

Abstracted Summary of Final Actions: January – February 2023

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 adopted new [Standards of Accreditation](#) and [Policies and Procedures](#), effective July 1, 2020. Information on individual schools can be found by accessing our [member school list](#). Past abstracts can be found [here](#).

At its semiannual meeting *January 30-31, 2023*, the Board of Commissioners of COAATS voted on the below actions with an effective date of **January 31, 2023**—unless otherwise noted.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO PERIOD OF ACCREDITATION

America Evangelical University Seminary - Los Angeles, CA

1. To affirm the school's accreditation for an initial period of five years, until 31 March 2028, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2027.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional location: Kairos University (2681 Walnut Avenue, Tustin, CA 92780-7005)

Athenaeum of Ohio - Cincinnati, OH

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Biblical Studies)
 - Master of Arts (Catholic Studies)
 - Master of Arts (Theology)
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry
 - b. Distance education: Limited
 - c. Additional locations: None

Beeson Divinity School - Birmingham, AL

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - b. Distance education: None
 - c. Additional locations: None

Bexley Hall Seabury-Western Theological Seminary Federation, Inc. - Chicago, IL

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2029.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:

- a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity*
 - Doctor of Ministry

*NOTE: Because of new faculty hires enabling the school to cover all curricular areas, the committee recommends removing the language of “by virtue of the school’s affiliation with Chicago Theological Seminary” included in the Board of Commissioners’ action of June 2016.
- b. Distance education: Comprehensive
- c. Additional locations: None

China Evangelical Seminary North America - West Covina, CA

1. To reaffirm the school’s accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Christian Studies (professional and academic)
 - Master of Theological Studies (academic)
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive (half or more of a degree)
 - c. Additional locations: None

Columbia Theological Seminary - Decatur, GA

1. To reaffirm the school’s accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Practical Theology
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Educational Ministry
 - b. Distance Education: Comprehensive (half or more of a degree)
 - c. Additional locations: None

Georgia Central University School of Divinity - Atlanta, GA

1. To reaffirm the school’s accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2029.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Christian Education
 - Master of Arts in Mission Studies and World Christianity
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Philosophy (Intercultural Studies)
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Henry Appenzeller University - Claremont, CA

To *deny* initial accreditation [*effective February 17, 2023*].

Holy Apostles College and Seminary - Cromwell, CT

1. To reaffirm the school’s accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2029.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:

- a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Philosophy)
 - Master of Arts (Theology)
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
- b. Distance education: Comprehensive
- c. Additional locations: None

Howard University School of Divinity - Washington, DC

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Religious Studies)
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

International Theological Seminary - West Covina, CA

- 1. To *defer* action on the recommendations of the evaluation committee report, pending submission of additional financial information (i.e., the FY 2022 audit and management letter) by the 1st of November 2023.
- 2. To extend the period of accreditation until 31 March 2024.

Mount Saint Mary's Seminary - Emmitsburg, MD

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theology)
 - b. Distance education: None
 - c. Additional locations: None

SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary - Orchard Lake, MI

- 1. To acknowledge the school's notification of its permanent closure, effective September 30, 2022.
- 2. To rescind the school's comprehensive visit scheduled for spring 2023.
- 3. To acknowledge notification of the school's *voluntary withdrawal* from membership in the Association and subsequently from the Commission, as well.

University of Chicago Divinity School - Chicago, IL

- 1. To reaffirm the Divinity School's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 March 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2029.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts
 - Master of Arts (Religious Studies)
 - Doctor of Philosophy
 - b. Distance education: None
 - c. Additional locations: None

Urshan Graduate School of Theology - Wentzville, MO

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:

- a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Theological Studies
 - Master of Arts in Christian Ministry
- b. Distance education: Comprehensive (half or more of a degree)
- c. Additional location: None

Westminster Theological Seminary - Philadelphia, PA

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 March 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in fall 2032.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Religion)
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Counseling
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Philosophy
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations:
 - Pastors' Academy at London Seminary (104 Hendon Lane, London N3 3SQ, United Kingdom). The Board approved a teach-out plan for this site in January 2019. The committee noted one student remains in the ThM at this location and it is anticipated that individual will complete their program requirements by May 2023.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO NEW DEGREE PROGRAM LEVEL

Beeson Divinity School - Birmingham, AL

To approve the Master of Arts in Counseling (MA in Counseling) (see Standards 4.6-9) and the Master of Theology (ThM) degree program (see Standards 4.10-12).

Moody Theological Seminary - Chicago, IL

To approve the Doctor of Ministry degree program offered at both the main campus and at the complete degree-offering additional location site in Plymouth, MI (see Standards 5.1-6).

St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary - Crestwood, NY

To approve the PhD in Orthodox Christian Studies degree program (see Standards 5.11-16).

World Mission University School of Theology - Los Angeles, CA

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

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO DISTANCE (ONLINE) EDUCATION

Duke University Divinity School - Durham, NC

To grant approval for limited distance education (less than half of any approved degree).

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

To grant approval for comprehensive distance education.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO ADDITIONAL LOCATION

Moody Theological Seminary - Chicago, IL

To grant approval to expand the school's additional location at 41550 E. Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth, MI 48170 to also offer the Doctor of Ministry degree.

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

Starr King School for the Ministry - Oakland, CA

To confirm that resources are available and appropriate to offer the complete MDiv and the MA in Social Change degree programs at 414 13th St. Suite 700, Oakland, CA 94612.

Western Theological Seminary - Holland, MI

1. To approve the seminary's request to move *from* a member-managed entity with the Reformed Church of America (RCA) as the sole member *to* become a director-managed entity with a minimum number of directors from the RCA.
2. To authorize a focused visit within six months of this substantive change in governing control to verify that Western Theological Seminary continues to meet all applicable Commission Standards (visit anticipated: spring 2023). The school is reminded that its next comprehensive evaluation visit is scheduled for fall 2023.

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

United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities - St. Paul, MN

1. To receive the report required in 2021 regarding the warning on resources (financial).
2. To **extend** for good cause for one year (*to* February 2024) the **warning on resources (financial)** issued in February 2021. The school has shown capacity to address its financial challenges during the period of warning; however, it is not clear if these strategies can be sustained long term. The school is reminded that, according to the Commission's *Policies and Procedures* III.G.1, a one-year Extension for Good Cause is the maximum extension for a warning.
3. To require a report by the 1st of November 2023, documenting continued progress toward financial sustainability. The report is to include an update on the school's progress toward anticipated enrollment growth, reducing and eliminating its operating deficits (see Standard 10.3), the current tuition revenue and scholarship strategy (see Standard 10.4), the continued preservation and utilization of endowment draws (see Standard 10.5), and the donor cultivation and giving strategy (see Standard 10.6). Documentation is to include FY 2022-23 audit, management letter (if available), the school's analysis of the FY 2023-24 operating revenues and expenditures to the date of the report's submission, and budget projections for FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 (see Standard 10.3).

Report prepared: March 1, 2023

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The Association of Theological Schools | **The Commission on Accrediting**

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