

Abstracted Summary of Final Actions: January-February 2022

Pursuant to §602.26 of Title 34 of U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, this report abstracts from all final actions taken recently by The Commission on Accrediting of The Association of Theological Schools (COAATS) concerning substantive changes only for schools in the US (Canadian schools are not included in this report). The membership of COAATS has adopted new [Standards of Accreditation](#) and [Policies and Procedures](#), effective July 1, 2020. Any older references would correspond to the [pre-2020 accrediting standards](#) and are subject to the Board-approved [implementation procedures effective until June 2022](#). Information on individual schools can be found by accessing our [member school list](#). Past abstracts can be found [here](#).

At its semiannual meeting [January 31-February 1, 2022](#), conducted via videoconference due to public health concerns, the Board of Commissioners of COAATS voted on the below actions with an effective date of **February 1, 2022**—unless otherwise noted.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO PERIOD OF ACCREDITATION

Alliance Theological Seminary - New York, NY

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2029, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2028.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Biblical Literature)
 - Master of Arts (Biblical Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies
 - Master of Professional Studies
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional location(s): San Juan, Puerto Rico (Jose A. Canal Street #458 Oficina 301Urb. Roosevelt, Hato Rey, PR 00918) to offer full master's degrees and the full Doctor of Ministry degree.

Boston University School of Theology - Boston, MA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity [MDiv]
 - Master of Arts in Religion and Public Leadership [MARPL]
 - Master of Sacred Music [MSM]
 - Master of Theological Studies [MTS]
 - Master of Sacred Theology [STM]
 - Doctor of Ministry [DMin]
 - Doctor of Philosophy [PhD]
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional locations: None

Catholic Theological Union - Chicago, IL

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2029, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2028.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theology)

Master of Arts in Hispanic Theology and Ministry
Master of Arts in Ministry
Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
Doctor of Ministry

- b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
- c. Additional locations: None

Claremont School of Theology - Claremont, CA

To approve an additional *delay* in the school's next comprehensive visit (*from* fall 2022 *to* spring 2023) and to adjust the school's period of accreditation accordingly [i.e., to expire July 31, 2023].

Drew University Theological School - Madison, NJ

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March, 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry
 - Master of Arts (Religion)
 - Master of Sacred Theology (STM)
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Philosophy
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional locations: None

Freed-Hardeman University Graduate School of Theology - Henderson, TN

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (New Testament)
 - Master of Arts (Old Testament)
 - Master of Arts in Ministry
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Care and Counseling
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional locations: None

Interdenominational Theological Center - Atlanta, GA

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Liturgical Arts and Culture
 - Master of Arts in Religion and Education
 - Doctor of Ministry

NOTE: The ThD, which had been offered through cooperation with the Atlanta Theological Association, is *discontinued* with no student remaining in the program.
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional locations: None

Lancaster Theological Seminary - Lancaster, PA

On behalf of the Board, Commission staff postponed on 1/19/2022 the next scheduled comprehensive evaluation visit *from* spring 2024 *to* fall 2024, with adjustment to the period of accreditation as necessary [i.e., to expire on March 31, 2025].

Loyola Marymount University Department of Theological Studies - Los Angeles, CA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31st of March 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Arts (Theology)
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional location(s):
 - St. John The Baptist Catholic Church, 3883 Baldwin Park Blvd, Baldwin Park, CA 91706, to offer the complete Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry degree.
- NOTE: The additional location at the Marywood Center, 2811 E Villa Real Drive, Orange, CA 92863, which had been previously approved to offer a complete degree, is closed.

Pontifical College Josephinum - Columbus, OH

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2029, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2028.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional locations: None

Saint Paul School of Theology - Leawood, KS

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2032, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2031.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Christian Ministry
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
 - c. Additional location:
 - Saint Paul School of Theology, Bishop W. Angie Smith Chapel, Oklahoma City University, 2501 N Blackwelder Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73106 [NOTE: This site has been an additional location approved to offer half or more of a degree; however, since the pandemic, the school has changed its delivery modality to students at this location from mostly onsite to mostly online, which will continue post-pandemic. Consequently, the evaluation committee did not visit this location because it no longer meets the Commission's definition of an additional location approved to offer half or more of a degree (see ATS Commission *Policies and Procedures*, IV.F.2)].

Southern California Seminary Graduate School of Bible and Theology - El Cajon, CA

1. To grant the school initial accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2029, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2028.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Christian Ministries [Standard 4.6(.b)]
 - Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies [Standard 4.6(.b)]
 - Master of Arts in Christian Counseling [Standard 4.6(.b)]
 - Master of Arts (Biblical Studies) [Standard 4.6(.a)]
 - Master of Arts (Philosophy and Apologetics) [Standard 4.6(.a)]
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Ministry

- b. Comprehensive distance education: Yes
- c. Additional locations: None

SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary - Orchard Lake, MI

1. To approve an additional one-year *delay* (equaling a two-year total delay) of the school's comprehensive evaluation visit (*from* fall 2021 *to* fall 2022) and to adjust the school's period of accreditation accordingly [i.e., to expire March 31, 2023].
2. To approve the school's teach-out plan since it meets the criteria for evaluating teach-out plans described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.L.2.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO NEW DEGREE PROGRAM LEVEL

Columbia Biblical Seminary of Columbia International University - Columbia, SC

To approve the Doctor of Philosophy (Standards 5.11-16) degree program.

HMS Richards Divinity School Division of Graduate Studies of La Sierra University - Riverside, CA

To approve the Doctor of Ministry (Standards 5.1-6) degree program.

Kairos University [formerly Sioux Falls Seminary] - Sioux Falls, SD

To approve the Doctor of Professional Counseling (Standards 5.7-10) degree program.

Western Seminary - Portland, OR

To approve the Doctor of Philosophy in Intercultural Education (Standards 5.11-16) degree program.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO DISTANCE (ONLINE) EDUCATION

Campbell University Divinity School - Buies Creek, NC

To grant approval for comprehensive distance education.

George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University - Waco, TX

To grant approval for comprehensive distance education.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO ADDITIONAL LOCATION

Asbury Theological Seminary - Wilmore, KY

1. To approve the closing of the school's additional location at 8401 Valencia College Lane, Orlando, FL, 32825, where the following degrees may be completed: Doctor of Ministry, Master of Divinity, Master of Arts [Biblical Studies], Master of Arts in Christian Ministries, Master of Arts in Leadership, Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Counseling, Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling, Master of Arts in Ministry, and Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling. The school is reminded to notify Commission staff when no students remain enrolled at this site.
2. To approve the school's teach-out plan since it meets the criteria for evaluating teach-out plans described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.L.2.

Dallas Theological Seminary - Dallas, TX

1. To acknowledge that Commission staff now have the authority to approve relocations with no Board-approved teach-out plan required (all students, staff, and instructors will relocate to the new site only 18 miles away), nor is any focused visit required for relocations (only new locations). So, the "temporary" authority granted by Commission staff in October 2021 is now considered "permanent" authority for this relocation *from* McLean Bible Church (10002 Battleview Parkway, Manassas, VA 20109) *to* Burke Community Church (9900 Old Keene Mills Road, Burke, VA 22015). This location is approved to offer any complete master's degree program.
2. To acknowledge that Commission staff now have the authority to approve relocations with no Board-approved teach-out plan required (all students, staff, and instructors will relocate to the new site only 10 miles away), nor is any focused visit required for relocations (only new locations). So, the "temporary" authority granted by Commission staff in October 2021 is now considered "permanent" authority for this relocation from Passion City Church—Downtown (515 Garson Drive NE, Atlanta, GA to Passion City Church—Cumberland (2625 Cumberland Parkway SE, Atlanta, GA 30339). This location is approved to offer any complete master's degree program.

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

1. To grant approval for a new additional location at Florida Memorial University (15800 NW 42nd Avenue, Miami Gardens, FL 33054) to offer any complete master's degree.
2. To authorize a focused visit within six months of this substantive change to verify that the location at Florida Memorial University (15800 NW 42nd Avenue, Miami Gardens, FL 33054) has the resources, facilities, and personnel described in the school's petition. (Visit anticipated: spring 2022)

Shepherds Theological Seminary - Cary, NC

1. To grant approval for a new additional location at Trinity College of Florida (2340 Welbilt Blvd, Trinity, FL 34655) to offer half or more of any master's degree, but not any complete degrees.
2. To authorize a focused visit within six months of this substantive change to verify that the location at Trinity College of Florida (2340 Welbilt Blvd, Trinity, FL 34655) has the resources, facilities, and personnel described in the school's petition. (Visit anticipated: fall 2022)

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO MISSION, LEGAL STATUS, NAME, OR MAIN LOCATION

Meadville Lombard Theological School - Chicago, IL

1. To approve the relocation of the school's main campus from 610 S Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60305 to 180 N Wabash Avenue, Suite 700, Chicago, Illinois 60601, effective December 13, 2021.
2. To authorize a focused evaluation visit to the new campus location within six months of the relocation (visit anticipated spring 2022) to determine whether the new location has the adequate resources to support the school's institutional and education mission.
3. To approve the school's teach-out plan since it meets the criteria for evaluating teach-out plans described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.L.2.

ACTION TAKEN RELATED TO PUBLIC SANCTION (WARNING, PROBATION, OR SHOW CAUSE)

Previous versions of the Standards of Accreditation and the Policies and Procedures used the term "notation" to refer to instances where a member school was not meeting or not fully meeting one or more standards. In June 2020, the membership and Board adopted a new set of Policies and Procedures that replace the term "notation" with "warning," describing the new term as follows (III.G): "Issuing a warning is a public action (the lowest level of three public sanctions; see III.H-I for the other two) that is taken when the Board determines that an accredited school substantially meets the standards but is at risk of not meeting one or more standards." Per the Board-approved implementation procedures, any school that received a notation prior to June 2020 must address that notation in light of the newer Standards of Accreditation (effective July 1, 2020).

Alliance Theological Seminary - New York, NY

To issue the following warning because the school, while substantially meeting the Commission Standards of Accreditation as a whole, is at risk of not meeting the following specific Standard. The school has two years to address this warning adequately, or the Board will take appropriate action as described in the *Policies and Procedures*, III.G-J., which usually means imposing probation.

[Effective February 28, 2022, per *Policies and Procedures*, VI.A.5 (Board Procedure on Effective Date of Accreditation Decisions); cf. VII.A.4-5 and VIII.A.(1-3)]

Standard 10.3 on Financial Resources: The school is at risk of not having "sufficient and stable financial resources to achieve its mission with educational quality and financial sustainability." The school must submit a report by the 1st of November 2023 documenting progress toward financial sustainability, including a financial plan that is "realistic, wholistic, and sustainable." The plan should (i) be based on reasonable revenues and expenditures in light of recent trends, (ii) consider the whole impact on the mission, educational quality, students, employees, donors, and other constituencies, (iii) represent operating surpluses, prudent dependence upon endowment, reserves, donors, and proper utilization of unusual and infrequent resources, and (iv) describe how debt repayment is being addressed—with a credible plan to address any deficiencies going forward. The school's most recent audit, along with any management letter, must be appended to the report.

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology - Brookline, MA

1. To receive the report of the evaluation committee concerning the focused visit conducted in fall 2021. *Concerning the Warning on Planning and Evaluation:*

2. To accept the report required in February 2021 demonstrating evidence for removal of the warning on institutional planning, in light of the development of, approval, and implementation of the School of Theology's strategic plan.
3. To remove the warning on institutional planning (N1.b, *"The institution's planning processes are insufficient or ineffective"* in the pre-2020 Commission *Policies and Procedures*).

Concerning the Warning on Resources (Financial):

4. To accept the report required in February 2021 demonstrating evidence for removal of the warning on finance showing the School of Theology's continued progress in achieving economic equilibrium.
5. To remove the warning on finances (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"* in the pre-2020 Commission *Policies and Procedures*).

The school is accredited in good standing.

6. To require a report by the 1st of November 2022, demonstrating evidence of the completion of the development of the academic plan and the continuing implementation of the strategic plan and the academic plan. The report should include, in particular, progress in the achievement of enrollment goals and, if necessary, adjustments made in the enrollment projections, the development of new degree programs, and fundraising work (Standards 2.3-4)
7. To require that the School of Theology include in its Self-Study Report leading to the scheduled reaffirmation of accreditation visit in fall 2023, further evidence of how the school has achieved the targets it has established for itself in enrollment, financial stability and real estate monetization, and strategic and academic planning.

Pontifical College Josephinum - Columbus, OH

To issue the following warning because the school, while substantially meeting the Commission Standards of Accreditation as a whole, is at risk of not meeting the following specific Standards. The school has two years to address this warning adequately, or the Board will take other appropriate action as described in the *Policies and Procedures*, III.G-J, which usually means imposing probation. [Effective February 28, 2022, per *Policies and Procedures*, VI.A.5 (Board Procedure on Effective Date of Accreditation Decisions); cf. VII.A.4-5 and VIII.A.(1-3)]

Standards 2.1-4 on Planning: The school has an insufficient planning process to address critically important issues that threaten its long-term viability and must submit a report by 1 November 2023, documenting how it fully meets Standards 2.1-4. The report must include a current strategic plan that (1) demonstrates "a broad-based process that engages appropriate constituencies to develop a plan that is widely owned" (Standard 2.1); (2) "focuses on priorities that are most strategic for achieving the school's mission and vision that recognize both the school's current realities and future possibilities" (Standard 2.2); (3) "results in a written plan that articulates the school's strategic priorities in ways that clarify how each priority will be achieved, including appropriate human, financial, physical, and technological resources needed for that priority" (Standard 2.3); and (4) "is actively implemented, regularly evaluated, and revised as needed" (Standard 2.4). The plan must especially address improved enrollment (see Standard 7.3), shared governance (see Standards 9.6-8), balanced budgets (see Standard 10.3), and prudent endowment draws (see Standard 10.5).

United Lutheran Seminary - Gettysburg, PA

1. To receive the report required in January 2020 regarding the warning related to Standard 8 on faculty and shared governance (pre-2020 Standard Notation N5.b, *"The institution does not appropriately resource, support, retain, or evaluate faculty, including provision of sufficient time to teach and research, or engage them adequately in the institution's planning and shared governance, 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 the warning on faculty, which the Board imposed by vote in January 2020 as Notation N5.b, *"The institution does not appropriately resource, support, retain, or evaluate faculty, including provision of sufficient time to teach and research, or engage them adequately in the institution's planning and shared governance, and there is no evidence of a credible plan or its implementation to address this issue in a timely and effective manner."*

The school is accredited in good standing.

Report prepared: March 3, 2022

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