



September 22, 2016

Dear CCCU Presidents,

Greetings. I trust that our letter finds you well launched into your new semester. On behalf of the CCCU Board of Directors, I wanted to share with you the results of the CCCU Task Force on Membership. The Board received the Task Force's proposal at its meeting in July and made some minor changes but kept intact the tone and substance of the Task Force's work. The Board unanimously approved the document that is attached to this letter, and it shared the minor changes with the members of the Task Force. Along with the attached document, we have included a comprehensive list of the presidents involved in this process as well as some individual comments from members of the Task Force and Board. The CCCU Board is deeply grateful to the members of the Task Force, co-chaired by Dr. Barry Corey of Biola University and Dr. Philip Ryken of Wheaton College, who worked diligently throughout the past year to arrive at this recommendation.

In summary, this process and the resulting document have enabled the CCCU to reaffirm its unwavering commitment to Christian higher education and historic Christian faith, to simplify and clarify its associational categories, and to highlight its important advocacy role for Christian higher education in the public sphere. The document offers a framework for CCCU associational relationships, and it describes six criteria that will be used to align an institution in one of three different associational categories: Governing Membership (voting), Associate Membership (non-voting), and Collaborative Partnership (non-voting). In keeping with the mission to "advance Christian Higher Education in the world," the CCCU will continue to provide valuable member services to institutions in all associational categories.

We also wanted to say a few words about the transition process to this new structure. For 2016-17, the existing associational structure and dues apply. We will prepare to implement these new associational categories over the next academic year. The CCCU expects full implementation by July 1<sup>st</sup> 2017, which is the beginning of every membership year. We expect that for almost all institutions, the appropriate new category will be self-evident and that the current dues structure will be largely maintained. President Hoogstra will be communicating with each president over the next three months to identify and discuss the appropriate associational category for that institution. She will bring any unresolved questions to the membership committee of the board at our meeting in January. Going forward, applications from institutions to join the CCCU will be considered under the updated associational structure. If you have any questions about the report or process, please don't hesitate to call President Hoogstra.

We believe that this document rightly articulates both the core and the breadth of the CCCU in a way that will make us the most effective witness and advocate for Christian higher education. As President Hoogstra often says in her updates, "we are in this together." We need each other now more than ever to carry out this important work.

May God continue to bless the work on your campus and the collective work of the CCCU.

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TASK FORCE ON CCCU ASSOCIATIONAL STATUS

REVISED BY THE CCCU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JULY 26, 2016

CCCU MEMBERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

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Summary

The Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) is a tax-exempt higher education association of non-profit Christian institutions of higher learning around the world. Our members are comprehensive colleges and universities with curricula rooted in the arts and sciences. Comprised of many independent Christian institutions, the CCCU through its members has relationships with dozens of denominations across many different faith traditions. The Council exists to advance Christian higher education in North America and throughout the world.

At the CCCU, we have remained faithful to our mission and purpose since our founding in 1976. For decades, the Council has encompassed distinctively Christian institutions of higher education in a common cause and commitment to Christ-centered, faith-integrated teaching, scholarship and service. The association's incorporated presence in Washington, D.C. serves its members through advocacy, strengthening academic excellence, professional development and offering students domestic and international off-campus semester programs.

The CCCU is an effective and respected advocate for Christ-centered higher education. We provide a unified voice to highlight the contributions of our institutions for the common good. We also advocate for the right of each member school to practice its sincerely held religious beliefs. Member schools—through the elected Board of Directors—control the governance, advocacy and programming of the CCCU. Current CCCU institutions employ over 30,000 faculty, 37,000 staff, serve more than 450,000 students and count over 1,800,000 alumni around the world.

Framework

The CCCU is comprised of diverse Christ-centered institutions that define their missions in ways that are consistent with their faith traditions. These theological differences add to the breadth and depth of the association. Through their associational relationship with the CCCU, members neither add to nor diminish one another's theological orthodoxy.

CCCU members enrich the diversity of higher education nationally and internationally. As a broad and theologically-diverse association of Christian institutions, we are united by a common commitment to educating students as whole persons created in God's image. We practice a coherent approach to education in which the development of the mind, spirit, body and emotions are seamlessly woven together in the quest not just for knowledge but also wisdom.

The institutions of the CCCU share three basic educational commitments.

*First*, we integrate biblical truth not just into “spiritual” aspects of the institution but throughout the academic enterprise. Our professors pursue academic excellence because they are committed to God as the author of truth, and that truth has implications for every academic discipline. The classroom and the laboratory are just as much arenas of Christian integration as the college chapel.

*Second*, we are committed to the moral and spiritual formation of students. Education that instructs the mind without deepening the soul is not true learning. Our schools seek to develop students who, in the words of the Old Testament prophet, “act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with their God” (Micah 6:8). This requires not simply professional competence but *wisdom*, which is a sense of things in their proper relationship and a love for the right things. Our purpose is to form students of moral commitment who live out Christian virtues such as love, courage and humility. This task gives meaning and coherence to every part of the academy, from the classroom to the fine arts studio, from the internship placement to the residence hall and the athletic field.

*Third*, we are committed to graduating students who make a difference for the common good as redemptive voices in the world. Our schools offer a wide variety of academic programs because we believe that Christians are called to use their vocations as vehicles to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to a fallen world. Our graduates are “hopeful realists” who recognize the brokenness of the world but believe that God has called them to work for its healing. As such, they play a redemptive and restorative role in the world as doctors, teachers, marketers, engineers, parents, soccer coaches and in a host of other ways. In other words, we are private religious institutions that exist for the public good and contribute to human flourishing.

### Institutional Autonomy

These educational commitments are quite distinctive in the landscape of higher education. Thus, the ability of CCCU institutions to educate according to their mission is crucial. CCCU institutions stand united in their support of institutional autonomy and the principles of religious and associational rights that undergird it. This autonomy is essential for each institution to be able to contribute to the higher education landscape in its unique way, and thus comprises a foundational value of the CCCU. Since its founding, the CCCU has led in advocating in the Courts, with Congress and at the White House for the freedom of its institutions to exercise their First Amendment rights. These rights of religion, association, and speech enable CCCU institutions to teach as well as maintain policies that are consistent with their religious beliefs and convictions.

### Criteria for Membership and Partnership

1. Christian Mission: All CCCU members have a board approved and public institutional mission statement that is Christ-centered and aligns with the following three commitments:
  - a. **Biblical Truth**: A demonstrated commitment to integrating the Holy Scriptures—divinely inspired, true, and authoritative—throughout the institution, including teaching and researching in all academic disciplines.
  - b. **Christian Formation**: A demonstrated commitment to fostering Christian virtues grounded in the Scriptures and nurtured through the institution’s curricular and co-curricular programs.

- c. **Gospel Witness:** A demonstrated commitment to advance God’s redemptive purposes in the world by graduating students who live and share the Gospel in word and deed.
2. **Institutional Type and Accreditation:** CCCU members offer non-profit comprehensive undergraduate curricula rooted in the arts and sciences and may also offer graduate programs and degrees. All U.S. members must be in good standing with a regional accrediting body. International members must be recognized by the equivalent accreditation body in their respective countries.
  3. **Cooperation and Participation:** All CCCU schools support other Christian colleges and universities and advance the cause of Christian higher education through participation in the programs of the CCCU and payment of the annual dues. Member campuses are urged to demonstrate continuing support for the CCCU through annual registration for CCCU professional development and/or student programs. In addition, CCCU institutions recognize that fellow schools are seeking to pursue faithfully their institutional missions in their particular context, and therefore they demonstrate respect and support for each other.
  4. **Institutional Integrity:** All CCCU members demonstrate responsible financial operations, have institutional practices that reflect high ethical standards, and operate all financial and fund raising activities consistent with the standards of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.
  5. **Employment Policies:** CCCU governing members have a continuing institutional policy and practice, effective throughout membership, to hire as full-time faculty members and administrators only persons who profess faith in Jesus Christ.
  6. **Christian Distinctives and Advocacy:** The CCCU has a robust, necessary and increasingly important advocacy role within the public square. Historic Christian beliefs and practices often intersect with current governmental interests and regulation. These biblical beliefs and practices guide the CCCU advocacy positions—as decided by the Board of Directors—to be in the best interest of advancing Christian higher education in the public square. Among the core commitments that guide our advocacy are:
    - Institutions hold the Christian belief that the Earth and the entire universe are God’s good creation. The CCCU advocates for the sustainability and preservation of the Earth.
    - Institutions hold the Christian belief that human beings, male and female, are created in the image of God to flourish in community, and, as to intimate sexual relations, they are intended for persons in a marriage between one man and one woman. The CCCU advocates for the right of Christian institutions to maintain practices that align with this sexual ethic.
    - Institutions hold the Christian belief that all human beings, without exception, are invested with inherent worth and dignity. The CCCU advocates for the wellbeing of the underserved and marginalized, for the protection of people of all faiths from religious persecution, and for the preservation and advancement of religious freedoms.

- Institutions hold the Christian belief that the Gospel calls us toward reconciliation with one another. The CCCU advocates for humble and courageous action that honors the unity of the human race, values ethnic and cultural diversity, and addresses the injustices of racism.

CCCU Governing Members voluntarily align as institutions with these advocacy positions. In addition, the Council's own services, advocacy, employment practices and student programs will be consistent with these alignments and Christian beliefs and principles.

Based on these above understandings, CCCU president and Board of Directors will advise current and applying institutions on their category of relationship within the CCCU.

### **Governing Membership**

Governing Membership in the CCCU is attained through: 1) demonstration of the six core CCCU membership standards, 2) completion of a CCCU application, 3) CCCU executive endorsement and approval by the CCCU Board of Directors. Governing Members are voting members of the CCCU as it relates to selecting the CCCU Board of Directors and anything else called for in the CCCU Bylaws.

### **Associate Membership**

Associate Members (non-voting) do not offer a fully accredited comprehensive undergraduate curricula rooted in the arts and sciences. Examples include seminaries, Bible colleges, undergraduate institutions without a full curriculum in the arts or sciences, and non-accredited institutions.

Associate Membership in the CCCU is attained through: 1) meeting all of the above criteria for membership except number 2, 2) completion of a CCCU application, 3) CCCU executive endorsement and approval by the CCCU Board of Directors.

### **Collaborative Partnership**

The cause of Christian higher education is advanced through our network of Collaborative Partners (non-voting) which benefit from attending CCCU conferences, participating in research programs and commissions, and/or availing themselves of CCCU resources.

These partnerships are invaluable and serve not only to strengthen the voice of Christian colleges and universities in the landscape of higher education but also to advocate for the collective good that religious colleges and universities bring. Collaborative Partnerships may include Christian colleges and universities which meet by their own warrant criteria number 1 through 4 but do not align with criteria number 5 or 6. Collaborative Partners, therefore, include those colleges and universities which choose to find common cause with the CCCU and likewise seek the freedom to educate within their religious convictions.

Collaborative Partnership in the CCCU is attained through: 1) demonstration of alignment with the first four CCCU membership standards, 2) completion of a CCCU application, 3) CCCU executive endorsement and approval by the CCCU Board of Directors.

The CCCU is an association of institutions led by men and women presidents who care deeply for Christian Higher Education. The CCCU could not function or have the influence it does for its size without the vast commitment of volunteers such as this Task Force or those who serve as board members. This Task Force was appointed by the Board in September of 2015 and completed its work by the July 2016 Board of Directors meeting. The Board sought membership on the Task Force that would represent the 35 denominations and/or points of view comprising the CCCU. These endorsements or reflections on the Task Force process and report represent the sentiment following the submission of the Task Force report to the Board of Directors. All members of the Board and the Task Force are listed at the end of this document. With thanks, Shirley Hoogstra, President of the CCCU. September 2016

### *Endorsements by Task Force or Board Members*

*It was a daunting task, made possible by the irenic spirit of all involved, while holding firm to our theological convictions. At the conclusion of each meeting I somehow sensed the Lord would be pleased with the team's clear commitment to honor Him. I am encouraged by, and support, the statement that resulted from the deliberations, and trust it will be well-received by the CCCU membership. Thanks for the opportunity to serve with you in this important work. Sandra Gray, President, Asbury University*

*This lengthy and reflective process. . . has focused on renewed expectations regarding membership, partnerships, and the future of the CCCU. Throughout the process, all task-team members were encouraged toward collaborative participation. This important conversation has resulted in a much-needed clarification regarding membership in the CCCU. Similarly, the classification of member and non-member categories is a step forward for Christ-centered higher education institutions that are committed to historic Christian beliefs and practices. While some will still want further definition and others, no doubt, would have preferred less specificity, I believe the statement on membership and collaborative partnerships reflects sensitivity to the diverse denominational perspectives represented across the CCCU, while attempting to speak with joyful conviction and Spirit-enabled charity toward and with one another. We pray that these efforts will help all of us serve together faithfully in the days ahead as we seek to carry out our shared calling and as we work together toward the advancement of Christian higher education.*

*David S. Dockery, President, Trinity International University*

*Faced with the divergent views of our constituents and the goal of finding a holistic framework for membership and involvement, co-chairs Corey and Ryken led our group with patience, wisdom, and persistence. Likewise, President Hoogstra and members of the staff provided strong, sensitive support as we sought answers to our questions. The process was long and our conversations were robust, covered in prayer before, during and after our meetings. If adopted, I believe that the emerging plan will serve us well as we seek to maintain a strong nucleus within our membership, simultaneously joining hands with others to advance commonly held interests. Andrew Westmoreland, President, Samford University*

*We urgently need two kinds of institutions in American life right now. First, we need institutions that are deeply bound to particular traditions and commitments—forming people in ways deeper than consumer culture or thin forms of civil society can ever do. Second, we need ones that*

*recognize and work for partnership across differences of tradition and commitment—demonstrating in concrete ways that real pluralism is possible and compatible with our common flourishing. And of course these two categories are not mutually exclusive. The CCCU has long represented institutions that are both deeply rooted and deeply committed to real pluralism. Our collaborative partners both represent their own traditions with integrity and also signal the value of diversity in the ways different institutions express their faith identity. They help the CCCU embody the genuine diversity that has historically been one of the unique and very best qualities in the American higher education system—and show the wider world that real partnerships, amidst real diversity, are alive and thriving. Andy Crouch, Executive Editor, Christianity Today*

*...The work of the task force has taken place in an atmosphere of transparency and frank dialogue. Our differences were neither threatening to one another nor did they stray from what we have come to describe as Christ-centered, faith integrated teaching, scholarship and services. The statement that has emerged from the task force ... weaves together the challenge of the diversity of our institutions and how they might to respond to issues while acknowledging the core aspirational frameworks we share and hold passionately together. The complexity of the times we are navigating demands an articulated core and a framework of flexibility. This allows institutions to function out of the identity, denominational and theological distinctiveness from which they were birthed and hold to. ... I fully endorse and support the work that has been done. It reflects the best of what it means to listen, collaborate, and seeks God's wisdom in a very complex and difficult time. Gary Nelson, President and Vice Chancellor, Tyndale University College & Seminary*

#### **CCCU Board of Directors 2015-16**

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Dr. Andrea Cook, Warner Pacific College  
Dr. Barry Corey, Biola University  
Mr. Andy Crouch, Christianity Today  
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#### **Task Force on Membership Sept. 15-16**

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