Notification related to Degree Program

(i.e., within a category the school already offers)

The *Policies and Procedures* (e.g., VI.A.6) require schools to notify ATS Commission staff of certain types of changes and, in most cases, to receive acknowledgement by staff before implementing those changes (as defined below). The *Policies and Procedures* (IV.D.1) state further that schools not on probation "must notify Commission staff at least 30 days prior to implementation when offering an approved degree through a new delivery method, offering 25 to 49 percent of a degree through Competency-Based Theological Education based on courses and/or credits, or changing by 25 percent or more the total credits or content of an approved degree." Adding a new specialization to an approved degree does not require notification.

This form covers four categories of notification: (1) *adding a new degree* that is NOT in a new degree category or does NOT represent a significant departure from currently approved degrees, (2) *changing the name* of an approved degree, (3) *discontinuing a degree* that does NOT also involve closing a location offering a complete degree, and (4) *changing delivery, duration, or content* of certain approved degrees, as described in IV.D.1 (including CBTE).

NOTE: Adding a degree in a new degree category or one that represents a significant departure from currently approved degrees, as well as discontinuing a degree that involves closing a location too, requires a petition rather than this notification. Any school on probation desiring to make such changes must first receive approval from the Board before implementation which requires a petition rather than this notification. See *Petition for Substantive Change in Degree Program* on the ATS *Petitions, Notifications, and Guidelines* webpage. Per the Board-approved *Guidelines for Competency-Based Theological Education*, CBTE programs delivering half or more of a program based on courses and/or credits should use the *Petition for Substantive Change in Degree Program* while any program utilizing direct assessment should use the *Petition for Educational Experiment*.

Schools are to use this form to notify staff for each degree-related change by completing the relevant portion (i.e., submit one notification form per change), without using your web browser's back button. In completing this form, please include links to additional documentation as requested or as deemed helpful. Notifications may be submitted anytime throughout the year, though at least 30 days prior to the anticipated change (60 days prior if adding a new degree). Commission staff will typically acknowledge this notification within 30 days of submission.

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Please note: you can save and return to this form as needed. Click "Save" at the bottom of any page and enter your email address. An email will be sent to you from Jotform (via noreply@jotform.com) which contains a link to your form in progress.

i.   Name of school: *

Click to select from menu

ii.   Contact information for person submitting this form: *

First Name (MI)	Last Name

iii.   Title: *

[_____]

Position title of person submitting this form

iv.   Email: *

[_____]

A copy of your form will be sent to this address

v.   Indicate the type of notification being submitted: *

`Click to select from menu`

Once notification type is selected, complete the items on the following pages

Adding a new degree that is not a substantive change

See Policies and Procedures, IV.D.1. If answering "Yes" to #4 and "No" to #5 below, then submit this notification form. Otherwise, typically a petition—not this notification—would be required for adding any degree in a category that is new for the school (RE: #4); represents a significant departure from any degree offering(s) currently on record (RE: #5); or uses competency-based theological education based on courses and/or credits for more than half the degree (RE: #7). NOTE: The six degree categories are located across Standard 4 (viz. MDiv, MA, and ThM/STM) and Standard 5 (viz. DMin, Other Professional Doctorate, and PhD/ThD).

1.   Name of new degree: *

[_____]

2.   Date when new degree will be implemented: *

[____] [____] [_____]

Month   Day   Year

3.   Total semester credits required: *

[_____]

For minimums, see Standards 4.1, 4.6, 4.10, 5.1, 5.7, and 5.11

4.   Does the school currently have Commission approval to offer a degree in this category? *

○ Yes
○ No

5.   Does this new degree represent a significant departure from currently approved degrees, in terms of faculty, facilities, or finances needed? *

○ No

○   [_____] 2

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6.   If at least half the degree will be offered online, does the school have comprehensive distance education approval? *

> Click to select from menu

Otherwise, if most of this degree will be delivered onsite, please select "N/A" above.

7. Will less than half (25 to 49 percent) of the degree be offered via competency-based theological education based on courses and/or credits?

○ Yes—(must complete Part A. below)
○ N/A (i.e., not delivered via CBTE)

8.   Describe the degree's purpose, outcomes, and course requirements: *

> [text box]

Consider providing link(s) to any documentation describing the new program in detail.

9.   Describe how the degree outcomes will be evaluated: *

> [text box]

Consider providing link(s) to any documentation describing the school's educational evaluation process.

10. If an MA-level degree, how does the school primarily define this program? *

> Click to select from menu

Otherwise, for a degree other than MA-level, please select "N/A" above.

Part A: Delivering 25 to 49 percent of the program utilizing CBTE based on courses and/or credits

Complete this section only if the program will utilize CBTE for 25 to 49 percent of the program. If half or more of the program will utilize CBTE, then the Petition for Substantive Change in Degree Program should be used.

A-1. Describe the rationale for the CBTE program, including what needs it will meet, how it aligns

with the school's mission, and a succinct description of the program (see Standard 1.1). *

[text box]

A-2. Describe as appropriate to the degree program requirements (see Standard 4.3, 4.8, or 5.3) a representative sample of three or four of the program's clearly articulated competencies and how those align with the expectations of the applicable degree program standards. Include competency definitions and behavioral-based performance indicators that potential graduates must demonstrate in order to earn the desired credential. Describe structured learning activities designed, reviewed, and approved by faculty that utilize new learning to help students move from their current levels of performance to achieve intended outcomes. Describe the learning activities associated with each competency, such as seminars, synchronous or asynchronous online sessions, reading and writing assignments, exams, ministry activities, study groups, mentoring sessions, church-based activities, etc. (see Standards 3, 4, and 5). *

[text box]

A-3. Summarize how the sample competencies listed above were developed, including the involvement of faculty and other professionals (e.g., church leaders), with some indication that graduates of the program will find appropriate placements (see Standards 7.10-11 and 8.8). *

[text box]

A-4. Summarize here and provide the link to a coherent plan for evaluating the program's competencies, including direct and indirect measures, especially performance-based assessment tools, as well as clear rubrics and benchmarks, that are aligned with criteria named in expected outcomes requiring students to demonstrate a pre-determined level of achievement (mastery) of all competencies before any degree is awarded. Describe how the combined activities fulfill individual course requirements for a representative sample of three or four courses (see Standards 2.5-6 and the appropriate degree program standards). *

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A-5. Describe the involvement of qualified faculty engaged in the design, delivery, and oversight of program content and in the evaluation of how and how well the competencies are achieved, as well as other persons or agencies involved in student evaluations. List faculty and others involved such as mentors, spiritual directors, etc., including their roles, specific activities, and relevant qualifications (see Standard 8). *

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A-6. Describe how the CBTE program meets graduate-level workload expectations equivalent to those of more traditional courses and credits in the program. Demonstrate that the work required and the outcomes achieved are comparable to current generally accepted standards of graduate education, e.g., the normal expectations and calculations used for credit hours (see Standard 3.2). *

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Changing the name of an approved degree

For what qualifies as a nomenclature change (as opposed to, e.g., a degree program revision), see Policies and Procedures, IV.D.1.

1.   Current degree nomenclature: *

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Must match current record; cf. school entry at https://www.ats.edu/member-schools/member-school-list

2.   New name for this previously approved degree: *

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3. Reason for changing the degree name: *

[text box]

4. Date when new degree name will become effective: *

[ ] [ ] [ ]
Month   Day   Year

5. If this change affects any curricular requirements, describe those here: *

[text box]

If none, please type "N/A" above.

Discontinuing a degree that does not involve closing a complete-degree granting location

Submit this notification to declare that students are no longer being admitted to a given program, i.e., the program is being discontinued. (Until the final student graduates or otherwise leaves the program, the program remains approved. Once the Commission is notified that the final student has graduated from or otherwise left the program, the program will be removed from the list of the school's approved degrees.) If degree discontinuation also involves the closing of an additional location, then a different form—not this notification—should be submitted instead wherein any degree(s) being discontinued at the time of closure can be mentioned (either the Notification related to Additional Location or the Petition related to Additional Location; cf. Policies and Procedures, IV.E.3).

1. Name of degree(s) being discontinued: *

[text box]

Submit separate forms per degree, unless dates aligns in #4 and #5 below—in which case, use semicolon (;) to distinguish multiple degrees.

2. Reason for degree(s) being discontinued: *

[ ]

3. Plan for addressing the educational needs of any students currently enrolled: *

[ ]

Consider providing link(s) to any documentation describing how student needs will be met.

4. Date when no more students will be admitted to the above program(s): *

[ ] [ ] [ ]

Month Day Year

5. Date when last student will exit the above program(s): *

[ ] [ ] [ ]

Month Day Year

Changing delivery, duration, or content of certain approved degrees

See Policies and Procedures, IV.D.1. Following are four examples of when to use this notification form: (i) a school with comprehensive distance education approval begins to offer at least half of an already approved degree through a new modality, e.g., offering at least half of a residentially delivered degree online for the first time; (ii) a school reduces the total credits required for an already approved degree by at least 25 percent, e.g., from a 48- to 36-credit MA; (iii) a school changes the content of an already approved degree by at least 25 percent, e.g., reducing or replacing the number of required courses by 25 percent or more (adding a new specialization to an approved degree does not require notification); and (iv) a school adopts a competency-based theological education model based on courses and/or credits for 25 to 49 percent of an already approved degree program.

1. Name of approved degree(s) affected: *

[ ]

Submit separate forms per degree, unless the date in #2 below aligns for every change—in which case, use a semicolon (;) to distinguish multiple degrees.

2. Date when change(s) will take effect: *

Month	Day	Year

3. Indicate the type(s) of change being submitted (check all that apply and complete each corresponding section below): *

☐ Changing the delivery method of an approved degree (including CBTE): Part A, below
☐ Changing the duration (total credits) of an approved degree by at least 25 percent: Part B, below
☐ Changing the content of an approved degree by at least 25 percent: Part C, below

Part A. Changing the delivery method of an approved degree

A-1. Previous delivery method(s) of the approved degree(s):

(e.g., delivered on-campus)

A-2. New delivery method of approved degree:

(e.g., delivered offsite, online, via CBTE)

A-3. Briefly describe the reason(s) for and extent of the change in delivery:

A-4. If at a location other than the main campus, is this additional location already approved to offer at least half of a degree?

◯ Yes
◯ N/A (i.e., not at additional location)
◯ Other [   ]

A-5. If delivered via distance/online, has the school been granted comprehensive distance education approval?

◯ Yes
◯ No – must petition and be granted approval first
◯ N/A (i.e., not delivered via distance/online)

A-6. Will 25 to 49 percent of the degree be offered via competency-based theological education using courses and/or credits?

◯ Yes—(must complete questions A-7 to A-12 below)
◯ N/A (i.e., not delivered via CBTE)

A-7. Describe the rationale for the CBTE program, including what needs it will meet and how it aligns with the school's mission, with a succinct description of the program (see Standard 1.1).

[   ]

A-8. Describe as appropriate to the degree program requirements (see Standard 4.3, 4.8, or 5.3) a representative sample of three or four of the program's clearly articulated competencies and how those align with the expectations of the applicable degree program standards. Include competency definitions and behavioral-based performance indicators that potential graduates must demonstrate in order to earn the desired credential. Describe structured learning activities designed, reviewed, and approved by faculty that utilize new learning to help students move from their current levels of performance to achieve intended outcomes. Describe the learning activities associated with each competency, such as seminars, synchronous or asynchronous online sessions, reading and writing assignments, exams, ministry activities, study groups, mentoring sessions, church-based activities, etc. (see Standards 3, 4, and 5).

[   ]

A-9. Summarize how the sample competencies listed above were developed, including the involvement of faculty and other professionals (e.g., church leaders), with some indication that graduates of the program will find appropriate placements (see Standards 7.10-11 and 8.8).

A-10. Summarize here and provide the link to a coherent plan for evaluating the program's competencies, including direct and indirect measures, especially performance-based assessment tools, as well as clear rubrics and benchmarks, that are aligned with criteria named in expected outcomes requiring students to demonstrate a pre-determined level of achievement (mastery) of all competencies before any degree is awarded. Describe how the combined activities fulfill individual course requirements for a representative sample of three or four courses (see Standards 2.5-6 and the appropriate degree program standards).

A-11. Describe the involvement of qualified faculty engaged in the design, delivery, and oversight of program content and in the evaluation of how and how well the competencies are achieved, as well as other persons or agencies involved in student evaluations. List faculty and others involved such as mentors, spiritual directors, etc., including their roles, specific activities, and relevant qualifications (see Standard 8).

A-12. Describe how the CBTE program meets graduate-level workload expectations equivalent to those of more traditional courses and credits in the program. Demonstrate that the work required and the outcomes achieved are comparable to current generally accepted standards of graduate education, e.g., the normal expectations and calculations used for credit hours (see Standard 3.2).

Part B. Changing the duration (total credits) of an approved degree by at least 25 percent

B-1. Number of total semester credits (or equivalent credits) previously required for the degree(s):

B-2. Number of total semester credits (or equivalent credits) now required for the degree(s):

NOTE: For minimum credit requirements, see Standards 4.1, 4.6, 4.10, 5.1, 5.7, and 5.11.

B-3. Briefly describe the reason(s) for the change(s) in duration:

Part C. Changing the content of an approved degree by at least 25 percent

C-1: Briefly describe the nature of the change in content of at least 25 percent:

[text box]

(i.e., briefly describe the nature and extent of the change)

When finished, please submit this notification to the ATS Accrediting Records Coordinator by hitting the "submit" button below. You can expect an automated confirmation email within a few minutes—and formal acknowledgement by your Commission staff liaison usually within 30 days. There is no fee for any notification (or any petition). Please do not send any paper copies or email attachments; submit only this completed online form (including any links to additional information deemed helpful).

ATS Commission Staff Liaison Email *

Click to select from menu
A copy of your form will be sent to this address

CEO Email

[text box]
A copy of your form will be sent to this address

CAO Email

[text box]
A copy of your form will be sent to this address

ALO Email

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A copy of your form will be sent to this address

Additional comments

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