



Being Presbyterian-Related

Making the Most of Your Institution's
Affiliation with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Introduction	3
The Presbyterian Church and Higher Education	4
Defining Presbyterian "Relatedness"	6
Faith Characteristics of Presbyterian-affiliated Institutions	8
The Association of Presbyterian Colleges & Universities	10

*Grounded in faith and driven by
discovery, our member institutions
seek to nurture both the mind and
the spirit by embracing academic
freedom, nourishing a commitment
to service, and pursuing excellence
in all we do—because the world
deserves nothing less.*

Introduction

Welcome to the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities.

This guide is designed for presidents, administrators, and faculty at APCU schools who are new to the world of Presbyterian higher education. It provides a brief introduction to the historical role played by the Presbyterian Church in American higher education while also providing insight into the characteristics and shared values that have helped to shape our member colleges and universities.



Most importantly, the guide summarizes the tangible benefits available to those institutions that choose to be members of the APCU. These benefits include exclusive access to church-sponsored programs, services, and student aid dollars, as well as opportunities for participation in APCU-sponsored events, programs, and services.

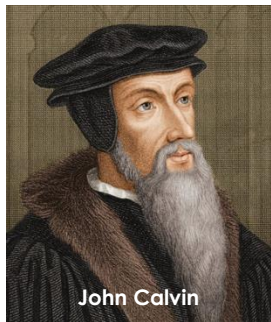
Additional information about the APCU can be found on our website:

<https://www.presbyteriancolleges.org>

The Presbyterian Church and Higher Education

The Presbyterian commitment to higher education can be traced back to the Protestant Reformation in 16th century Europe, and specifically to the French theologian John Calvin.

Calvin and other 16th century reformers argued that the Bible, as opposed to the traditions and pronouncements of the Catholic hierarchy, should always be the primary authority in the Church. This emphasis on the authority of scripture led them to argue that all Christians had



the right—and the duty—to read and study the Bible together. As a result, Calvin placed great emphasis on the importance of literacy and education as vehicles for reforming the church.

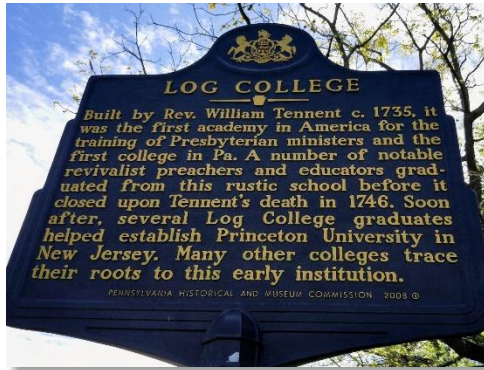
As part of the foundational work that would eventually lead to the founding of the Presbyterian Church, Calvin established the Geneva Academy in Switzerland to prepare commoners for the ministry and positions of secular leadership. The Academy would later evolve into the University of Geneva.

While living in Geneva, Calvin also developed a Presbyterian pattern of church governance that vests authority primarily in elected church members known as elders. In fact, the word “Presbyterian” is derived from the Greek word for elder. This governance model is still used by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) today.



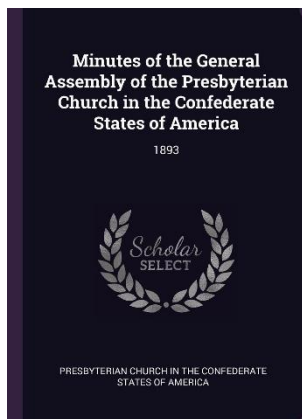
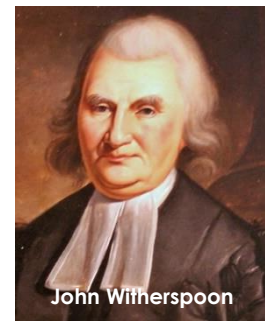
The Reverend John Knox, a Scotsman who studied with Calvin in Geneva, took Calvin’s teachings back to Scotland and, along with a group of collaborators, authored two works known collectively as the *Book of Discipline* that applied Calvin’s ecclesiastical order to the Church of Scotland. In addition to describing a system of Presbyterian polity for the church, the two works also emphasized the importance of multi-level education regardless of social class, gender, ethnicity, background or disability. Scottish and English Presbyterians would bring these ideals with them to the new world in the 17th century.

The Presbyterian emphasis on higher education first emerged in America when Presbyterian pastor William Tennent established a ministerial “log college” in Pennsylvania to educate and prepare commoners for ministry. Founded in 1727, the Log College grew out of the first “Great Awakening,” a revivalist movement in the early 18th century. Based on the success of the Log College, and a desire to more formally train ministers in support of the Great Awakening, Presbyterians founded the College of New Jersey in 1746. During its Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1896, the College of New Jersey was renamed Princeton University.



One of the most prominent presidents to serve the College of New Jersey in its early years was Presbyterian minister John Witherspoon. During his presidency, which ran from 1768 to 1794, Witherspoon also represented New Jersey as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress. In this role he became the only active clergyman or college president to sign America's Declaration of Independence from Great Britain.

In the years that followed America's independence, Presbyterian missionaries and pastors spread out across the emerging nation establishing churches, schools and colleges. By the start of the Civil War, Presbyterians had founded over a quarter of all the colleges in the United States. In most cases, governance of the colleges was shared by a local or regional council of the Church, such as a congregation, a presbytery, or a synod, and by local civic and business leaders.



Despite the rapid growth of Presbyterian-founded colleges in the first half of the 19th century, a cohesive model for Presbyterian higher education in the U.S. was never developed. This was due, in part, to the distinct regional autonomy that characterized each Presbyterian college and by a series of schisms within the church that compromised its ability to maintain a consistent position on religious education.¹

As a result, Presbyterian colleges were able to exercise a greater degree of flexibility than many other church-affiliated institutions with regard to their respective missional priorities. As the 19th

century progressed, this flexibility led many Presbyterian colleges away from their traditional emphasis on religious education and toward an emphasis on scholarly preparation for a number of emerging academic disciplines related to the sciences, healthcare, and business administration.

This trend continued into the 20th century as a number of Presbyterian-affiliated colleges began to deemphasize all formal ties to the church. The movement was fueled by



Wilson College Science Class, 1890



Picture courtesy of Rhodes College (1974)

several factors, particularly an increased desire to be more inclusive and a continued erosion of financial support from the church. By the mid-1970s, the role of the national Presbyterian Church in the direct funding and governance of its affiliated colleges had completely ceased.²

By the 1990s, much of the national church's activity related to higher education was divided between the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Office of Higher Education

and the newly incorporated Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU). While the outsourcing of responsibility for Presbyterian higher education to an independent entity may have been a cause of concern for some, church historians note that the decision was simply an extension of the decentralized, entrepreneurial relationship the national church had maintained with its affiliated colleges over the previous two centuries.³

Today, more than 50 colleges and universities continue to emphasize their historical connections to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) through membership in the APCU. All of them operate independently, providing a diverse range of settings, programs, and student experiences. Dr. John Kuykendall, president emeritus of Davidson College, notes that this diversity reflects the "genius" of the Presbyterian approach because each school is "free to seek its own way and discover distinct opportunities to associate faith and learning".



Defining Presbyterian "Relatedness"

The following statement, developed by the Presbyterian College Chaplains Association in 2013, provides the most widely accepted description of how APCU member institutions "associate faith and learning" today:

Because we are Presbyterian-related, our institutions honor the dignity and worth of every person and value learning, faith, service, and connection to each other, the Church, and the world.

Because...

APCU institutions do not value learning and all faith traditions represented on our campuses in spite of our church-relatedness. It is because we are church-related that we



value and cherish all inquiry and welcome and encourage all faith communities.

Honor...

Our efforts to live out our commitment to learning, faith, service, and connection take place in the context of our ongoing and pervasive commitment to honor the dignity and worth of all people. Our schools are resources and instruments through which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) serves the world as we serve each of our students in all their magnificent variety and particularity.

Learning, faith, service...

This order is important. We are schools, not churches, and our primary mission is education. Learning comes first. Nevertheless, as church-related institutions we are concerned to educate whole people for the whole world. We strive to graduate students who are not only academically well-prepared, but also spiritually and socially mature participants within their religious and civic communities.

Connection...

APCU institutions value our relationships with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and with other Presbyterian-related schools. We are not, and do not wish to be, identical institutions. Yet we appreciate our common connections and commitments. We benefit from our mutual relationship, we are all grateful for the historic and ongoing support of the Church, and we are committed to maintaining that relationship.

World...

Our connection to the world is both social and environmental. We seek to serve the whole world through our service to each student. We understand ourselves to be part of a global community of teaching, learning, and inquiry. We also work to exhibit, embody, and encourage environmental responsibility on our campuses and beyond. As was stated above, we strive to educate whole people for the whole world.



Faith Characteristics of a Presbyterian-Related College

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by a constitution comprised of two documents: *The Book of Order* and *The Book of Confessions*. *The Book of Order* defines the governance structure of the church along with its policies and procedures. *The Book of Confessions* defines the beliefs of the church through a series of confessional statements that continue to be augmented. For example, the Confession of Belhar, which emerged from apartheid-era South Africa, was added to the *Book of Confessions* in 2016.

In the early 20th century, the Presbyterian vision for church and ministry was crystalized in the Six Great Ends of the Church (Book of Order: F-1.0304):




- The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind
- The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God
- The maintenance of divine worship
- The preservation of the truth
- The promotion of social righteousness
- The exhibition of the kingdom of heaven to the world

This important foundational passage in the Church's constitution provides useful guidance for APCU schools as they seek to conceptualize and live out their Presbyterian-relatedness:

- The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind:
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to have clearly articulated institutional values that are demonstrably consistent with values articulated in the Bible.*
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to ensure that interested Christian students have regular opportunities for Christian worship on their campuses.*
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to provide support for students interested in formal Christian ministry*
- The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God:
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to provide holistic care for each student and all other members of the campus community regardless*



of their particular religious commitments and beliefs.

- The maintenance of divine worship:
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to include services of public worship as part of their institutional lives.*
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to provide support for all forms of religious behavior on their campuses.*
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU schools to embrace religious pluralism and provide opportunities for interested students to articulate authentic faith in multi-faith contexts.*
 - ◇ *It is appropriate for APCU institutions to treat each student, and all members of the campus community, with Humility, Hospitality, and Honesty...*
- Humility for APCU institutions means not presuming to tell any student or other member of the campus community what his/her religious faith should be.
- Hospitality for APCU institutions means working to help interested students or other members of the campus community find religious congregations and communities that are authentic and appropriate for them.
 
- Honesty for APCU institutions means embracing their relationship to the Presbyterian Church while also affirming that the treatment of all students and community members with humility and hospitality is not at odds with the institution's Presbyterian Church-relatedness but, instead, the result of its Church-relatedness.
- The preservation of the truth:
 - ◇ *APCU institutions and administrators contribute to the preservation of the truth by maintaining a commitment to Academic Freedom and always acting with institutional and individual integrity.*
- The promotion of social justice:
 - ◇ *APCU institutions contribute to the promotion of social justice by embodying, encouraging, and facilitating civic engagement by students, faculty, staff, and alumni.*

- The exhibition of the kingdom of heaven to the world:
 - ◊ *APCU institutions exhibit the kingdom of heaven to the world by constructing and maintaining a diverse campus culture characterized by integrity and commitment to service within and beyond the college community.*

Each APCU school has its own rich heritage and unique opportunity to serve the world by serving its particular students and community. Likewise, each APCU school stands to benefit from ongoing interaction with other APCU institutions and with local, regional, and national Presbyterian bodies.



APCU Overview

The Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU) was incorporated in 1995 as an independent, not-for-profit association dedicated to the support and advancement of colleges and universities that maintain a historical affiliation to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). To accomplish this, the APCU:

- *Advocates the importance of higher education within/across the agencies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), particularly the Presbyterian Mission Agency*
- *Serves as a resource on market trends, institutional advancement strategy, church doctrine, and legislative activity to member institutions*
- *Assists presidents in the development of strategies, models and tactics that advance their respective institutional missions*
- *Creates/maintains strategic partnerships that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of member institutions*
- *Administers a range of programs and services that strengthen and distinguish member institutions*

APCU member institutions stretch across the continental U.S. from St. Petersburg, Florida to Spokane, Washington and around the world from San Juan, Puerto Rico to Daejeon, South Korea. Our schools annually serve nearly 150,000 students across a broad range of undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs.

Overall, more than 30% of the students enrolled at APCU schools in the U.S. are members of minority groups and nearly 40% were Pell-eligible (as of the 2017-18 academic year). On average, more than 90% of the students attending APCU schools in the U.S. receive gift aid from

their respective institutions, which helps to keep the net-price (after financial aid is applied) at the vast majority of APCU schools well below \$20,000 annually.



The social and faith climates at our member schools cut across the spectrum from very conservative to very progressive. The most common faith tradition cited by students attending APCU schools is “none”. On average, only 4% of the students on APCU campuses identify as Presbyterian. In addition to Roman Catholic students and those representing a range of Protestant denominations, many of our campuses serve a significant number of Jewish, Muslim and Hindus students.

Six of our APCU member schools are regarded as “majority minority” institutions, meaning that racial and/or ethnic minorities comprise at least 50% of their enrollments. These schools include two HBCUs, Stillman College (Alabama) and Johnson C. Smith University (North Carolina) as well as Agnes Scott College (Georgia), Belhaven University (Mississippi), Bloomfield College (New Jersey), and William Peace University (North Carolina).

Governance and Finance

The APCU is governed by a board of directors consisting of twelve presidents from member institutions, a chaplain representing the Presbyterian College Chaplains Association (PCCA), the executive director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the executive director of the APCU. Board members serve three-year terms which can be extended for an additional three years.

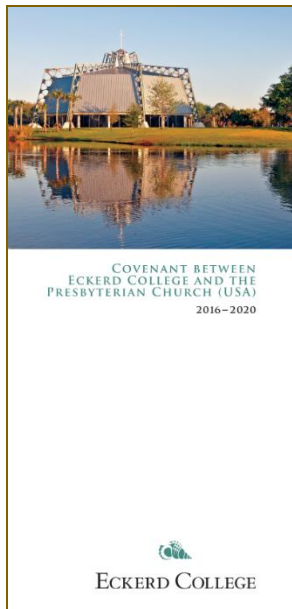


In 2016, the APCU expanded its membership to include chaplains who are members of the Presbyterian College Chaplains Association (PCCA). This was done to strengthen the relationship between the APCU and the Church and to assist APCU members

with the development of an appropriate spiritual/faith climate on their respective campuses. While the work being done by the PCCA is fairly independent from the work being done by the

APCU, the chaplains and presidents meet every three years to discuss opportunities and challenges associated with our Presbyterian-relatedness and the role of spirituality and faith across our campuses.

The presidents of APCU member schools serve as institutional representatives and have the authority to vote on behalf of their respective schools at an annual Members' Meeting. The Members' Meeting takes place in the context of a broader Presidents' Retreat which is usually held each year in March.



The work of the APCU is supported primarily from annual dues paid by member institutions. Dues are based on a formula that considers each institution's full-time enrollment, annual operating budget, and endowment. Additional funding comes from APCU strategic partners (vendors), foundations, and special solicitations in support of specific APCU projects.

Covenant with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The APCU maintains a renewable covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This covenant defines how the APCU and the PMA will support each other to further the mission of APCU-member institutions and the church's historical commitment to higher education. For a copy of the covenant, contact the APCU office.

In addition, most APCU member institutions maintain independent covenants with an agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), such as a synod or presbytery, or with the APCU. These covenants, which express mutual support, vary widely and typically have a ten-year duration. One excellent example of such a covenant can be found on the Eckerd College website (<https://www.eckerd.edu/csl/>).

APCU Member Benefits and Offerings

Gatherings

Presidents' Retreat: The APCU hosts an annual Presidents' Retreat that provides opportunities to share successes, challenges, concerns and best practices. The relaxed atmosphere also helps to strengthen our community by



encouraging our presidents to get to know each other both personally and professionally.

Member Webinars: The APCU sponsors a number of webinars each year that target various audiences at member institutions, including presidents, chief academic offices, enrollment managers, and development officers. The webinars often feature case studies from APCU strategic partners and occasionally showcase the successful work of member institutions in different operational areas.



Consulting/Mentoring Services

Peer Advising Network: This service is designed to help APCU member institutions address significant institutional challenges in a low-cost, confidential manner by drawing on the knowledge and experience of seasoned APCU colleagues. The Network is designed to serve as an alternative to expensive (and more extensive) engagements with external higher education consulting firms.

Mentoring Service: APCU Board members volunteer annually to serve as mentors to new APCU presidents. This helps our APCU community remain strong by allowing existing members to provide support and encouragement to the newest members as they make the transition to their respective leadership roles.

Employee Benefits, Insurance and Risk Management

Board of Pensions: APCU member institutions are eligible to participate in a range of benefits and insurance programs administered by the Presbyterian Board of Pensions. Until recently, these services were only available to clergy and church staff. They include retirement, medical, and death & disability benefits as exclusively on the higher education sector.

Lending & Funds Management

Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program: APCU members are now eligible to participate in programs from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program and the



Presbyterian Foundation that were previously available only to churches. The Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) offers low-interest loans to APCU members to fund capital improvement projects, real estate purchases, debt refinancing, and initiatives that enhance access and energy efficiency.



Presbyterian Foundation: The Foundation offers free online tools and services to help APCU members create and manage annual giving campaigns. In addition, the Foundation now offers a range of proven investment options—pooled and independent—to our members to help them build and manage their endowment resources.

Student Awareness Initiatives

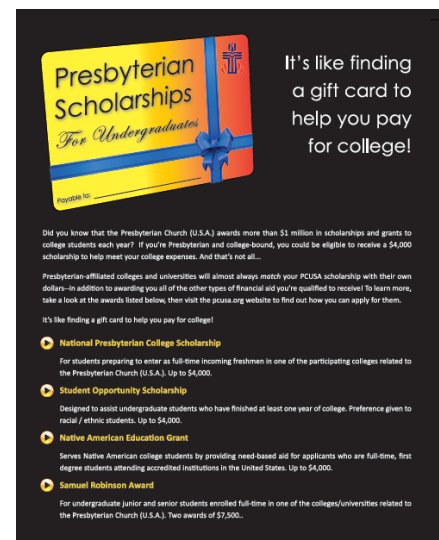
Student Search: The APCU conducts student search campaigns each year that target approximately 30,000 self-identified, college-bound Presbyterian students. The campaign focuses on creating awareness of our diverse set of our colleges and universities—geographically, academically and spiritually.

Congregational Outreach: The APCU also sends print materials to congregations with a minimum of 25 active high school youth members. The materials provide an introduction to APCU member schools and offer information about scholarships and grants available to them through the PCUSA.

Youth Events: The APCU represents all of its members at annual Presbyterian youth conferences and at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. Approximately 6,000 high school students participate in the youth conferences each summer and more than 5,000 gather at Purdue University every three years for the Youth Triennium.

Student Aid

Scholarships: Three scholarships are available to Presbyterian students at the undergraduate level. Each scholarship is currently valued at \$4,000 and is renewable. Approximately half-a-million dollars is available through these scholarships each year to qualified candidates.



PCUSA Parent Loan: Loans are available through the Church to Presbyterian parents with dependent children enrolled at an APCU school at least half time. Parents can borrow up to \$10,000 annually with a \$75,000 lifetime cap at an interest rate (currently) of 6.0%.

Strategic Partnerships

Higher Ed Service Providers: The APCU maintains partnerships with organizations that can provide significant value to our members in areas such as:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ⇒ Campus master planning | ⇒ Insurance / Risk Management |
| ⇒ Capital financing | ⇒ IT support / outsourcing |
| ⇒ Funds management | ⇒ Leadership development |
| ⇒ Food service | ⇒ Operational efficiency |
| ⇒ Fundraising | ⇒ Student recruitment |

All partners have been carefully vetted and many already have working relationships with one or more of our schools. They have each agreed to discount their products/services to APCU members and, in some cases, make exclusive services available to them.

A complete list of APCU Strategic Partners is available on the APCU website.

Off-campus & Exchange Programs

Study USA: In partnership with the British Council, the United Kingdom's official sponsor for cultural relations and educational opportunities, the APCU makes it possible for the best and brightest students from Northern Ireland to



complete a year of study at an APCU member institution. Due to the limited number of eligible students, participating APCU member schools are not guaranteed a placement.

Irish American Scholars: This complementary program to Study USA encourages students from APCU member institutions to study tuition-free at one of five institutions in Northern Ireland. Students are evaluated by the APCU Executive Director and a panel of faculty members from the five institutions.

Korean Summer Studies Program: This three-week academic program housed at Hannam University in Daejeon, South Korea aims to guide participating students through a diverse set of experiences that demonstrate the richness and dynamism of Korean culture, in both its historical and contemporary social contexts.

Tahoe Semester: Immersed in heart of the Sierra at the Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center, the Tahoe Semester uses a classical liberal arts model to engage the natural world through the integration of the humanities and the sciences. Students explore the natural world through the perspective of the biological sciences as well as from the vantage point of the philosophers, historians, poets and theologians of the humanities.

Acknowledgements

The following individuals were instrumental in the development of this publication.
The APCU is grateful for their contributions:

John Comerford

President, Otterbein University

Burton Webb

President, University of Pikeville

Kathy Francis

Senior Director of Communications,
Presbyterian Mission Agency

John Williams

Chaplain and Director of Church Relations
The William E. Elliot, Jr. Chair in Christian
Ministry, Austin College

Steven O'Day

President, Austin College

Endnotes

¹Weston, William and Soden, Dale. (2003). The American Presbyterian College. In D. Ferguson & W. Weston (Eds.), *Called to teach: the vocation of the Presbyterian educator* (pp.63). Louisville, KY: Geneva Press.

²Longfield, Bradley and Marsden, George. (1992). Presbyterian Colleges in Twentieth Century America. In M. Coalter, J. Mulder & L. Weeks (Eds.), *The Pluralistic Vision: Presbyterians and Mainline Protestant Education and Leadership* (pp. 101). Louisville, KY: John Knox Press.

³Weston, William and Soden, Dale. (2003). The American Presbyterian College. In D. Ferguson & W. Weston (Eds.), *Called to teach: the vocation of the Presbyterian educator* (pp.63). Louisville, KY: Geneva Press.

