

## BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

### Asbury Theological Seminary

#### RECOMMENDATION

**Asbury Theological Seminary meets the Chancellor's standards, and the review team recommends provisional authorization for the proposed program. Provisional authorization will continue through December 31, 2012, contingent upon continuing accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools, and contingent upon the Chancellor's written approval of progress reports that demonstrate satisfactory progress toward compliance with all standards. The Chancellor shall withdraw provisional authorization if, in the Chancellor's judgment, the progress reports do not demonstrate satisfactory progress in any area. Progress reports are to be submitted by December 31, 2009, 2010, and 2011. A follow-up review will be performed prior to December 31, 2012 to determine continued authorization of the program.**

**Profile:** Asbury Theological Seminary is an independent, co-educational institution located in Wilmore, Kentucky. Originally established in 1923 as part of Asbury College, the standalone seminary today serves nearly 2,000 graduate students by offering certificate, master's, and doctoral programs. The mission of the seminary is to "prepare and send forth a well-trained, sanctified, Spirit-filled, evangelistic ministry."

**Accreditation/Authorization:** Asbury Theological Seminary is regionally accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and holds programmatic accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), through 2014. This is the institution's first request to the Chancellor.

**Program Information:** The seminary is requesting authorization to establish an extension center at Vineyard Leadership Institute in Westerville, Ohio, to offer its Asbury Cluster Education (ACE) Program. The thirty hour program comprises core courses offered in the seminary's Master of Arts and Master of Divinity degree programs and is structured as such due to an ATS requirement that students complete a residency requirement at a campus or in an approved distance education format. Upon completion of the program, students may complete the remaining courses needed to earn either degree at the seminary's main campus, satellite campus in Florida, or online.

**Review Results:** The review team noted several strengths in the review, including the structure and content of the program; the faculty identified to teach in the program; the seminary's commitment to its students; and the library resources and services provided at the main campus.

The team also noted some areas of non compliance with the Chancellor's standards and recommended that the institution: develop specific objectives and goals for the ACE Program; develop formal agreements with local academic libraries; and clarify the student services available at the extension center. In addition, the team urged the seminary to continue discussions with ATS to allow students in the program to complete an entire degree program at the proposed site.

The institution responded appropriately to the suggestions and recommendations of the consultants' report by demonstrating how the recommendations were accepted and integrated into the proposed programs, or, in the case of recommendations that could only be complied with over time, by presenting a clear plan for the implementation of the recommendations and a timeline for such.

**Recommendation to the Chancellor:** Asbury Theological Seminary meets the Chancellor's standards, and the review team recommends provisional authorization for the proposed program. Provisional authorization will continue through December 31, 2012, contingent upon continuing accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools, and contingent upon the Chancellor's written approval of progress reports that demonstrate satisfactory progress toward compliance with all standards. The Chancellor shall withdraw provisional authorization if, in the Chancellor's judgment, the progress reports do not demonstrate satisfactory progress in any area. Progress reports, reviewed at the institution's expense, are to be submitted by December 31, 2009, 2010, and 2011. A follow-up review will be performed, at the institution's expense, prior to December 31, 2012 to determine continued authorization of the program.