



***Guidelines for Renewing Associate Membership
in The Association of Theological Schools
in the United States and Canada***

[Approved by ATS Board of Directors in April 2020, effective July 2020]

The ATS *Procedures Related to Membership* (II.C.4) stipulate, with regard to associate membership, “At the end of its first five-year term of Associate Membership, if the institution has not been granted accreditation by the Board of Commissioners, it shall either petition the ATS Board of Directors for one additional five-year term of renewal as an Associate Member or notify the ATS Board it is voluntarily withdrawing.”

The Association initially grants Associate Membership on the recommendation of the Board of Directors; the Board alone may renew an institution’s Associate Membership. The Board bases its recommendation for granting initial Associate Membership on a formal application for Associate Membership and the report following a staff visit. The purpose of the petition for renewal is to demonstrate to the Board that the institutional character that was evident at the time Associate Membership was granted is still intact and that the long-term institutional intention remains to seek accredited membership.

The petition for renewal includes two components:

1. A cover letter, signed by the institution’s chief administrative officer and addressed to the ATS Board of Directors, stating why the institution is petitioning for a five-year renewal of Associate Membership, summarizing the reason(s) it was not able to achieve accreditation within the last five years and describing how it will be able to achieve accreditation within the next five years.
2. An updated ATS Associate Membership Application form, providing any new information since the institution’s last application regarding how it meets the membership criteria (e.g., any changes in mission, location, structure, degrees, faculty, enrollment, facilities, finances, governance, and administration).

The ATS Board of Directors will act on petitions for renewal of membership at a regularly-scheduled Board meeting and communicate its decision to the institution within 30 days. The Board renews Associate Membership for only one additional five-year period (i.e., ten years total). If an institution has not achieved initial accreditation at the end of ten years, it will be automatically withdrawn from Associate Membership. If that institution desires to pursue again Associate Membership, it must go through the formal application process like any other applicant school.