



Spiritual direction

The 2020 cohort had seven students, two in the Master of Arts (Spiritual Direction), four in the Graduate Diploma in Spiritual Direction, and one auditing the course.

The Graduate Diploma students will be completing the course at the end of this year; they have until the end of the year to submit their project. The Masters students still have another six months to complete their thesis. We also have one student who completed the Graduate Diploma some years ago and is now completing extra units and the thesis to get the Master. The Masters students are currently close to completion of all units for graduation.

The 2021 cohort began with five students, one in the Masters program and the remainder in the Graduate Diploma. However, due to reduced numbers caused by individual student circumstances, the students unanimously agreed to postpone the rest of their course until next year. As students are not enrolled in WU until they have completed the discernment semester, this has not affected WU student enrollment. Even so, students have enjoyed the course so it looks very positive for next year.

Master of Arts (Christian Studies)

We have nearly finished the third semester of the Master of Arts (Christian Studies). This is a professional development program for Indonesian Christian workers.

We had a debrief at the end of last semester to gather students' responses to the program. They all found that sessions with lots of discussion and fellowship was very different from their previous studies. The rationale is that the program needs to be useful in real ministry, so students spend most of the time in sessions evaluating the relevance of new information, discussing how to put principles into practice in real ministry, and solving the kinds of problems they face. Students are very consistent in attendance and participation; one even had Covid19 and still joined in all sessions.

The staff also reviewed the program and were very positive. We wanted students to do better at written work and they have generally risen to the challenge.

Due to Covid19, we still do everything on Zoom, Whatsapp, and email. It is an adjustment that we have all had to make. Nevertheless, students are geographically widespread, so it would be necessary anyway.

In memorium

One of the Indonesian committee members, Kefas Kariyono, contracted Covid19 and passed earlier on this year. He was enthusiastic and creative, had an open heart for people, and was a committed evangelist. Sadly missed.

Another doctorate

I have been asked to do another doctorate for accreditation purposes. My topic is a review of the MA (Christian Studies) according to the accreditation criteria for distance education; it's useful as we'd have to do it anyway. I've made lots of progress, I'm short of time until the semester ends.

ACAS Tribunal Win

You might know that the Australian Centre for Advanced Studies (ACAS) lost its accreditation and appealed to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The Tribunal found that ACAS complied with all mandatory standards and instructed the accreditor to renew ACAS's registration. It is encouraging to know that that ACAS has passed the most stringent possible test by an independent adjudicator. At the end, the member reported that the hearing had produced 3,000 pages of evidence.

However, the ACAS board is changing the structure, and especially the financial structure, so WU will have less access to its accreditation. This most directly benefits the WU graduate program in spiritual direction, but does not benefit the program in education, as its local recognition depends on ACAS accreditation.