

ATS Board of Commissioners names redevelopment task force

By TOM TANNER

Should the membership vote at the June 2018 Centennial Biennial Meeting to redevelop the accrediting Standards and Procedures, the 19-member task force is poised to begin its work. Appointed by the ATS Board of Commissioners (per Commission Bylaws, section 3.1), the task force has 13 members from ATS schools and six ATS/Commission staff members. The goal is broad representation of the membership with persons who have experience and expertise in issues related to the redevelopment of the Commission Standards and Procedures.

Members of the task force will be engaging many different constituencies to ensure widespread membership input (e.g., at ATS Leadership Education events; at meetings of presidents and deans who are African American, Latinx, and of Asian descent; and consultations with those representing Canadian concerns). The 20-member ATS Board of Commissioners brings yet another layer of representation to the process, as they will work closely with the task force and will make the final recommendations to the membership.

Sarah Drummond (Chair) is academic dean at Andover Newton Seminary at Yale University Divinity School. She currently serves on the Board of Commissioners, was

a member of the Board's Preparatory Committee that proposed a redevelopment process, and has been on six accreditation visits. She brings expertise in areas of educational assessment and online learning, and her work on visits has shown her to be attentive to collaboration, conflict management, and getting things done.

Oliver McMahan (Vice Chair) is vice president for accreditation and institutional effectiveness and professor of counseling at Pentecostal Theological Seminary. He serves as a member of the Board of Commissioners, was also a member of its Preparatory Committee, and has served on at least 20 accreditation visits. In addition to this experience with ATS member schools, he brings knowledge of counseling programs and standards,

as well as of the expectations of other accrediting agencies.

Mitzi Budde is head librarian and professor at

Virginia Theologi-

cal Seminary. She has served on 21 accreditation visits. She brings experience in educational assessment, ecumenical formation, and governance, as well as information technologies in education. She has wide and deep experience of theological education in the United States. Her work on visits demonstrates attention to detail, commitment to collaboration, and strategic vision.

Debbie Creamer is a director, accreditation and institutional evaluation, serving on the ATS Commission staff. Prior to joining ATS in 2013, she served at Iliff School of



The ATS Board of Commissioners meet at the ATS office in Pittsburgh.

Theology, beginning in 1997 as a member of the library staff, becoming a faculty member in 2005, then director of the library, associate dean for academic affairs in 2009, and interim dean and vice president for academic affairs in 2012. One of her areas of expertise is assessment of student learning.

Rene Espinosa is vice president for finance at Oblate School of Theology. He is currently a member of the Board of Commissioners and has served on eight accreditation visits. He has been an active participant in ATS CFO leadership events. Service on visits demonstrates comprehensive understanding of financial and resource issues faced by member schools, as well as wisdom and prudence in matters of governance.

Harry Gardner is president and dean of theology at Acadia Divinity College. He currently serves as chair of the Board of Commissioners, but his term on the Board expires in June 2018. He brings a broad and deep understanding of the work of the schools from his experience on the Board and has an excellent understanding of and expertise in governance, institutional development, planning, and evaluation, as well as Canadian concerns.

Stephen Graham is senior director of programs and services on the ATS staff, as well as director of the Lilly Endowment-funded Educational Models and Practices Project for ATS. In addition to providing oversight of programs and services, he leads the programming for chief executives and chief academic officers. Prior to joining ATS in 2008, he served as the dean of faculty and professor of American church history at North Park Theological Seminary.

Betty Holley is associate professor of environmental ethics and African American religious studies, and director of the MDiv Program at Payne Theological Seminary. She serves as a new member of the Board of Commissioners and has served on seven accreditation visits. She brings expertise in theological curriculum, educational assessment, and academic administration.

Vergel Lattimore III is president and professor of pastoral psychology and counseling at Hood Theological Seminary. He is a member of the ATS Board of Directors and brings to the table experience and expertise in executive leadership, governance, and teaching, as well as concerns related to Historically Black Theological Schools.

Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi is director of the Center for Analytics, Research, and Data for the United Church of Christ and is an ordained UCC pastor. She has served the Commission as a ministry practitioner on three visits. She brings a depth of knowledge about trends in Christianity in North America.

Mary McCormick is academic dean of Saint Mary Seminary and Graduate School of Theology. Her experience with the work of the Commission includes several accreditation visits. Her work with Roman Catholic schools will be particularly helpful in terms of assessment and theological curriculum.

Barbara Mutch is a director, accreditation and institutional evaluation, serving on the ATS Commission staff. Prior to coming to ATS in 2015, she served nearly 20 years at Carey Theological College in British Columbia as associate professor of pastoral ministry and, for ten years, as chief academic officer. She is a former member of the ATS Board of Commissioners and brings expertise in DMin education and Canadian concerns.

Valerie Rempel is dean of the seminary at Fresno Pacific University. She has served on four accreditation visits. She brings experience with mergers and with the complexity of consortia as well as embedded institutions. She has expertise in academic administration, theological curriculum, and planning.

Lester Edwin J. Ruiz is senior director of accreditation and institutional evaluation, serving on the ATS Commission staff. Prior to joining ATS in 2008, he served at New York Theological Seminary, first as professor of theology and culture and later as vice president for academic

affairs and academic dean. Before then, he was associate professor of political science at International Christian University in Tokyo, teaching courses in peace and world order studies, international relations, and politics and culture.

Tom Tanner is a director, accreditation and institutional evaluation, serving on the ATS Commission staff. Prior to joining ATS in 2012, he served for 33 years at Lincoln Christian University as library director, director of planning and assessment, accreditation liaison, undergraduate dean, seminary dean, vice president of academics, and dean of adult and online learning. He serves as the Commission staff liaison for the proposed redevelopment process.

Tite Tiéno is the Tite Tiéno Chair of Global Theology and World Christianity Research Professor, and dean emeritus at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is a former member of the Board of Commissioners and has served on nine accreditation visits. He brings experience in governance, global theological education, and a long history with ATS.

Peter Vaccari is rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary. He has served on two accreditation visits and on the ATS

Board of Directors since 2014. He also serves on the Educational Models and Practices Project Advisory Committee. He brings expertise in governance, institutional planning and evaluation, and Roman Catholic theological education.

Arch Wong is professor of practical theology, director of e-learning and modular learning, and associate director, Flourishing Congregations Institute at Ambrose University in Calgary. He is a current member of the Board of Commissioners, was a member of its preparatory committee, and has served on five visits. He brings expertise in Canadian theological education, theological curriculum, and educational assessment.

Frank Yamada is executive director of ATS, joining the staff in 2017. He oversees the work of both the Association and the Commission on Accrediting. Prior to ATS, he served as president of McCormick Theological Seminary, as well as associate professor of Hebrew Bible and director of the Center for Asian American Ministries. His tenure there was marked by increasing diversity in McCormick's student body and creative engagement with the shifting realities of theological education.



Tom Tanner is Director, Accreditation and Institutional Evaluation at The Association of Theological Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He also serves as the ATS Commission staff liaison in the proposed redevelopment process.