

CENTRE FOR PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND SOCIAL ETHICS
ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2011

Prepared by Lambert Zuidervaart for the ICS Senate and Board meetings, May 19-20, 2011

This report summarizes the activities and accomplishments of ICS's Research Centre during its first ten months (July 2010-April 2011) and indicates what we hope to do during the next academic year (2011-2012). At the end I compare what we have accomplished with the timelines included in "Creating a New Research Centre at ICS," the document whose recommendation to establish a research centre was adopted by ICS's Senate and Board in May 2010. That document is available at <http://research.icscanada.edu/>.

EVENTS

- Ran a successful international conference on *Truth Matters* at Victoria University, U of T, August 18-20, 2010; 92 registrants; funded entirely by registration fees, a \$15,000 Reid Trust grant, and institutional subsidies totaling \$19,000 from Calvin College, Dordt College, and the VU University Amsterdam.
- Organized a book launch for *Dog-Kissed Tears*, November 21, 2010, co-sponsored by Beach United Church, Toronto Beach Chorale, and Woodbine Animal Clinic.
- Organized a double book launch on March 23, 2011 for Jonathan Chaplin's *Herman Dooyeweerd* (Notre Dame UP, 2011) and Lambert Zuidervaart's *Art in Public* (Cambridge UP, 2011), hosted by Crux Books at Wycliffe College, U of T.
- Launched the new Toronto Interfaculty Colloquium with two sessions at the Toronto School of Theology attended by faculty from TST, U of T, and ICS.
 - February 16, 2011: Simone Chambers on "Secularism Minus Exclusion: Developing a Religious-Friendly Idea of Public Reason." Commentator: Ron Kuipers, ICS. Simone Chambers is Professor, Associate Chair, and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Political Science at U of T.
 - March 16, 2011: Shannon Hoff (ICS) on "Inheriting Identity and Practising Transformation: The Time of Feminist Politics." Commentator: Marsha Hewitt, Professor of Ethics and Contemporary Theology in the Faculty of Divinity at Trinity College, U of T.

PROJECTS

- Selected 16 essays for a *Truth Matters* conference volume and conducted two rounds of editing in correspondence with the authors. A volume introduction, book prospectus, and publication grant request are nearly finished (as of April 21, 2011).
- Prepared a major Partnership Grant application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and submitted it on January 31, 2011. The application requests a \$20,000 development grant that, if awarded, would support the preparation of a nearly \$1 Million four-year grant proposal this summer and fall. Our application received letters of support from the Canadian Yeshiva and Rabbinical School, Emmanuel College, Jackman Humanities Institute, Regis College, Toronto School of Theology, and the VU

University Amsterdam—several of which will become official partners if SSHRC invites the Centre to submit the \$1 Million grant proposal.

FOUNDATIONS, FUND RAISING, AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Submitted a successful proposal to the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust, which has awarded \$7,000 to support the editing and eventual launching of the *Truth Matters* volume.
- Met on January 17 with a program officer from the Tony Blair Faith Foundation and had subsequent correspondence with Drew Collins, the head of the Foundation's Faith and Globalisation initiative. The Foundation is not a funding agency, but it could be a partner for certain research centre events and projects.
- Met with an ICS supporter to discuss the research centre and received a \$5,000 gift as seed money for a proposed conference on social justice and human rights.
- Met with members of Friends of ICS at a reception hosted by Peter and Janet Borgdorff and Morris and Alice Greidanus on April 14.
- Met on April 15 with Joel Carpenter (Director, Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity, Calvin College) and Kelly Clark (Project Director for two multi-million dollar projects funded by the John Templeton Foundation) to discuss possible grant proposals to the Templeton Foundation.
- Chris Gort and I have been meeting with Mark Toulouse (Principal) and several faculty members at Emmanuel College to discuss a possible partnership arrangement that would benefit both Emmanuel and ICS. I have also made partnership overtures to a number of other schools and agencies, including the ones that wrote letters in support of our SSHRC Partnership Grant application (see above).

COMMUNICATIONS

- "Research Matters." ICS *Perspective* 44 (October 2010) 2: 1-2.
- Interviewed by Sheila Nonato, "Institute Examines Ethical and Religious Questions," *Christianweek News*, December 21, 2010: www.christianweek.org/stories.php?id=1439.
- "Q+A: What Is the Centre for Philosophy, Religion, and Social Ethics?" Interview of Bob Sweetman and Lambert Zuidervaart conducted by Daryl Kinsman, ICS *Perspective* 45 (February 2011) 1: 4-5.
- Print, video, and radio interviews in connection with the book launch of *Art in Public* in Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 2011—see <http://artinpublicingr.wordpress.com/>.
- I spoke to and with ICS supporters at public outreach events in Calgary and Edmonton in April 2011.
- I played a significant role in formulating and preparing ICS's new Case for Support.

PERSONNEL

- I began a one-year term as Director in July 2010. I am willing to serve another one-year term.
- In October I hired three graduate research assistants to help with book editing and event organizing: Allyson Carr, Matt Klaassen, and Ronnie Shuker. Allyson, Matt, and Ronnie, who had worked closely with me on the *Truth Matters* conference, have been a great support.

- Claire Veenstra, Shawn Stovell, and I plan to interview selected candidates from a pool of 31 applicants for a half-time Associate Director position (see www.icscanada.edu/ics/jobs/). The successful candidate will begin work in May 2011, if possible.

LOOKING AHEAD

Although we need to be flexible and respond to new challenges and opportunities, the following projects will likely occupy much of the research centre's attention in 2011-2012.

- Expanding and enriching the Centre's webpage.
- Preparing an official launch event for the Centre this fall.
- Planning and implementing a major conference on social justice and human rights (originally proposed by Kathy Vandergrift and currently projected for May 2012).
- Organizing four sessions of the Toronto Interfaculty Colloquium (two in fall, two in spring).
- Sponsoring an annual book launch.
- Brainstorming about a new public lecture series, possibly on religion and scholarship.
- Completing the preparation and publication of the *Truth Matters* volume.
- Preparing a SSHRC Partnership Grant and a few strategically selected foundation grants.
- Identifying the topic or themes for a first collaborative, multi-year research team.
- Providing support and advice for faculty grant applications.
- Preparing framework and details for graduate and postdoctoral fellowships at the Centre.
- Working out formal partnership agreements with units at TST, U of T, and the VU.
- Developing and ratifying the Centre's governance structure and bylaws.

COMPARISON WITH TIMELINES

The report "Creating a New Research Centre at ICS" gave an approximate timeline for the first three years (see pp. 11-12), and the Appendix to this report (pp. 15-17) imagined what the highlights of the first five years might look like. We are in step with these projections.

There is one notable difference between the report's timeline and what we actually accomplished in 2010-11: we did not develop and ratify a governance structure and bylaws for the Centre. Instead my time went into writing the first SSHRC Partnership Grant. It became clear as I worked on this that it would be premature to propose a governance structure before we have had more extensive discussions with potential partners such as Emmanuel College and the VU University Amsterdam. We need to think carefully about how our partners can have meaningful involvement in the Centre's governance. I hope that further discussions with these potential partners will help us shape a suitable governance structure. Another important difference involves the timing of the first collaborative research project. A final draft had been projected for September 2011, but now it must wait until after we submit the formal SSHRC Partnership Grant in the fall (if invited). The Partnership Grant will help secure the infrastructure within which a subsequent collaborative research project can flourish.

There are a few differences between the imaginary highlights in the report's Appendix and the actual highlights for 2010-11 and projected highlights for 2011-12. This year we started the Toronto Interfaculty Colloquium on a more modest scale than projected (two sessions rather than

four), and the book launch for *Art in Public* turned out to be more “in-house” than I would have liked. Also we do not have a postdoctoral fellow lined up for 2011-12, mostly because we need to prepare a framework for such fellowships and secure adequate funding (which the formal SSHRC Partnership Grant will include). I have, however, received expressions of interest from potential postdoctoral fellows. Otherwise, the highlights are or will be much as we imagined.

I hope this report helps you assess the scope and significance of the Centre’s efforts. I look forward to our conversations at the governance meetings in May.

Blessings,

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