

Abstracted Summary of Final Actions: May-June 2020

Pursuant to §602.26 of Title 34 of U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, this report abstracts substantive changes only from all final actions taken recently by The Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools (COAATS). Canadian schools are not included in this report. References correspond to the [compendium of accrediting documents](#). Information on individual schools can be found by accessing our [member school list](#).

*At its semiannual meeting June 1-2, 2020, the Board of Commissioners of COAATS met via teleconference modality and voted on the below actions with an effective date of **June 2, 2020**, unless otherwise noted.*

Concerning COVID-19/coronavirus-related guidance now extending through end of December 2020, click [here](#). For more documentation related to this public health crisis, go to: <https://www.ats.edu/ats-events-and-coronavirus-resources>.

ACTION(S) RELATED TO PERIODS OF ACCREDITATION

Academy for Jewish Religion - Yonkers, NY

1. To grant initial accreditation of Academy for Jewish Religion for the maximum period of seven years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2027, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2027.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
 - Rabbinical Program
 - Cantorial Program
 - Master of Arts
3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

NOTE: To authorize a follow-up, onsite focused visit when it is safe and reasonable to do so to meet the Board-approved COVID-19 Guidelines issued on June 1, 2020.

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky - Georgetown, KY

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Baptist Seminary of Kentucky for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree program:
 - Master of Divinity
3. To approve the following extension site(s):
 - Simmons College, located at 1018 S. 7th Street, Louisville, KY, 40203, to offer the complete MDiv.
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes
[NOTE: During the visit the committee determined that adequate resources were in place to remove the provisions limiting distance education between Simmons College and BSK at the Georgetown campus.]

Bethel Seminary of Bethel University - St. Paul, MN

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Bethel Seminary of Bethel University for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Children's and Family Ministry
 - Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy
 - Master of Arts in Ministry
 - Master of Arts in Transformational Leadership
 - Master of Arts (Christian Thought)

Master of Arts (Theological Studies)

Doctor of Ministry

3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
[NOTE: The school is currently teaching-out all students from the closed extension site at 6116 Arosa St, San Diego, CA 92115, where the MDiv, MA in Mental Health Counseling, MA in Marital and Family Therapy, MA in Ministry, MA (Christian Thought), and MA (Theological Studies) are offered. The school is reminded that it should inform Commission staff when the last student has graduated from or otherwise exited each of the six programs offered at this site.]
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

Boston College School of Theology and Ministry - Chestnut Hill, MA

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Boston College School of Theology and Ministry for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
Master of Divinity
Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry
Master of Theological Studies
Master of Theology
[NOTE: Since November 2019, the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry is recorded as being *discontinued*; the school is reminded to inform ATS Commission staff when the last student has graduated or otherwise exited from this program.]
3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

Catholic Distance University Graduate School of Theology - Charles Town, WV

1. To grant initial accreditation to Catholic Distance University Graduate School of Theology for the maximum period of seven years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2027, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2027.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
Master of Arts in Theology and Educational Ministry
Master of Arts (Theology)
3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico - San Juan, PR

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico for a period of seven years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2027, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2027.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
Master of Divinity
Master of Arts (Religion)
Doctor of Ministry
3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: No

Logsdon Seminary of Logsdon School of Theology of Hardin-Simmons University - Abilene, TX

1. To accept the school's *withdrawal* from accredited membership in the Commission *effective December 31, 2023*.
2. To approve the school's teach-out plan since it meets the criteria for evaluating teach-out plans described in the Board of Commissioners' *Policy Manual*, Appendix 5.
3. To *rescind* the comprehensive evaluation visit scheduled for spring 2022.

Pentecostal Theological Seminary - Cleveland, TN

Per Board vote on 3/23/2020 ([initial guidelines posted 3/24/2020](#), now extended—see link(s), above), next comprehensive evaluation visit is postponed *to* spring 2021, due to the COVID-19 health crisis limiting travel and group gatherings, with adjustment to the period of accreditation as necessary [i.e., to expire on July 31, 2021].

Perkins School of Theology Southern Methodist University - Dallas, TX

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Perkins School of Theology for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Ministry
 - Master of Sacred Music
 - Master of Theological Studies
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Pastoral Music
 - Master of Theology
3. To approve the following extension site(s) at which the MDiv, MA in Ministry, and MTS degrees may be offered. Note that an exception to the residency requirements for the MDiv and MA in Ministry was granted in February 2018 allowing courses taken at the school's four extension sites in Houston and Galveston to count for residency, as an exception to Standard A, section A.3.1.3 and Standard B, section B.3.1.3:
 - Houston Methodist Hospital, 6565 Fannin St., Houston, TX 77030
 - St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 5501 Main St., Houston, TX 77004-6917
 - St. John's United Methodist Church, 2019 Crawford St., Houston, TX 77002
 - Moody Memorial United Methodist Church, 2803, 53rd St. at Avenue U, Galveston, TX 77551-4526
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

Southeastern University School of Divinity - Lakeland, FL

1. To grant initial accreditation to Southeastern University School of Divinity for the maximum period of seven years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2027, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2027.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership
 - Master of Arts in Family Ministries
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Arts (Biblical Studies)
 - Doctor of Ministry
3. To approve the following extension site(s):
 - Bayside Community Church (15800 FL-64, Bradenton, FL 34212) as a complete degree-granting site for the MDiv, MA in Ministry Leadership, and MA (Theological Studies)
 - The House Modesto (1601 Coffee Rd, Modesto, CA 95355) as a complete degree-granting site for the MDiv, MA in Ministry Leadership, and MA (Theological Studies)
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

St. John Vianney Theological Seminary - Denver, CO

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of St. John Vianney Theological Seminary for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree program:
 - Master of Divinity
3. To approve the following extension site(s): None
4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: No

St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary - Boynton Beach, FL

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary for a period of ten years with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires in July 31, 2030.
2. To approve the following degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity

Master of Arts (Philosophical Studies for Missionary Discipleship)

Master of Arts (Theological Studies)

3. To approve the following extension site(s):

St. John Vianney College Seminary, located at 2900 SW 87th Ave, Miami, FL 33165, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies), *pending* an onsite focused visit (anticipated: fall 2020; see below).

4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: No

NOTE: To authorize a follow-up, onsite focused visit when it is safe and reasonable to do so to meet the Board-approved COVID-19 Guidelines issued on June 1, 2020.

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School of Trinity International University - Deerfield, IL

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School of Trinity International University for a period of seven years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2027, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2027.

2. To approve the following degree programs:

Master of Divinity

Master of Arts in Chaplaincy and Ministry Care

Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling

Master of Arts in Ministry

Master of Arts in Urban Ministry

Master of Arts

Master of Arts (Theological Studies)

Doctor of Ministry

Master of Theology

PhD (Educational Studies)

PhD (Intercultural Studies)

PhD (Theological Studies)

3. To approve the following extension site(s):

Xenos Christian Fellowship, 1340 Community Park Drive, Columbus, OH 43229, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies).

New Life Celebration Church of God, 14243 Dante Avenue, Dolton, IL 60419, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies) and the Master of Arts in Urban Ministry.

2701 W. Cypress Creek Road, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies).

Eastbrook Church, 5353 N. Green Bay Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53209, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies).

Christ Community Chapel, 750 W. Streetsboro Street, Hudson, OH 44236, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies).

9010 SW 137th Ave. #101, Miami (Kendall), FL 33186, as a complete degree-granting site for the Master of Arts (Theological Studies).

Torch Center for World Missions (TCWM), 70 Baumbero 31-Gil, Seocho-Gu, Seoul, 137-889, South Korea, as a complete degree-granting site for the Doctor of Ministry (Korean-language track).

4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: Yes

Wake Forest University School of Divinity - Winston-Salem, NC

1. To reaffirm the accreditation of Wake Forest University School of Divinity for a period of ten years, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2030, one term before the period of accreditation expires on July 31, 2030.

2. To approve the following degree program:

Master of Divinity

3. To approve the following extension site(s): None

4. To grant approval to offer comprehensive distance education: No

ACTION(S) RELATED TO NEW/REVISED DEGREES

Denver Seminary - Littleton, CO

To approve the Doctor of Philosophy (Counselor Education and Supervision)

Palm Beach Atlantic University School of Ministry Graduate Department - West Palm Beach, FL

To approve the Master of Arts (Philosophy of Religion)

Regent University School of Divinity - Virginia Beach, VA

1. To approve the Master of Arts in Christian Discipleship
2. To approve the Master of Arts in Church Leadership
3. To approve the Master of Arts in Church Planting
4. To approve the Master of Arts in Evangelism and Mission

Shepherds Theological Seminary - Cary, NC

To approve the Doctor of Ministry

Western Seminary - Portland, OR

To approve the Master of Applied Biblical Leadership

ACTION(S) RELATED TO NEW COMPREHENSIVE DISTANCE EDUCATION APPROVAL

Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology - Hales Corners, WI

To grant approval for comprehensive distance education

ACTION(S) RELATED TO NEW/EXPANDING EXTENSION SITES OFFERING AT LEAST HALF A DEGREE

Central Baptist Theological Seminary - Shawnee, KS

To grant approval to offer more than half of the MDiv degree, but not a complete degree, at a new, partial-degree extension site located at 1266 N Northwest Hwy, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

ACTION(S) RELATED TO CLOSING/RELOCATING EXTENSION SITES OFFERING AT LEAST HALF A DEGREE

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary - New Orleans, LA

1. To approve the closing of the complete degree extension site located at First Baptist Church (at 2908 Georgia Highway 120, Duluth, GA 30096), where the MDiv and MA in Christian Education degrees are currently offered.
2. To approve the school's teach-out plan since it meets the criteria for evaluating teach-out plans described in the Board of Commissioners' *Policy Manual*, Appendix 5. The teach-out plan is that all students at the closed site will continue their degrees at an already approved site 4 miles away, which also offers the same two degrees
3. To acknowledge notification that the following partial-degree sites will close by **(i.e., effective): December [1], 2020**, including description of how students' educational needs will be met:
 - 233 Church Avenue, Rainsville, AL 35986 (Northeast Extension Center)
 - 6850 Belfort Oaks Pl, Jacksonville, FL 32216 (Florida Baptist Convention)
 - 1836 Olive Road, Pensacola, FL 32514 (Olive Baptist Church)
 - 1120 Lake Joy Road, Warner Robins, GA 31088 (Central Baptist Church)

[Date of Commission staff action on behalf of the Board: 6/03/2020]

ACTION(S) RELATED TO THE REMOVAL OF NOTATION

A *notation* is a warning, i.e., negative action, to denote that a school partially meets a given Standard, which it must fully meet within two years or face withdrawal of accreditation, i.e., adverse action. See [Policies and Procedures](#), section VII.E.

Houston Graduate School of Theology - Houston, TX

1. To accept the report required in June 2017 (and extended for good cause) regarding Notation N8.b, "The institution's financial resources are not adequate for long-term institutional vitality and there is no credible plan to address this issue in a timely and effective manner."

2. To remove Notation N8.b, and to remind the school that it will need to demonstrate continued progress and implementation of a credible plan for long-term institutional vitality on the occasion of its comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2022.

John Leland Center for Theological Studies - Arlington, VA

1. To accept the report required in January 2020 regarding Notation N9.c, "*The institution has not demonstrated the extent to which its students have met the learning outcomes appropriate for each degree program it offers or that its assessment efforts have led to improvement and there is no evidence of a credible plan or its implementation to address this issue in a timely and effective manner.*"
2. To remove Notation N9.c, and to remind the school that its upcoming self-study report should demonstrate measurable progress in the assessment of student learning, with particular attention to degree program effectiveness.

Memphis Theological Seminary - Memphis, TN

1. To receive the report required in June 2018 regarding Notation N8.b, "*The institution's financial resources are not adequate for long-term institutional viability and there is no credible plan to address this issue in a timely and effective manner.*"
2. To remove Notation N8.b.
3. To require that the focused evaluation visit required by the Board of Commissioners in June 2018 to take place in fall 2021, regarding the following three areas—strategic planning and institutional evaluation, educational assessment, and institutional viability—pay particular attention to the school's demonstrable progress toward financial equilibrium.

ACTION(S) RELATED TO THE EXTENSION OF NOTATION FOR GOOD CAUSE

A *notation* is a warning, i.e., negative action, to denote that a school partially meets a given Standard, which it must fully meet within two years or face withdrawal of accreditation, i.e., adverse action. See [Policies and Procedures](#), section VII.E.

Christian Theological Seminary - Indianapolis, IN

1. To receive the report required in June 2018 requiring evidence for the removal of Notation N9.c.
2. To *extend* for good cause for one year (to June 2021) Notation N9.c, "*The institution has not demonstrated the extent to which its students have met the learning outcomes appropriate for each degree program it offers or that its assessment efforts have led to improvement and there is no evidence of a credible plan or its implementation to address this issue in a timely and effective manner.*"

Per the ATS Commission *Policies and Procedures*, "In certain cases and for demonstrated good cause, the Board of Commissioners may extend by one year the period of imposition of a notation" (section VII.E.3). Evidence for removal of this notation should reach the Board of Commissioners no later than **April 1, 2021**, in order to be considered by the Board at its **June 2021** meeting. The school may request that a notation be removed prior to this deadline, noting the November 1 deadline for such an early submission.

New York Theological Seminary - New York, NY

1. To receive the report required in June 2018, regarding Notation N8.b.
2. To *extend* for good cause for one year (to June 2021) Notation N8.b, "*The institution's financial resources are not adequate for long-term institutional vitality and there is no credible plan to address this issue in a timely and effective manner.*"

Per the ATS Commission *Policies and Procedures*, "In certain cases and for demonstrated good cause, the Board of Commissioners may extend by one year the period of imposition of a notation" (section VII.E.3). Evidence for removal of this notation should reach the Board of Commissioners no later than **April 1, 2021**, in order to be considered by the Board at its **June 2021** meeting. The school may request that a notation be removed prior to this deadline, noting the November 1 deadline for such an early submission.

Starr King School for the Ministry - Berkeley, CA

1. To receive the report required in June 2019, regarding Notation N8.b.
2. To *extend* for good cause for one additional year (to June 2021) Notation N8.b, "*The institution's financial resources are not adequate for long-term institutional vitality and there is no credible plan*

to address this issue in a timely and effective manner,” due to delays in implementing some strategies and due to economic uncertainties created by the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Per the ATS Commission *Policies and Procedures*, “In certain cases and for demonstrated good cause, the Board of Commissioners may extend by one year the period of imposition of a notation” (section VII.E.3). Evidence for removal of this notation should reach the Board of Commissioners no later than **April 1, 2021**, in order to be considered by the Board at its **June 2021** meeting. The school may request that a notation be removed prior to this deadline, noting the November 1 deadline for such an early submission.

ACTION(S) RELATED TO THE IMPOSITION OF NOTATION

A [notation](#) is a warning, i.e., negative action, to denote that a school partially meets a given Standard, which it must fully meet within two years or face withdrawal of accreditation, i.e., adverse action. See [Policies and Procedures](#), section VII.E.

Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico - San Juan, PR

To impose the following notation(s) for a period of 24 months, with a report due by April 1, 2022, adequately documenting how the school has addressed the notation—**effective June 30, 2020**:

Notation N8.b, *"The institution's financial resources are not adequate for long-term institutional vitality and there is no credible plan to address this issue in a timely and effective manner."*

Report prepared: 6/30/2020

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