

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Dear Friends,

The global network of Calvary Chapel Bible Colleges is one of our greatest, most unique attributes, and we plan to encourage more student mobility across all CCBC Affiliates. The experiential learning available at Affiliates prepares students for missions and ministry in a unique way. These educational and cultural experiences have also connected hundreds of students with lifelong relationships that span the globe.

**Our simple policy is going to be that students must complete at least 25% of the “resident” credits for any program directly through CCBC (Murrieta campus, CCBC Costa Mesa campus, or CCBC Online). The rest of the coursework for any program can be transferred in, as long it is similar to CCBC coursework in terms of what students do and learn.** The School Board is developing policy and we will be updating our website soon.

Answers to Accreditation FAQs for Affiliates:

- (1) **Are accreditation and degrees the things that matter now?** No, that is an unfortunate impression. Our main mission is to help students know God through His Word and equip them for ministry with a servant’s heart. We intend for students to deepen their relationship with God and seek His will for their lives, while being immersed in studying His Word. We desire our students to graduate with a solid spiritual foundation for the rest of their lives, including ministry in the church and on the mission field, as well as being witnesses in their families and in their workplace. For those called to further education, we want to provide a solid foundation that will help them stand strong with and for the Lord.

We recognize that God doesn’t always call the “equipped,” but he does equip those he calls. Formal studies and degree programs are not for everyone, and most of the saints used greatly by God throughout history did not have a formal Christian education. God uses various methods to equip people for ministry, and having a degree does not make any Christian worker more important than another. More Calvary Chapel pastors have been pursuing growth through graduate-level degree programs, which is one of the reasons why it has been easier for CCBC to pursue accreditation at this time as compared to 1990 when we started—but did not finish—the accreditation process. Nearly all of our teachers are Calvary Chapel leaders or attenders, and many are CCBC graduates who have gone on to further study.



**(2) Accreditation is not about worldly status.** Accreditation is about two things: (1) quality improvement, and (2) quality assurance (credibility). As history shows, schools can drift away from their Christ-centered mission, church relationships, and doctrinal faithfulness if accreditation is over-emphasized. That is why CCBC is pursuing accreditation through an evangelical, biblical, faith-based accreditor, The Association for Biblical Higher Education ([www.abhe.org](http://www.abhe.org)). ABHE is committed to supporting evangelical Bible colleges, and despite its recognition by the federal government, the world does not hold evangelical faith-based accreditors in high regard. We are not pursuing secular accreditation, because we are still a Bible college that only offers degrees in Bible and Christian ministry. ABHE is also a unique accreditor in that it is very supportive of church-based colleges, instead of pushing for separation of church and school. This is perfect for us, since we are a branch of the teaching ministry of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, through which CCCM wants to bless and serve people all over the world. We still seek to demonstrate our credibility through the spiritually fruitful lives of our students, and we believe that accreditation will help us (1) gain and retain students to teach, (2) improve our quality in accomplishing our mission, and (3) open doors for students in terms of financial support and future ministry opportunities.

**(3) Is CCBC switching to a four-year program?** Our main program will continue to be the two-year program (Diploma without Gen Ed, Associate's with Gen Ed). We also offer a 4-year Bachelor's degree completion program for those who have attended other colleges (the Bachelor of Biblical Studies). There is a new 4-year option for those who want to continue beyond the two-year program, receiving credit for internships, vocational ministry training, and further studies in biblical servant leadership (the Bachelor of Biblical Studies & Leadership). In addition, there is a 1-year program for those who plan to come to CCBC for a shorter time. It made sense to offer a program for those students, instead of seeing them simply drop out of the two-year program early. See [www.ccbc.info](http://www.ccbc.info) for more information about our programs.





- (4) **Why does CCBC offer Gen Ed?** The Gen Ed courses we offer are all geared toward studying topics that relate to understanding God's world through the light of His Word, for the purpose of preparing students for Christian life and ministry. A minimal amount of Gen Ed is required for all accredited associate and bachelor degrees in the U.S. In the past, we offered an Associate of Theology that was out of compliance with national norms and accreditation standards because it did not require introductory courses that covered foundational, broad topics. We addressed this in 2014 by changing the name of our main 2-year program that requires no Gen Ed to the Diploma in Biblical Studies. We also offer the non-credit Certificate of Completion. As currently required by the State of California, everything CCBC teaches has to fall within the scope of the "religious" teachings of our church, so Gen Ed is taught through the lens of a biblical worldview, for the purpose of Christian life and ministry.
- (5) **Will CCBC still have "Affiliates"?** Accreditation does not substantially affect our network of CCBC Affiliate schools. We can still recognize as an Affiliate any school that is connected to our family of churches and is aligned with our mission and philosophy of ministry. We will continue to transfer credits from Affiliates. As always, this requires that the courses we transfer in are equivalent to the courses we offer, in terms of what the students learn. Transferable courses from Affiliates are not limited to teachers who have master's degrees. We use several criteria to evaluate course equivalency for transfer, and the teacher's educational background is just one of those factors. Other factors include: (1) total learning time (class time and homework combined—now 37.5 total hours per credit), (2) history of successful transfer students from the school, and (3) comparable syllabi. It remains our hope that we can all work together to invite new students into our schools, since we can reach much further together than any of us can alone. We would like for CCBC to serve the Affiliates as an accredited umbrella into which students can transfer credits and complete their certificate and degree programs, while also benefitting from the unique learning experiences that Affiliates offer. For some students, this will involve starting at an Affiliate and transferring to CCBC (Murrieta, Costa Mesa, or Online). Others will start at CCBC and continue at an Affiliate for one, two, or three semesters. As a kingdom-minded school, we seek a healthy, sustainable balance so that more students may benefit from the Bible college overall.

With you for the Great Commission,



Dave Shirley, Vice President



Joel Wingo, Academic Dean

