

Carroll Institute gains initial ATS accreditation

June 15, 2017

IRVING—The B.H. Carroll Theological Institute earned initial accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools.

At its summer meeting in Pittsburgh, the ATS board of commissioners voted to grant the Carroll Institute initial accreditation, following the institute's completion of the self-study process and an evaluative visit.

The board of commissioners granted the Carroll Institute the maximum length allowed for initial accreditation, seven years, effective June 2.

"Faculty, administration and staff are to be commended for their investment in Carroll Institute's mission in seeking to provide quality education," the board wrote in its accreditation approval letter. "Their investment and passion are evident throughout the Carroll Institute community and clearly articulated by students and alumni."

'A historic milestone'

ATS accreditation "marks a historic milestone in the implementation of Carroll Institute's mission and model," said Gene Wilkes, president of the institute. "It affirms the vision placed by God on the hearts of the founding senior fellows and pioneering faculty and staff."

Launched in 2004, the institute's founders envisioned a hybrid delivery system that would combine video classrooms, online instruction and teaching churches where experienced pastor-teachers would mentor ministers in training.

Traditionally, the ATS commission on accrediting insisted not more than

one-third of a master of divinity degree could be completed through online instruction. However, the commission began granting exceptions to the residency requirement in 2013.

'An outstanding achievement'

Bruce Corley, one of the founding senior fellows, was Carroll's first president and set accreditation with ATS as one of the institute's goals.

"This is an outstanding achievement. To be accredited by ATS is a quality affirmation by our peer schools in theological education and a tremendous encouragement to our students, faculty and supporters that Carroll's design for ministry training is both effective and commendable," Corley said.

The Association of Theological Schools includes more than 270 schools enrolling about 74,500 students. These schools include Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox graduate schools of theology that reflect a broad spectrum of doctrinal, ecclesiastical and theological perspectives within the Christian faith. The mission of ATS is to promote the improvement and enhancement of theological schools to the benefit of communities of faith and the broader public.

Earlier this year, the Association for Biblical Higher Education notified the Carroll Institute its full accreditation had been affirmed for the next 10 years. In 2007, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board certified the institute to grant degrees.