

# Logsdon dean named HSU Faculty Member of the Year

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ABILENE—Robert Ellis, who learned earlier this year the seminary where he was dean would close, recently found out his peers at Hardin-Simmons University named him Faculty Member of the Year.



Robert Ellis

Ellis is professor of Old Testament and Hebrew and has been dean of HSU's Logsdon School of Theology and Logsdon Seminary since 2018.

"To be chosen as faculty member of the year by my peers is one of the most significant affirmations of my life. My father, who taught at HSU for 36 years, received this award during his service at the university. Now, as I begin my 27th and final year at Hardin-Simmons, I am deeply honored to be in his company and in the company of the other remarkable recipients of this award through the years," Ellis said.

"Teaching at Logsdon has been a high privilege, and I am grateful for the opportunity of service here and thankful for visionary university leaders and donors who through the years have supported ministry preparation at

HSU.”

## **‘A bright shining light’**

Myles Wertnz, formerly the T.B. Maston Chair of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology at Logsdon and now founding director of the Baptist Studies Center at Abilene Christian University, offered congratulations in a social media post, writing: “Bob is one of the best people I know, and I’m proud you were my dean.”

Ellis embodies the HSU motto of “an education enlightened by faith,” said Kyle Tubbs, president of the Logsdon Alumni Council.

“Dr. Ellis has been a bright shining light to thousands of Hardin-Simmons students over the years. What an honor for the faculty to recognize his brilliance through this award,” Tubbs said. “I am deeply grateful for his leadership, faithfulness and integrity. He is one of my Baptist heroes!”

## **Major time of transition**

On Feb. 7, Ellis found himself in the middle of a firestorm and a major time of transition after HSU announced its board of trustees voted to [close Logsdon Seminary](#).

In a [Feb. 12 letter](#) to the “HSU family,” President Eric Bruntmyer explained the closing of Logsdon Seminary was “strictly a financial decision” reached after extended analysis, discussion and prayer. He also explained current seminary students would be provided a “teach out” program to allow them to complete their degrees and full-time faculty would be provided a one-year contract.

A few days later, the university provided additional details, announcing it was eliminating 11 graduate degree programs, five undergraduate majors,

four undergraduate minors and two certificate programs to address a [more than \\$4 million operating deficit](#). HSU further announced it was reorganizing its academic programs into five colleges and schools, and the undergraduate Logsdon School of Theology would become part of the Cynthia Ann Parker College of Liberal and Fine Arts.

Ellis began serving as Logsdon dean in spring 2018. He spent two years on the HSU faculty in the mid-1980s before going to teach at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He returned to the HSU and Logsdon faculty in 1996.

Ellis earned his undergraduate degree from HSU and both his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from Southwestern Seminary. He spent two years in post-doctoral studies at the University of Cambridge.

He served two decades on the Baptist General Convention of Texas' Theological Education Council.