



UNIVERSITY SENATE

August 1,

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2023

As you are well aware, the landscape for higher education accreditation has changed considerably in recent years. Responding to these changes, The United Methodist Church's University Senate, which has assured quality standards for Methodist-affiliated colleges and universities since the late nineteenth century, adopted a policy clarification during its June 28, 2023 meeting. More particularly, drawing from the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016 and from the University Senate's Organization, Policies, and Guidelines 2017-2020, the University Senate has formulated a list of accreditation entities recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation which will satisfy the accreditation standards for the University Senate. A copy of the policy statement is included for your reference.

As you will see, UMC-affiliated institutions not accredited by one of these entities have three years to come into compliance with this policy. Recognizing that obstacles may arise to completing this process within three years, institutions making a good faith effort to comply may seek up to two one-year extensions. In no instance will an institution be approved for listing with the University Senate beyond this five-year period without being accredited by one of the approved accreditors.

The formulation of this policy has been driven by the University Senate's commitment to ensuring that students enrolled at our institutions have an assurance about the quality of the education they are receiving at UMC-affiliated colleges and universities. Members of the University Senate, whose membership includes college and university presidents, deans, and faculty as well as representatives from The United Methodist Church, became concerned that a small number of our affiliated institutions have acquired endorsements from accrediting agencies lacking the level of recognition and approval that is common among those entities on the enclosed list. This lack of recognition has resulted in some of our students completing

degrees not recognized for approval by some state teacher education and licensure programs, for example.

The University Senate encompasses a wealth of higher education and accreditation experience. Our members stand ready and willing to assist any institution not complying with this standard. If you have questions or concerns about your institution's ability to comply with this policy, be assured that our members are eager to assist. Our only goal is to ensure that our UMC-affiliated colleges and universities provide the educational quality that our students have every right to expect.

Sincerely,

ashville, TN 37212 • 615-340-7

senate

Rock Jones
President of the University Senate

Jay Simmons
Chair of the Commission on Institutional Review