EVALUATION REPORT

of *CATHOLIC THEOLOGY* (612V60002) STUDY PROGRAMME

at Vytautas Magnus University

Kaunas, Lithuania

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I. INTRODUCTION

According to the request received from the Faculty of Catholic Theology (FCT) at Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania) regarding the assessment of the First Level Study Programme – Bachelor in *Catholic Theology* (612V60002), – the Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO) has established the experts' team for its external quality evaluation. For the accreditation process has been applied an approach of the *remote visiting*, i.e. proceeding with the assessment of the Self-evaluation Report by the experts without on-site visit and drafting the preliminary evaluation conclusions. The Summary of the results of the assessment has been done by the experts' team at AVEPRO drafting the Final Evaluation Report.

II. INFORMATION ON BACHELOR STUDIES PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme	*Catholic Theology*
State code	612V60002
Kind of the study programme	University studies
Level of studies	First
Study mode (length in years)	Full-time (5)
Scope of the study programme in national credits	300 ECTS
Degree and (or) professional qualifications awarded	**Bachelor of Theology**

III. SHORT PROGRAMME ANALYSIS

The brief analysis of the program tends to report only the essential elements and the changes that took place during the period of the last three years. With reference to the previous assessment report, the attempt was to avoid pointless repetition.

The uniqueness as well as the foundation of necessity for the *Programmes of Catholic Theology* in Lithuania is established. The number of applicants for the Programme exceeds the reguired minimum by the University. Regarding the main areas of employment opportunities there were no major changes. The Programme purpose, aims, learning outcomes and its consistency meet the requirements of the Congregation for Catholic Education as well as of the Lithuanian State. The Study volume is in compliance with propositions of Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia Christiana* and *Description of General Requirements for Undergraduate Degree-Granting and Integrated Study Programs* of the Minister of Educations and Science of Republic of Lithuania. Should be noted that the transition from national credits to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been fully and successfully operated.

The paragraph 2.2.2. of the Self-Evaluation Report presents the changes made to Programme Content in response to indications made in 2010 by the experts' team from Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC, Lithuania) and Holy See's Agency for the Evaluation and Promotion of Quality in Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties (AVEPRO, Holy See). It serves to note that the suggestions and indications essentially have been followed. Seeking to avoid the indicated duplications and to develop more universally recognized pattern of course units, some contents have been redistributed and some theological courses units, especially in the areas of Fundamental, Dogmatic and Moral Theology, have been changed (cf. Table 8 of Self-Evaluation Report).

However, taking into account the possibility for the future improvement of the Programme and giving attention to the difficulty and importance of the taught subjects some further changes could be made: 1) without changing the total number of credits of the Programme, distribute in a different way the credits inside of the proposed courses; more specifically reverse the credits of *Ontology* (TEON1002; 3 ECTS) and *Speciality Language Culture: Theological Language* (TEO1010, 4 ECTS); of *Catechetics* (TEON4010, 5 ECTS) and *Ecclesiology and Mariology* (TEO4013, 4 ECTS); of *Special Moral Theology (2): Bioethics, Sexual and Conjugal Ethics* (TEO4016, 6 ECTS) and *The Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles* (TEON3009, 5 ECTS); 2) change the placement of the following courses: *Ontology* (TEON1002) from 1 to 2 semester; *Speciality Language Culture: Theological Language* (TEO1010) from 2 to 1 semester.

The Academic staff composition has undergone some changes. It would be noted that the average age of academic staff is young enough, so the future perspective of the Faculty is positive. The number of staff is sufficient. The high number of full-time professors (22 of 25) undoubtedly favors the adequate support to students.

However, from the qualificative point of view, certain attention some of the professors is required: AKELAITIS Algirdas teaches almost all matters of the Old Testament and has only the Master degree; KASČIUKAITIS Arvydas who teaches all matters over the New Testament and has the licentiate degree. stimulus to take the doctorate. The recalled situation should become a stimulus for a commitment to doctoral studies.

As for the scientific production, it would be necessary to encourage publication activities oriented rather toward theological and philosophical research and not only educational material.

No adverse changes were noted regarding facilities and learning resources. The situation is entirely satisfactory. Il may be noted the absence of reference to the free wi-fi, or "virtual offices" of teachers.

There are no significant changes also in the study process and student's assessment: both remain corresponding to real needs.

The concrete commitment towards improving of Programme management and quality assessment is observable.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The average age of academic staff is young enough, thus the perspective of the Faculty is good. The number of staff is sufficient. However, certain attention on some of the teachers is required: AKELAITIS Algirdas, who teaches almost all matters of the Old Testament and has only the Master degree; KASČIUKAITIS Arvydas who teaches all matters over the New Testament and has the licentiate degree. stimulus to take the doctorate. The current situation should become a stimulus for taking the next step toward the doctorate.

2. It would be necessary to encourage publication activities as oriented rather toward theological and philosophical research than to educational materials exclusively.

3. In view of the near future improvements and taking into account the importance and difficulty of the subjects some changes could be made.
   - the inversion of the credits and the placement (semester) of the following courses: TEON1002, *Ontology*, 3 ECTS, 1 semester, and TEO1010, *Speciality Language Culture: Theological Language*, 4 ECTS, 2 semester;
   - the inversion of the credits of the following courses: a) TEON4010, *Catechetics,* 5 ECTS, and TEO4013 *Ecclesiology and Mariology* , 4 ECTS b) TEON3009, *The Synoptic Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles*, 5 ECTS and TEO4016 *Special Moral Theology (2): Bioethics, Sexual and Conjugal Ethics*, 6 ECTS.

V. PERSPECTIVES FOR REMOTE FUTURE

1) In view of the future update of the program structure might be expected something of more contextualized for Lithuania. Starting from the changes made as a result of prior observations on the structure of the program the further steps to aid contextual reflection could be taken and could influence course offerings in the future. For the same purpose could serve a rethinking of credits assigned to the course categories A and B that help students attend to cultural context. In the same direction, the question arises: might it be possible to design a degree programme for lay people that would be somewhat different from that offered to seminarians?

2) Some consideration regarding the content of the courses in philosophy and theology that are currently offered. It refers more specifically to the following question: what notion of pastoral (or "practical") theology is operative in the curriculum, and what influence, if any, this has on areas of dogmatic/systematic theology? The notion of the discipline of practical theology does not confine itself to "skills training for priests" or even a narrowly defined "skills training for lay pastoral agents." Rather, the definition to be proposed would be a study of "the self-actualization of the Church in history, what it is and what it should be" (Karl Rahner). An implication of this approach is that questions that emerge from a reflection on context are "carried back" into the heart of more specialized courses in theology, so that they also can address questions that are relevant to a cultural context, answers to which can help to direct future pastoral action. The concern which encourages to ask similar questions should be a desire to help theology become contextual.

VI. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The study programme *Catholic Theology* (state code – 612V60002) is given POSITIVE evaluation.

Table. *Study programme assessment in points by evaluation areas*.

No.	Evaluation area	Assessment in points*
1	Programme aims and learning outcomes	4
2	Curriculum design	3
3	Staff	3
4	Facilities and learning resources	3
5	Study process and student assessment (student admission, student support, student achievement assessment)	4
6	Programme management (programme administration, internal quality assurance)	4
	Total:	**21**

*1 (unsatisfactory) - there are essential shortcomings that must be eliminated

2 (poor) - meets the established minimum requirements, needs improvement

3 (good) - the area develops systematically, has distinctive features

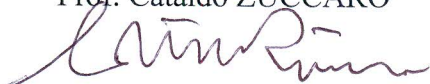4 (very good) - the area is exceptionally good

ASSESSMENT FORM

Criterion	Assessment [*]				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. Programme aims and learning outcomes					
1.1. Programme demand, purpose and aims					
1.1.1. Uniqueness and rationale of the need for the programme					X
1.1.2. Conformity of the programme purpose with the institutional, state and international directives			X		
1.1.3. Relevance of the programme aims					X
1.2. Learning outcomes of the programme					
1.2.1. The comprehensibility and attainability of the learning outcomes				X	
1.2.2. Consistency of the intended learning outcomes				X	
1.2.3. Transformation of the learning outcomes				X	
2. Curriculum design					
2.1. Programme structure					
2.1.1. Sufficiency of the study volume				X	
2.1.2. Consistency of the study subjects			X		
2.2. Programme content					
2.2.1. Compliance of the contents of the studies with legal acts				X	
2.2.2. Comprehensiveness and rationality of the programme content			X		
3. Staff					
3.1. Staff composition and turnover					
3.1.1. Rationality of the staff composition			X		
3.1.2. Turnover of teachers			X		
3.2. Staff competence					
3.2.1. Compliance of staff experience with the study programme x			X		
3.2.2. Consistency of teachers' professional development			X		
4. Facilities and learning resources					
4.1. Facilities					
4.1.1. Sufficiency and suitability of premises for studies					X
4.1.2. Suitability and sufficiency of equipment for studies					X
4.1.3. Suitability and accessibility of the resources for practical training				X	
4.2. Learning resources					
4.2.1. Suitability and accessibility of books, textbooks and periodic publications					X
4.2.2. Suitability and accessibility of learning materials					X

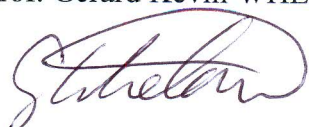|	1	2	3	4	5
5. Study process and student assessment					
5.1. Student admission					
5.1.1. Rationality of requirements for admission to the studies					X
5.1.2. Efficiency of enhancing the motivation of applicants and new students				X	
5.2. Study process					
5.2.1. Rationality of the programme schedule				X	
5.2.2. Student academic performance					X
5.2.3. Mobility of teachers and students			X		
5.3. Student support					
5.3.1. Usefulness of academic support					X
5.3.2. Efficiency of social support					X
5.4. Achievement assessment					
5.4.1. Suitability of assessment criteria and their publicity				X	
5.4.2. Feedback efficiency				X	
5.4.3. Efficiency of graduation papers assessment				X	
5.4.4. Functionality of the system for assessment and recognition of achievements acquired in a non-formal and self-study way.			X		
5.5 Graduate placement					
5.5.1 Expediency of graduate placement				X	
6. Programme management					
6.1. Programme administration					
6.1.1. Efficiency of the programme management activities				X	
6.2. Internal quality assurance					
6.2.1. Suitability of the programme quality assessment				X	
6.2.2. Efficiency of the programme quality improvement			X		
6.2.3. Efficiency of stakeholders' participation				X	

* – Values of scores:

1 – based on this criterion the programme is unsatisfactory, as there are essential shortcomings that must be immediately eliminated;

2 – based on this criterion the programme is poor, as there are a lot of shortcomings which are not essential;

3 – based on this criterion the programme is satisfactory; the programme meets the established minimum requirements and has one or two shortcomings which are not essential;

4 - based on this criterion the programme is good; the programme meets the requirements higher than those established by legal acts;

5 – based on this criterion the programme is excellent; the quality of programme implementation is of an exceptionally high level.

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