



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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Faculty of Theology and Religion

Fakulteit Teologie en Religie
Lekala la Thutatumelo le Bodumedi



2019/2020

Undergraduate faculty brochure

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Message from the Dean



Prof Jerry Pillay
Dean: Faculty of Theology and Religion

In 2017 the Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria celebrated its centenary year. The centenary celebrations were an opportunity to give thanks for the past, acknowledge the Faculty's shortfalls during the apartheid era and celebrate its achievements over the years, but also placed a great deal of significance on shaping the future.

The Faculty is one of the leading theological institutions in South Africa and in Africa at large. It is known for its quality research, relevant teaching and learning programmes, and community engagement, especially through its Centres.

The Faculty has the largest number of National Research Foundation (NRF) rated scholars than any South African faculty of theology and produces hundreds of peer-reviewed articles per year in highly accredited journals both nationally and internationally. It offers cutting-edge research on relevant, contextual, interdisciplinary, and trans-disciplinary levels. It acknowledges that such work cannot be done in ivory towers and therefore aims to engage research that is life-changing and transforming, making a difference in communities and society at large.

As far as teaching and learning is concerned, the Faculty continues to pursue excellence as it gears its course content to address current issues and struggles, differing epistemologies, curricula transformation, decolonisation and africanisation. We are engaging different methods in teaching to encourage critical thinking, investigation, interactive and participatory learning, alternate forms of assessments, and the use of technology. Further, our teaching modules are directed to incorporate

non-theological modules to enable students to train for careers outside of Theology as well. We have very qualified, experienced and dedicated lecturers who are committed to assisting students at whatever level of study to complete and graduate at the expected time.

The Faculty, in its intention of impacting and working for the common good of society, has partnerships with a number of stakeholders which include but are not limited to churches, government and non-governmental organisations, community leaders and ministries. In our efforts towards transformation we are seeking to foster inclusivity, embrace diversity and promote equity. We are creating a new culture that embraces a true ecumenical spirit and posture, especially seeing that our students come from over 33 different denominations.

As of 2018, the name of the Faculty of Theology has changed to the Faculty of Theology and Religion. The addition of Religion is an attempt to be more inclusive and to open our space to people of other faiths. The Faculty is still essentially Christian in its theological orientation, but realises the need to engage in dialogue and research with other religions on important themes, for example religious violence and fundamentalism, as we seek to create a better world and fullness of life for all.

Saint Anselm of Canterbury, in defining Theology, said it is 'faith seeking understanding'. In a world of great complexities, injustices, differentiations and global struggles, we need to consistently grapple with our understanding of God, life and reality. The Faculty of Theology and Religion thus offers relevant, critical and contextual teaching, quality research and community engagement, preparing students to respond to the challenges of life, making a difference in society, providing the tools and skills to apply knowledge to given contextual experiences, and creating an environment for new ideas and thoughts to emerge. It is a Faculty that facilitates life-affirming theologies, nurtures transformative leaders, promotes justice and peace and prepares students for a changing environment and world. Whether you are training for the ministry in the church or in the 'market place', this is the right place to be as we bring faith and context together, dissect and analyse the realities of life and explore questions related to spirituality, beliefs and faith practices.

Welcome to the Faculty of Theology and Religion and enjoy the journey!

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Undergraduate programmes

Important information on undergraduate programmes for 2020

- The following persons will be considered for admission: candidates who are in possession of a certificate that is deemed by the University to be equivalent to the required Grade 12 certificate with university endorsement; candidates who are graduates from another tertiary institution or have been granted the status of a graduate of such an institution; and candidates who are graduates of another faculty at the University of Pretoria.
- Life Orientation is excluded in the calculation of the APS.

University of Pretoria website www.up.ac.za/theology
National Benchmark Test website www.nbt.ac.za

Programmes	Minimum requirements for 2020		
	Achievement level*		APS
	English Home Language or English First Additional Language		
	NSC/IEB	AS Level	
BDiv – Bachelor of Divinity (for admission to MDiv studies) [4 years] Closing dates: SA – 30 September Non-SA – 31 August	4	D	25
Careers: Ministers, pastors, priests, preachers in certain denominations, missionaries and youth counsellors. Other possibilities include ethics consultants to businesses. Theological studies can be enriching for people in various other vocations. If prospective students are interested in ordained ministry, this should also be discussed with their church leadership.			
BTh – Bachelor of Theology [3 years] Closing dates: SA – 30 September Non-SA – 31 August	4	D	25
Careers: Ministers, pastors, priests, preachers in certain denominations, missionaries and youth counsellors. Other possibilities include ethics consultants to businesses. Theological studies can be enriching for people in various other vocations. If prospective students are interested in ordained ministry, this should also be discussed with their church leadership.			
DipTh – Diploma in Theology [3 years] Closing dates: SA – 30 September Non-SA – 31 August	3	E	22
Careers: Ministers, pastors, priests, lay preachers in certain denominations, missionaries and youth counsellors. Candidates should consult their church leadership on which course would suit their aims best. The Diploma in Theology is intended for candidates who have completed Grade 12 (or equivalent), but without the required university admission.			

* Cambridge A level candidates who obtained at least a D in the required subjects, will be considered for admission. International Baccalaureate (IB) HL candidates who obtained at least a 4 in the required subjects, will be considered for admission.



Undergraduate programmes

Why study at the Faculty of Theology and Religion?

The Faculty of Theology and Religion is renowned for its commitment to the following:

- **The Bible.** This remains the central point of reference for theology.
- **Spirituality.** Faith formation is of great importance.
- **Academic excellence.** The Faculty's standards of education compare with the best in the world.
- **Lecturers.** Lecturers are noted academics and also respected church leaders.
- **Student life.** Theology students participate fully in campus life: tours, rag, camps, sports, serenades and many more.
- **International contacts.** Students can benefit from the many international contacts of the Faculty.

People study theology for a variety of reasons, and not only to make it their profession. Some find it a fascinating field about which they would like to know more, whereas others search for spiritual enrichment through study or may want to equip themselves to function more effectively in their workplace. The Faculty also offers courses that will benefit students who do not necessarily want to become ministers, but who would like to enrich their lives.

There are many advantages to enriching one's study in a particular field with insights and applications from theology. By including modules from Religion Studies in another field of study, such as computer science, engineering, languages, psychology, social work or teaching, graduates will enter their chosen careers as better equipped and more fully developed people.

What does the programme entail?

Theology deals with the basic questions of life:

- How do faith and religion influence people's lives?
- How does one approach ethical and moral questions in the workplace?
- How do theological insights promote good human resource practices?
- How does one cultivate ecological sensitivity and awareness?
- How do Christians relate to laws?
- How do religious values contribute to peace and good human relations?
- Can crime be stopped by appealing to people's beliefs and values?
- What is the meaning and purpose of life?
- Where does one find answers to the deepest life questions?
- How does one gain a better understanding of humanity in order to make a difference in the world?

Some students feel called to work in the church as ministers, pastors, priests, lay preachers, missionaries or youth workers. If this is the case, then studying theology is the way to go. Others find their calling in serving the community as social workers, development workers, psychologists, teachers, journalists or writers. Yet others will become engineers, lawyers or entrepreneurs. For all, studying theology will contribute to a greater understanding of humanity and society.

Undergraduate programmes in Theology and Religion

The seven main sections in the study of theology focus on questions about the Bible and life.

- **New Testament Studies**
In the New Testament, the story of Jesus is told and elaborated on from several perspectives. New Testament Studies focuses on the books of the New Testament, as well as the first and second-century Mediterranean context in which they originated.
- **Old Testament Studies**
The Old Testament is concerned with God's relationship with Israel and God's involvement with humanity and creation. Old Testament Studies engages with the books of the Old Testament as well as the life settings of ancient Israel. From the Old Testament, we learn that ancient Israelites engaged with issues like suffering, love and how to live in the presence of God in different circumstances.
- **Practical Theology**
Practical Theology focuses on what Christians do (faith actions) — how they experience and express their faith. Worship as lived religion and preaching, the meaning of symbols and symbolic acts, helping people in crisis, teaching faith and faith formation, understanding the world in which we live and many other areas are studied in this field.
- **Religion Studies**
Religion Studies (formerly known as Biblical Studies) is a life-enriching course open to anyone who may be interested in religion. Students from diverse fields, such as engineering, architecture, music, political science, law, fine arts and many more choose to broaden their vision by taking this course. It addresses questions such as the following: Why are people religious? What did ancient people believe? How do we understand and respect our neighbours from other religious denominations?
- **Science of Religion and Missiology**
Science of Religion focuses on the world religions — Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism — and their relationship to Christianity. Missiology investigates the manner in which Christian faith communities participate in God's mission. A holistic approach is followed.
- **Systematic and Historical Theology**
The systematic and historical reflection on theology consists of integrated as well as specialised themes. With regard to historical reflection, it covers the history of the Christian church and the lives of its great figures, from Saint Augustine to Saint Aquinas, John Calvin to Martin Luther, along with the ways in which different Christian traditions are structured in the modern era. With regard to systematic reflection, it covers faith (in God and as relationship) and beliefs (with regard to themes such as creation and scripture, Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, future), faith communities and their respective lives of faith and societal challenges (ethical themes).

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Article

LoveReach lifts campus spirits

by Charel du Toit

Students of Theology and Religion at the University of Pretoria staged an outreach, called LoveReach, on Valentine's Day in 2018. Sixteen students got together on the lawn near the Aula where they handed out sweets and made live music. They were playing a guitar, a violin and an accordion.

As people of faith, they wanted to spread love and lift the spirits of students on the campus without using words, but by creating an atmosphere of caring. Their singing and warm smiles were engaging and several students stopped to chat. It was an opportunity to live out the biblical learning of the classroom and to take it into a public space.

Over seven-hundred-and-forty sweets were handed out within an hour, and for many students it was a pleasant surprise to receive something from a stranger. This project continues to grow in momentum.

The Chairperson of the Faculty of Humanities also visited the group and indicated that they were keen to participate in future events. Future collaborations with other faculties are also in the pipeline.



Postgraduate programmes

Postgraduate programmes in Theology and Religion

- **Bachelor of Theology Honours – BThHons**
The purpose of this programme is to provide graduate students with specialised knowledge, skills and competence in a particular field or fields of theology at postgraduate level.
- **Postgraduate Diploma in Theology and Ministry**
The Postgraduate Diploma aims to offer advanced theological knowledge and practical skills that meet the needs of the ministry. Church-specific training and formation are offered in co-operation with the church partners involved.
- **Postgraduate Diploma in Theology**
Theological studies can be pursued by candidates who already have tertiary qualifications equivalent to any bachelor's degree, but not in Theology. Students can specialise in any of the six theological disciplines and, after completion of this programme, will be able to do an MTh in the subject in which they specialised.
- **Master of Divinity – MDiv**
The MDiv builds on the BDiv programme or previously the four-year BTh programme. It is a coursework Master's degree programme in general theology covering all six theological disciplines. It focuses on advanced theological knowledge and practical skills.

- **Master of Theology – MTh**
This programme offers the student with a four-year BDiv, a BThHons or equivalent qualification, the opportunity for theological specialisation and research at master's level. There are two possibilities, namely a programme with coursework and a mini-dissertation or a research master's consisting of a dissertation. The coursework modules offer the opportunity to acquire specialist skills in a particular discipline.
- **Doctor of Philosophy – PhD**
The programme line that starts with the three-year BTh and continues via the BThHons to MTh, or the programme line that starts with the four-year BDiv and continues with the MTh, is concluded with the PhD. The outcome of a PhD is highly specialised knowledge and expertise based on research.

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Student contributions



‘My reason for studying theology is a passion to work with and help people. At first, my approach was based mainly on curiosity, seeking to learn more about God and my faith. However, my experience in this Faculty has given me a broader understanding of what theology entails.

With this qualification, I wish to explore the academic world within the field of theology. Therefore, I am working towards being a scholar of dogmatics and Christian ethics. I also see myself taking part in pastoral care and counselling.

What I love about this Faculty is that, since it is the smallest of all the faculties, it enables us to build relationships with students, lecturers and staff. It is easy to get to know one another. I am glad to have been given the opportunity to serve on the House Committee 2016/17 with the portfolio of academics. I am inspired by the quote: *‘the realization that you can’t predict the future—and mould it—could only come as a shock to an academic’ (David Harsanyi).’*

Lethabo Molopyane – BTh – Bachelor of Theology Honours



‘In Theology we study nature, various religious beliefs and the different understandings people have of God. I have always been fascinated with mankind, their beliefs and how they relate to a Creator. This programme in the Faculty has taught me more than I would have ever imagined! Every individual in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, be they staff, graduate or undergraduate students, is a guide and helping hand in one way or another. They have enabled me to grow as a man of wisdom, understanding and integrity while I achieve the goals I have set for myself.’

Mathias Shunmugam – BTh – Bachelor of Theology

Article

The impacts that informed my life-changing decisions and career choice

by Wayne Renkin



Left to right: Wayne Renkin, Mandla Sithole and Tebogo Mpufane

'From a very young age I knew I wanted to play a part in transforming society one day. I decided to move to Pretoria and enrol at the Faculty of Theology and Religion at UP, to equip myself. Very soon I realised that, although invaluable—all the book knowledge in the world couldn't really prepare me for the need I witnessed in the inner city of Pretoria.'

'I joined Echo Youth Development. They create places of safety for youth at risk. I shared my living spaces with youth at risk and immersed and committed myself fully to understand their circumstances and what contributed to their situation.

During 2011, I became part of organisations that responded to a large-scale illegal and violent eviction of Schubart Park in the inner-city of Pretoria. Two-thousand people were suddenly left homeless, with little to no possessions, exploited by the systems.

I recall vividly standing among men, women and children in the middle of the night—feeling completely powerless and dumbstruck. This unnecessary tragedy that perpetuated injustice and vulnerabilities, moved me to seek answers, new platforms and to learn

all I can from people and organisations who didn't hesitate to stand in the gaps. My fundamental understanding of the world was challenged and turned upside down and my theology was put to the test.

My theological understanding was that of a saviour: I am the one who must give the answers to pain and injustices, to correct all the wrongs of the world. Being immersed into the world of homelessness, vulnerabilities, and injustices in the city, I quickly realised that I do not have the answers nor can I be the saviour. But I am called to journey with people through the pain and seek answers together, sharing our lives and caring our burdens together, and stand in radical solidarity within the pain and suffering. My theology is continuously being informed by people who are vulnerable, homeless and who face exclusion and discrimination on a daily basis.

As part of a student group, I had the opportunity to go to Germany through a DAAD scholarship. I also spent one semester at Fordham University, New York City, USA as part of my two-year master's degree.

I returned to South Africa and joined the Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF). The organisation's *vision* is to see healthy and vibrant communities flourishing in God's presence. As TLF we are tasked to find sustainable pathways out of homelessness, creating platforms where people are empowered and once again become active citizens in society. We also lobby for systematic transformation in terms of laws and

policies to ensure the city truly becomes a city for all who live in it.

I joined the Centre for Contextual Ministry as a research assistant to Dr Stephan de Beer. It is here that I learned to articulate my theology through the experiences in the city. I have been challenged to critically engage my theology with issues of social justice. One intensive research project we launched in 2014 is that of Pathways out of Homelessness.'

'My practical work informs my research and my research informs my practical work—a true praxis cycle. I am pursuing a PhD in which I will continue to reflect academically on my work and engagements with people in the city who not only enrich my life but continuously transform it.'

Wayne Renkin is a Project Coordinator at the Tshwane Leadership Foundation, and a researcher at the Centre for Contextual Ministry, Faculty of Theology and Religion, UP.

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Article

From Pretoria to Germany—Studying at UP can really take you places

by Tshwanelo Serumola

Tshwanelo, a student in the Faculty of Theology and Religion, had the opportunity to interview Siyaphiwa Maphanga, who has just returned from Germany.

"I was in Germany from April to August 2018 for the German Exchange Programme and what a life-changing, unforgettable experience it was," says a thrilled Siyaphiwa.

How did you get involved in the programme and what was your motivation to go?

"I was involved in the programme with Professor Willem Fourie who drafted the advert, which was sent out to all students. I've always wanted to study abroad so I waited for my schedule to be more flexible and decided to go."

What were the most valuable lessons you learned while you were there?

"Firstly, there's a world out there beyond us. Secondly, cultural exchange programmes bring forth diversity. Finally, when you're plucked out of your comfort zone, don't be closed off but rather take full advantage of opportunities given to you."

So how did you find the field of theological study in Germany?

"With the elective modules I was able to take, I got to understand the rich theological history in Germany. These days, they're a lot more liberal and they follow the northern theological trends".

What were your greatest challenges on a personal level while away from home?

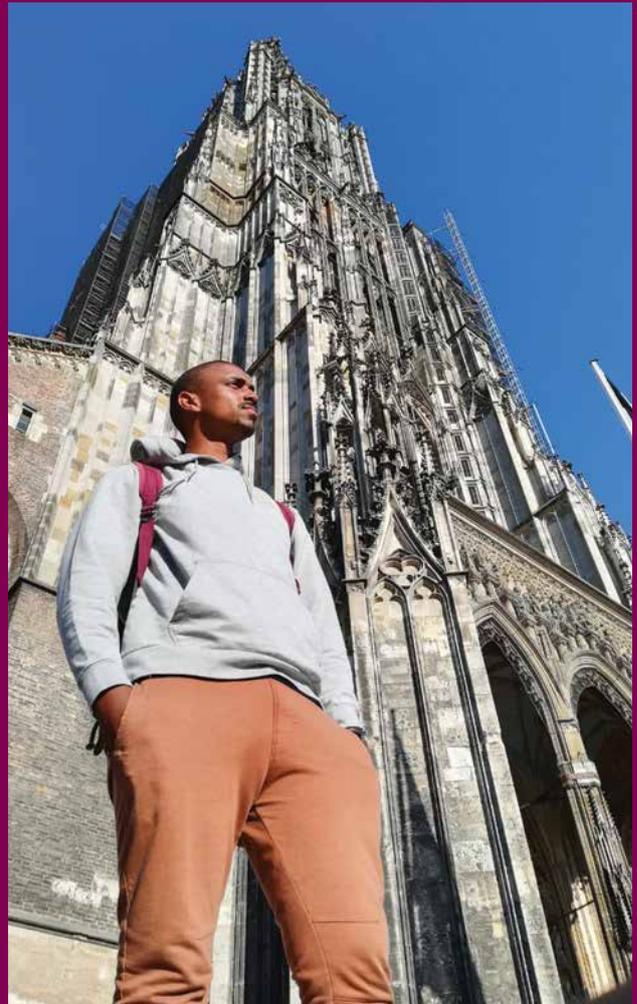
"I cannot report a single thing that was bad from my stay, because people were that great to me. I think the only challenges were the cultural and linguistic differences that made it difficult to connect to people on a deeper level, but I felt well accommodated".

Where would you like to see the local study of theology in the next five years?

"I would like us to have more serious conversations which are relevant to what is happening in society. We cannot be an isolated body of thinkers out of sync with the rest of society".

Would you ever go back to Germany, and what advice would you give to students who want to participate in the exchange programme?

"I definitely plan on going back to Germany again. I would advise students who are interested in this Exchange Programme to learn German ahead of time. It makes communication so much easier. It is also advisable to consider this opportunity at postgraduate level, because you have more flexibility and the impact on your studies is less than at undergraduate level."



More about Siyaphiwa

Born and raised in Durban, Siyaphiwa went to Northwood High School for Boys. He enrolled at UP in 2012 to study BEng (Chemical Engineering), but after having a major spiritual encounter with God, he decided to leave engineering after studying for two years and fulfil his calling by obtaining a Theology degree. Siyaphiwa would like to go into academia and teach here in Pretoria while serving in fellowship at a church.



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