

**TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT – INTERNATIONAL
 MINISTRY COLLEGE**

PREPARED BY: HEATHER DELANGE

I. SUMMARY

International Ministry College has requested authorization to operate as a seminary or bible college. Staff has conducted the required review of the institution's application materials and finds that the institution meets the requirements.

II. BACKGROUND

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, which authorizes certain types of institutions to offer degrees and/or degree credits. These are: (1) Colorado publicly supported colleges and universities; (2) properly accredited private colleges and universities; (3) postsecondary seminaries and bible colleges; and (4) private occupational schools authorized by the Division of Private Occupational School. Persons or unauthorized organizations that violate the provisions of the statute are subject to legal penalties.

All private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries or bible colleges are required to register with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and to meet criteria found in CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act, in order to be granted authorization to offer degrees within Colorado. Such authorization must be received by the institution prior to offering any program of instruction, academic credits, or degrees; opening a place of business; soliciting students or enrollees; or offering educational support services.

The Commission administers the Degree Authorization Act by determining an institution's eligibility to operate pursuant to statute and CCHE policy. Commission action is required by statute in order for institutional authorization at any level.

In the case of a seminary or bible college, an institution must qualify as a bona fide religious postsecondary educational institution which is exempt from property taxation under the laws of this state. It shall require for admission at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and shall not offer programs or courses that are secular in nature. Additionally, to qualify as a bona fide religious postsecondary educational institution, an organization must meet each of the following criteria:

1. Be a non-profit institution owned, controlled, operated, and maintained by a bona fide church or religious denomination, lawfully operating as a non-profit religious corporation pursuant to Title 7 of the Colorado Revised Statutes.
2. Limit the educational program to the principles of that church or denomination and grant degrees or diplomas only in areas of study that contain on their face a reference to the theological or religious aspect of the degree's subject area. Institutions operating under this degree authorization shall not award degrees in any area of physical science or medicine; or degrees appropriate only for academic institutions; or degrees associated with specific professional fields or endeavors not clearly and directly related to religious studies or occupations.
3. Not market, offer, or grant degrees or diplomas which are represented as being linked to a church or denomination, but which actually are degrees in secular areas of study.
4. Have obtained exemption from property taxation under state law and shall have provided the Department a copy of the certificate of this exemption.

International Ministry College is proposing to offer the following religious degrees:

- Certificate of Ministry
- Diploma of Ministry
- Associate of Arts in Ministry
- Bachelor of Arts in Ministry
- Bachelor of Theology in Ministry (degree completion program)
- Graduate Certificate of Ministry
- Masters of Arts in Ministry Leadership

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

A representative from International Ministry College communicated with the Department of Higher Education as required by the Degree Authorization Act policy and formally applied for authorization to operate as a seminary or bible college. The representative provided all documentation required by the Act. International Ministry College meets the criteria set forth in policy promulgated by Title 23, Article 2.

The Grand Junction Foursquare Church, also known as New Horizons, owns, controls, operates, and maintains International Ministry College. The church is a subordinate unit of the parent organization of International Church of the Foursquare Gospel and has been in existence since December 18, 1951.

International Ministry College meets the criteria set forth in policy promulgated by Title 23, Article 2, otherwise known as the Degree Authorization Act.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Commission approve authorization for International Ministry College as an exempt seminary or bible college.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

23-2-103.3 (4) C.R.S.