

GRIMKÉ SEMINARY

STATEMENT ON ACCREDITATION

Accreditation in higher education aims to provide accountability (for the institution) and quality assurance (for the student). It involves internal evaluations by the school, external evaluations by accrediting agencies, and regulation, legislation, and oversight by state and federal governments. Understandably, many consider accreditation a necessary feature of a school worth their time and money. However, accreditation is actually a relatively recent development. Accrediting agencies did not exist until the late 19th century, at which time they primarily served as a way to distinguish colleges from preparatory and career schools. Even after their creation, regional accrediting agencies lacked standardized assessment criteria until congress passed the Higher Education Act in 1965. In other words, the modern understanding of an “accredited school” is only slightly more than 50 years old. (This means that renowned institutions such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton were not accredited for the first few centuries of their existence.)

Additionally, there are legitimate reasons for lacking accreditation. Some schools simply are not old enough to achieve accreditation yet. That is, agencies cannot award accreditation to any school that hasn't first graduated at least one class of students and completed a multi-year peer-reviewed evaluation. As a result no new school can be accredited from the moment of its founding. Other schools, especially religious institutions, may deliberately eschew accreditation for fear of potentially negative consequences arising from the oversight of a secular government that seems to be growing increasingly hostile to the Christian faith.

Sample schools that lack government-approved accreditation:

- Whitefield Theological Seminary | notable graduates: R.C. Sproul Sr., Kenneth Gentry
- Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary | notable faculty: Anthony Curto, Joseph Pipa
- Toronto Baptist Seminary | notable faculty: Stephen Wellum, Peter Gentry

Sample schools that only recently received government-approved accreditation:

- Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary | founded 1995, accredited 2014 | notable faculty and alumni include: Joel Beeke, David Murray, Michael Barrett
- Luther Rice College & Seminary | founded 1962, accredited 2015 | notable faculty and alumni include: John Ankerberg, Charles Stanley, Jerry Vines, Spiros Zodhiates

Summary: As with every new institution, Grimké Seminary is currently not accredited; however, we will pursue accreditation as soon we are eligible. In the meantime our staff vigorously employs alternative measures to ensure high levels of institutional accountability and educational quality.

