

Institutional Accreditation Standards

STANDARD 7

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The institution's academic programs are designed with appropriate curricula, policies, and practices to impart the knowledge, skills, and practical experiences necessary for lifelong learning, vocational competence, and development of a biblical worldview regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. Academic programs and related curricula designed with content and rigor characteristic of higher education, and the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong learning commensurate with the level of education offered.
2. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula designed to support development of a biblical worldview through Bible engagement and theological reflection.
3. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula designed to prepare graduates for effective engagement in ~~diverse and multicultural~~ varied contexts.
4. ~~Curriculum~~ Academic programs and related curricula that progresses from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree and level of education offered.
5. Practical experiences and application of knowledge through practicums, internships, course-embedded experiential learning, or other appropriate means, for ministry and professional programs.
6. A cycle of regular academic program review that supports program planning and improvement.
7. An academic advising system that guides the student from the point of program selection to graduation.
8. An academic calendar that meets state, provincial, and federal regulations and considers regional higher educational patterns. Clear, published policies govern any alternative patterns utilized.
9. Published policies for awarding academic credit commensurate with normative academic and/or governmental definitions, including credit awarded based on direct assessment of intended learning outcomes, if applicable.
10. A system of grading, and associated policies and procedures, that reflects integrity, ensures fairness and consistency, conforms to higher education norms, and facilitates transferability of students' academic credits.
11. Appropriate measures to ensure that the student receiving credit is the person completing the work, ~~and~~ with notification in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any additional charges associated with verification of student identity.
12. ~~Advanced standing policies for master level programs ensuring that a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.~~

- ~~13-12.~~ Policies ensuring that a minimum of 25% of semester hours required for an undergraduate degree and 33% of semester hours required for a graduate degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.
- ~~14-13.~~ A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted graduation requirements consistently applied to the certification of graduates.
- ~~15-14.~~ A system of accurate and secure student record keeping consistent with state, provincial, and/or federal regulations.

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

- ~~16-15.~~ The equivalent of a minimum of 120 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree and 60 semester hours for an associate degree.
- ~~17-16.~~ A Bible/theology core ~~of Bible/theology studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a ~~four- or five-year~~ baccalaureate degree, ~~24 semester hours for a Canadian three-year baccalaureate degree,~~ 18 semester hours for a non-traditional degree completion program or transfer students ~~needing fewer than 60 semester hours to complete a baccalaureate degree~~ with 60 or more transfer credits toward a declared bachelor degree, and 12 semester hours for an associate degree or one- or two-year certificate or diploma program.
- ~~18-17.~~ A general studies core ~~of general studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 15 semester hours for an associate degree, with one or more courses drawn from each of the following four disciplines: communication, humanities/fine arts, natural science/mathematics, and social/behavioral sciences.
- ~~19-18.~~ The equivalent of a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional and/or ministry studies for a baccalaureate degree.

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

19. Advanced standing policies for master-level programs that ensure a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.
20. The equivalent of a minimum of 30 semester hours for a master's degree, 72 semester hours for the Master of Divinity degree, and 30 semester hours beyond the master's degree for a doctoral degree.
21. Appropriate prerequisite and/or curricular requirements to ensure that students are prepared to pursue graduate studies.
22. Cohesive curriculum designed to advance students' academic knowledge, research skills, and professional expertise substantially beyond that required of undergraduate programs.
23. Curricular requirements that ensure students demonstrate significant ability to engage in biblical integration and theological reflection in relation to their academic or professional disciplines through prerequisites, curricular requirements, or program-level learning outcomes.
24. Doctoral-level programs that build upon and advance students beyond the levels of knowledge and competence required of master-level programs, ~~if applicable.~~

25. Doctoral-level programs that ensure doctoral students demonstrate comprehensive understanding and mastery of the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study, ~~if~~ applicable.

Programmatic Accreditation Standards

STANDARD 7

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The program is designed with appropriate curricula, policies, and practices to impart the knowledge, skills, and practical experiences necessary for lifelong learning, vocational competence, and development of a biblical worldview regardless of location, instructional modality, or language of instruction.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. Content and rigor characteristic of higher education and the knowledge and skills needed for lifelong learning commensurate with the level of education offered.
2. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula designed to support development of a biblical worldview through Bible engagement and theological reflection.
3. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula designed to prepare graduates for effective engagement in diverse and multicultural contexts.
4. ~~Curriculum~~ Program curricula that ~~progresses~~ progress from foundational to advanced studies appropriate to the degree and level of education offered.
5. Practical experiences and application of knowledge through practicums, internships, course-embedded experiential learning, or other appropriate means for ministry and professional programs.
6. A cycle of regular academic program review that supports program planning and improvement.
7. An academic advising system that guides the student from the point of program selection to graduation.
8. An academic calendar that meets state, provincial, and federal regulations and considers regional higher educational patterns. Clear, published policies govern any alternative patterns utilized.
9. Published policies for awarding academic credit commensurate with normative academic and/or governmental definitions, including credit awarded based on direct assessment of intended learning outcomes, if applicable.
10. A system of grading and associated policies and procedures that reflects integrity, ensures fairness and consistency, conforms to higher education norms, and facilitates transferability of students' academic credits.
11. Appropriate measures to ensure that the student receiving credit is the person completing the work, ~~and~~ with notification in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any additional charges associated with verification of student identity.
12. Policies ensuring that a minimum of 25% of semester hours required for an undergraduate degree and 33% of semester hours required for a graduate degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.

13. A clear and publicized statement of faculty-adopted graduation requirements consistently applied to the certification of graduates.
14. A system of accurate and secure student record keeping consistent with state, provincial and/or federal regulations.

Relative to this standard, an accredited undergraduate program is characterized by...

15. The equivalent of a minimum of 120 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree and 60 semester hours for an associate degree.
16. A Bible/theology core ~~of Bible/theology studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a four- or five-year baccalaureate degree, ~~24 semester hours for a Canadian three-year baccalaureate degree~~, 18 semester hours for a non-traditional degree completion program or transfer students ~~needing fewer than 60 semester hours to complete a baccalaureate degree~~ with 60 or more transfer credits toward a declared bachelor degree, and 12 semester hours for an associate degree or one- or two-year certificate or diploma program.
17. A general studies core ~~of general studies~~ equivalent to a minimum of 30 semester hours for a baccalaureate degree or 15 semester hours for an associate degree, with one or more courses drawn from each of the following four disciplines: communication, humanities/fine arts, natural science/mathematics, and social/behavioral sciences.
18. The equivalent of a minimum of 18 semester hours of professional and/or ministry studies for a baccalaureate degree.

Relative to this standard, an accredited graduate program is characterized by...

19. Advanced standing policies for master-level programs that ensure a minimum of 50% of semester hours applied to degree requirements are awarded from curricula designed for and delivered at the graduate level.
- ~~19.~~20. The equivalent of a minimum of 30 semester hours for a master's degree, 72 semester hours for the Master of Divinity degree, and 30 semester hours beyond the master's degree for a doctoral degree.
- ~~20.~~21. Appropriate prerequisite and/or curricular requirements to ensure that students are prepared to pursue graduate studies.
- ~~21.~~22. Cohesive curriculum designed to advance students' academic knowledge, research skills, and professional expertise substantially beyond that required of undergraduate programs.
- ~~22.~~23. Curricular requirements that ensure students demonstrate significant ability to engage in biblical integration and theological reflection in relation to their academic or professional disciplines through prerequisites, curricular requirements, or program-level learning outcomes.
- ~~23.~~24. Doctoral-level programs that build upon and advance students beyond the levels of knowledge and competence required of master-level programs, ~~if applicable~~.
- ~~24.~~25. Doctoral-level programs that ensure doctoral students demonstrate comprehensive understanding and mastery of the knowledge and skills appropriate to the field of study, ~~if applicable~~.

Applicable Policies: *Policy on Adult Degree Completion Programs; Policy on Bible-Theology Core; Policy on Canadian Institution Degree Programs; Policy on Certificate, Diploma, and Two-Year Degree Programs; Policy on Competency-Based Education and Direct Assessment; Policy on Distance Education; Policy on General Studies; Policy on Graduate Education; Policy on Instructional Modalities; Policy on International Education Programs; Policy on Transfer and the Award of Academic Credit; Policy on Validating Credits Earned at Unaccredited Institutions*