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**COUNCIL OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
AND
COUNCIL ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

JOINT REPORT

**Submitted by
Kelly Thompson and Jon Berquist,
Chairs of Councils**

Council of Colleges and Universities

Disciples related colleges and universities represent a broad range of opportunities for students to experience the richness of a liberal arts education steeped in the Disciples tradition of faith, reason, and wholeness. There are fifteen colleges and universities that are in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) across the United States. While they are diverse in their settings and academic offerings, all have a commitment to academic excellence, a passion for social justice, and provide an inclusive community that respects all people and cultures.

The covenantally affiliated schools are:

Barton College
Bethany College
Chapman University
Columbia College
Culver-Stockton College
Drury University
Eureka College
Hiram College
Jarvis Christian College
University of Lynchburg
Midway University
Texas Christian University
Tougaloo College
Transylvania University
William Woods University

Disciples schools focus on character, service, and leadership; providing ample opportunities for student to get involved in the community, explore faith and values, and connect to new ideas and perspectives. All institutions offer Disciples scholarships and financial aid to help make higher education affordable. Each offers a wide range of

undergraduate and graduate degree opportunities with a unique scope of majors and programs of study.

Established in connection with the church, through Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, the primary purpose of the Council of Colleges and Universities is to provide an avenue for discussion of common concerns and issues, generally institutional in character, and for the sharing of its members' expertise. The Council also exists as a forum at which the institutions may discuss strategies for denominational understanding and for the development of denominational fiscal support. The Council also provides advice and recommendations to HELM and is a means by which institutions can explore appropriate ways of working with HELM and the wider church. In addition to providing a forum, the Council is a means for fellowship of the chief executive officers of the institutions holding membership in the Council.

Highlights of work of the council include:

Over the past two years, nearly all of the Disciples colleges and universities have experienced increases in undergraduate admissions applications. Several schools have also seen significant increases in enrollment. The council continues to work with HELM to recruit Disciples students to attend Disciples colleges and universities

HELM has held info sessions at churches, regional assemblies, and racial ethnic constituency gatherings, to share information with high school students and with their parents. These info sessions have generated excitement and interest in Disciples colleges and universities and have contributed to increased number of students seeking enrollment at Disciples schools.

HELM staff and representatives from other Disciples general ministry have promoted ministry programs for young adults by working with Disciples chaplains and campus ministers. This continues to encourage Disciples college students participating in the NBA XPLOR program, DOM Global Mission Intern Program, DHM Disciples Peach Fellows, and many others

During 2018, HELM worked closely with Tougaloo College to achieve the school's goal of moving toward full covenantal affiliation with the church. The proposal was well received and approved by all relevant councils and boards of the church. It became official during the 2019 General Board meeting.

Council on Theological Education

All of us are called to serve God with our lives. Some, however, feel called to serve in specific vocational ministries. For those who are discerning this calling, considering the possibility of theological education and where that might take place is crucial.

Throughout the history the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and throughout the entirety of the Stone-Campbell movement, Disciples have been committed to the

education and training of those serving in ministry. And while the context in which ministry takes place today is very different than in previous generations, the commitment to excellence in education continues.

Today there are seven seminaries and divinity houses that are in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) across the United States. Each of them offers various degrees, certificates, and programs, as well as varying approaches in journeying with students. Some offer a traditional, residence-based experience, others have on-line classes with short on-campus intensives throughout the year, and still others offer a blending of on-site and distance learning. However, while they may differ in the format of classes as well as specific degrees and programs offered, all have a commitment to journeying with students in discerning their calling, equipping them with the knowledge and experience to serve God in the wider church and world.

Established in connection with the church, through Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, the Council on Theological Education is an organized means of communication and cooperation both among its member institutions and between its membership and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Council includes up to two voting representatives selected by each theological education institution affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) [Current Members: Brite Divinity School; Christian Theological Seminary; Lexington Theological Seminary; Phillips Theological Seminary; Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago; Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, and Disciples Seminary Foundation

The last two annual meetings of the Council of Theological education took place in Indianapolis and were hosted by Higher Education and Leadership Ministries at Disciples Center. Highlights of the meetings include:

- Presentation from and conversation with General Minister and President Teresa “Terri” Hord Owens. The conversation focused on the goals and priority of the Office of the General Minister and President, as well as the church’s commitment to strong theological education institutions.
- Presentations from and engagement with leaders of the Association of Theological Schools where data was presented on enrollment trends at schools across North America, with a focus on Disciples schools and the numbers of Disciples students enrolled in ATS schools. The members of CTE committed to engaging in continued intentional conversations around increasing enrollment of Disciples students at Disciples theological education institutions.
- The Council also met with leadership from the Pension Fund and the National Benevolent Association as part of their ongoing effort to strengthen connections with Disciples of Christ general ministry partners.