

### **Introduction**

Accreditation is a voluntary process by which an institution evaluates its educational activities and seeks an independent judgment to confirm that it is substantially achieving its objectives and is generally equal in quality to comparable institutions.

An accredited institution, therefore, is deserving of public trust, having been judged by a recognized, authoritative third party as evidencing those characteristics indicative of quality and integrity. Moreover, it has been judged that these characteristics are present in sufficient strength to indicate that the college can be reasonably expected to continue to exhibit quality and integrity in the future. The accreditation process seeks not only to serve as a means by which to certify present quality and integrity, but to serve also as an impetus toward excellence.

Following are the standards for accreditation accepted by the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association.

### **Purpose of CETA**

#### **Mission**

The mission of CETA is “To promote excellence in theological education in the Caribbean through professional association and quality control.”

#### **Objectives**

CETA seeks to fulfill its mission through the pursuit of two major objectives:

First, to provide for professional association among administrators of Bible Colleges and theological schools in the Caribbean area, primarily through an Association Meeting held biennially;

Second, to assist in the development and promotion of standards of excellence among member institutions.

### **History of Bible Institutes**

Bible Colleges were first established in the late 1880's to prepare lay and semiprofessional workers for the church. A. B. Simpson, founder of Nyack Missionary Training Institute (1881), was concerned primarily for the unenlightened peoples of the world and the preparation of missionaries to help meet their needs. D. L. Moody, founder of Moody Bible Institute (1886), directed his attention to the urban centers of America as well as to foreign lands. The colleges they founded became the pattern for a new expression in higher education.

Although it is impossible to obtain an accurate count of the Bible colleges in North America today, an estimate of 600 is probably conservative. Many missionaries, pastors, evangelists, Christian education directors, church musicians, and others have been educated in a Bible college.

From the beginning, the Bible college movement has been dynamic — not only in the rapid multiplication of its colleges, but in the expansion of its programs. This dynamism is apparent in the

effort to improve the quality of education by extending two-year courses to three, four, and five years, making admissions requirements more stringent, increasing the general studies component and implementing other changes.

### **Caribbean Bible Colleges**

The Bible college movement in the Caribbean appears to have emerged from the need for training for ministry in the region. While the extent of the evangelical Bible college movement in the Caribbean is unclear, colleges exist in the four major language groups—English, Spanish, French and Dutch. Different lists have identified as many as 89 such schools. Many of these schools were established by denominational bodies and in collaboration with missionaries and have training for ministry as their primary objective. The curricula of these schools follow the pattern of the traditional bible college including biblical, theological, general and professional studies and emphasize spiritual formation and practical ministry. The schools offer programmes lasting between one and four years leading to a certificate, diploma, baccalaureate or masters degree through traditional and non-traditional delivery systems.

### **Content of Bible College Education**

Today's Bible college, whatever majors it offers and whether located in the Caribbean or elsewhere, requires all students to complete course work in at least three areas — biblical/theological, general, and professional studies. Most programs are four years in length, although one-, two-, three- and five-year programs are also available.

**Biblical/Theological Studies.** A major in biblical/theological studies is required of all students enrolled in church vocational programs. At least a minor is required of all other students. The goal is to help students think and act biblically as they seek to make an impact on the segment of society in which God has placed them.

**General Studies.** Besides developing college-level communications skills, general studies enable students to gain a broad knowledge of the created realm and of the human experience. It also enables students to grapple with the worldviews of those to whom they will be ministering.

**Professional Studies.** This segment of the curriculum assists students in developing ministry skills, whether they are preparing for vocational or lay ministry.

**Christian Service.** Bible colleges require students to be actively involved in some aspect of ministry. To become involved firsthand in the lives of those around them is the model that Jesus provided for the Twelve.

### **History of CETA**

The Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association began in the early 1970s when a few theologians in the region met informally. Within a short time, college administrators from additional territories expressed interest in an organized fellowship with regular times of meeting.

CETA was officially launched in 1973 at Victory Heights Camp, Trinidad. It was known then as the Caribbean Association of Bible Colleges (CABC). Representatives from 21 training institutions scattered over eleven different territories and four language areas were involved in the inauguration. In 1985, the name of the Association was changed from CABC to the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association in order to better reflect its broadening services of graduate education and accreditation at all levels.

The association's accreditation programme was launched in 1979. In 1980, the association

became one of the founding members of the International Council of Accrediting Agencies for evangelical theological education. This council, currently known as ICETE (International Council of Evangelical Theological Education), operates under the sponsorship of the World Evangelical Fellowship and includes several regional associations including the Accrediting Council for Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA), Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC), Association for Evangelical Theological Education in Latin America (AETAL), Asia Theological Association (ATA), Euro-Asia Accrediting Association of Evangelical Schools (E-AAA), European Evangelical Accrediting Association (EAAA), South Pacific Association of Bible Colleges (SPABC), and the Caribbean Evangelical Theological Association.

Seminars, workshops and conferences are held in conjunction with the biennial meetings of the association. These serve as catalysts for thinking through issues unique to Caribbean theological education and to wider Caribbean thought.

### **Overview of Accreditation Process**

The CETA process of accreditation involves either two or three stages depending upon the level of institutional readiness. Institutions may proceed either from applicant, to candidate, and finally to accredited status or from candidate to accredited status. The stages apply both to the accreditation of the institution as a whole, including all programmes currently offered, or of specific individual programmes an institution offers.

**Applicant Status** is granted to institutions that meet the Association's Conditions of Eligibility and that possess qualities that provide a basis for achieving candidate status within four years. Applicant colleges are required to submit annual reports demonstrating progress toward candidate status. Within four years, institutional self-study materials that include a compliance document, an assessment plan and a planning document are submitted to the Association office prior to an evaluation team visit regarding the college's readiness for candidate status.

**Candidate Status** is a pre-accredited status granted to colleges that show promise of achieving accreditation status within four years. Candidate colleges are required to submit annual progress reports demonstrating progress toward accreditation. Within four years, self-study materials are submitted to the Association office prior to an evaluation team visit regarding the college's readiness for initial accreditation.

**Accredited Status** is granted to colleges that substantially meet or exceed the criteria of the Association and give evidence of continual striving toward excellence. During the fifth year of accredited status, self-study materials are submitted to the Association office prior to an evaluation team visit regarding the reaffirmation of the college's accredited status. After this initial reaffirmation, the college repeats the reaffirmation process every ten years.

#### **The format of the revised criteria is as follows:**

**Criteria Statement:** This is a broad statement that expresses the Association's threshold standard for institutions.

**Essential Elements:** These are statements that define the scope of the standard.

**Questions for Institutional Engagement:** These are questions designed to assist both institutional and Association personnel to evaluate institutional compliance. They are intended to identify for the institutions some of the issues to be considered in the standard under consideration. There is no

expectation that an institution will attempt to answer these questions systematically in its self-study document.

### **Conditions of Eligibility**

The Accrediting Commission will grant applicant status to those colleges that (1) document compliance with the Association's Conditions of Eligibility and (2) appear, in the commission's judgment, to be able to achieve candidate status within four years.

To be considered for applicant status by the committee, a college must provide the commission with the following:

- (1) An official statement from its chief executive officer reflecting a decision of its board of control to pursue accreditation,
- (2) A completed application form providing both essential data and a trend analysis of that data,
- (3) An official statement from the chief executive officer reflecting a board of control decision to affirm support of the CETA Tenets of Faith, and
- (4) A document indicating compliance with the following Conditions of Eligibility.

#### **1. Authorization**

A college must have authorization from the appropriate government agency (if required) to operate as an educational institution and to grant all degrees, certificates, and diplomas that it awards.

#### **2. College Mission**

A college must have a clear statement of mission as well as formally adopted and widely publicized institutional goals that are in accord with the Association's definition of Bible college education.

#### **3. Governance**

A college must have an external governing board of at least five members that has the authority to carry out the mission, goals, and objectives of the institution.

#### **4. Chief Executive Officer**

A college must employ a chief executive officer whose major responsibility is to the institution and who possesses appropriate authority.

#### **5. Academic Programs**

A college must offer one or more educational programs that are at least two academic years in length and are consistent with the mission of the college and appropriate to higher education.

#### **6. Catalog**

A college must have available to students and the public a current and accurate catalog setting forth the college's governance, mission, institutional goals, specific objectives, programs and courses, resources, admissions and standards, academic offering, rules and regulation for conduct, degree completion requirements, full- and part-time faculty rosters with faculty degrees, fees and other charges, refund policies, a policy defining satisfactory academic progress, graduation rates, rate of recent graduate employment in program-related occupation, and other items related to attending, transferring to, or withdrawing from the institution. Claims regarding educational effectiveness must be supported by appropriate data.

- 7. Learning Resources**  
A college must have learning resources to support the courses, programs, and degrees offered.
- 8. Faculty Qualifications**  
A college must have at least one qualified faculty member for each major offered.
- 9. Admissions Policy**  
A college must have an admissions policy that is compatible with its stated objectives.
- 10. Student Body**  
A college must have students enrolled in and pursuing its educational programs.
- 11. Biblical/Theological Studies**  
A college must meet, in all its programs, the minimum requirement for biblical/theological studies as specified in the Criteria for Accreditation.
- 12. General Studies**  
A college must meet, in all its programs, the minimum requirement for general studies as specified in the Criteria for Accreditation.
- 13. Christian Service Program**  
A college must require that students participate in a program of Christian service.
- 14. Program Completion**  
A college must have graduated at least one class in its principal program by the time of the committee's decision regarding applicant status.
- 15. Institutional Stability**  
A college must have a pattern of stability in enrollment, administration, faculty, and finances.
- 16. Potential for Growth and Development**  
A college must possess the capacity for growth and development.
- 17. Financial Base**  
A college must have a financial base indicating that the institution can achieve its mission and objectives within a balanced budget and at a safe level of debt.
- 18. Income Allocation**  
A college must devote substantially all of its generated income to the support of its educational purposes and programs.
- 19. Annual Audit**  
A college must have financial records that receive an annual, opinioned external audit.
- 20. Agency Disclosure**  
A college must agree to disclose to the Association any and all such information as it may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.
- 21. Compliance**

A college must commit itself to comply with the Association's Standards for Accreditation either current or as hereafter modified, during the period of its affiliation.

**22. Public Disclosure**

A college must attest in writing that it understands and agrees that the Association may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or member of the public the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the institution's status with the Association.

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**Principle for Accreditation**

A Bible college must demonstrate that it is substantially achieving and can be reasonably expected to continue to achieve its mission and to meet the Criteria for Accreditation. It must also demonstrate its commitment to ongoing institutional development.

**Overview of Accreditation Criteria**

**1. Mission, Goals and Objectives**

The institution has a clearly defined mission that is appropriate to higher education as well as its own specific educational role. The mission statement serves as the foundation for institutional operations, programs, and activities. Statements of the goals and program objectives specify how the institution will fulfill its mission.

**2. Assessment and Planning**

The institution demonstrates that it is accomplishing and can continue to accomplish its mission, goals and program objectives and improve performance through a regular and comprehensive system of assessment and planning.

**3. Institutional Integrity**

The institution demonstrates integrity in all of its practices and relationships, with strict adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies. The institution is a model of Christian ethical behavior, both internally and externally.

**4. Authority and Governance**

The institution is legally constituted as a nonprofit organization authorized by government to operate as an educational institution and grant degrees and/or credentials. The institution has a governing board with legal and fiduciary responsibility to exercise appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, resource development, and ongoing operations.

**5. Administration**

The institution has a core of administrators who bring together its various resources and allocates them to accomplish institutional goals by implementing institutional policies and structures in collaboration with appropriate constituencies.

**6. Institutional Resources**

The institution has the human, financial, physical and technological resources needed to achieve its mission and has implemented policies and procedures to manage these resources effectively.

**7. Enrollment Management**

The institution has developed and implemented an enrollment management plan that is consistent with its mission and addresses issues of recruitment, admissions, financial aid and retention.

**8. Student Services**

The institution provides services that contribute to the holistic development and care of students.

**9. Faculty Resources**

The institution maintains a faculty committed to its mission and qualified academically and spiritually to communicate content of their discipline within a biblical worldview. The institution fosters an academic climate that stimulates the exchange of ideas, encourages professional development and the well-being of faculty.

**10. Learning Resources**

The institution ensures the availability of learning resources of appropriate form, range, depth and currency to support the curricular offerings and meet student needs.

**11. Academic Programs**

The institution's academic programs are appropriate to the achievement of its mission and to the level of educational programs offered, with some programs leading specifically to full-time vocational ministry but all programs enabling students to develop an integrated biblical worldview.

**12. Assessment of Student Learning**

As indicated in Standard 2, the institution has an overall plan to assess its effectiveness in achieving its mission. Central to this plan is the systematic and specific assessment of student learning and development through a strategy that measures the student's knowledge, skills and competencies against institutional and programmatic goals.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

**1. MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES**

**The institution has a clearly defined mission that is appropriate to higher education as well as its own specific educational role. The mission statement serves as the foundation for institutional operations, programs, and activities. Statements of the goals and program objectives specify how the institution will fulfill its mission.**

**ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- A clearly defined mission statement, appropriate to biblical higher education, developed and periodically reviewed by broad representation from all sectors of the institution and ratified by the governing board.
- A mission statement that is made public to both internal and external constituencies.
- A mission statement that guides faculty, staff, administration, and governing boards in

making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program development, and educational outcomes.

- Clearly articulated and publicized institutional goals that are directly related to the mission statement.
- Clearly articulated and publicized objectives for each educational program that support the mission statement and institutional goals.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

What review process is being used to ensure that the mission statement is appropriate to biblical higher education, faithful to the institution's historic purpose, and yet current? What constituencies participate in this process?

To what extent is there evidence that the mission statement is broadly understood by members of the internal constituency?

What procedures are being followed to confirm that the mission is communicated clearly to the external constituency?

To what extent do the goals reflect the institutional mission and values?

In what ways does the institution ensure that its educational objectives are used as guides for decision-making, resource allocation, and program development?

How does the institution ensure that its mission statement, institutional and program objectives are regularly reviewed and modified?

## 2. ASSESSMENTS AND PLANNING

**The institution demonstrates that it is accomplishing and can continue to accomplish its mission, goals and program objectives and improve performance through a regular and comprehensive system of assessment and planning.**

Issues regarding Student Learning are discussed with Standard 12. The intentional focus of this standard is toward Institutional Effectiveness

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution's comprehensive system will be characterized by...

- A written assessment document that describes continuous, structured processes involving the total institution.
- Analysis of assessment data and distribution of results to appropriate constituencies.
- A planning process that is systematic and ongoing and involves representatives of the various institutional constituencies.
- A planning process for the improvement of the institution's goals and services.
- A plan that reflects the institution's vision and is based on assessment results and realistic resource projections.
- A system for monitoring institutional progress in achieving planning goals.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

Does the institution have a written plan that includes the assessment of academic programs, academic support services and institutional support services?

Is there evidence that assessment operates on an annual cycle?



What evidence demonstrates the process is in place to ensure that assessment plans are funded?  
 Who is the identified person or group responsible for institutional assessment?  
 What is the balance between quantitative and qualitative assessment measures?  
 What patterns of evidence show that educational objectives have been achieved?  
 How are assessment data analyzed and distributed to the appropriate constituencies?  
 To what extent does assessment identify areas of weakness that should be strengthened in the planning process?  
 To what extent are faculty, staff and administration involved in the planning process?  
 Is the plan presented to the Board for final approval?  
 To what extent is there evidence that assessment impacts planning?  
 How is the institution's vision reflected in planning?  
 What fiscal analysis is done to ensure that plans are realistic?  
 What strategies are in place for the implementation of the plan?  
 How is success in achieving planning goals monitored?

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

**The institution is a model of Christian ethical behavior, both internally and externally. The institution demonstrates integrity in all of its practices and relationships, with strict adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies.**

#### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:

Relative to this standard, institutional integrity is characterized by ...

- Institutional publications, statements and advertising that describe accurately and fairly the institution, its operations and its programs.
- Student, faculty, and staff handbooks that describe various institutional relationships with those constituencies, including appropriate grievance procedures.
- Policies and practices for the resolution of internal conflicts within the institution's constituency.
- An institutional culture that fosters respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- Equitable and consistent treatment of constituencies in all areas including student discipline, student evaluation, grievances, faculty promotion, administrative review, compensation, and human resource management.
- Honest and open communication with all agencies including accrediting, licensing, and governing bodies regarding compliance.
- Fulfillment of all applicable standards and requirements of the CETA Commission on Accreditation.
- Integrity in all financial matters.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

In what ways does the institution demonstrate that it promotes and upholds sound ethical practices and respect for people?  
 What patterns of evidence demonstrate that the institution accurately describes its programs and practices through publications, public statements, and advertising?  
 What evidence is available to demonstrate the effectiveness of the institution's conflict management policies?  
 What issues of diversity have been addressed and how?

How does the institution assure that its students and employees grievances and complaints are addressed promptly and equitably?

What records are maintained of student complaints?

What evidence is there that the institution learns from its complaints and improves services?

How does the institution demonstrate integrity in its communication with accrediting and government agencies on issues of compliance?

What evidence is there that fund raising practices accurately present the needs of the institution and protect the interests of the donor?

#### **4. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE**

**The institution is legally constituted as a nonprofit organization authorized by government to operate as an educational institution and grant degrees and/or credentials. The institution has a governing board with legal and fiduciary responsibility to exercise appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, resource development, and ongoing operations.**

##### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:**

Relative to this standard, authority and governance of an accredited institution will be characterized by ...

- Evidence that the institution is operating legally.
- A constitution and bylaws that clearly and comprehensively provide a basis for institutional administration and governance.
- A governing board that possesses autonomy and exercises legal power to establish and review policies of the institution.
- Board membership that excludes all employees except the chief executive officer.
- A governing board with elected officers that does not include the chief executive officer.
- A governing board that assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution.
- A conflict of interest policy for board members that addresses issues such as financial interests, contracts, employment, family, or other personal interests in the institution.
- A governing board appropriate in size to operate efficiently and sufficiently diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender (where theologically appropriate), and professional competencies to represent the constituency.
- A governing board that is sufficiently autonomous to protect the integrity of the institution.
- A procedure in place for the assessment of the effectiveness of board members.
- A process for orienting and developing new board members, and providing updates for current members on issues relative to mission, organization, finances, and programs.
- A chief executive officer appointed by the board, to provide administrative leadership for the institution.

##### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

1. If government authorization is required to offer credentials, what evidence is available to demonstrate compliance with these requirements?
2. How does the institution's constitution safeguard its core values? How do bylaws provide a clear understanding of the institution's organizational structure, including clear lines of authority/responsibility?
3. How does the board carry out its role of exercising fiduciary responsibility, financial oversight, and fund raising?
4. What organizational structures exist to enable the board to fulfill its responsibilities?
5. What evidence exists that the board understands its role in policy formation? Has the board effectively delegated the implementation of policy to its administration and faculty?
6. Is there evidence that the board and administration are operating under sound principles relative to conflicts of interest?
7. How does the board monitor the qualifications of its members? What evidence is available to demonstrate that board members reflect the diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, and professional skill competencies necessary to adequately represent the constituency?
8. How does the board evaluate the performance of its members and what effect does its evaluation process have on the recruitment, orientation, and retention of its members?
9. How does the board relate to affiliated organizations and is the board of control able to make decisions without undue influence?
10. What evidence demonstrates that the board regularly evaluates the performance of the institutional CEO?

## **5. ADMINISTRATION**

**The institution has a core of administrators that brings together its various resources and allocates them to accomplish institutional goals by implementing policies and structures in collaboration with appropriate constituencies.**

### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:**

Relative to this standard, the administration of an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- A chief executive officer who is responsible to the board in leading the institution toward the accomplishment of its mission.
- A chief executive with the combination of academic background and professional training appropriate to the institution's mission.
- An organizational structure and qualified staff that fits the size and scope of the institution.
- Administrative leaders with appropriate education, skills, and resources necessary to discharge their duties.
- Clear documentation in regard to organizational structure and job responsibilities.
- Complete, accurate, and securely maintained administrative records.
- A process for review and enhancement of the performance of administrators.

### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

What evidence is available to demonstrate that the chief executive officer has adequate resources and authority to discharge his/her duties?

Is there evidence that administrative leaders have the appropriate academic and professional backgrounds to discharge their duties? In what ways do these individuals reflect the institution's constituency?

In what ways are accountability structures clearly defined? What evidence is available to demonstrate that job responsibilities are clearly outlined?  
What evidence demonstrates that the institution has staff appropriate for its type, size, and complexity?  
What evidence demonstrates that the institution has effective processes in place for recording, maintaining, and securing accurate administrative records?  
How effective is the system for evaluating the work performance of administrators?

## **6. INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES**

**The institution has the human, financial, physical and technological resources needed to achieve its mission and has implemented policies and procedures to manage these resources effectively.**

### **6a. HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- An adequate number of qualified institutional personnel to provide basic services to students, faculty, and administration.
- Written policies and procedures for hiring, promoting, and dismissal of institutional personnel based on principles of fairness and regard for individual rights.
- Demonstrated commitment to provide adequate resources for employee welfare including professional growth and development.
- Policies and practices that promote employee diversity appropriate to the cultural context.
- An organizational climate that encourages job satisfaction, collegiality, and respect among personnel.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

Can it be demonstrated that the institution is adequately staffed with qualified personnel who provide basic services for the various administrative functions?  
Can it be demonstrated that enabling documents, descriptions of administrative structure and decision-making, institutional policies and procedures, and current job descriptions are documented in written form and distributed appropriately?  
What processes are in place to communicate to employees their rights and responsibilities?  
Can it be demonstrated that the evaluation of employees is consistent, fair, and documented?  
What evidence is available to demonstrate that the institution's budget provides adequate financial resources for employee welfare?  
What programs for professional growth and development are in place?  
What evidence suggests that the institution provides a climate that fosters job satisfaction, collegiality and respect among personnel?  
What programs are in place to recruit employees from under-represented populations?

### **6b. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

#### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- A consistent record of financial stability as documented by external audits.
- A budgeting process that serves as an effective instrument of financial control.
- The cultivation of multiple revenue streams sufficient to enable the realization of institutional goals.
- Adequate resources to facilitate donor research and development.
- Risk management policies and procedures sufficient to safeguard assets.
- Appropriate board oversight of financial management to meet public accountability obligations.
- Sufficient financial reserves to enable an effective response to unforeseen crises.
- Adequate internal controls to safeguard assets and protect personnel from accusations of wrongdoing.
- Evidence that institutional planning is related to the budgeting process.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

How do the institution's calculated scores/financial ratios reflect the commission's standards?  
Do the operating results of the last five fiscal years demonstrate financial stability?

What procedures are in place to ensure that the board provides adequate oversight of institutional finances?

Are financial reports distributed to satisfy reasonable accountability obligations to the interested publics?

What evidence confirms that annual audit reports comply with generally accepted accounting practices?

What internal controls have been developed and implemented to minimize potential losses from mistakes or dishonest actions?

How do budgeting processes involve persons responsible for resource allocation, employ appropriate steps for approval and control, and result in the production of regular financial reports?

What procedures ensure institutional effectiveness in managing accounts receivable and payable?

How successful is the institution in cultivating new sources of revenue?

What reserve funds are available to the institution in the event of an unexpected emergency?

How does the institution effectively manage risks through the application of sound policies, the diversification of investments, the use of appropriate levels of insurance, and the maintenance of appropriate reserve funds?

How are the budgeting and planning processes linked?

### 6c. PHYSICAL RESOURCES

#### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- Evidence that identified physical resource needs are addressed in the planning process.
- Personnel and procedures in place to provide a well maintained and clean physical plant.
- Facilities that are operated in compliance with applicable health, safety and disability access codes.
- Appropriate provisions for the protection of facilities and personnel from threat of harm or loss.
- Owned or leased facilities that assure continuity of educational offerings.

## QUESTION FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

What evaluation processes are employed to ensure that facilities and equipment are sufficient and well maintained to support quality education?

What planning processes are employed to determine future physical resource needs?

Can it be demonstrated that utilities are economically operated and designed to be environmentally responsible?

If facilities are leased, does the lease include adequate protection to allow sufficient time to make alternate arrangements?

What evidence illustrates that facilities are systematically renewed to ensure full function for the present and the future?

What deferred maintenance needs have been identified and what plans are being made for funding them?

By what means are facilities adequately protected from safety and health threats? Is evidence available to confirm that facilities are operated in compliance with health, safety, and disability codes?

## 6d. TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Technological resources of an accredited institution are characterized by ...

- Use of technology to enhance and advance instruction and research in and out of the classroom.
- Use of technology to support administrative functions.
- Use of technology to communicate with constituents.
- Upgraded and expanded technology.
- Ongoing training for technical personnel and users of information systems.
- Clearly stated policies and procedures regarding technological resources.
- Procedures and funding to maintain hardware and software to sustain reliable and effective service.
- Policies and procedures that protect security and confidentiality of technological data.

## QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

How effectively do the institution's technological capacities support its mission, goals and objectives?

What changes have been made to take advantage of technological advances?

What priorities have been established for improving and expanding the utilization of technology?

How effectively are technical resources being utilized to serve various departments and functions?

What training is being provided for technical personnel and general institutional users?

To what extent are users dependent on technical personnel in utilizing the institution's technical resources?

How are policies regarding use of technology communicated to appropriate parties?

Can it be demonstrated that the technical equipment operates with an appropriate degree of reliability?

Can it be demonstrated that network arrangements and software are sufficiently up-to-date to

meet institutional needs?  
To what extent does the institution have policies and procedures in place to protect privacy rights and confidential data?

## **7. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

**The institution has developed and implemented an enrollment management plan that is consistent with its mission and addresses issues of recruitment, admissions, financial aid and retention.**

### **7a. RECRUITMENT**

#### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, enrollment management of an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- Recruitment strategies that are directed toward students whose spiritual commitment, goals and interests are consistent with the institutional mission.
- Accurate and comprehensive recruitment literature that enables prospective students to make informed decisions.
- The allocation of resources and authority to adequately support recruitment efforts.
- Recruitment strategies that reflect the diversity strategies of the institutions constituency and community.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

How do recruitment strategies reflect the mission of the institution?

What evidence exists that admissions personnel communicate clearly and in a timely manner with prospects and applicants?

What procedures are in place to evaluate and upgrade recruitment materials?

To what extent do recruitment strategies enhance the diversity of the institution's constituency and community?

### **7b. ADMISSIONS**

#### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, enrollment management of an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- Admissions requirements and procedures that are clearly communicated to prospective students and applied consistently in the admissions process.
- Evaluation procedures that reasonably ensure admitted students have the ability to successfully achieve their educational goals.
- Published policies and procedures related to transfer credit and prior learning.
- Systematic procedures for identifying students who are not fully prepared for their desired level of college study

#### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

What measures are used to ascertain the spiritual commitments and goals of applicants?

What data is collected to evaluate an applicant's academic ability?

What evidence exists to demonstrate that the admissions criteria are consistently applied?  
How are the admissions testing results used to address student needs?  
What procedures are in place to document that under-prepared students have the “ability to benefit?”  
Are under-prepared students accepted conditionally, and if so are these conditions clearly communicated to the student at the time of acceptance?  
What percentage of admitted students are admitted without the appropriate qualifications and how do they demonstrate their ability to benefit?  
Can it be demonstrated that the institution’s written policy governing the acceptance of transfer credit is communicated to applicants prior to enrollment?  
Can it be demonstrated that transfer credit practices are consistent acceptable practice and/or with the requirements of the Association’s policy on awarding credit?  
How and when are transfer applicants informed of the credit to be awarded to them?  
Are official transcripts retained in the student’s academic file to support the award of credit?

## **7c. FINANCIAL AID**

### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, enrollment management of an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- Accurate financial aid information and counseling in regard to scholarships, grants, loans and refunds.
- Evidence that financial aid practices meet relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Financial aid decision-making procedures that are timely and equitable.

### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

Does recruitment literature inform applicants of the eligibility requirements, imposed conditions, and amounts of financial aid available to them?  
When and how are financial aid decisions communicated to applicants?  
Can it be demonstrated that financial aid practices meet relevant legal and regulatory requirements of government agencies?  
To what extent are institutional funds used for scholarship purposes?

## **7d. RETENTION**

### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, enrollment management of an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- The development of services to improve student retention.
- Attention to the special needs of various populations.
- An assessment program that measures student retention, persistence and attrition,

### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

What evidence exists to document that assessment results are used to improve enrollment management processes, with special attention to student retention, persistence, and attrition?  
What measures are taken to determine the effectiveness of the academic support programs for



at risk students?  
What evidence is available to demonstrate that the institution is able to attract and retain gifted students?  
Can it be demonstrated that longitudinal retention studies are used to improve the admissions and educational processes?

## **8. STUDENT SERVICES**

**The institution provides services that contribute to the holistic development and care of students.**

### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- A commitment to the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development of students that is consistent with biblical higher education.
- Services that are designed to meet the needs of students, regardless of location or instructional delivery system.
- Services designed to respond to diverse student needs, abilities, and cultures.
- The organization and delivery of student services that are integrated into academic programs and appropriately aligned with the institution's culture and educational objectives.
- Qualified professionals empowered to supervise and provide student services and programs.
- Leadership development facilitated by co-curricular programs that are integrated with the educational objectives.
- A regular system of assessing needs, experiences, and levels of student satisfaction in order to improve services.
- Opportunities for students to provide input in institutional decision-making.
- Published procedures for addressing student complaints and grievances.

### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

Are student service programs appropriate to the institution's mission and objectives?  
To what extent are orientation and services provided for every student regardless of location or educational delivery system?  
What evidence demonstrates that student services accommodate the diversity that exists within the student body?  
What programs are in place to encourage appreciation for cultural differences?  
To what extent do student services complement and support the academic programs?  
How effectively have student services been used to integrate the academic and personal development of students?  
Is there evidence that professionally competent student services personnel are empowered to implement an effective student life program?  
What evidence demonstrates that co-curricular programs facilitate leadership development?  
What systems are in place to determine student utilization of and satisfaction with services provided and what evidence exists to demonstrate that institutional change has taken place in response to data collected?  
Is there evidence that an effective program of student government has been implemented?  
Can it be shown that an array of extra curricular activities, appropriate to the make up of the student body, promotes the students' spiritual, intellectual, and social development?

- Is there evidence that residential services meet student needs and contribute to the development of community life?
- Is there evidence that fair and reasonable disciplinary procedures are in place for restorative purposes?
- Are the standards for community life clearly communicated to applicants and students via an appropriate medium?
- To what extent do students participate in institutional decision-making processes and influence institutional policy changes?
- What written procedures are in place for students to process complaints against the school or its personnel?
- Do formal records of complaints comply with any relevant government regulations and demonstrate their satisfactory resolution?
- To what extent can it be demonstrated that counseling and health services adequately support and promote student physical and emotional well-being?
- Does the institution address the physical disabilities of students in compliance with applicable laws?

## 9. FACULTY RESOURCES

**The institution maintains a faculty committed to its mission and qualified academically and spiritually to convey the content of their discipline within a biblical worldview. The institution fosters an academic climate that stimulates the exchange of ideas, encourages professional development, and promotes the well-being of faculty.**

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, the faculty resources of an accredited institution will be characterized by ...

- A spiritually mature faculty who value a modeling and mentoring relationship with students.
- A core faculty of sufficient size and expertise, responsible for the fulfillment of its mission and the quality of its academic functions.
- Faculty who have earned a minimum of a baccalaureate degree for the diploma level, a master's degree for the baccalaureate level, and a doctoral degree for the master's degree level, and who are teaching in their area of expertise.
- A faculty handbook that delineates appropriate policies and procedures, including published criteria for the recruitment, appointment, promotion, grievance processes, and termination of faculty based on principles of fairness and regard for the rights of individuals.
- A process of faculty appointment that includes appropriate involvement of related academic and administrative personnel.
- A faculty that is appropriately involved in decision-making processes, especially related to admissions criteria, curriculum, student life, and graduation requirements.
- A diverse faculty that is representative of the constituency.
- Systems for evaluating the teaching effectiveness of all faculty.
- Evidence of faculty contribution in the areas of student learning, research, institutional development, ministry and community service.
- Adequate support for the professional advancement and development of its faculty including the pursuit of terminal degrees.
- Faculty members who possess at least a baccalaureate degree for the diploma level, a master's degree for the baccalaureate level, and a doctoral degree for the master's degree level in their primary teaching field from accredited institutions. Exceptions should be limited

and validated by personal vitae.

- Appropriate documentation of its faculty's academic preparation; including official transcripts, official documentation of professional experience, performance and technical competencies, published documents, and other certifications and qualifications.
- A published statement of academic freedom and adherence to its principles within the context of the institutional mission.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

What evidence suggests a spiritually mature faculty who are providing a Christ-like role model for students?

What evidence indicates that the number of faculty is adequate to ensure the continuity, coherence, and quality of academic programs?

What percentage of faculty hold at least a baccalaureate degree for the diploma level, a master's degree for the baccalaureate level, and a doctoral degree for the master's level from accredited institutions in their primary teaching areas?

What percentage of faculty have completed at least 15 graduate credits from accredited institutions in their second teaching area? Are exceptions documented by personal vitae?

What percentage of faculty hold terminal degrees from accredited institutions?

Can it be demonstrated that the institution has up-to-date documentation of faculty credentials?

Can it be demonstrated that the institution has developed and implemented policies and procedures for the recruitment, appointment, promotion, tenure, grievance, discipline, and dismissal of faculty based on principles of fairness and regard for the rights of individuals?

Does the institution maintain a current faculty handbook that delineates all policies and procedures related to faculty rights and responsibilities?

What evidence indicates that the institution follows a process of faculty appointment that includes appropriate involvement of related academic personnel and administration?

What evidence indicates that faculty are contributing to the increase of knowledge, strengthening of the church, and the enhancement of the community?

What documentation indicates faculty involvement in the development and assessment of the educational programs?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that the faculty provides academic leadership and governance consistent with their professional competence?

How does the faculty represent the ethnic and religious diversity of the student body?

What evidence is there that adequate institutional funds are expended for the professional advancement and development of faculty?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that the institution has adequately documented and implemented a statement of academic freedom within the context of the institutional mission?

## 10. LEARNING RESOURCES

**The institution ensures the availability of learning resources and services of appropriate form, range, depth, and currency to support the curricular offerings and meet student needs.**

### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by ...

- A purpose, consistent with the institutional mission and a Christian philosophy of

librarianship.

- Appropriate, documented policies and practices relating to the management of learning resources.
- Sufficient funding, staff and practices to procure and maintain needed learning resources.
- The availability of reference services and other means of support to help users find needed information.
- Promotion to enhance awareness of resources and services available.
- Documentation for any cooperative arrangements involving the use of another institution's resources.
- Faculty involvement with the library staff in the analysis of resource adequacy, the selection of resource materials, and the establishment of library policy.
- Policies, procedures, and facilities that ensure access to and security of learning resources.
- Effective leadership by a qualified and credentialed director who has faculty or administrative status and who reports to the chief academic officer.
- Library staff participation in curricular planning.
- Effective collaboration between library staff and information technology personnel.
- Evaluation of learning resource utilization by the learning community.
- The provision of instruction, in collaboration with the faculty, designed to teach information literacy skills to the learning community.
- Participation in learning resource networks.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

Are there written descriptions of the structure, policies and procedures that facilitate the management of learning resources?

Is there a credentialed director who has faculty status and who is adequately supported by qualified personnel?

Has the library staff developed a written statement that details the mission purpose and objectives of the library and articulates a philosophy of librarianship consistent with the character of the institution?

To what extent do representatives from the library staff participate in curricular planning?

Is there evidence that a committee composed of library and faculty personnel functions effectively to develop learning resource policy and guide the allocation of resources?

What patterns of evidence are available to illustrate that the faculty is engaged in the analysis of resource adequacy and the selection/de-selection of resources?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that the collection of learning resources includes a variety of media formats?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that adequate funding is provided to procure essential learning resources and to sustain the use of current technology?

What evidence demonstrates that users are provided adequate reference and information assistance?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that both faculty and students adequately utilize learning resources?

What evidence demonstrates that the library staff collaborates with information technology personnel in the maintenance and development of technical resources.

How involved is the library staff in the teaching of literacy skills?

How can it be demonstrated that records are sufficiently complete and preserved to facilitate effective management of learning resources?

Can it be demonstrated that regular communications are available within the library environment and throughout the institution to provide up-to-date information on learning resources and services?

What evidence is available to demonstrate that policies, procedures, and facilities are utilized to safeguard learning resources and facilitate their usage?  
How do written agreements document cooperative arrangements with external institutions and protect student interests?  
To what extent is the institution providing resources internally and externally to meet the needs of students and programs?

## 11. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**The institution's academic programs are appropriate to the achievement of its mission and to the level of educational programs offered, with some programs leading specifically to full-time vocational ministry but all programs enabling students to develop an integrated biblical worldview.**

### 11a. CURRICULUM

#### ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, academic programs of an accredited institution are characterized by ...

- Evidence that academic programs exhibit the content and rigor characteristic of higher education, and a level of analytical research and communication skills needed for life-long learning appropriate to the level of education.
- A written statement of expected student outcomes for each academic program and a coherent program of study to achieve these objectives.
- Evidence that curricular components are taught from the perspective of a biblical worldview with sensitivity to the cultural context in which the students minister.
- A process of regular review by faculty to ensure that curricular objectives for each academic program are being realized.
- Evidence that course sequence progresses from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree.
- A curriculum content and level of education appropriate to the degree and nomenclature being offered.
- A Bible/theology component equivalent to 30 semester hours, 9 of which may be in interdisciplinary Bible related courses, for a non-church related baccalaureate, 18 semester hours of Bible/theology for a non-traditional degree completion program and 12 semester hours for Bible/theology for a one or two year program.
- A core of general education studies representative of the breadth of general studies and equivalent to 36 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 18 semester hours for an associate degree
- A core of professional studies equivalent to a minimum of 18 semester hours and selected to prepare students for professional positions.
- Professional program requiring significant practicum experiences in the area of specialization.

#### QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

What research has been undertaken to measure student learning in comparison to students studying at the same level in the general higher education community?

What evidence is there that students are engaged in higher level cognitive activities such as research and critical analysis? How are faculty actively engaging students in mutual pursuits of scholarship?

What evidence is there that learning outcomes appropriate to the credential offered are being achieved?

To what extent is there evidence that direct study of the Bible is required and that this study results in the mastery of skills necessary for lifetime study of the Scriptures?

What faculty development programs are in place to encourage effective integration within the curricular offerings?

What evidence is there that graduates have acquired a biblical world-view?

What evidence is there that students are relating curriculum content to their cultural setting?

What evidence is there that the curriculum of each program reflects a coherent pattern that requires students to progress from foundational to advanced studies?

What evidence is there that the curriculum is reviewed regularly by the whole faculty and that this review process results in improved curricular offerings?

What research has been done to measure the effectiveness of graduates in the area of their professional expertise?

Do all academic programs meet the minimum hours required in Bible/Theology? If not, has the institution demonstrated a satisfactory alternative?

What evidence demonstrates that students graduate with a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible?

Does the general education core include required courses in the humanities, the social, behavioral and natural sciences, and mathematics where applicable?

Do all programs meet the minimum general education credit requirement? If not, has the institution demonstrated a satisfactory alternative?

What evidence is there that the curriculum of professional programs leads to competency?

## **11b. MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM**

### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, academic programs of an accredited institution are characterized by ...

- A culture and programs that promote development of effective witnesses and servants in the church and community at large.
- An educational philosophy in which ministry formation is viewed as an integral part of the student's education.
- A program of supervision that provides an adequate basis for evaluating and guiding students in the pursuit of their professional goals.
- A ministry formation program coordinated by a director with faculty status and implemented under the supervision of faculty.
- Evidence that the program is adequately staffed and financially supported.
- A system of regular program review and assessment of outcomes that results in program improvement.
- Evidence that academic credit given for ministry is warranted.

### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

What evidence is there that ministry has priority in the institution?

What percentage of students have a supervised ministry experience in a church context?

What percentage of students have a supervised ministry experience in the community at large?

Is there evidence that the institution has a written philosophy that describes how it views ministry formation and states the objectives that its program is designed to achieve?  
 Does the Ministry Formation program require satisfactory participation for graduation?  
 Do Ministry Formation assignments reflect genuine ministry experiences in which the student has opportunity to impact lives spiritually?  
 Is there evidence that students enrolled in professional programs have an intensive, supervised internship experience?  
 What percentage of ministry assignments provide a cross-cultural experience for the student?  
 How is student progress in the development of ministry skills measured?  
 To what extent is the faculty integrally involved in the design and evaluation of the Ministry Formation program?  
 Is there a qualified director with faculty status who is empowered with the authority and resources to develop and implement the Ministry Formation program?  
 If academic credit is granted, is there evidence that the student's work is supervised by competent professionals, coordinated with classroom instruction, and sufficient in quantity and quality to warrant credit?

### **11c. ACADEMIC PATTERNS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, academic programs of an accredited institution are characterized by ...

- An academic advising system that guides the student from matriculation to selection of a program and graduation from that program.
- A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted requirements for graduation.
- A process that involves faculty approval of candidates for graduation.
- An academic structure organized in departments, divisions, or alternate approaches appropriate to the size and complexity of the institution.
- An academic calendar that is consistent with national higher educational patterns, and government regulations.
- A system of accurate and secure record keeping.
- An academic support system supervised by qualified professionals and designed to enable under-prepared students to progress toward program completion.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

How are student's learning needs assessed? What evidence is there that the academic advising system is meeting student needs?  
 What procedures are in place to regularly inform students of their progress towards graduation?  
 Is there evidence that the faculty participates in determining requirements for graduation and that these requirements are clearly communicated to students?  
 What process is in place to approve candidates for graduation?  
 What policies and procedures are in place to ensure accurate, secure and safe maintenance of student records?  
 What published and implemented policies are in place for the release of student information in compliance with federal regulation?  
 What are the patterns of faculty organization?  
 Are academic departments, divisions and/or schools chaired by qualified professionals and staffed by a minimum of two full-time faculty members?  
 Does the academic calendar for each academic program provide the number of contact hours required by appropriate authorities?

What evidence is there that developmental courses and/or programs are providing adequate support for under-prepared students?

#### **11d. ALTERNATIVE ACADEMIC PATTERNS**

##### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, academic programs of an accredited institution are characterized by ...

- Use of alternative academic patterns that is consistent with its institutional mission and extends its reach.
- The involvement of faculty in the development and approval process.
- Alternative patterns that meet the good practice standards outlined in the relevant Association policy.

##### **QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:**

What alternative academic patterns are utilized in the institution?

Are programs utilizing these patterns consistent with the institutional mission?

What evidence is there that these programs are meeting the special academic needs of a specific community?

What evidence is there that faculty are involved in the development and approval of alternative programs?

To what extent is there general faculty and administrative support for these programs?

To what extent does each alternative academic program meet the good practice standards listed in the relevant Association policy.

If any program does not meet these standards, has the institution provided a reasonable explanation for the discrepancy?

#### **12. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**As indicated in Standard 2, a college has an overall plan to assess its effectiveness in achieving its mission. Central to this plan is the systematic and specific assessment of student learning and development through a strategy that measures the student's knowledge, skills and competencies against institutional and programmatic goals.**

Issues regarding institutional effectiveness are discussed in Standard 2. The intentional focus of this standard is toward Student Learning.

##### **ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

Relative to this standard, assessment of student learning will be characterized by ...

- The identification of inter-related student outcomes at three levels: institutional goals, program objectives and course objectives.
- A shared commitment on the part of students, faculty, staff, and administration to achieve these stated outcomes.
- A written outcomes assessment plan that articulates multiple means to validate expected learning outcomes.



- A process whereby these outcome measurements lead to the improvement of teaching and learning.

QUESTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT:

How do institutional goals, programs and course objectives exhibit coherence and congruence? What evidence is there that the desired outcomes reflect the attainment of spiritual maturity, biblical and general knowledge, life competencies, and professional skills appropriate to biblical higher education?

What evidence is there that the institutional community is unified in its efforts to improve student learning?

How are institutional goals and program objectives communicated to the internal and external constituencies?

What evidence is there that the results of learning outcomes assessment are readily available to the general public, especially applicants to the college?

What evidence is there that the objectives of each academic program are being realized?

What measures do faculty members have in place to determine whether their course objectives are being realized?

Does the institution have a comprehensive learning outcomes assessment plan that is specific to each academic program? Is there an annual procedure for review and revision of this plan?

What evidence is there that the outcomes assessment plan includes diverse measures such as standardized tests, portfolios, pre- and post-tests, capstone courses, licensure results, graduate school admission and performance data, alumni surveys, job placement records, retention and completion rates and grade distribution reports?

Is there an identified person or persons who monitor the outcomes assessment process?

Is there evidence that data on student learning is distributed to appropriate institutional constituencies?

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# Policy on Substantive Change

## Program Changes

**Institution must receive the Accrediting Commission's approval for any proposed substantive program changes prior to its implementation.**

Examples of substantive changes include:

Adding degree programs or educational units, which do not conform to Bible college parameters as defined in the Standards for Accreditation

Initiation of degree programs(s) at more advanced level (e.g., associate to baccalaureate)

Initiation of graduate level offerings

Initiation of an adult degree completion program

Requesting accreditation of a program at a non-accredited institution

### Procedure for Gaining Approval of Substantive Program Change

1. Notify CETA's Accreditation Coordinator as soon as practical, in writing, of any contemplated change that may be substantive.
2. Follow the procedures outlined in the handbook for substantive change.
3. Provide thorough documentation relating to the proposed change:
  - a. The purpose and rationale for the change in reference to the institutional mission and educational goals
  - b. Evidence/findings/causes of the need and/or demand for the change
  - c. A comprehensive description of the change
  - d. Responsible estimates of required resources (e.g., facilities, personnel, finances, learning resources, information technology, infrastructure)
  - e. A plan for procurement and/or allocation of needed resources
  - f. Any structural alterations necessary for implementation of the change
  - g. Evidence of due consideration and authorization of the change through appropriate channels of institutional governance
  - h. Anticipated impact of the change upon institutional stability
4. The Accreditation Coordinator will provide guidance
  - a. Decide whether the contemplated change is substantive
  - b. Decide whether the contemplated change requires approval or requires notification prior to implementation
  - c. Assess documentation
  - d. Be a liaison between the institution and the Accrediting Commission
  - e. Request progress reports
5. The **Accrediting Commission** may suggest any or all of the following:
  - Require no follow-up activity until the institution's next scheduled reaffirmation
  - Require the submission of a progress report after a specified period of time
  - Request that the college host the Accreditation Coordinator or his representative for an on-site evaluation after a specified period of time
  - Request that the institution host an evaluation team visit after a specified period of

time  
Disapproval of a major substantive change

## **GUIDELINE FOR REPORTS TO THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION**

The institution should use the following as a guide in reporting and evaluating your substantive change.

1. **MISSION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES**

Clearly articulated and publicized objectives for the educational program showing that the program supports the mission statement and institutional goals.

2. **ASSESSMENTS AND PLANNING**

A plan that reflects the institution's vision and is based on assessment results and realistic resource projections.

3. **INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY**

Evidence that demonstrates the institution demonstrates accurately the new program changes through publications, public statements and advertising.

4. **AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE**

Evidence that the governing board authorized the substantive change.

5. **ADMINISTRATION**

Each program demonstrates that administrative leaders have detailed job responsibilities outlined and that effective processes are in place for recording, maintaining, and securing accurate administrative records.

6. **INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES**

6a. **HUMAN RESOURCES**

An adequate number of qualified institutional personnel to provide leadership for substantive change. An institution must have at least one qualified faculty member for each major offered.

6b. **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Evidence that institutional planning is related to the budgeting process.

Evidence that substantially all of the college's generated income is devoted to the support of its educational purposes and programs.

6c. **PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

Employment of evaluation processes to ensure that facilities and equipment are sufficient and well-maintained to support the change.

6d. TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Clearly stated policies and procedures that protect security and confidentiality of technological data.

7. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

7a. RECRUITMENT

Accurate and comprehensive recruitment literature that enables prospective students to make informed decisions

The allocation of resources and authority to adequately support recruitment efforts

7b. ADMISSIONS

Admissions requirements and procedures that are clearly communicated to prospective students and applied consistently in the admissions process

Evaluation procedures that reasonably ensure admitted students have the ability to successfully achieve their educational goals.

Published policies and procedures related to transfer credit and prior learning.

Systematic procedures for identifying students who are not fully prepared for their desired level of college study.

7c. FINANCIAL AID

Accurate financial aid information and counselling in regard to scholarships, grants, loans, and refunds.

Evidence that financial aid practices meet regulatory requirements.

Financial aid decision-making procedures that are timely and equitable.

7d. RETENTION

An assessment program that monitors student retention, persistence and attrition.

8. STUDENT SERVICES

The organization and delivery of student services that are integrated into academic programs and appropriately aligned with the institution's culture and educational objectives.

A regular system of assessing needs, experiences, and levels of student satisfaction in order to improve services

Opportunities for students to provide input in institutional decision-making

Published procedures for addressing student complaints and grievances.

9. FACULTY RESOURCES

- A core faculty of sufficient size and expertise, responsible for the quality of its academic functions.
- Faculty who have earned a minimum of one level above that which they teach or have extensive experience in the area of expertise.
- A faculty handbook that delineates appropriate policies and procedures, including published criteria for the recruitment, appointment, promotion, grievance processes, and termination of faculty based on principles of fairness and regard for the rights of individuals.
- Systems for evaluating the teaching effectiveness of all faculty.
- Appropriate documentation of its faculty's academic preparation; including official transcripts, official documentation of professional experience, performance and technical competencies, published documents, and other certifications and qualifications.

10. LEARNING RESOURCES

The availability of reference services and other means of support to help users find needed information.

Promotion to enhance awareness of resources and services available

Documentation for any cooperative arrangements involving the use of another institution's resources.

Faculty involvement with the library staff in the analysis of resource adequacy and the selection of resource materials.

11. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

11a. CURRICULUM

Evidence that academic programs exhibit the content and rigor characteristic of higher education, and a level of analytical research and communication skills needed for life-long learning appropriate to the level of education.

A written statement of expected student outcomes for each academic program and a coherent program of study to achieve these objectives.

Evidence that curricular components are taught from the perspective of a biblical worldview with sensitivity to the cultural context in which the students minister.

Evidence that course sequence progresses from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree.

A curriculum content and level of education appropriate to the degree and nomenclature being offered.

A core of studies that are representative of the breadth of the major and the standards of an accredited institution.

Professional program requiring significant practicum experiences in the area of specialization.

#### 11b. MINISTRY FORMATION PROGRAM/PRACTICUM EXPERIENCES

- A culture and program that promote development of effective witnesses and servants in the church and community at large.
- An educational philosophy in which ministry formation is viewed as an integral part of the student's education.
- A program of supervision that provides an adequate basis for evaluating and guiding students in the pursuit of their professional goals.
- A ministry formation program coordinated by a director with faculty status and implemented under the supervision of faculty.
- Evidence that the program is adequately staffed and financially supported.
- A system of regular program review and assessment of outcomes that results in program improvement.
- Evidence that academic credit given for ministry is warranted.

#### 11c. ACADEMIC PATTERNS AND PROCEDURES

An academic advising system that guides the student with selection of a program and graduation from that program.

A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted requirements for graduation.

A process that involves faculty approval of candidates for graduation.

A system of accurate and secure record keeping.

An academic support system supervised by qualified professionals and designed to enable under-prepared students to progress toward program completion.

#### 11.d. ALTERNATIVE ACADEMIC PATTERNS

Use of alternative academic patterns that is consistent with its institutional mission and extends its reach.

The involvement of faculty in the development and approval process.

#### 12. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The identification of inter-related student outcomes at three levels: institutional goals, program objectives and course objectives.

A shared commitment on the part of students, faculty, staff, and administration to achieve these stated outcomes.

A written outcomes assessment plan that articulates multiple means to validate expected learning outcomes.

A process whereby these outcome measurements lead to the improvement of teaching and learning.

# Policy on Alternative Sites and Delivery Systems

*CETA provides for various forms of learning in which education is offered apart from the main campus. These include:*

- Branch campuses,
- Additional locations
- Extension sites and extension classes, and
- Distance education

Resident study programs are the primary means of instruction because of the added values derived from the more extensive and immediate resources of the main campus and from interaction with the college community. However, colleges with adequate resources may well utilize alternative sites and delivery systems in order to meet the needs of the general public, to deliver instruction to constituencies unable to avail themselves of courses on campus, to allow students to benefit from educational experiences in the context of life and ministry, and to provide continuing education for college graduates. Alternative sites and delivery systems may be either for credit (supportive of a certificate or degree) or noncredit (popular level). All distance education should be under the direct control of the college administration.

## Definitions

***Branch campus.*** A branch campus is a geographically separate unit with its own core facilities, curricula, faculty, and instructional resources. The parent institution provides general oversight. A branch campus a) is permanent in nature; b) offers courses in education programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized education credential; c) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and d) has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

***Additional location.*** An additional location is any location other than the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational program.

***Extension class.*** Classes offered by extension at sites other than the main campus (in local churches or rented quarters, for example) are usually taught by the college's own faculty. Such locations must offer less than 50 percent of a defined educational program in this way.

***Distance education.*** Distance education is defined as an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. The term includes courses offered principally through the use of a) television, audio, or computer transmission, such as open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, satellite transmission, or the Internet; b) audio or computer conferencing c) video cassettes or disks; or d) correspondence.

## General Policies

Alternative sites and delivery systems are an extension of the parent institution and, hence, come under the institutional accrediting jurisdiction of the association. Colleges wishing to initiate alternative sites and delivery systems should refer to the "Policy on Substantive Change." Each initiative is considered individually and, once approved, becomes part of the college's regular reporting and evaluation cycle. Accordingly, at the time an institution's status is reaffirmed, any branch campus or additional location will be subject to a visit from an evaluating team representative. Such visits will be held at the discretion of CETA.



Alternative sites and delivery systems must be consistent with the college's mission and be limited to those subject areas for which the parent institution has expertise.

Alternative sites and delivery systems must be offered in conformity with applicable national laws.

A specific plan, identifying purpose, objectives, resources, methods of implementation and means of implementation for each alternative site adopted (branch campus, additional location, extension class, or distance education) must be clearly stated, and outcomes documented to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program.

Alternative sites and delivery systems must contribute to the parent institution's quality and integrity. For-credit courses must be applicable toward one of the institution's degree programs and must be commensurate in quality with regular on-campus offerings.

Alternative sites and delivery systems must not adversely affect the institution's administrative effectiveness; result in faculty overload, or cause financial stress or instability. The parent institution must control alternative sites and delivery systems in order to ensure sound business practices, adequate financial support, quality instruction, and accurate promotion.

The qualifications of alternative site faculty must be commensurate with those of on-campus faculty.

Admissions standards will be the same for all students whether they study on campus or pursue their education by distance learning.

Alternative site courses must be systematically evaluated to determine if course objectives are being met.

Adequate support services, such as financial aid, guidance, and oversight must be provided for alternative site students. Records that deal with academic and other matters must be maintained and safeguarded.

Credentials should be awarded only to alternative site students who complete a planned program consistent with institutional mission and program objectives.

### **Specific Policies for Branch Campuses**

When a college initially proposes to establish a branch campus, a special evaluation team visit is required in order to assess the branch campus with respect to the CETA Criteria for Accreditation and this "Policy on Alternative Sites & Delivery Systems." The team will visit the branch campus within six months of its establishment. Special attention will be given to the design of curricular offerings, the validity of the credentials awarded, the adequacy of financial support, instructional resources, administrative oversight, and the impact of the branch campus upon the parent institution.

The establishment of a branch campus will be considered a major substantive change to be processed in accord with the "Policy on Substantive Change." A comprehensive written proposal addressing the branch campus compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and this "Policy on Alternative Sites and Delivery Systems" is required. Materials must include a business plan that includes statements of projected cash flow, and of revenues and

expenditures.

Substantive changes at a branch campus must be processed in accord with the “Policy on Substantive Change.”

A branch campus normally requires its own chief administrative officer, who is responsible to the parent institution’s president and board. Appropriate documents should specify organizational and administrative relationships and the terms of interaction between the branch campus and the parent institution. For example, if the branch campus has an advisory board, it must be demonstrated that this board is wholly responsible to the board of the parent institution.

The curricula, instruction, awarding of credit, and conferral of degrees or diplomas must remain under the control of the parent institution’s faculty and administration.

Qualified faculty and adequate instructional support, facilities, supplies, and equipment must be provided at the branch campus.

Adequate student services, e.g., student aid, guidance, and oversight, must be provided at the branch campus. Records that deal with academic and other matters must be maintained and safeguarded.

Degrees or diplomas that are based chiefly upon credits earned at a branch campus must indicate that they were earned at the branch campus.

### **Special Policy for “Additional Locations”**

When a college initially proposes to establish an additional location, a special visit is required in order to assess the additional location with respect to the association’s Criteria for Accreditation and this “Policy on Alternative Sites & Delivery Systems.” Representatives of the association will visit the additional location within six months of its establishment. Special attention will be given to the design of curricular offerings, the validity of any credentials awarded, the adequacy of financial support, instructional resources, administrative oversight, and the impact of the additional location upon the parent institution.

The establishment of an additional location will be considered a major substantive change to be processed in accord with the “Policy on Substantive Change.” A comprehensive written proposal addressing the additional location’s compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and this “Policy on Alternative Sites & Delivery Systems” is required. Materials must include a business plan that includes statements of projected cash flow, and of revenues and expenditures. This procedure must be followed for the first three additional locations established. After the successful establishment of three additional locations, an institution can treat subsequent locations as minor substantive change except where a new degree program is offered, national boundaries are crossed or the additional location requires the development of substantial new faculty and learning resources. In such instances, a new location must be treated as a major change.

Substantive changes at additional locations must be processed in accord with the “Policy on Substantive Change.”

An additional location must be under the administrative control of the parent institution’s president and board. Appropriate documents should specify organizational and

administrative relationships between the additional location and the parent institution. The curricula, instruction, awarding of credit, and conferral of degrees or diplomas must remain under the control of the parent institution's faculty and administration. Qualified faculty and adequate instructional support, facilities, supplies, and equipment must be provided at the additional location.

Adequate student services, e.g., student aid, guidance, and oversight, must be provided at the additional location. Records that deal with academic and other matters must be maintained and safeguarded at either the parent campus or the additional location.

Degrees or diplomas that are based chiefly upon credits earned at an additional location must indicate that they were earned at the additional location.

### **Special Policy for Extension Classes**

Qualified faculty and adequate instructional support, facilities, supplies, and equipment must be provided at the extension class site.

Records that deal with academic and other matters must be maintained at the parent campus.

### **Special Policies for Distance Education**

When distance education is offered, the college must provide for the proper evaluation of the student's progress and for guidance regarding future work.

When a degree or diploma is offered by distance education, the college must ensure that the students fulfill Christian service requirements.

Each distance education offering must feature adequate safeguards to protect the integrity of the offering, including appropriate proctoring of major examinations.

Distance education offerings must provide students access to instructional resources that will support the courses being taken.

Records for distance education offerings that deal with academic and other matters must be maintained at the parent campus.

Fees for distance education offerings must be kept reasonable in relation to the actual costs of materials and services provided.

### **Other Factors:**

Institutions desiring to introduce alternative sites and delivery systems must be guided by the Accreditation Criteria with respect to assessment and planning, institutional integrity, administration and institutional resources.

*(Approved March, 2005)*