**Subject: COTE Minutes of September 19-20, 2023**

**Minutes of the Committee on Theological Education**

**of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

**September 19-20, 2023**

**Dubuque, IA**

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| tuesDAY, september 19, 2023 | |
| call to order and PRAYER | The meeting of the Committee on Theological Education (COTE) of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was called to order by the Chair, Katherine Smith at 9:15 a.m. CT. Jodi Craiglow opened the meeting with words of prayer. |
| attendance | Quorum was declared. Those present for all or a portion of the meeting were: |
| *General Assembly Representatives* | Katherine Smith, Chair  April Davis Campbell  Jodi Craiglow  Vanessa Hawkins (Zoom)  Brint Pratt Keyes  Nicholas Piccolo  Michael Williams |
| *Institutional and Covenant Representatives* | Emma Jordan-Simpson (Auburn Theological Seminary)  Victor Aloyo (Columbia Theological Seminary)  Paul Roberts, Vice-Chair (Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary)  Andrew Pomerville (Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary)  Jonathan Lee Walton (Princeton Theological Seminary)  Laurie Garrett-Cobbina (Dean, San Francisco Theological Seminary)  Raúl Santiago Rivera (Finance Director, Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico)  Jacqueline Lapsley (Union Presbyterian Seminary)  Jeffrey Bullock (University of Dubuque Theological Seminary) |
| *Invited Participants* | Shelli Latham (President, Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation) (Zoom) |
| *Excused* | José Irizarry (Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary)  David Crawford (McCormick Theological Seminary)  Asa Lee (Pittsburgh Theological Seminary)  Juan Mejías Ortiz (Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico) |
| *Others* | Barry Ensign-George (Staff Liaison, COTE; Coordinator, Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Mission Agency)  Lee Hinson-Hasty (Senior Director, Theological Education Funds Development, Presbyterian Foundation)  Timothy Cargal (Associate Director, Ministry Leadership Development, Office of the General Assembly)  Catherine Reuning (Mission Specialist, Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Mission Agency) |
| **cote member introductions and reflections** | Smith invited COTE members to share introductions and reflections of a time during which they felt a sense of belonging. |
| **approval of agenda** | The Committee **APPROVED** the agenda as presented. |
| **cote chair report** | Katherine Smith provided a brief report to the Committee, including extending appreciation to the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary for hosting the Committee on campus for the Fall Stated meeting of the Committee. Smith shared preliminary groundwork for COTE to have a working lunch in order to prepare for its meeting with the Unification Commission of the PC(USA) during the afternoon plenary. |
| **cote staff liaison report** | Barry Ensign-George provided a brief report to the Committee, focusing on COTE related business from the 225th General Assembly (2022) to help inform the Committee’s preparation for the 226th General Assembly (2024). Committee discussion centered on a referral from GA225 (2022) regarding financial support of Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico and the categorical make-up of the Board of Trustees report from COTE related theological institutions. Ensign-George included a brief update on a Christian Zionism Working Group. |
| **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** | The Committee **APPROVED** the following minutes as submitted:   * COTE Executive Committee Minutes, February 20, 2023 * COTE Executive Committee Minutes, May 23, 2023 |
| **BREAK** | The Committee recessed for a break 10:37 – 10:49 a.m. |
| **cote manual of operations** | Barry Ensign-George reported proposed revisions to the COTE Manual of Operations to the Committee:   * Appendix A1: LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL AND COVENANT MEMBERS OF COTE (page 12) to affirm the PC(USA) covenant agreement with San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS). * Policy E: Recognizing Significant and Distinguished Lifetime Service and Leadership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) -related Theological Education by the PC(USA): Award for Excellence in Theological Education to add the GA225 (2022) recipients, Gayraud Wilmore (posthumously) and Frank Yamada.   The Committee discussed the interest of Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation (OPSF) in entering into a covenant relationship with the PC(USA).  The Committee **APPROVED** a definite postponement of revisions the COTE Manual of Operations. |
| **theological institutional member updates** | Smith invited representatives from the COTE related theological institutions to share brief updates with the full Committee. |
| **RECESS** | The Committee recessed for lunch at 12:09 p.m. |
| **RECONVENE** | The Committee reconvened at 1:13 p.m. Brint Pratt Keyes opened the plenary session with prayer. |
| **theological education fund advisory committee report** | Vanessa Hawkins and Lee Hinson-Hasty reported to the Committee on behalf of the Theological Education Fund Advisory Committee (TEFAC). Hawkins reviewed TEFAC’s recommendations, which are in response to the comments by the 225th General Assembly (2022) item of business [FIN-03](https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3000760).  The Committee **APPROVED** amending the Theological Education Fund allocation formula in the following ways:   1. increase the Equal Distribution allocation of the TEF formula from 48% to 52%; 2. decrease the Distribution by Graduates allocation from 48% to 44%; 3. increase the Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico (SEPR) share to 8% to align with Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary’s share, as a second historically minoritized school; 4. modify the COTE Manual of Operations Appendix Policy C to reflect these changes.   The Committee **APPROVED** that COTE work with SEPR and the PC(USA) World Mission Office to explore securing a mission co-worker to serve as a faculty member at SEPR.  The Committee **APPROVED** that COTE work with SEPR and the Presbyterian Foundation to strengthen its fundraising capacity. |
| **theological education fund senior director report** | Lee Hinson-Hasty reported on the Theological Education Fund on behalf of the Presbyterian Foundation. Hinson-Hasty’s report focused primarily on the Presbyterian Foundation’s work around fundraising, financial reporting and management, and communications and public relations on behalf of the Theological Education Fund and COTE. |
| **award for excellence in theological education** | Hinson-Hasty updated the Committee regarding current nominations for the Award for Excellence in Theological Education. Members of COTE were encouraged to continue discerning potential nominations for the award. |
| **break** | The Committee recessed for a break 2:03 – 2:17 p.m. |
| **226th general assembly (2024)** | Smith and Ensign-George led the Committee through a preparatory review for GA226 (2024). Items of particular concern and interest to COTE included:   * The docket of GA226 (2024) * Deadlines for COTE business, referrals, and comments * GA226 (2024) logistics (e.g., no exhibit hall, formats for sponsored events, etc.) * COTE reports to General Assembly (e.g., COTE Agency Report, Institutional Reports of related institutions, confirmation of presidents/deans, and confirmation of institution trustees) * COTE Elected Member nominations * Ordination Task Force [from GA225 (2022)] * Potential COTE collaboration of theological institutions at GA226 (2024)   Lee Hinson-Hasty, Jodi Craiglow, and Andrew Pomerville will serve on a work team to identify ways in which COTE-related theological institutions can collaborate for, and during, GA226 (2024). |
| **conversation with pc(usa) unification commission** | The Committee met via Zoom with designated members of the Unification Commission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to share information about both the process of unification of the Office of the General Assembly and Presbyterian Mission Agency, as well as the relationship the PC(USA) related theological education institutions hold with the denomination through COTE. |
| **RECESS** | Smith recessed the meeting at 3:42 p.m. with a closing prayer. An optional tour of Wolter Woods & Prairies followed. |
| **WEDNESDAY, september 20, 2024** | |
| **RECONVENE** | Katherine Smith called the meeting to reconvene at 9:08 a.m. Emma Jordan-Simpson gave the opening prayer. A quorum was declared. |
| **nominating committee** | Smith led the Committee in conversation about the COTE nominating committee. There was agreement that at least one theological institution president should serve on the Nominating Committee. |
| **global partnerships** | Ensign-George led the Committee in conversation about current and potential global partnerships with the PC(USA)-related theological institutions. There was collective interest in the possibility of COTE meeting on the campus of a global partner in the future. |
| **ADJOURNMENT** | Katherine Smith closed the meeting with a closing prayer at 9:40 a.m. |
|  | Respectfully Submitted,  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Katherine Smith  Chair  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Barry Ensign-George  COTE Staff Liaison  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Catherine Reuning  Recorder |
| Approved by COTE / COTE Executive Committee: Month Day, Year | |