

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**between**  
**Blackfriars Hall, Oxford University and**  
**Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology, Berkeley, CA**

**Aims:** Following upon recommendations from recent General Chapters of the Order, the purpose of this project is to facilitate the exchange of postgraduate students and faculty members so as to:

1. foster the mutual, academic benefit of both institutions and their members;
2. strengthen ties between the brethren throughout the Order;
3. further the outreach apostolate of the Order.

### **I – DSPT LAY STUDENTS VISITING OXFORD UNIVERSITY**

Blackfriars Hall will welcome applications from lay students of the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT) who are presently enrolled in any of the DSPT concurrent programs. Such students may be invited to spend one academic year (from the end of September to end of June) in residence as Official Visiting Students of Oxford University (OU). In special circumstances, students in other programs may petition to spend one semester at OU. However, preference will be given to those applying for the year.

#### **Program of Study.**

Qualified students will enrol at Blackfriars Hall of Oxford University as “Visiting Students.” They will be able to attend OU lectures and seminars, have access to OU faculty libraries and the Bodleian Library, and will have an OU computing account which gives the student an Oxford University email address and access to the University’s on-line databases. Students will have access to OU sporting facilities at the same rates as matriculated students. They will further have access to the library, and student common room, and other general facilities for students of Blackfriars Hall, a Blackfriars computing account, together with access to the normal lectures and seminars of the Blackfriars Studium, and invitations to a number of events organised by the Aquinas Institute, and the Las Casas Institute, of Blackfriars Hall.

Depending on the college tuition fee, Blackfriars Hall will also provide Visiting Students with a level of one-to-one tutorial-style supervision with a supervisor or supervisors appropriate to the student’s discipline and research area. Options will include a weekly tutorial (60 mins) and a fortnightly extended tutorial 90 (mins). Typically, students take four tutorials in an eight-week term. The tutorial system is described more fully in a separate document available through the office of the DSPT Academic Dean.

Oxford University operates on a system of terms: Michémas (mid-October through mid-December); Hilary (mid-January through mid-March); Trinity (mid-April through mid-June). Students should check the Oxford University website for the most recent dates for each term, and should arrange their schedule so as to arrive well in advance of the start of the term for orientation and induction.

#### **Housing.**

Students who come for an academic year will normally be offered accommodation by Blackfriars Hall. Students who come for less than one academic year will either be offered accommodation by Blackfriars Hall or be offered advice on how to find independent accommodation.

#### **Application.**

DSPT students would normally participate in this exchange during the second year of the concurrent MA program. Eligible students must submit a written statement of intent to the Academic Dean by the end of their first semester in the program. After receiving this statement, the Academic Dean will meet with the student and the Academic Advisor to plan a proposed course of study for the year abroad (tutorials, lectures, and classes). This proposal is then submitted to the Director of Blackfriars Hall for review and approval. Discussion of this may take place at any time, but the final agreement must be reached and an application submitted by April of the first year in the concurrent program.

### **Student Visa.**

Students traveling to the United Kingdom are considered a **non-visa national** if: i) you have US citizenship; ii) will travel from the UD; & iii) live in the US), and in such case do not have to obtain Entry Clearance prior to arrival in order to stay as a **Student Visitor**.

Upon arrival to port of entry (e.g. Heathrow airport), the student informs the Immigration Officer that you will be taking a short course and should be given permission to enter the UK as a 'Student Visitor'. There is no charge for this. Note that it is not possible to get immigration permission as a Tier 4 (General) Student on arrival.

In addition to a valid U.S. passport, students must show the following documents to the Immigration Officer:

- the letter offering you a place on the short course, clearly stating the dates you will be studying;
- financial evidence including your previous 3 months bank statements and all or some of the following:
- if a parent, relative or friend is paying for you to study, a letter from them confirming what their relationship to you is, how much they are going to give you, how often, for how long, and where that money is going to come from. You will also need evidence that they can fulfil their promise, for example, their bank statements or wage slips, or a letter from their employer confirming their salary;
- if you are being sponsored by a government or scholarship agency, a letter from them confirming how long the scholarship will continue for and what costs it will cover;
- if you are going to pay for your studies with your own savings, original bank statements covering at least the last 3 months.

### **Academic Progress and Transcripts.**

At the end of each term or of each set of tutorials, the supervisor or tutor will submit to Blackfriars Hall a report on the student's written work and performance in tutorials with an overall grade. This report will be communicated to the student and discussed with him or her in a meeting with the Director of Studies who is responsible in the Hall for monitoring the student's academic progress. Upon successful completion of the academic year Blackfriars Hall will (i) issue to the student an official transcript of the studies undertaken; (ii) issue a copy of this to the Registrar of DSPT. Upon return to DSPT, students must petition the Academic Dean to have this coursework transferred to their DSPT program.

**TUITION PAYMENT.** While away, the following process will be used to cover payment of tuition:

- The bursar at the college the student is attending will send an invoice for tuition (and room and board where applicable) to the VP Finance at DSPT who in turn will send it to the student for their review
- The fees will be converted to US\$ using the prevailing exchange rate on the date the fees are posted to the student's tuition account
- The balance of the tuition account must be paid by the student to DSPT **before** DSPT will wire the fees to the college the student is attending
- As soon as the student pays their tuition account balance, DSPT will wire the fees to the college the student is attending using the prevailing exchange rate on the day the wire is processed. Any difference between the exchange rate used when the tuition fees were posted and paid, will be charged or credited to the student's tuition account.

## **II – DOMINICAN STUDENT FRIARS VISTING THE BLACKFRIARS STUDIUM**

In an effort to develop stronger ties between the Provinces, the Blackfriars Studium will welcome Dominican friars who wish to study there for one academic year. Under the direction of the Master of

Students of the English Province, all friars will participate fully in all (academic and formational) aspects of the studium.

**Program of Study.**

Friars will have access to the normal lectures and seminars of the Blackfriars Studium, and invitations to a number of events organised by the Aquinas Institute and the Las Casas Institute of Blackfriars Hall. They will normally receive one tutorial per week in addition to lectures, seminars, and language classes. They will also have access to the Blackfriars library and student common room, a Blackfriars computing account.

**Housing.**

Friars will normally be accommodated in the Blackfriars Priory.

**Application.**

Those friars interested in study at Blackfriars Hall must first petition in writing their own Province (Prior Provincial, Regent of Studies, and Master of Students). Once preliminary approval for study abroad has been received, students must then obtain permission from their own Regent of Studies, the Dean of DSPT, and the director of Blackfriars Hall over the teaching (tutorials, lectures, and classes) which the student visiting Oxford will receive. Discussion of this may take place at any time, but the final agreement should be reached and an application submitted by April of the academic year immediately preceding the year of study at Oxford.

**Academic Progress and Transcripts.**

At the end of each term or of each set of tutorials, the supervisor or tutor will submit to Blackfriars Hall a report on the student friar's written work and performance in tutorials with an overall grade. This report will be communicated to the student and discussed with him or her in a meeting with the Director of Studies who is responsible in the Hall for monitoring the student's academic progress. Upon successful completion of the academic year Blackfriars Hall will (i) issue to the student an official transcript of the tutorial studies undertaken together the results of any examinations sat in the Blackfriars Studium; (ii) issue a copy of this to the Registrar of DSPT. Upon return to DSPT, students must petition the Academic Dean to have this coursework transferred to their DSPT program.

**III – BLACKFRIARS/OXFORD POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS VISITING DSPT**

It is recognized that postgraduate students of Blackfriars Hall are normally bound by the residency requirements of OU such as to preclude masters students from studying abroad during their course and to prevent doctoral students from studying abroad for 6 of the 9 terms normally taken to complete a doctoral thesis. It is also recognized that OU students are liable for 9 terms of Oxford University fees regardless of whether they are resident or not in a given term. Nonetheless, there may be postgraduate students who wish to study abroad after completion of their residency requirements.

DSPT will welcome as Visiting Students applications from eligible postgraduate students of Blackfriars Hall or suitably qualified friars in the Blackfriars Studium who wish to spend one academic year (from the end of August to end of May), or one academic semester (September through December, or February through May).

**Program of Study.**

Students from Blackfriars Hall or Studium will be able to attend lectures and seminars of DSPT, as well as participate in the cross-registration policy of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) and the University of California, Berkeley, as defined by the common agreement for members of the GTU. Visiting Students will also have access to the libraries of GTU, UC Berkeley, and Santa Clara Universities, along with a DSPT e-mail account and access to on-line databases. They will also have access to the UC Berkeley sporting facilities at the same rates as other DSPT students.

Depending on the tuition fee, DSPT will also provide Visiting Students with a level of one-to-one tutorial-style supervision with a supervisor or supervisors appropriate to the student's discipline and research area.

**Housing.**

DSPT will assist Visiting Students in finding suitable accommodation. Under the direction of the Master of Students for the Western Dominican Province, Dominican student friars will participate fully in all (academic and formational) aspects of the studium of the Western Dominican Province, residing at St. Albert Priory (Oakland, CA).

**Application.**

Eligible students must submit a written statement of intent to Blackfriars Hall. Having received approval, students must then submit to Blackfriars Hall and the Dean of DSPT a plan of study (tutorials, lectures, and classes) which they hope to receive while attending DSPT. Discussion of this may take place at any time, but the final agreement should be reached and an application submitted by April of the year in which they wish to begin study at Berkeley.

**Academic Progress and Transcripts.**

At the end of the program of studies, DSPT Registrar will (i) issue to the student an official transcript of the studies undertaken. If the Visiting Student wishes an official copy to be sent to the Regent of Blackfriars Hall, then they must submit a written petition to the DSPT Registrar.

**Tuition fees**

Blackfriars offers different levels of tutorial teaching at different prices: e.g. undergraduate students can choose to pay a higher fee for two tutorials a week or a lower fee for one per week.

Depending upon their study needs, students enrolling at DSPT will pay either the regular tuition rate for full-time enrolment (four courses), or a tutorial rate (for doctoral students who need directed one-on-one study).

**IV – EXCHANGES AND VISITS BY FACULTY MEMBERS**

In order to foster greater academic collaboration between our two institutions, DSPT and Blackfriars Hall will welcome applications by full-time Faculty members who wish to undertake research for periods of up to one year.

Applicants to Blackfriars will submit to the Regent of Blackfriars, a letter of recommendation from the Dean of DSPT together with a brief research proposal and academic CV.

Applicants to DSPT will submit to the Academic Dean a letter of recommendation from the Regent of Blackfriars together with a brief research proposal and academic CV.

Each entity will assist successful applicants in locating accommodation. Wherever possible, friars will be accommodated in a Dominican Priory. The cost of accommodation for the friars will be determined by the relevant priors.

Visiting Research Scholars at Blackfriars have access to OU faculty libraries and the Bodleian Library, will have an OU computing account with access to the University's on-line databases, and will be able to attend OU lectures and seminars. They will further have access to the library, and Senior common room, and other general facilities for Fellows of Blackfriars Hall, a Blackfriars computing account, together with access to the normal lectures and seminars of the Blackfriars Studium, and invitations to a number of events organised by the Aquinas Institute, and the Las Casas Institute, of Blackfriars Hall.

Visiting Research Scholars at DSPT will have access to the libraries of the GTU, UC Berkeley, Stanford and Santa Clara Universities. In certain circumstances, they may also have access to the private library and archives of St. Albert Priory. They will also have a DSPT e-mail account, access to on-line databases, and

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will be able to attend lectures and seminars of the DSPT, and enjoy access to such other lectures and seminars in the GTU and Philosophy faculty at Berkeley as are open to scholars.

### **Access charges/Administrative Fees**

Students and visiting research scholars will pay relevant administrative fees of each institution as determined at the time of the exchange.

Approved by the DSPT Faculty on 12 Oct 2011