

## **Provisional Plan**

Submitted by Arizona Christian University  
to the Higher Learning Commission  
August 14, 2024

## Introduction

In June 2024, ACU received notice from the U. S. Department of Education that the university's financial composite score had fallen below 1.0. ACU's VP of Academic Affairs Jeffrey Green and AVP of Institutional Effectiveness Jeff Phillips notified the Arizona SARA Council of the situation. On July 2, 2024, Dr. Green and Mr. Phillips met with the SARA state portal entity contact, Lanna Dueck. Ms. Dueck informed ACU that the school would be withdrawn from participation from SARA effective September 30, 2024.

Due to its withdrawal from SARA, on September 30, 2024, ACU will be suspending its distance education offerings in 23 states plus the District of Columbia. ACU has determined that 15 students will be affected by its withdrawal from SARA participation.

Arizona Christian University (ACU) submits the following information as part of a provisional plan per the guidelines of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) found in the commission's procedure document [Provisional Plans and Teach Outs](#).

## List of Affected Students and Programs

Table of Degree-Seeking Students Affected by SARA Withdrawal

Student #	Degree Program	Remaining Credits for Degree Completion	State
1	BA Biblical and Theological Studies	64	PA
2	BA Child Development	65	VA
3	BA Child Development	50	MI
4	BA Biblical and Theological Studies	18	OR
5	BS Secondary Education	98	VA
6	BA Biblical and Theological Studies	11	GA
7	MA Education	36	NJ
8	BS Secondary Education	46	NC

Table of Non-Degree-Seeking, Concurrent High School Students Affected by SARA Withdrawal

Student ID	State
9	KS
10	MI

11	MI
12	PA
13	PA
14	PA
15	VA

## **Transfer and Teach-Out**

ACU will assist each individual student affected by its program closures in states affected by its withdrawal from SARA. ACU will provide guidance and advising to each student regarding their options to transfer to other institutions or participate in a teach-out agreement. ACU will cover the costs of acquiring transcripts from the students' previous enrollments at ACU or other institutions to make their transitions smooth and affordable as possible. ACU will coordinate with transfer and teach-out receiving institutions to pick up the burden of advising once transfer or teach-out enrollment has been accomplished.

## **Potential Teach-Out Receiving Institutions**

ACU's Dr. Green has been in contact with representatives from several institutions about serving as teach-out receiving institutions. Thus far, only HCU has agreed to enter into a teach-out agreement with ACU. See the signed teach-out agreement with HCU below.

HCU offers an online BA in Biblical Studies that corresponds to ACU's BA in Biblical and Theological Studies in which Student 1 is currently enrolled.

HCU offers an online BA in Psychology that corresponds to ACU's BA in Child Development in which Students 2 and 3 are currently enrolled.

## **Current Arrangements**

ACU has entered into a teach-out agreement with HCU for Student 1. The agreement is attached to this provisional plan for HLC review and approval. Student 1 is weighing the options of enrolling at HCU under the teach-out agreement or a transfer option. HCU has agreed to accept the student via either option.

Student 2 was offered the teach-out option with HCU but has chosen to pursue a transfer option and has applied to Regent University.

ACU has made a limited authorization arrangement with Michigan to offer online education to Student 3 through the end of the fall semester. ACU has offered the student free tuition at ACU

during the fall semester while it pursues a teach-out option suitable to the student's desires. However, Student 3 has chosen to pursue a transfer option immediately with the University of the Cumberland.

ACU is working on a transfer option with Student 4 and HCU. The student has expressed a desire to complete his remaining degree requirements with HCU and then transfer those credits back to ACU for an ACU degree. HCU has agreed to accommodate the student's wishes and provide a path for his degree completion.

ACU is working on a transfer option with Student 5 and Liberty University. Under this option, the student would complete his degree requirements and graduate with a degree from Liberty University.

ACU has made limited authorization arrangements with officials in Georgia, New Jersey, and North Carolina to continue offering Students 6, 7, and 8 online education in those states through the completion of their degree programs.

## **Tuition Information**

ACU's online tuition is \$450 per credit hour. HCU's online tuition is \$445 per credit hour, but will provide Student 1 with a military discount of \$250 per credit. Liberty University has a block tuition schedule for full time students at \$390 per credit hour. ACU commits to promptly informing students of any additional costs.

## **Credits Transferred**

All credits transferred as part of a transfer option or a teach-out agreement covered by this provisional plan are undergraduate semester credits earned in the traditional classroom setting, either online or residential.

## **Communication Plan**

No communication has been made to the students in Georgia, New Jersey, and North Carolina, as they will be able to continue receiving online education from ACU per the limited authorization arrangements with those states.

ACU has sent communications to the students who will be part of a transfer arrangement or a teach-out arrangement. ACU has communicated that this provisional plan and all teach-out arrangements are not final until approved by the HLC. Once approval is acquired, ACU will communicate that information to the receiving institutions and the students.

ACU has communicated to all concurrent high school students that it will not be able to offer them online education beginning this fall 2024 semester.

This provisional plan and details of teach-out arrangements can be found on ACU's [website](#).

## **Record Retention**

ACU's registrar will continue to retain all student records according to internal policy, federal regulations, and higher education best practices. ACU will provide student transcripts and financial aid records to teach-out receiving institutions. After teach-out agreements are completed, student transcripts and financial aid records will be maintained by the accepting institution's registrar. The target date for the HCU teach-out agreement to be completed is August 2024. If a teach-out agreement is completed with Liberty University, the responsibility for record retention will be transferred to Liberty University as early as August but no later than December 2024.

## **Academic and Financial Aid Advising**

ACU's Enrollment Management Specialist (EMS) team and financial aid office will continue to offer academic and financial aid advising to students affected by the school's withdrawal from SARA. Teach-out agreements will contain stipulations that receiving institutions will pick up the burden of academic and financial aid advising once students are admitted to their institutions.

## **Accreditation and Licensing**

ACU is institutionally accredited through the Higher Learning Commission. HCU and Liberty University are institutionally accredited through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. ACU, HCU, and Liberty University are in good standing with their respective accreditors with no sanctions, pending sanctions, or provisional status.

ACU's education programs are programmatically accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and are approved by the Arizona Department of Education. Liberty University's education programs are also accredited by ACSI, as well as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, and are approved by the Virginia Department of Education. HCU's education programs are approved by the Texas Education Agency.

## **Teach-Out Agreement: Arizona Christian University to Houston Christian University**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this teach-out agreement is to ensure the equitable treatment and successful degree completion for students enrolled in online programs at Arizona Christian University (ACU) that are being discontinued in certain states. This agreement outlines the collaborative agreement between ACU and the receiving institution, Houston Christian University (HCU), to provide a seamless transition for affected students, allowing them to complete their academic programs without undue burden or interruption.

This teach-out agreement serves as a formal agreement between ACU and HCU, demonstrating both institutions' commitment to prioritizing student success and fulfilling their educational responsibilities. ACU and HCU attest that this agreement is consistent with state and federal regulations. ACU attests to being in good standing with its accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission. HCU attests to being in good standing with its accreditor, The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. HCU further attests that it is authorized to offer out-of-state distance education per its participation in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements.

### **Terms of the Agreement**

1. This teach-out agreement initially pertains to one ACU student from a state where ACU is ceasing its online program offerings. The student is from Pennsylvania and is enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies degree program. This student needs 64 credit hours to complete the program.
2. The ACU student will be guaranteed admission to HCU with no application or admission fees. The student will be accepted into HCU's online BA in Biblical Studies program.
3. HCU will charge an online tuition of \$250 per credit with a \$250 per semester technology fee. This is lower than ACU's online tuition of \$450 per credit and \$45 per course technology fee. HCU's tuition and fees will be communicated to the student enrolling at HCU per this teach-out agreement.
4. HCU will be familiar with the requirements of ACU's provisional plan, of which this agreement is a part. The provisional plan can be accessed at [www.arizonachristian.edu/teach-out](http://www.arizonachristian.edu/teach-out).
5. The credits the student earned at ACU (which are all based on semester credit hours) will be accepted by HCU toward an equal or comparable degree program at HCU. ACU will provide official transcripts to HCU.
6. HCU commits to making reasonable efforts to work with the student identified in this agreement to develop a degree completion plan within the same timeframe as was possible at ACU with awareness of the program requirements the student has yet to complete. HCU's commitment is provisional upon the student making satisfactory progress and completing all requirements of the plan. ACU will communicate clearly with HCU the program requirements yet to be completed for the student.

7. HCU will waive any minimum enrollment requirements and credit requirements that may be greater than those at ACU.
8. HCU will provide financial aid advising, academic advising, and academic support to the ACU student enrolling at HCU as part of this agreement to facilitate the student's degree completion.
9. Should the student opt to enroll at HCU as part of this teach-out agreement and complete the degree program or graduate, the student is not eligible for discharge of federal student loans.
10. ACU and HCU will endeavor to achieve enrollment of the student identified above to HCU in time for HCU's fall 2024 semester (either the first or second 8-week online session).
11. Additional students may be added to this teach-out agreement upon the mutual agreement of ACU and HCU.

### Signatures



Dr. Jeffrey Green  
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Arizona Christian University



Dr. Kristie Cerling  
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of  
the Graduate School  
Houston Christian University



Date

August 28, 2024

Date



Jeff Phillips &lt;jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu&gt;

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## distance education authorization

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**Maggie Rivers** <mrivers@gnpec.ga.gov>  
To: Jeff Phillips <jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu>

Mon, Aug 12, 2024 at 11:10 AM

Good afternoon Jeff,

Thanks for providing this additional information.

You have permission to continue providing instruction to Jeffrey Diaz as he completes the remaining 11 credit hours, which puts him on track to complete his degree by December of 2024. If he does not complete by this time, please let me know and provide me with a status update. During this time of completion for Jeffrey, your institution is not permitted to advertise to, enroll or instruct any other Georgia resident.

If you seek to advertise, enroll, or instruct students from Georgia, you must first acquire authorization. The process and requirements for which are outlined here: <https://gnpec.georgia.gov/authorization/authorization-application/how-do-i-apply-certificate-authorization>, and it will begin by submitting a proposal (step 2).

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,

Maggie



**Magda Rivers, CPM®**  
**Deputy Director | GA-SARA Coordinator**

**Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission**  
770-414-2644  
2082 E. Exchange Place  
Tucker, GA 30084

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**From:** Jeff Phillips <jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 9, 2024 1:21 PM  
**To:** Maggie Rivers <mrivers@gnpec.ga.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: distance education authorization





Jeff Phillips &lt;jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu&gt;

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## Inquiry from Arizona

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**Taylor, Eric [OSHE]** <Eric.Taylor@oshe.nj.gov>  
To: Jeffrey Green <jeffrey.green@arizonachristian.edu>  
Cc: Jeff Phillips <jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu>

Fri, Jul 26, 2024 at 12:34 PM

Hi Dr. Green,

Thank you for providing the notice below. No additional action is needed by your institution to continue and complete the teach-out for the NJ-based student.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

**Eric Taylor, Esq.**

*Director, Office of Licensure*

Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE)

1 John Fitch Plaza, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor | PO Box 542

Trenton, NJ 08625-0542

eric.taylor@oshe.nj.gov



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**From:** Jeffrey Green <jeffrey.green@arizonachristian.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 25, 2024 2:29 PM  
**To:** Taylor, Eric [OSHE] <Eric.Taylor@oshe.nj.gov>  
**Cc:** Jeff Phillips <jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Inquiry from Arizona



Jeff Phillips &lt;jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu&gt;

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**Administrative Approval - Limited License for Arizona Christian University (Erin Drill)**

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State Authorization NC &lt;stateauthorization@northcarolina.edu&gt;

Mon, Aug 12, 2024 at 2:20 PM

To: Jeff Phillips &lt;jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu&gt;

Cc: Jeffrey Green &lt;jeffrey.green@arizonachristian.edu&gt;

Good afternoon,

The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina (BOG) is authorized to grant licenses to conduct degree-granting postsecondary activity in North Carolina pursuant to [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 116-15](#). Arizona Christian University has been granted a limited license for [REDACTED], a student enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education program, to complete clinical rotations & coursework in North Carolina from August 1, 2024 - August 25, 2025 at Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This limited license may not be transferred, and the timeframe may not be extended without approval.

This email serves as administrative approval. When the University of North Carolina Board of Governors meets, our team will provide an official letter for your records. Let us know if you have any issues with your clinical partner accepting the email as confirmation.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

**KELBY POTTER****Program Specialist - Licensure & State Authorization**

Division of Academic &amp; Regulatory Affairs

The University of North Carolina System

(919) 962-4550 | kfpotter@northcarolina.edu

[www.northcarolina.edu](http://www.northcarolina.edu)

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**From:** Jeff Phillips <jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu>**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 5:30 PM**To:** State Authorization NC <stateauthorization@northcarolina.edu>**Cc:** Jeffrey Green <jeffrey.green@arizonachristian.edu>**Subject:** [External] Limited License application; ATTN: Kelby Potter

**[CAUTION: External email. Do not click links or open attachments unless verified. Send all suspicious email as an attachment to [spam@northcarolina.edu](mailto:spam@northcarolina.edu)]**

Kelby,

ACU has provided the requested information for a limited license for NC student [REDACTED] in the attached document.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you.



Jeff Phillips, M.Div.

Assistant Vice President of Institutional

Effectiveness &amp; Assistant Professor

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[jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu](mailto:jeff.phillips@arizonachristian.edu)[arizonachristian.edu](http://arizonachristian.edu)

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