

CREATING A NEW RESEARCH CENTRE AT ICS

A Report Prepared by Lambert Zuidervaart

May 1, 2010

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES ESTABLISH A NEW RESEARCH CENTRE TO CONSOLIDATE AND PROMOTE FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP AND TO WELCOME OTHER SCHOLARS AND AGENCIES INTO ICS'S RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.

This report makes the case for creating a new research centre at ICS and proposes how the centre should be organized. Section 1 says why the proposed centre is important for ICS. Section 2 indicates why it is important in a wider context. The next three sections lay out the details of the envisioned centre (section 3), identify issues and opportunities of implementation (section 4), and document the discussions and consultations that inform this report (section 5). Then the appendix imagines what the proposed research centre will accomplish in its first five years.

1. REFORMATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Institute for Christian Studies is a hub for graduate education, faculty scholarship, and public outreach in the reformational tradition. The spokes branching out from this hub connect it with a wide array of communities and organizations around the world, especially in North America and Europe: postsecondary schools both “public” and “private”; Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian communities, particularly the Kuyperian matrix within the Reformed tradition from which ICS was born; and faith-oriented organizations in civil society such as Citizens for Public Justice and Christian Schools International. In recent years the array of connecting communities and organizations has become more varied, thanks in part to an institutional affiliation with the Toronto School of Theology, cross appointments and collaborations with other units at the University of Toronto, and the denominational diversity of ICS's faculty, staff, students, and alumni/ae.

At the core of these connections two features of ICS stand out, namely, a reformational vision of scholarship, life, and society, and a commitment to articulating it via philosophical inquiry that is normative in emphasis and interdisciplinary in scope. According to this vision, all of life, including scholarship, has religious and spiritual orientations, even when these are not acknowledged. The task of the scholar who acknowledges such orientations is to show their relevance for questions of value and purpose in all areas of life and society, including the academic fields and institutions that organize contemporary scholarship. Moreover, when undertaken by reformational scholars, this task best occurs in a collaborative fashion—“communal scholarship” was a common phrase in ICS's early days.

Until recently, however, ICS has not found effective ways either to insert faculty research and publication into wider discussions or to open the faculty's reformational scholarship to conversation and debate with other scholars and public figures. This is not for lack of effort. Soon after it opened in 1967 ICS generated seminal faculty publications via the Wedge Publishing Foundation and *Vanguard* magazine. ICS began a series of Academic Papers in the

1970s and subsequently co-published a series of faculty monographs called “Christian Studies Today” with the University Press of America. From the outset new faculty members have given public inaugural lectures that articulate a reformational vision for their areas of scholarship. ICS has regularly sponsored academic conferences, symposia, and other important events such as the now defunct Christian and Learning lectures and the ongoing Art Talks! series. And faculty members have published, as expected, in academic journals and with academic presses. Yet none of these efforts has enjoyed significant academic resonance or public visibility.

The leadership of ICS believes the time has come to take faculty research and publication to another level. It is time to give faculty scholarship the support and exposure it deserves. It is also time to welcome other scholars and public figures into our scholarly efforts, to enrich our work by having other voices join our conversations, and to show the relevance of our research for normative questions that arise in public debates about social justice, economic sustainability, cultural and religious pluralism, democratic solidarity, environmental earth keeping, and the like. To these ends we propose to establish a new research centre.

2. A POSTSECULAR AGE

The cultural timing for this initiative could hardly be better. We live in a postsecular age. Instead of fading into irrelevance, religion has become central to global and domestic conflicts and to their possible resolution. Yet the proper role of religion in supposedly secular societies is far from obvious. Many citizens in North America and Europe, disaffected with a disenchanted world, have turned either to fundamentalism or to newer forms of spirituality for orientation, even as mainstream expressions of religion struggle to recover a public voice. The decline of mainline Protestant churches in Canada has not lessened the spiritual quest of people who are dissatisfied with most forms of institutional authority. Nor has the arrival of immigrants who uphold traditional religious teachings spelled the demise of a relatively democratic culture. On all sides people struggle to articulate in public the values and purposes most germane to their deepest convictions and to human flourishing.

Our universities are ill equipped to address the new challenges of a postsecular age. Products of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, Western universities often assume rather than address the process of secularization. Academic fields become ever more specialized; religious and spiritual discourses remain marginal to university life; and broadly normative questions slip through the cracks between departments and disciplines.

ICS is in an excellent position to address these challenges. Established in 1967 as an independent graduate school for interdisciplinary philosophy in the reformational tradition, ICS has long emphasized critical, creative, and religiously attuned scholarship. It has also promoted normative reflection on social and cultural issues. But its contributions along these lines have failed to receive the academic attention and public discussion they deserve.

The new research centre will help change this. Affiliated with the Toronto School of Theology, one of the largest consortiums for theological education in North America, and informally linked to the University of Toronto, the premier research university in Canada, ICS’s research centre will bring together leading scholars in the fields of philosophy, religion, and social ethics to

explore the challenges of a postsecular age. The centre will make the rich resources of reformational philosophy available for discussion and debate by scholars from diverse disciplines and religious backgrounds. It will contribute to an emerging interfaith dialogue fostered by other interdisciplinary ventures such as the Centre for Jewish Studies (U of T), Emmanuel College (TST), and the Institute for Studies in Religion, Society, and Culture or VISOR (VU University Amsterdam). It will also participate in the growing discourse on social ethics and public life sponsored by extra-departmental units at the University of Toronto such as the Centre for Environment, Centre for Ethics, Jackman Humanities Institute, Joint Centre for Bioethics, and the Centre for the Study of Religion's "Religion in the Public Sphere" program.

In all of these ways ICS's research centre will foster a deepening dialogue between ICS faculty and graduate students and their counterparts at other schools. ICS will bring to this dialogue more than forty years of uniquely interdisciplinary scholarship. Such scholarship bridges divides between analytic and continental philosophy and among various disciplines. It acknowledges the relevance of religious discourses for academic work. And it engages the normative dimensions of public life. ICS will receive in return the fruits of disciplinary and subdisciplinary specializations, the wisdom of various religious traditions, and the ethical insights of both academic experts and public agencies—contributions that will enrich graduate-level scholarship at ICS and insert it into a wider conversation on the challenges of a postsecular age.

3. PROPOSAL

This section of the report describes the shape of the research centre we propose. Some topics receive minimal treatment, and most are left open for refinement after a decision has been reached about whether to create the research centre.

3.1 Name

The name will indicate that this is a centre for research and scholarship. It should also suggest the most important fields of research; for example, Centre for Philosophy, Religion, and Social Ethics.

3.2 Purpose, Goals, and Values

The centre's *purpose* is to promote philosophically primed, religiously attuned, and interdisciplinary research on leading questions of life and society by bringing together scholars from diverse fields.

In achieving this purpose, the centre pursues the following *goals*:

- To make the resources of reformational philosophy available for discussion by scholars from diverse disciplines and religious backgrounds
- To address important normative issues of a postsecular age
- To welcome other scholars and public figures into ICS's scholarly efforts
- To foster a deepening dialogue between ICS researchers and their counterparts at other schools
- To draw greater attention to the ICS faculty's scholarship in academic and public settings

In pursuing these goals, the centre is committed to the following *values*:

- Reformational orientation
- Socially relevant normative reflection
- Substantial critical and creative inquiry
- Intellectual solidarity and collaborative effort
- Thoughtful public participation

3.3 Themes

Activities funded or organized by the centre will fall under three rubrics:

- interdisciplinary philosophy
- interreligious dialogue
- social ethics

Interdisciplinary philosophy addresses issues at the hinges among academic fields and between the academy and society. An example would be the idea of truth, a topic of debate within the discipline of philosophy that has relevance for other academic fields as well as for religion and public discourse.

Interreligious dialogue refers to both formal and informal conversations among the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic faiths as well as other religions, aimed at increasing mutual understanding across these traditions and enhancing their contributions to public life.

Social ethics is reflection upon normative questions and challenges that arise in institutions, organizations, communities, cultural practices, societal structures, environmental patterns, international relations, and public policies; it is distinct from, although not separate from, personal morality and professional ethics. As carried out at the centre, social ethics combines what many scholars distinguish as “metaethics” and “normative ethics,” and it keeps in view questions of “applied ethics.”

3.4 Programs

The centre supports five sorts of research activities:

- individual ICS faculty research and publication
- multiyear, collaborative research projects
- annual lecture series, book launches, and other events
- symposia, workshops, consultations, and conferences
- limited-term residencies

The centre is an incubator for *individual faculty research and publication* carried out by ICS faculty members and spelled out in their five-year academic plans. The centre helps them prepare research grant applications, advises them on opportunities for publication, helps them secure research assistance, develops and maintains an online institutional repository and other means of electronic dissemination of research, and hosts book launches for faculty publications.

The centre supports *research projects* that extend for more than one year, involve two or more researchers, and fall under the three rubrics identified above. Normally the principal investigator for each project is a faculty member at ICS. Other members of a research team may come from other institutions, although ICS faculty members normally make up at least one half of a team. When the centre is fully operational, more than one research project will be underway in any given year, with the beginning and end of such projects staggered in light of opportunities and constraints. The centre will take the lead in publishing some results of these projects. Most will be published at the initiative of team members in appropriate books, journals, and online venues.

The centre organizes annual *lecture series, book launches, and other events* such as the “Art Talks!” series and a new lecture series on “Religion and Scholarship.”

The centre also hosts *symposia, workshops, consultations, and conferences* that relate to the main themes of its work. Some of these events have direct links to multiyear research projects at the centre. Others are one-time occasions when members, associates, and invited guests can present their research in a collaborative and supportive environment.

To the extent that it is able, the centre also offers *residencies* for established scholars and postdoctoral fellows who bring their own funding and can benefit from the intellectual setting and resources the centre provides. When feasible, scholars in residence will receive office space and a modest research stipend.

3.5 Operations and Staff

The centre is open for nine months of the year, closing for two months in the summer and one month during the break between fall and winter semesters. It has the following staff:

- a director
- an associate director
- graduate research assistants

The centre’s *director* is normally a member of ICS’s faculty whose appointment as director counts as 50 percent of his or her workload. The director oversees all of the centre’s activities, serves as its chief spokesperson, grant writer and administrator, and budget officer, and prepares an annual report for the centre’s governing and advisory bodies.

The *associate director* works half time for the centre and reports to the director. The associate director oversees the work of research assistants and carries out many other responsibilities.

The centre also employs several ICS graduate students as *research assistants* on an hourly basis to help research, plan, and implement conferences, lectureships, and other annual and one-time events. These RA positions are funded through the centre’s general operating budget and are distinct from research assistantships funded by specific research grants. In addition, ICS’s library staff directly support the centre and have a portion of their salary paid through the centre.

3.6 Location

Current ICS facilities are inadequate to house the centre. Either ICS will need to expand the amount of space it rents or the centre will need to be housed elsewhere at the University of Toronto or the Toronto School of Theology. It would be strongly preferable to have the centre and the ICS library in the same physical location.

3.7 Budget

The main areas of projected expenditure are as follows:

- Salary and benefits (both faculty members and research centre staff)
- Research assistants
- Expense allowances (including what ICS currently calls “academic allowances”)
- Rent, furnishings, and office supplies
- Library costs
- Research and publication costs
- Events (lectures, book launches, other events)
- Meetings (symposia, workshops, consultations, conferences)
- Overhead

3.8 Funding

Funding for the centre’s operations and programs is expected to be of three sorts:

- endowment income and long-term gifts
- research grants
- other revenues

Endowment income and long-term gifts come from bequests and other donations that ICS receives and designates for the research centre. The aim is to have such funding provide a substantial and dependable base of ongoing support for the centre’s work.

Research grants are tied to specific research activities and are secured either by the centre’s director or by a project’s principal investigator or by both. They come from academic granting agencies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). They also come from foundations and other agencies. Being designated for specific research activities, much of this is flow-through funding, although some of it supports the centre’s general operating budget.

Other revenues come from three sources. (a) Partnerships with other schools and agencies whereby these contribute an agreed-upon amount to the centre’s income in exchange for a stake in the centre’s work. There will be significant costs associated with such inter-institutional support. (b) Foundation grants and agency funds that support the centre’s work and are not designated for specific research activities. (c) Fees for services the centre provides.

3.9 Other Resources

As a venture under the organizational umbrella of the Institute for Christian Studies, the centre receives administrative support from ICS staff, especially in the areas of financial administration and fund development. Although the centre's director will be involved in soliciting grants from foundations and research agencies and in securing institutional partnerships, ICS may need to increase staffing in advancement and communication. The centre also has ICS's historically significant library at its disposal and, through this, enjoys direct access to the University of Toronto's library system. Volunteer efforts by ICS's alumni/ae and supporters are also possible, particularly in the organizing and hosting of meetings and events.

3.10 Members, Associates, and Fellows

There are three levels at which researchers participate in the work of the centre:

- members
- associates
- fellows

Full *members* receive part of their salary via the centre and have the right to sit on the centre's governing council. Members of the centre include the faculty at ICS and may also include faculty members from partnering schools that tie regular compensation to the ongoing work these faculty members do at the centre (see 3.12 below).

Associates of the centre are researchers who have an interest in the centre's work and become associate members by invitation or by application. All ICS emeritus faculty, adjunct faculty, distinguished associates, honorary doctors, graduates, and current students are automatically associates of the centre unless they request otherwise. The centre welcomes associate members from other schools as well as from appropriate nonacademic agencies.

Fellows are scholars who are engaged in a centre-sponsored research project or have limited-term residencies at the centre. One can be both a member or associate of the centre and a fellow there. One can also be a fellow without being a member or associate of the centre.

3.11 Faculty Research Expectations

The centre provides a significant portion of ICS faculty compensation, and ICS faculty members are full members of the centre. Certain expectations for faculty research are intrinsic to this arrangement. Some, such as the first two listed below, have been in effect for many years. Others are either new or revised expectations, formulated with a view to the research centre's mission and organization. Once the research centre is fully operational, each Senior Member at ICS will typically undertake the following activities on its behalf within a five-year cycle:

- Pursue the research and publications projected in the faculty member's five-year academic plan.
- File annual activity reports and updates to the academic plan for informational review by the centre's Governing Council and for performance review by ICS's Professional Status Committee and Senate.

- Apply for at least one research grant every five years.
- Serve as a principal investigator or co-investigator for a centre-sponsored research project.
- Organize one annual conference and attend centre-sponsored conferences.
- Attend research symposia (4-6 sessions per year) and contribute discussion papers from time to time.
- Participate in other events sponsored by the centre such as book launches, workshops, and consultations.
- Serve a two-year term on the research centre's governing council.
- Supervise a graduate research assistant each year.
- Possibly mentor a postdoctoral fellow.
- Possibly serve as a conversation partner for one external scholar in residence.
- Help develop library resources, online vehicles of research dissemination, and other research tools in the faculty member's areas of expertise.

3.12 Institutional Partners

The centre plans to have several institutional partners, preferably with at least one in Canada, one in the United States, and one in Europe. Institutional partners are academic institutions or research centres that endorse the centre's mission, help subsidize its operations, and have representation on its governing council. While each partnership is unique and allows for specific mutually beneficial contributions between the centre and its partner, the three elements of endorsement, subsidy, and representation are common to all partnerships.

3.13 Institutional Affiliates

Institutional affiliates are schools, research centres, and other appropriate agencies that endorse the centre's mission and participate in one or more of the centre's activities. Appropriate agencies can include governmental, civic sector, and religious organizations. Institutional affiliates are asked to provide representatives to the centre's advisory council on a rotating basis.

3.14 Governance

As a venture of the Institute for Christian Studies, the centre operates under ICS's general policies and under the general governance of the ICS Senate (academic governing board), which approves the centre's policies, and Board of Trustees, which approves its budget. In more specific matters, and also on draft policies and budget, the centre is overseen by a governing council and supported by an advisory council.

The *Governing Council* has 5-9 members chosen from the centre's members and associates and from the centre's institutional partners. The centre's director, one ICS Senator, and one ICS Trustee are members *ex officio* of the Governing Council. Up to two seats are reserved for ICS faculty members (in addition to the centre's director). The Governing Council meets once or twice each year to review the centre's work, lay plans for the future, and approve policy and budgetary recommendations. Members are appointed to the Governing Council by ICS's Senate upon the recommendation of the centre's director and ICS's Professional Status Committee.

The *Advisory Council* (or Council of Reference) has 5-9 members chosen from among the centre's fellows both past and present, the centre's institutional affiliates, and the public at large, including ICS's alumni/ae and supporters. The role of the Advisory Council is to give the centre constructive comments on its efforts, help the centre establish networks in the worlds of research and funding, and give timely advice on new initiatives. It does not have a decision-making role. The Governing Council appoints members to the Advisory Council upon the recommendation of the centre's director.

Both the Governing Council and the Advisory Council receive an annual report on the centre's programming and operations and make it available to the stakeholders they represent. The centre's director prepares this report every year for the ICS Senate and Board.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Five considerations are crucial for implementing the recommendation of this report:

- Reconfiguring existing patterns of faculty scholarship into the new research centre
- Integrating the research centre with graduate education and public outreach
- Developing financial capacity
- Procuring appropriate institutional partners and affiliates
- Synchronizing implementation with available resources of funding, staffing, and space

4.1 Reconfiguration

The new research centre will incorporate existing patterns of faculty scholarship and give them new scope and focus. The faculty and the ICS community have had several conversations about what this change might entail. At a minimum, it clarifies and strengthens the expectations for faculty research, as listed above (see 3.11). But it also raises questions about how such expectations relate to the tasks of teaching and mentoring. The annual team-taught Interdisciplinary Seminar provides a good curricular arena for creating synergies in that regard, but there may be others as well. The newly articulated expectations for faculty research also affect how we regard the faculty's role in public outreach. We need to make strategic choices here and cannot simply pile more and more expectations on an already thinly resourced faculty. Also, the evaluation of faculty performance, including research and publication, should continue to follow the established channels of faculty governance. The research centre will not evaluate the faculty's work for reappointment decisions. That remains in the domain of the Professional Status Committee and the ICS Senate.

4.2 Integration

By more clearly delineating the three ventures under ICS's umbrella—graduate school, research centre, and public outreach—we create opportunities to give each venture more concentrated attention. But we also run the risk of creating silos that break down communication and create unhealthy competition for resources and personnel. This needs careful attention in the next several years. It might require that we restate the mission of ICS as an umbrella organization. It might also require that we reexamine ICS's governance structure, especially at the levels of Leadership Team, Senate, and Board.

4.3 Development

The research centre will not thrive if ICS does not expand its financial capacity. The new centre will bring in new revenues, but it will also incur new expenses. Although the Andreas bequest provides a foundation on which to build, that foundation will not sustain the centre in the long term unless we secure equally generous endowment and long-term gifts in the next five years. Several administrators at other schools with whom the author of this report consulted made that very clear. Institutional partnerships are unreliable sources of long-term financial stability, they said, for partners can back out. Moreover, research grants are only good from year to year and project to project. In the words of one administrator, “Grant money is soft money, and soft money is like sand. Don’t build your house on it. And don’t let anybody think that you might be trying to do this.” ICS may need to mount a major capital campaign in the near future.

4.4 Procurement

Nevertheless, it will be important to the centre’s work, also from a financial angle, to secure appropriate institutional partners and affiliates. Prospects for affiliates are much stronger than prospects for partners. In consultations with approximately 20 administrators and faculty colleagues at TST, U of T, and Calvin College, the author found excitement about the proposed research centre, accompanied by suggestions about how various schools and units could co-sponsor and co-host symposia, conferences, lectures, and the like. There is an obvious need for the kind of scholarship the centre will promote, and many scholars at other schools want to be part of it. When the author posed questions about potential institutional partnerships, however, many consultants drew a blank. Their own schools or units would not be likely candidates, they said, and they were hard pressed to think of other candidates. The main reason is that universities have difficulty justifying expenditures that seem primarily to benefit another school. This does not make such partnerships impossible to achieve, but it does mean ICS will need to be creative and flexible in the way it develops them.

These consultations, together with earlier ones conducted by Bob Sweetman, indicate that many schools and units would be interested in affiliating with the new research centre and a few might be interested in partnering if suitable and mutually beneficial arrangements were proposed. These potential institutional collaborators are listed below. A second list contains other institutions mentioned by our consultants for which additional research and conversation would be required to establish the potential of their collaboration.

Potential Institutional Collaborators

Name of School or Unit	Type of Collaboration
Calvin College (selected units)	Affiliate
Centre for Ethics (UofT)	Affiliate
Emmanuel College (TST)	Affiliate, Partner?
Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College (TST)	Affiliate
Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael’s College (TST)	Affiliate
Jackman Humanities Institute (UofT)	Affiliate

Regis College and Lonergan Research Institute (TST)	Affiliate
Toronto School of Theology	Affiliate, Partner
Victoria University (UofT)	Affiliate
VU University Amsterdam (especially VISOR)	Affiliate, Partner

Other Possible Collaborators

Association of Reformed Institutions of Higher Education or ARIHE	Affiliate
Cambridge Inter-Faith Programme (Cambridge University)	Affiliate
Centre for Jewish Studies (UofT)	Affiliate
Centre for the Study of Religion (UofT)	Affiliate
Christian Higher Education Canada or CHEC	Affiliate
Department of Philosophy (UofT)	Affiliate
Department of Political Science (UofT)	Affiliate
Environics Institute (a venture of the Environics Research Group)	Affiliate
The Immanent Frame (blog of the Social Science Research Council)	Affiliate
Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture (University of Virginia)	Affiliate
The King's University College, Edmonton	Affiliate
St. Thomas More College (University of Saskatchewan)	Affiliate, Partner?
Tony Blair Faith Foundation	Affiliate, Partner?

4.5 Synchronization

To remain in step with available funding, staffing, and space, the centre should be phased in over three academic years, with the aim of becoming fully operational by July 2013. Several advisors and consultants mentioned the importance of having a first research project that captures the imagination, encourages others to join our efforts, and signals the uniqueness and importance of the centre's work. The shape of such a project will be a primary topic for faculty deliberation in the coming months, with the aim of defining the project for discussion at the centre's first Governing Council meeting in February 2011. The following schedule provides an approximate timeline for establishing the centre (see also the appendix titled "Imaginary Director's Report, ICS Research Centre, May 2015"):

2010-2011

May 13-14, 2010	Discussion and approval of proposed centre by ICS Senate and Board
July 2010	Appointment of a Director and start of discussion about a lead project
August 18-20, 2010	First public event "organized" by centre: Truth Matters conference ¹
September 15, 2010	First draft of bylaws circulated
November 12, 2010	Bylaws approved by Senate and Board
January 2011	Preliminary Governing Council appointed
February 2011	First meeting of Governing Council to recommend policies and budget
May 2011	Policies and 2011-12 budget approved by ICS Senate and Board

¹ A book stemming from this conference will likely be the first publication that the research centre sponsors. There are preliminary plans to seek a research grant in support of this volume.

2011-2012

July 2011	Associate Director hired for the centre
September 2011	Final draft of the lead research project proposal completed
October 2011	First grant application submitted to SSHRC via the centre
December 2011	First Institutional Partner(s) and Affiliate(s) secured
February 2012	(Expanded) Governing Council meets and appoints Advisory Council
March 2012	First meeting of Advisory Council
May 2012	Policies and 2012-13 budget approved by ICS Senate and Board

2012-2013

July 2012	Space secured and furnished for the research centre
August 2012	First Research Project Team convenes
October 2012	First Invitation for Residencies posted: Deadline December 1, 2012
December 2012	Additional Institutional Partner(s) and Affiliate(s) secured
January 2013	Meeting of (expanded) Advisory Council
February 2013	Meeting of Governing Council
May 2013	Policies and 2013-14 budget approved by ICS Senate and Board, and performance review of the centre's Director completed

5. DOCUMENTATION

Many discussions and consultations lie behind this report. This section documents them for future reference.

5.1 Preliminary Discussions

The discussions leading to this report began in the strategic planning process headed by Chris Gort that began in 2005. The result was the “Strategic Plan: 2007-2012” adopted by the ICS Senate and Board in May 2007. It describes ICS as “an interdisciplinary graduate school where the gospel’s message of renewal shapes our pursuit of wisdom [and] scholars focus on the intersection of Reformational philosophy and contemporary scholarship and society.” Both the strategic plan and the discussions leading to it clearly identified the need to secure new streams of revenue, to develop institutional affiliations and partnerships, and to strengthen the academic and public profile of ICS—all of which play a significant role in the decision to create a new research centre.

Because Bob Sweetman’s “Rethinking ICS: The Latest White Paper” goes into these matters in some detail, only a few other stages of preliminary discussion need to be listed:

- 11-09-08 The ICS faculty discussed “Bob’s Brainstorm about ICS’s Relationship with TST,” which proposed that ICS faculty become the core membership of a new philosophy department within TST.
- 03-17-09 A meeting with David Barnard (by phone) and Gordon Smith, attended by Chris Gort (by phone), Bob Sweetman, Nick Terpstra, and Lambert Zuidervaart, spawned the idea of ICS’s seeking an institutional research partnership with the VU University Amsterdam. Bob and Lambert subsequently developed a proposal that Bob then

- presented at the VU, to much interest there but no commitment, due to newly imposed budgetary constraints.
- 10-07-09 The ICS faculty discussed a second version of “Bob’s Brainstorm,” this one titled “Proposal to Toronto School of Theology for Centre for Religious Philosophy and Philosophical Theology” and dated September 30, 2009. The document points toward a research centre rather than an academic department or teaching unit. Bob had extensive discussions of this document with key players at the various TST schools during the fall of 2009. ICS’s Academic Council discussed it on November 18, 2009.
- 01-20-10 The ICS faculty had a wide-ranging discussion about the idea of a new research centre, the shape it might take, and what role it could play in their scholarship. There was sufficient consensus for the development of a detailed proposal to begin.

5.2 Internal Consultations

Internal group discussions continued during the drafting of this report, along with individual consultations. Junior Member Ronnie Shuker was hired to interview ICS faculty members and to prepare digests of these interviews. The interviews explored each faculty member’s research needs, plans, and dreams in relation to a possible research centre.

Group discussions on drafts of the report included the following:

- 04-20-10 Leadership Team Meeting
- 04-21-10 Executive Board Meeting
- 04-21-10 ICS Community Meeting for faculty, staff, and current students
- 04-27-10 Faculty Meeting to discuss the interview digests and a draft of this report

5.3 Internal Advisors

At the beginning of his work, the author convened an ad hoc Research Centre Internal Advisory Committee (RCIAC) to read drafts of the report and give their advice. The following members of ICS graciously agreed to serve and have offered both insights and encouragement along the way:

- Board members Chris Gort, Mike den Haan, Kathy Vandergrift, and Aileen Van Ginkel
- Senators Nick Terpstra and Clarence Joldersma
- Staff member John O’Leary
- Faculty members Isabella Guthrie-McNaughton and Shannon Hoff

The author also consulted regularly with Bob Sweetman and Claire Veenstra about administrative and financial matters and had e-mail correspondence with ICS Board member Carol Veldman Rudie. Members of the RCIAC will meet on the morning of May 13 to discuss the final version of this report.

5.4 External Consultants

The author of this report has met or will have met personally or corresponded with the people listed here concerning a draft of the research centre proposal. Their enthusiasm for the proposal and their good advice have helped shape the final draft. An asterisk indicates someone with whom ICS President Bob Sweetman had also consulted at an earlier stage of brainstorming.

Name	Position/Experience	Date
Donald Ainslie (UofT)	Chair, Department of Philosophy	M 4-7-10
Joel Carpenter (Calvin)	Director, Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity; former Provost of Calvin College; former program officer at the Pew Foundation	E 3-30-10
Simone Chambers (UofT)	Professor of Political Science; founding member of the Executive Committee, Centre for Ethics	M 4-29-10
Janel Curry (Calvin)	Holder, Gary and Henrietta Byker Chair in Political, Social, and Economic Thought; former Dean for Research and Scholarship	P 4-12-10
Mario D'Souza (TST)*	Dean, Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College	M 4-8-10
Bob Gibbs (UofT)*	Director, Jackman Humanities Institute	M 4-14-10
Willi Goetschel (UofT)	Professor of German and Philosophy; member of the Steering Committee, Centre for Jewish Studies	M 4-14-10
Paul Gooch (TST)*	President, Victoria University	M 5-12-10
Alan Hayes (TST)	Director, Toronto School of Theology	M 4-13-10
Marsha Hewitt (UofT)	Professor of Social Ethics and Religion, Faculty of Divinity at Trinity College, and Centre for the Study of Religion	M 4-29-10
Rev. Abigail Johnson	Minister, Beach United Church	M 4-28-10
Karen M. Johnston (UofT)	Neurosurgeon, Faculty of Medicine; Director, Sport Concussion Clinic, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute	M 5-1-10
Mark Kingwell (UofT)	Professor of Philosophy and Undergraduate Coordinator, Philosophy; former chair of Institute for Contemporary Culture at the Royal Ontario Museum	M 4-29-10
Pamela Klassen (UofT)	Director, Religion in the Public Sphere program	M pending
David Neelands (TST)*	Dean, Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College	M 5-12-10
Gordon Rixon (TST)*	Dean, Regis College	M 4-26-10
Mark Toulouse (TST)*	Principal, Emmanuel College	M 4-13-10
Matt Walhout (Calvin)	Dean for Research and Scholarship	E 4-26-10
Dr. Barry Watson	President and CEO, Environics Research Group	M 4-30-10
Melissa Williams (UofT)	Director, Centre for Ethics	M 4-21-10
Abbreviations: E = E-mail, M = Meeting, P = Phone or Skype		

Appendix A. Imaginary Director’s Report, ICS Research Centre, May 2015

Note: To give an idea of what the proposed research centre will accomplish in its first five years, this appendix imagines the highlights of a five-year report from the centre’s director. The report focuses on scholarly events and results and does not discuss successes in grant applications, foundation funding, long-term gifts, and the creation of institutional partnerships.

Dear Members of the Research Centre Governing Board, ICS Senate, and ICS Board,

The past five years have seen steady expansion in the ICS Research Centre’s programming and a notable array of achievements. From modest beginnings in 2010-11, we have grown into a full-fledged centre for research and scholarship, one that is receiving recognition in both academic and religious circles across North America and Europe. Let me list highlights from each of the centre’s first five years.

2010-2011

- The centre ran a highly successful international conference on “Truth Matters” at the University of Toronto, thanks to grant funding from the Reid Trust and institutional support from the VU, Calvin College, and Dordt College.
- A conference volume from the Truth Matters conference was compiled, edited, and prospected with potential publishers.
- The centre hosted 4 research symposia with 2 faculty presenters from TST and 2 from ICS—symposia attended by colleagues from TST, U of T, and other universities in the GTA.
- The centre organized a book launch for *Art in Public* attended by scholars, artists, and representatives of arts organizations and government funding agencies.
- The centre sponsored the work of 10 graduate research assistants, 1 assigned to each of ICS’s Senior Members and 3 assigned to the centre itself.

2011-2012

- We welcomed Anonymous Bosch as the centre’s new Associate Director. Anonymous joins the 10 graduate research assistants we hire each year and now oversees them, among many other responsibilities.
- We also welcomed the centre’s first postdoctoral fellow. Polly Vandersma received a postdoctoral fellowship from SSHRC to work with Shannon Hoff and Lambert Zuidervaart on a book that develops reformational reflections on gender identity.
- The centre co-sponsored this year’s Art Talks! lecture and workshop with the Centre for Ethics and the Jackman Humanities Institute at U of T. Noted literary theorist and cultural critic Terry Eagleton was the featured speaker.
- The centre’s first book publication—the Truth Matters conference volume—was launched in a festive event held at Victoria University in the U of T.
- The centre hosted 5 research symposia with 1 faculty presenter from TST and 2 each from U of T and ICS.

- The centre organized a book launch for a new book on Richard Rorty by Ron Kuipers and for Nik Ansell's *The Annihilation Of Hell*. Jeffrey Stout and Jürgen Moltmann were among the featured guests.

2012-2013

- At last ICS and the research centre moved into newly renovated quarters on the U of T campus, just in time to welcome our first research project team.
- Professors Bob Sweetman and Rebekah Smick began a three-year research project funded by a major grant from SSHRC. Their team includes a noted Islamist from the Netherlands and a prominent Canadian from the world of Jewish Studies. They are investigating the medieval and renaissance roots to contemporary interreligious dialogue.
- The centre hosted its first Religion and Scholarship lectures. This biennial series features prominent scholars, both Christian and otherwise, who reflect on the relevance of religious traditions and practices for the pursuit of academic inquiry. Our first distinguished lecturer was Canadian political philosopher Charles Taylor.
- We received strong applications from a number of scholars for a one-year residency at the centre and approved 1.
- The centre hosted 6 research symposia with 1 faculty presenter each from TST, U of T, Calvin College, and the VU, and 2 from ICS. Attendance at these symposia averaged around 25 faculty members from TST, U of T, York U, Ryerson U, and other schools.
- The centre hosted workshops and book launches to mark the much-anticipated publication of Shannon Hoff's *Justice as Law, Justice as Forgiveness: Hegel and Beyond* and Doug Blomberg's *Wisdom and Teaching*.

2013-2014

- We welcomed our first scholar in residence this fall, a leading scholar and sought-after consultant in the interreligious "just ecology" movement.
- We also welcomed our second postdoctoral fellow, whose work with Ron Kuipers and Nik Ansell was funded by VISOR (Free University Institute for Studies in Religion, Society and Culture).
- The Art Talks! lecture and performance drew more than 400 people this year, thanks in part to excellent arrangements made with the Centre for Environment, Centre for Ethics, Emmanuel College, St. Michael's College, Jackman Humanities Institute, and the Luminato arts festival. It featured a performance piece on the theme of earth keeping and human creativity.
- This performance amplified the rigorous debates and genial discussions at the centre's international conference on "Solidarity and Sustainability: Toward a Global Ethic."
- Six more research symposia took place this year, two of them co-hosted by TST and the Centre for the Study of Religion (U of T), and one of them co-hosted by the Centre for Jewish Studies (U of T).
- Our book launch this year featured Rebekah Smick's *Michelangelo's Vatican Pietà as Image in the Theology and Aesthetics of Compassion* and Polly Vandersma's book on gender identity.

2014-15

- We welcomed our second research team this fall. Headed by Doug Blomberg, it began a two-year investigation of questions surrounding government funding for religiously oriented schools (including interreligious schools) and the state's role in education. The team includes prominent scholars from the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian communities.
- The research project headed by Bob Sweetman and Rebekah Smick concluded their three-year investigation with both a workshop and a conference on the history of interreligious dialogue. Three books and numerous journal articles will appear in the next few years as a result of their project.
- The last year of the project also included three day-long consultations with religious leaders from the aboriginal, Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant communities in Canada, facilitated by the Canadian Council of Imams, Toronto School of Theology, Centre for Jewish Studies, the Centre for Ethics, and the "Religion in the Public Sphere" program at U of T.
- The centre hosted its second Religion and Scholarship lecture, given this year by a prominent historian of religion.
- Three of our 6 research symposia this year were co-hosted by the Department of Philosophy, Department of Political Science, and the Faculty of Law at U of T.
- Our book launch this year featured the centre's second volume (on religion and scholarship) as well as Lambert Zuidervaart's book on a reformational conception of truth.

In summary, the research centre achieved the following in the past five years:

- ran 2 multi-year research projects involving 5-7 scholars each
- published 2 centre volumes and launched 8 books by ICS faculty and a postdoctoral fellow
- sponsored 2 high-profile Art Talks! lecture and performance events
- offered 2 biennial Religion and Scholarship lectureships
- organized and ran 3 international conferences
- hosted 27 well-attended research symposia
- held 3 day-long consultations
- hosted 2 postdoctoral fellows and 1 scholar in residence for a year each
- sponsored the work of 10 graduate student research assistants per year (50 in total)

In addition ICS faculty and other members and associates of the centre have published an impressive array of essays, book chapters, and journal articles, and they have presented many papers to both academic and nonacademic audiences across North America.

This has been a very productive time for research and publication at ICS. I thank you for your vision and support, and I invite you to celebrate the centre's first half decade on June 30. Representatives from our institutional affiliates and partners will be there, along with members and associates of the centre. I hope you can join us!

Blessings,

Dr. Namen Los
Director, ICS Research Centre