

Abstracted Summary of Final Actions: May–June 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 *June 5-6, 2023*, the Board of Commissioners of COAATS voted on the below actions with an effective date of **June 6, 2023**—unless otherwise noted.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO PERIOD OF ACCREDITATION

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary - Springfield, MO

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS)*
 - Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies (MAIS)
 - Master of Leadership and Ministry (MLM)
 - Master of Theology (ThM)
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Applied Intercultural Studies (DAIS)
 - Doctor of Philosophy in Biblical Interpretation and Theology*
 - Doctor of Philosophy in Intercultural Studies*
 - *Note: The school will submit a notification form for a slight nomenclature change for these degrees.
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Berkeley Divinity School - New Haven, CT

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, by virtue of its affiliation with Yale Divinity School, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Berkeley Divinity School does not award degrees. The MDiv, MAR, and STM degrees are awarded by Yale Divinity School.
 - b. Distance education: None
 - c. Additional locations: None

Berkeley School of Theology (CA) - Berkeley, CA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring of 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Masters in Community Leadership
 - Master of Theological Studies
 - Doctor of Ministry

- b. Distance education: Comprehensive
- c. Additional locations: None

Christian Witness Theological Seminary - San Jose, CA

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

Fuller Theological Seminary – Pasadena, CA

To approve a one-semester *delay* of the school's comprehensive evaluation visit (*from* spring 2024 to fall 2024) and to adjust the school's period of accreditation accordingly [i.e., to expire March 31, 2025].

[Commission staff action 5/01/2023 on behalf of the Board of Commissioners]

International Theological Seminary - West Covina, CA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of five years, until 31 July 2028, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2028.
Rationale if less than maximum period: In light of the imposition of probation, an accreditation period of less than ten years is necessary.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Theology (ThM)
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Intercultural Studies
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Meadville Lombard Theological School - Chicago, IL

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 July 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2030.
Rationale if less than maximum period: While the school has successfully moved to a new location and has launched several important institutional and programmatic initiatives in recent years, it continues to face potential financial instability, insufficient institutional communication, lack of future planning, and inadequate evaluation processes. See 5.a-c and 6.a below.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Religion)
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary - Kansas City, MO

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity

- Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling
- Master of Arts in Christian Education
- Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies
- Master of Arts in Worship Ministries
- Master of Theological Studies
- Master of Theology
- Doctor of Educational Ministry
- Doctor of Ministry
- Doctor of Education
- Doctor of Philosophy
- b. Distance education: Comprehensive
- c. Additional locations: None

Presbyterian Theological Seminary in America - Santa Fe Springs, CA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 July 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2030.
Rationale if less than maximum period: In light of the warnings on evaluation and shared governance, the period of accreditation is reduced to seven years.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology
 - Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Seattle Pacific Seminary - Seattle, WA

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 July 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2030.
Rationale if less than maximum period: In light of the multiple current challenges - named by the school as a "perfect storm" of crises, affecting institutional resources, and requiring significant decisions about institutional identity and academic programming - seven years appears most appropriate at this time.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Shepherds Theological Seminary - Cary, NC

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity (MDiv)
 - Master of Arts in Biblical Studies (MABS)
 - Master of Arts in Biblical Literature and Languages (MABLL)
 - Master of Arts in Christian Ministry (MACM)
 - Master of Theological Studies (MTS)
 - Master of Theology (ThM)
 - Doctor of Ministry (DMin)
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations:
 - The West Institute (Laramie Valley Chapel, 4801 Quarter Horse Drive, Laramie, WY 82070), approved to offer more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of the Master of Theological Studies.

Shepherd's Theological Seminary Tampa Bay* (Trinity College of Florida, 2430 Welbilt Boulevard, Trinity, FL 34655), approved to offer more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of any master's degree.

*Note: At the time of the visit, the committee was informed that the school was closing the Trinity, FL location. The school submitted the requisite paperwork on May 10, 2023 to close the site.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary - Louisville, KY

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Apologetics)
 - Master of Arts (Ethics and Public Theology)
 - Master of Arts (Islamic Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Theological Studies
 - Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling
 - Master of Arts in Christian Education
 - Master of Arts in Church Ministries
 - Master of Arts in Leadership
 - Master of Arts in Missiology
 - Master of Arts in Worship Leadership
 - Master of Theology
 - Doctor of Educational Ministry
 - Doctor of Ministry
 - Doctor of Missiology
 - Doctor of Education
 - Doctor of Philosophy
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: Union University (1050 Union University Drive, Jackson, TN 38305), approved to offer more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of the MDiv and MA in Christian Education.

St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry - Rochester, NY

1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts (Catholic Philosophy)
 - Master of Arts (Theological Studies)
 - Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations*: 40 North Main Avenue, Albany, NY 12203, approved to offer complete master's degrees.

*Note: The school submitted a petition to reduce the Albany, NY location to offer less half of any degree.

St. Stephen's College University of Alberta - Edmonton, AB

1. To grant the school initial accreditation for a period of seven years, until 31 July 2030, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2030.
2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Psychotherapy and Spirituality (professional)
 - Master of Theological Studies (academic and professional)
 - Doctor of Ministry

- b. Distance education: Comprehensive
- c. Additional locations: None

Vancouver School of Theology - Vancouver, BC

- 1. To reaffirm the school's accreditation for a period of ten years, until 31 July 2033, with the next comprehensive evaluation visit in spring 2033.
- 2. To approve the following educational offerings:
 - a. Degree programs:
 - Master of Divinity
 - Master of Arts in Public and Pastoral Leadership
 - Master of Arts in Theological Studies
 - Master of Arts in Indigenous and Inter-Religious Studies
 - Master of Theology
 - b. Distance education: Comprehensive
 - c. Additional locations: None

Yale Divinity School - New Haven, CT

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

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO NEW DEGREE PROGRAM LEVEL

Beeson Divinity School of Samford University - Birmingham, AL

- 2. To approve the PhD degree program (see Standards 5.11-16).

Columbia Biblical Seminary of Columbia International University - Columbia, SC

- 1. To approve the Doctor of Ministry degree program (see Standards 5.1-6).
- 2. To *exempt* the school from a focused evaluation visit for this new doctoral program in light of the exemption allowed in *Policies and Procedures*, III.D.1 and IV.D.1.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary - South Hamilton, MA

- 2. To approve the Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies degree program (see Standards 5.11-16).

Meadville Lombard Theological School - Chicago, IL

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

Northwest Nazarene University Graduate School of Theology - Nampa, ID

- 1. To accept the report of the evaluation committee concerning the focused visit conducted in spring 2023, confirming that the school has the capacity to offer the Doctor of Theology degree program (see Standards 5.11-16).

Oakwood University School of Theology Graduate Department - Huntsville, AL

To *defer* consideration of the Doctor of Ministry degree program until the Board of Commissioners has received a resubmitted petition that demonstrates how the proposed degree will meet the expectations for an advanced professionally oriented degree. This includes course work designed to cultivate advanced theological integration and to deepen existing religious leadership and that is resourced by a library collection sufficient in quantity and quality to support the research needs of this new degree category (see Standards 5.1-6).

Pentecostal Theological Seminary - Cleveland, TN

1. To grant approval to offer the Master of Theology (ThM) degree program (see Standards 4.10-12).

Presbyterian Theological Seminary in America - Santa Fe Springs, CA

7. To *deny* the petition to offer the PhD (see Standards 5.11-16) as it does not meet *Commission Standards* regarding educational evaluation, minimum residency, relevant collection development policy, and a faculty sufficient in number and diversity (see Standards 2.6-7, 5.15, 6.8, and 8.2).

Union Theological Seminary - New York, NY

1. To approve the Doctor of Ministry degree program (see Standards 5.1-6).
2. To *exempt* the school from a focused evaluation visit for this new doctoral program in light of the exemption allowed in *Policies and Procedures*, III.D.1 and IV.D.1.

United Theological Seminary - Dayton, OH

To accept the report of the evaluation committee concerning the focused visit conducted in spring 2023, confirming that the school has the capacity to offer the Doctor of Theology degree program in the proposed format as an educational experiment (see Standards 5.11-16).

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

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

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO DISTANCE (ONLINE) EDUCATION

Beeson Divinity School of Samford University - Birmingham, AL

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

Emmanuel College of Victoria University - Toronto, ON

To grant approval for comprehensive distance education (half or more of any approved degree).

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary - Wynnewood, PA

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

St. John's Seminary (CA) - Camarillo, CA

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

St. Stephen's College University of Alberta - Edmonton, AB

6. To grant approval for comprehensive distance education (half or more of any approved degree).

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE RELATED TO ADDITIONAL LOCATION

Central Baptist Theological Seminary - Shawnee, KS

1. To approve the closing of the school's additional location at 1008 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212, effective July 31, 2023.
2. To approve the closure of the additional location at 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103, effective July 31, 2023.

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

1. To grant approval to relocate the Houston, Texas location *from* 555 Tallowood Road, Houston, TX 77024, *to* 14130 Hargrave Road, Houston, TX 77070, effective August 1, 2023, where the full MTS, MACM and MDiv program can be completed, *contingent* on the school clarifying the status of the agreement between the school and Lanier Theological Library. [*contingency met 6/09/2023*]
2. To *exempt* the additional location from a focused evaluation visit since the school meets the exemption criteria described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.D.4.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary - New Orleans, LA

1. To grant approval for a new additional location at Hebron Baptist Church, 202 Hebron Church Road, Dacula, GA 30019 to offer complete master's-level degrees.
2. To *exempt* the additional location from a focused evaluation visit since the school meets the exemption criteria described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.D.4.
3. To confirm that Cross Pointe Baptist Church, 1800 Satellite Blvd NW, Duluth, GA 30097 will continue to be approved to offer the complete DMin program.

North Park Theological Seminary - Chicago, IL

1. To grant approval for a new additional location at Logan Correctional Center (LCC), 1096 1350th Street, Lincoln, IL 62656, to offer the complete Master of Arts in Restorative Justice Ministries.
2. To *exempt* the school from a focused evaluation visit for this new additional location in light of the exemption allowed in *Policies and Procedures*, III.D.1 and III.D.4.

St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry - Rochester, NY

6. To approve the reduction in scope of the school's additional location, at 40 North Main Avenue, Albany New York, 12203, where the complete MDiv degree had been offered. This site is now approved to offer less than half of any approved degree.
7. To *exempt* the school from submitting a teach-out plan, since it meets the criteria for communicating to students and faculty the online options for completing the degree as described in *Policies and Procedures*, III.L.2.

Virginia Theological Seminary - Alexandria, VA

2. To confirm that resources are available and appropriate to offer the complete DEdMin degree at the school's additional location at Ming Hua Theological College (Glenealy, Central, Hong Kong).

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

B. H. Carroll Theological Institute - Irving, TX

1. To approve the school's request for a change in control or legal status, with East Texas Baptist University (ETBU) in Marshall, TX within which it will be embedded (expected date of merger, December 2023).
2. To approve the school's change of name from to B.H. Carroll Theological Institute to B.H. Carroll Theological Seminary at East Texas Baptist University (anticipated: December 2023).
3. To authorize a focused visit within six months of this substantive change in governing control to verify that the school continues to meet applicable Commission Standards (Visit anticipated: spring 2024).

B. H. Carroll Theological Seminary - Irving, TX

To acknowledge notification that B. H. Carroll Theological Institute is *doing business as* (DBA) B. H. Carroll Theological Seminary, effective February 9, 2023.

[Commission staff action 6/12/2023 on behalf of the Board of Commissioners]

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky - Lexington, KY

3. To approve the relocation of the school's main campus *from* 400 E. College Street, Georgetown, KY 40324 *to* 110 Wilson Downing Road, Lexington, KY, 40517.

Claremont School of Theology - Claremont, CA

1. To approve the relocation of the school's main campus *from* 1325 North College Avenue, Claremont, CA, 91711 United States *to* 10497 Wilshire Boulevard Los Angeles, CA, 90024 United States, effective January 1, 2024.
2. To authorize a focused evaluation visit to the new campus location within six months of the relocation (visit anticipated spring 2024) to determine whether the new location has the adequate resources to support the school's institutional and education mission.

Cornerstone Theological Seminary – Grand Rapids, MI

To acknowledge notification regarding an institutional name change *from* Grand Rapids Theological Seminary *to* Cornerstone Theological Seminary, effective June 1, 2023.

[Commission staff action 6/12/2023 on behalf of the Board of Commissioners]

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago - Chicago, IL

1. To approve the relocation of the school's main campus *from* 1100 East 55th Street Chicago, IL, 60615 *to* 5416 South Cornell Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60615, effective July 1, 2023.
2. To authorize a focused evaluation visit to the new campus location within six months of the relocation (visit anticipated fall 2023) to determine whether the new location has the adequate resources to support the school's institutional and education mission.

Yale Divinity School – New Haven, CT

To acknowledge notification indicating that the correct listing of the school is Yale Divinity School, rather than Yale University Divinity School (as Yale Divinity School is one of the schools in the larger university).

[Commission staff action 5/10/2023 on behalf of the Board of Commissioners]

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).

International Theological Seminary - West Covina, CA

6. To impose probation for a period of 24 months (June 2023 to June 2025), as a result of the school not meeting the following Commission Standard (per *Policies and Procedures*, III.H): Standard 10.3. 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 April 2025, documenting progress toward financial sustainability, including a financial plan that is “realistic, holistic, and sustainable” (see [Guidelines for Understanding Standard 10.3 on Finances](#) for additional guidance). The school’s FY 2022-2023 and FY 2023-2024 audits, management letters (if available), analysis of the FY 2024-2025 operating revenues and expenditures, and budget projections for FY 2025-2026 must be appended to the report (see Standards 9.3 and 10.3).
7. To authorize a focused visit prior to the end of the period of probation (no later than April 15, 2025) to make a recommendation regarding whether the Board of Commissioners should remove probation or take an adverse action, i.e., withdrawal of accreditation (*Policies and Procedures*, III.J).

[Effective June 23, 2023, 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)]

New York Theological Seminary - New York, NY

1. To issue a Show Cause Order. The school should submit a report no later than the 1st of April 2024, demonstrating why accreditation should not be withdrawn. This report should demonstrate that the school meets Standard 10.3 and has “sufficient and stable financial resources to achieve its mission with educational quality and financial sustainability.” The report should include the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Audit Reports, the school's analysis of its FY 2022 and FY 2023 operating revenues and expenditures, updated budget projections for FY 2024 and FY 2025, and a report on the school's progress toward balancing its operating budget, increasing its reserves, and replenishing its investments. Failure to submit a satisfactory report will lead to withdrawal of accreditation (*Policies and Procedures*, III.J).

Presbyterian Theological Seminary in America - Santa Fe Springs, CA

6. To impose the following warnings 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 these warnings adequately, or the Board will take other appropriate action as described in the *Policies and Procedures*, III.G-J:
 - a. Standards 2.6-7 on Evaluation: The school has insufficient evaluation processes and practices for its educational programs and must submit a report by the 1st of April 2025, providing clear documentation of how it fully meets all parts of Standard 2.6-7 for each degree program.
 - b. Standards 9.6-8 on Shared Governance: The school insufficiently demonstrates an expression of shared governance in which the school's governing body delegates to the faculty appropriate authority to oversee, design, implement, evaluate, and improve the school's educational programs and policies in collaboration with other appropriate parties. The school must submit a report by the 1st of April 2025, documenting the establishment of a governance model that ensures that faculty, understood as those charged with teaching the majority of the curriculum, exercise appropriate authority in light of their expertise, and that governance is shared appropriately across the institution.

[Effective June 23, 2023, 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)]

Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico - San Juan, PR

1. To impose probation for a period of 24 months (June 2023 to June 2025), as a result of the school not meeting the following Commission Standard (per *Policies and Procedures*, III.H): Standard 10.3. 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 April 2025, documenting progress toward financial sustainability, including a financial plan that is “realistic, holistic, and sustainable” (see [Guidelines for Understanding Standard 10.3 on Finances](#) for additional guidance). The school's FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and FY 2022-2023 audits, management letters (if available), analysis of the FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025 operating revenues and expenditures, and budget projections for FY 2025-2026 must be appended to the report (see Standards 9.3 and 10.3).
2. To authorize a focused visit prior to the end of the period of probation (no later than April 15, 2025) to make a recommendation regarding whether the Board of Commissioners should remove probation or take an adverse action, i.e., withdrawal of accreditation (*Policies and Procedures*, III.J).

[Effective June 23, 2023, 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)]

Report prepared: June 29, 2023

Leah K. Wright | Accrediting Records Coordinator

The Association of Theological Schools | The Commission on Accrediting

10 Summit Park Drive | Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1110 | 412-788-6505, ext. 240 | accrediting@ats.edu | www.ats.edu