## Interview Summary Form

We want to capture **stories**, **themes**, **ideas**, and **great quotes**. Below, provide a summary of your interview that captures these elements.

*(As you enter the results of your interviews on your computer, the table cells will expand)*

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| Date: | 10/27/21 |
| Interviewer Name: | Mary Emily Duba |
| Interviewee Name & Title/Organization  (if any): | Tim Slemmons, Associate Professor of Homiletics and Worship, UDTS |
| Interviewee relationship: | o Current student, program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  o Alumni, program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  x Faculty  o Pastor or denominational leader  o Other |
| Do we have this interviewee’s **permission** to use their name alongside their comments? Yes  What **great stories** did you hear about **UDTS** (questions 1 & 2)? **Great quotes?**  He described the era of the seminary when he was first hired on. “Everything seemed so hopeful.” He gratefully remembered worshiping in Blades 3 times a week, hearing faculty preach regularly, and weekly communion. “There was a more robust worship life at that time.”  He also described high points that took place away from the Seminary, when he had a chance to speak at various presbyteries or conferences. He expressed that he hasn’t done much speaking on behalf of UDTS in the larger church, but noted that when he has, those were high moments. “I felt like, yes, we really do serve the larger church.” | |
| What **important** **themes** did you hear in questions 1 & 2 about the forces and factors that enable UDTS to thrive?       **Theme**: What does it mean to be a Reformed seminary? What parts of this inheritance should we pass on and which parts should we shed?  He noted that the question of our connection to the PCUSA and the Reformed tradition has been a lively one in the UD Administration for all the years that he’s been here. The question has prompted him to ask, “What is the Reformed tradition? What does it mean to be an heir of that? What is worth passing on and what is it time to shed?” He was reflecting on these questions both in a meta-sense, in terms of the future of the Presbyterian church and its identity, and specifically with respect to the identity of the Seminary. | |
| What does the interviewee **anticipate for the future**? (question 3)  He is not particularly concerned about the ecological crisis, and is worried that panic about the environment is being oversold to us by the media. While he does believe that we are called to be stewards of creation, he thinks that we should also credit our Creator with making a resilient creation. (He was responding to my interview, and probably would not have brought this up otherwise.)  He is concerned about social divisions that are widening. “There are thousands of fissures running through society.” He also expressed broader concerns about bias in the media. He is concerned that the media is not fairly representing problems with the safety and effectiveness of vaccinations, noting that he suspects the news sources he follows give more coverage of anti-vaccination demonstrations around the world than other news sources do. He is concerned about “medical tyranny” and wonders what Bonhoeffer and the confessing church might have to say about it. | |
| What **visions of the future** does this person have for a strategic, unified, and faithful future at UDTS? (question 4)  He expressed the hope that we’ll continue to produce biblical literate, historically grounded, and theologically centered students.  He hopes that the seminary of the future will be “open to the world, but not driven by the world.”  He hopes that UDTS will be less denominationally constrained. “I want to honor our fathers and mothers, but not tied by their apron strings.” He expressed some concern with the language of “ecumenical” because it sounds to him too easily confused (even, he admitted, in his own mind) with “interfaith,” which represents a trajectory that he finds troubling. He expressed a possible preference the language of “post-denominational.” | |
| What does this person believe arethe **most important strategic opportunities** for 2022 and beyond? (question 5)  He hopes to see future collaboration among faculty toward a shared publication. He wishes for more than conversation and community among faculty, but collaboration on a scholarly project.  Enriching our worship life.  Proposes that we consider having a University Press, or at least an annual publication – some vehicle for faculty scholarship. | |
| Have you learned **anything else** (or had a new thought yourself) during the interview that you want to share?  I am reminded by this interview that having clearer language around our identity as a PCUSA/Reformed seminary would be helpful going forward, as well as a shared understanding of what that identity means and doesn’t mean concretely for our life together. In my experiences in various ecumenical settings, I have known the truth of the apparent paradox that the clearer an institution can be about its own position in the religious landscape, the more hospitable that institution can be to those from other traditions. (I was never more welcomed as a Lutheran than at my Jesuit university – its clarity about itself made room for my clarity about myself.) | |
| **Please send this completed Interview Report Form by email to Jill Dodds by November 24.**  **jdodds@dbq.edu** | |