



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** William P. Murphy *William Murphy*  
**SUBJECT:** Permission to Operate: Biola University  
**DATE:** June 30, 2022  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):** *William Murphy*

#### **SUMMARY**

#### **Issue for Decision (Consent)**

Should the Board of Regents approve the renewal of Biola University's (Biola) permission to operate in New York State to offer courses for the Master of Divinity program in Brooklyn, New York?

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute and State regulation.

#### **Proposed Handling**

This issue will come before the Full Board for action at its July 2022 meeting.

#### **Procedural History**

Pursuant to section 3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents, Biola applied for permission to continue to offer courses toward the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree in New York City.

On May 22, 2007, the Board of Regents granted permission for Biola to offer two-thirds (68 of the 102 credits) of its M.Div. program in Manhattan with the remainder of the program being completed at the main campus in California.

In June 2012, the Board of Regents voted to renew Biola's permission to offer courses from its M.Div. program for a five-year period. During this period, the program moved from Manhattan to Brooklyn, New York.

In July 2017, Biola's permission to offer courses from its M.Div. program was renewed for another five-year period. At that time, the institution determined the curriculum goals could be met with a condensed course load and adjusted the M.Div. requirements to 79 credit hours. This reduction included 53 credits at the New York location.

### **Background Information**

Established in 1908, Biola is an independent, not-for-profit institution located in La Mirada, California that offers more than 150 academic programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree levels to over 6,000 students. It is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities. Biola's mission is "biblically-centered education, scholarship, and service—equipping men and women in mind and character to impact the world for the Lord Jesus Christ."

Established in 1952, the Talbot School of Theology (Talbot) is one of Biola's six schools. Its programs are accredited by The Association of Theological Schools. Talbot describes its theological position as "Christian, protestant, and theologically conservative." Talbot's mission is "the development of disciples of Jesus Christ whose thought processes, character and lifestyles reflect those of our Lord, and who are dedicated to disciple-making throughout the world."

In partnership with Chosen People Ministries, Talbot offers a Master of Divinity in Messianic Jewish Studies. As stated in its academic catalog, Talbot's mission of the Master of Divinity degree program is "to equip servant leaders for making disciples worldwide by developing in them an accurate knowledge of the Word of God, the skills necessary to communicate the Gospel effectively, and character worthy of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ for the leading of the church". The program's course load concentrates on Biblical history, mastery of Biblical language (Greek and Hebrew), Jewish culture, and liturgy.

Currently, there are 23 students enrolled in the courses offered in New York State. Biola is currently seeking another term of renewal of its permission to operate courses from its M.Div. program at its Brooklyn, New York location. This program reports an average class size of 7 students, a 97% course completion rate, a 77% retention rate, and no formal complaints have been received in relation to the offering of these programs.

### **Related Regents Items**

May 2007: [Biola University: Permission for Talbot School of Theology to Offer Courses in New York State](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2007Meetings/May2007/0507heppca1.html)  
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2007Meetings/May2007/0507heppca1.html>)

June 2012: [Renewal of Permission to Operate: Biola University](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/June2012/612brca4.pdf>)

July 2017: [Renewal of Permission to Operate: Biola University](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/717brca10.pdf)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/717brca10.pdf>)

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents renew Biola University's permission to offer courses from its Master of Divinity program in Brooklyn, New York. This permission will be effective July 18, 2022, and end on July 31, 2027.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

Subsequent renewals of this permission to operate, if sought, will be subject to the terms of section 3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. If Biola University seeks to renew its permission to operate after its current term, it must apply to the Department no later than July 31, 2026.