6713; email: [Ronald@ctutrainig.co.za](mailto:Ronald@ctutrainig.co.za);

Enquiries and information on programmes, academic institutions and requirements: Dr. H Breytenbach, tel. 0834147053; email: [hmbreytenbach@gmail.com](mailto:hmbreytenbach@gmail.com)

Administrator: Mrs C Hagg, tel. 012 3322946 or 0832716338; email: [corahagg@yahoo.com](mailto:corahagg@yahoo.com).

## Annexure D Student Matrix

Matrix of FCRC Students 2019 to 2029 (2)

Ten Year study plan	Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
Students Curators and Students Determine specific Traject	2024		2025		2026		2027		2028		2029	
	Studies	PTP	Studies	PTP	Studies	PTP	Studies	PTP	Studies	PTP	Studies	PTP
<i>Rofhiwa Ramphabana (determine Traject with Mission)</i>												
<i>Jakob Mars</i>	CRTS 4 to Jun	Complete; return to SA										
<i>Jonatan Boon</i>	CRTS 2 to Jun; CRTS 3 Sep	SA	CRTS 3 to Jun; CRTS 4 Sep	SA	CRTS 4 end May	Complete						
<i>Arjan v d Meer</i>	CRTS 2 to Jun; CRTS 3 Sep	SA	CRTS 3 to Jun; CRTS 4 Sep	SA	CRTS 4 end May	Complete						
<i>Marco van Renssen</i>	CRTS 2 to Jun; CRTS 3 Sep	SA	CRTS 3 to Jun; CRTS 4 Sep	SA	CRTS 4 end May	Complete						
<i>Johann Snijder</i>	CRTS 1 to Jun; CRTS 2 Sep	SA	CRTS 2 to Jun; CRTS 3 Sep	SA	CRTS 3 to Jun; CRTS 4 Sep	SA	CRTS 4 end May	Complete				
<i>Possible students to join the program</i>												
<i>Albert Bijker</i>												
<i>Projected Student Numbers</i>												
Number of Students SA	7		7		10		8		8		8	
Number of Students CRTS	5		9		8		5		2		1	
Number of Students PTP	5		9		8		0		0		0	
Number of Students 6 Months Program before CRTS	2		1		5		7		7		8	
Students Completed to do Classis Exam	1		1		3		3		2		1	
	Year 5		Year 6		Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10	
	2024		2025		2026		2027		2028		2029	
For preparation to enter CRTS	4		4			1						
For PTP in SA												
Guest Lecturers												

