

Accreditation and Affiliation in India's Higher Education

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As India is fastly developing, its educational system continues to undergo changes. In the process, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has excluded most of the nation's theological programs from its educational framework. This is unfortunate since this act of the government marginalizes people who have the potential to become a robust resource as educators, professionals, and leaders. It is imperative that Indian Christians in the meanwhile continue to become educated not only in Christianity but also in secular studies. They must continue to join and change secular society so that Christian institutions and youth can have greater opportunities to help build the nation.

Given this context, this research will discuss important accreditation organizations within India's framework of higher education. The purpose is to gain insight on available accreditation systems both secular and Christian. What began as an in-house discussion on admissions at the graduate seminary level transformed into a labyrinth. It became clear that the educational systems in postcolonial Asia can be quite complex. In many ways, they are fusions of the systems in America, Great Britain, and Western Europe. India's Christian education is no exception.¹

To give readers a broad understanding, this article will be divided into four sections. Because we are dealing with Christian education, the first section will provide a very brief background regarding the country and its Christian history. The second part will discuss Indian government's accreditation system for tertiary institutions and schools. The third section will summarize the two of India's largest Christian accrediting and affiliating bodies: Asia Theological Association (ATA) and Ser-

1. This research underwent three stages. It began as an in-house discussion at Torch Trinity Graduate University because statistically we have given more scholarships to Indians more than any other nationality. Then as I began to research India's situation more (because it was so different from my own Western education), it turned into a paper for our admissions officers to read. Finally, at the behest of my colleague, I generalized parts of my initial paper to accommodate a larger audience.

ampore. Though there are other accrediting bodies, there is only room to discuss these two (and even then, as overviews). In addition, the American educational system will intermittently be used as a reference point of comparison.²

This article is more of a report; it barely scratches the wide and complex surface of the Indian higher educational system. Thus deeper questions cannot be answered here but simply raised in the last section under "Inquiries." Issues regarding global relationships, transferability, and awareness will be raised for further research at the end of this paper. Palliative solutions that were recommended to Torch Trinity Graduate University's admissions office are also added. The appendix contains Christian ratios in India's regions.

India's Christian Background

India is currently "slightly one-third size of the US"³ as the seventh largest country in the world.⁴ The Republic of India is divided into twenty-eight states and seven union territories. States and unions are divided into smaller districts. Within the states are people groups whose physical features range from Indo-Aryan (72%), Dravidian (25%), to Mongoloid (3%). Similarly, the country itself is extremely diverse. Official languages enumerate to twenty-two; and there are more dialects and derivatives of these languages spoken in smaller tribes. Hindi and English are the two most commonly used languages, where English often plays the role of a second language to many groups.

The country has an ancient Christian history, hidden to many Westerners. Some churches trace their origins back to the one of the twelve disciples, the Apostle Thomas.⁵ Although the claim's verac-

2. I would also like to thank to Gnanaraj, who has worked as an admissions officer at New Life College in Bangalore. Without his discussions and assistance, my first draft would have been leaner and more skeletal. He is also a doctoral candidate at Torch Trinity Graduate University.

3. "India," CIA Factbook, under Geography, accessed January 7, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>. Compare this to South Korea which has almost 49 million people who are nearly homogeneous with one language (and English is taught in schools as well) with 31.6 percent as Christians (nearly 15.5 million people). "Korea, South," CIA Factbook, under People and Society, accessed February 10, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ks.html>.

4. It is 3,287,263 square kilometers, "Country Comparison: [sic] Area," CIA Factbook, accessed January 7, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>.

5. For a fuller treatment regarding the historicity of Indian Thomastic studies, see chapter 4 in Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From*

ity is difficult to confirm, there are other accounts that demonstrate Christianity's early presence there. For example, the Christian apologist, Pantaenus, was sent to India to debate with Hindu philosophers by the bishop of Alexandria, Egypt around 180 AD. According to his account, some Indians had in their possession the Hebrew translation of the Gospel of Matthew, which they claimed to have received from the Apostle Bartholomew.⁶

Despite Christianity's germinal presence, the growth of Christianity has remained minimal over the millenniums. Today, Christians compose about 2.3 percent of the total population of 1.22 billion people, trailing far behind the Hindus (80.5%) and Muslims (13.4%).⁷ According to India's 2011 census, there are over 24 million Christians, 138 million Muslims, and 827.5 million Hindus.⁸ It is also known that many Christians come from poor backgrounds.

Christians are concentrated in pockets within the country. India's census notes that "Christianity has emerged as the major religion in three North-eastern states, namely, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Meghalaya."⁹ Thus, the largest concentration of Christians is located in the north-eastern region of India. The state of Nagaland borders Myanmar. More than 90 percent of the Naga people claim to be Christian (1.75 million Christians), among whom 60 percent classify themselves as Baptist.¹⁰ Mizoram, located between Bangladesh and Myanmar, is also a "Christian dominated state," with 90.5 percent of the Mizo Christians being

Beginnings to the Present, Oxford History of the Christian Church, paperback ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2010), 91-115.

6. Samuel Moffet, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume 1: Beginnings to 1500*, 2nd rev. and corrected ed. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2009), 36-38.

7. CIA Factbook, "India," under People and Society, accessed January 7, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>.

8. Census India, "Population by Religious Communities," Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner India, accessed February 14, 2014, http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_data_finder/C_Series/Population_by_religious_communities.htm.

9. Census India, "Religion," Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner India, accessed February 14, 2014, http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/religion.aspx. The census was published in 2011.

10. Manpreet Singh, "The Soul Hunters of Central Asia: The Most Baptist State in the World—Nagaland—Is Vying to Become a Powerhouse for Cross-Cultural Missions," *Christianity Today*, posted February 2, 2006, page 1, accessed January 27, 2013, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2006/february/38.51.html>.

Presbyterian.¹¹ North of the Bangladeshi border is Meghalaya; here reside over 1.6 million Christians comprising 70 percent of the state's population.¹²

The 2011 census lists other states with a significant number of Christians: Manipur (34%), Goa (26.7%), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (21.7%), Kerala (19%), and Arunachal Pradesh (18.7%).¹³ At the tip of the subcontinent, for example, there is Kerala, located on the southwestern coast. It has the largest number of Christians (6 million) although the state itself is 19 percent Christian. Kerala's neighboring state, Tamil Nadu, has nearly 3.8 million Christians. They comprise 6.9 percent of the state's population. Despite these big numbers, in a population with over a billion people, Christians only compose 2.3 percent of the nation's total population. Therefore, elsewhere in India, Christianity's presence is marginal.¹⁴

Higher Education under India's Central Government

This section will provide an overview of India's higher education and its accreditation system in three parts: (1) What is college?; (2) What is a university?; and (3) What is affiliation? The use of these terms is somewhat unique to Indian education system, not exactly comparable to education systems elsewhere. To understand the higher education system in India, the following need to be explained.¹⁵ India's Central Government possesses an educational system supervised by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Under this ministry, there are two departments: (1) Department of School Education and Literacy and (2) Department of Higher Education. The first department deals with primary and secondary levels of education. The second deals

11. "About Mizoram," Mizoram Tourism, accessed February 14, 2014, <http://tourismmizoram.com/about-mizoram>. The 2011 census states that there are 772,809 Christians out of 888,573 people or about 87 percent of the Mizos are Christian. Census India, "Population by Religious Communities," Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner India, accessed February 14, 2014, http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_data_finder/C_Series/Population_by_religious_communities.htm.

12. The 2011 census states that there are 1,628,986 Christians out of 2,318,822 people or about 87 percent of the Mizos are Christian. Census India, "Population by Religious Communities," accessed February 14, 2014.

13. Census India, "Religion," accessed February 14, 2014.

14. See appendix.

15. India is large therefore it is natural that there are many layers of government and agencies. As comparison, the American system can also be seen as multi-layered with regional accreditation systems.

with the tertiary level. If a university wishes to be recognized by the Indian government, it needs to be registered with the University Grants Commission (UGC). If it is a technical institution, it must be registered under the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

Accreditation falls under a different jurisdiction from that of obtaining the central government's recognition. The UGC and AICTE each have an autonomous accrediting body.¹⁶ The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is under the UGC, while the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) works with AICTE for technological education.¹⁷ Originally, schools that taught general education were able to ask for assessment and accreditation, but now evaluations are mandatory.¹⁸ Technical schools also must be accredited by law.¹⁹

In addition, the UGC superintends Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The Distance Education Bureau (DEB) is under the UGC and is currently overseeing distance education after the dissolution of the Distance Education Council (DEC) in 2012.²⁰ Prior to its disbandment, the accrediting body was called Open and Distance Education and Assessment and Accreditation Board.²¹ Different types of ODL institutions include State Open Universities (SOUs), Correspondence Course Institutes (CCIs), and other institutions. They offer education programs that are not restricted to a geographic location.²² Indira Gandhi National Open University is the largest of such institutions, and it also manages open universities at the national level.²³ There are thirteen SOUs that provide solely distance education.²⁴

16. Ashoka Chandra, "Towards an Indian Accreditation System" in *Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, ed. Alma Craft (London: Falmer Press, 1992), 96.

17. Pratibha Khanna, "Transnational Education: Issues and Implications," in *Education in India*, ed. Shubha Tiwari (New Delhi: Atlantic, 2007), 82.

18. N. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India: Massification and Change," in *Asian Universities: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Challenges*, ed. Philip G. Altbach & Toru Umakoshi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 98.

19. Chandra, "Towards an Indian Accreditation System," 94-95.

20. Distance Education Bureau, "Homepage," University Grants Commission, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/index.html>.

21. Colin Latchem and Insung Jung, *Distance and Blended Learning in Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 158.

22. Department of Higher Education, "Overview," Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, under Higher Education, and Distance Learning, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://mhrd.gov.in/overviewdl>

23. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 96. For more information see their website: www.ignou.ac.in.

24. Open universities (OUs) listed are Dr BR Ambedkar OU, Vardhman

What Is College?

The word, college, can have different meanings in the English language in America and in Great Britain. In America, the terms “university” and “college” are used interchangeably, and both words refer to an undergraduate, post-high school education. In Britain, “college” has a range of meanings. They are deciphered by their contexts. For example, the term “college” can refer to an undergraduate education, or a house or a commune at a university—such as, the University of Oxford is composed of thirty-eight colleges and six permanent private halls.²⁵ College can also refer to a level of education for students who are generally 16 to 18 years old. In Britain, the level is called “Sixth Form College”, and the system prepares students for their undergraduate major. Generally, after two years of Sixth Form College, students take a standardized test on a subject called “A-Level,” which is treated like the way Americans perceive the SAT (Standardized Aptitude Test).

India adopted and contextualized the British education system,²⁶ thus college also has a range of meanings. There is “pre-university college” (PUC), which refers to the higher secondary education stage (namely the American equivalent of the eleventh and twelfth grades or high school juniors and seniors). Students sometimes shorten this by calling it, “college.” There is the more familiar usage (at least to Americans), where the UGC uses the word as a place where an undergraduate degrees can be earned, or more specifically, a type of Higher Education Institution (HEI) like a university.²⁷ However, unlike the American understanding, college is not synonymous with university. It is a smaller institution connected to a university.

In order to attend a tertiary-level institution, students must complete the pre-university college stage which is a part of secondary education. The Department of School Education and Literacy supervises

Mahaveer OU, Nalanda OU, Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra OU, Madhya Pradesh BHOJ OU, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar OU, Karnataka State OU, Netaji Subhas OU, UP Rajarshi Tandon OU, Tamil Nadu OU, Uttaranchal OU, Krishna Kanta Handique State OU. Department of Higher Education, “State Open Universities,” Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, under Higher Education, under Distance Learning, accessed January 14, 2014, http://mhrd.gov.in/state_open_hindi.

25. “The Collegiate System Is at the Heart of Oxford University’s Success,” under Colleges, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.ox.ac.uk/colleges/index.html>.

26. India became independent from British rule on August 15, 1947.

27. “Eligibility Criteria for Institutions (w.e.f. 1st November 2013,” The Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, accessed January 10, 2014, http://www.naac.gov.in/Eligibility_HEI.html.

primary and secondary education. Compulsory and free elementary education begins at the age of six and ends at the age of fourteen.²⁸ Secondary education is highly encouraged but costs money. According to India's website, "The policy at present is to make secondary education of good quality available, accessible and affordable to all young persons in the age group of 14-18."²⁹ State-run schools are generally affordable to most Indians. Private education costs more. In some ways, therefore, secondary education is a luxury and a privilege to those who can afford it (although most are able to afford it). Secondary education is divided into two stages. The first stage belongs to the ninth and tenth grades. After the tenth grade, students take the secondary school certificate examination. If they pass, they can continue into the higher secondary levels of the eleventh and twelfth grades.

Furthermore, higher secondary education is divided into two tracks. Students in the first track follow "several vocational, technical, and para-professional courses leading to a variety of certificates and diplomas."³⁰ This first track lasts from one to three years, depending on the program. Only the three-year polytechnic education is considered as "higher education" if it leads to a diploma.³¹ However, the diploma in electronics, for example, is not equal to a bachelor's degree.³²

The "plus two" (+2) track is required for students to complete if they want to go to university. According to N. Jayaram, the second track is offered in "three different types of educational settings: colleges offering first-degree courses, junior colleges offering this course exclusively, and some schools."³³ The state organizes this level of education.³⁴

There are several different ways to express the last level: the second stage, higher or senior secondary education, pre-university college (PUC), and "plus two." Thus, the education system consists of a framework where "[p]rimary and secondary education is ten years in dura-

28. Most children start at the age of 5 years.

29. Department of School Education & Literacy, "Overview," Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, under Secondary Education, accessed January 10, 2014, <http://mhrd.gov.in/secondaryedu>.

30. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 88. Tracks include math, science, economic/commerce, and vocational.

31. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 88.

32. This situation may become complicated if a student enters theological college after completing the tenth grade. Normally, the student will take another two years to earn a diploma in theology and then enter the BTh program possibly as a second year student. The number of years of the student to earn a BTh thus depends on the school (2 or 3 years).

33. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 88.

34. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 88.

tion, followed by two years of senior secondary education (equivalent to completion of senior high school graduation in the United States).³⁵

Students who successively complete the plus-two stage can move on to earn a bachelor's degree after attending their undergraduate school. A general bachelor's degree in India usually lasts for three years. This contrasts with the American model, where it usually takes four years to finish. The other type of bachelor's degree is professional. The completion time ranges according to each program. For example, medicine and science take 5.5 years while nursing takes three years to complete.³⁶ A master's degree would take two to three years to complete depending on the program.³⁷ For example, an MA takes usually two years while an MBA takes three years to complete.

Having said the above, the word, college, has sundry meanings from pre-university college to a college affiliated to a university—the latter will be explained under the affiliation section. At Torch Trinity Graduate University (TTGU), we require our applications to list their undergraduate and graduate schools only and forego listing their secondary education even if it contained pre-university courses. Because Koreans, Japanese, and Americans are more familiar with the expression, “post-high school,” we added the qualification of “after the 12th grade” on our application to prevent confusions.³⁸

What Is a University?

The Central Government and the states are responsible for higher education. The Central Government uses the University Grants Commission (UGC) to develop and maintain the general educational system in India. The UGC approves institutions that possess higher education as a university or college. This is separate from accreditation. The UGC established the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) to act autonomously to accredit institutions and assess their quality in traditional settings. In terms of accreditation, if the school is not listed under the UGC, then they cannot be accredited by the NAAC. In addition, not every school registered with the UGC is accredited by the NAAC; they must meet NAAC standards for higher education. Non-

35. Ujjaini Sahasrabudhe and Swetha Muthanna, “Making Sense of Accreditation for Higher Education Institutions in India,” International Education Research Foundation, accessed January 15, 2014, http://ierf.org/pdf/Nafsa09_handout.pdf.

36. Jayaram, “Higher Education in India,” 88.

37. Jayaram, “Higher Education in India,” 88.

38. We may also need to footnote it to also say, “that is, after high school or university-level institutions or higher educational institutions, etc.”

accredited institutions as a consequence cannot receive government grants.³⁹

Currently, the UGC vaunts a 27 percent increase in the number of institutions during the past sixty years.

The sector boasts of 42 Central universities, 243 State universities, 53 State Private universities, 130 Deemed universities, 33 Institutions of National Importance (established under Acts of Parliament) and five Institutions (established under various State legislations). The number of colleges has also registered manifold increase with just 578 in 1950 growing to be more than 30,000 in 2011.⁴⁰

Already from the above there are several terms that will appear unfamiliar to many North American and Korean educators. The following comes from the government's website and is copied verbatim.

Central University:	A university established or incorporated by a Central Act.
State University:	A university established or incorporated by a Provincial Act or by a State Act.
Private University:	A university established through a State/Central Act by a sponsoring body viz. A Society registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, or any other corresponding law for the time being in force in a State or a Public Trust or Company registered under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956.
Deemed-to-be University:	An Institution Deemed to be University, commonly known as Deemed University, refers to a high-performing institution, which has so declared by Central Government under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956.
Institution of National Importance:	An Institution established by Act of Parliament and declared as Institution of National Importance.

39. Jayaram, "Higher Education in India," 89.

40. Department of School Education & Literacy, "Overview," Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, under Higher Education, accessed January 10, 2014, http://mhrd.gov.in/overview_uni_higher_english.

Institution under State Legislature Act:	An Institution established or incorporated by State Legislature State Legislature Act: Act.
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The NAAC works within the above framework. They assess and accredit the above institutions according to their “quality status.”⁴¹ After assessment, they assign letter grades to each school: A, B, C, and D. A, B, and C lead to accreditation with A being “very good”. If a school earns a D, it is considered “unsatisfactory” and a school with this letter grade is not accredited.⁴² In addition, “The NAAC accreditation does not cover distance education units of HEIs.”⁴³ In other words, it appears that the NAAC’s grade refers to the education given on campus. One can also check an accreditation status of a school online via the NAAC’s website: www.naac.gov.in.⁴⁴

In reality, most Christian schools are not registered. The UGC generally avoids theological colleges and seminaries along with other religions such as Hindu and Muslim institutions. Gnanaraj points out that the “focus of religious education in Indian Universities is secular in nature and aims to promote moral and ethical teachings”⁴⁵ over evangelical beliefs which are not considered by the government. This clearly puts Bible and theological colleges and seminaries at a disadvantage.

Having said that, there are a few exceptions that the UGC have recently listed, and even fewer have accreditation. For example, Martin Luther’s Christian University (MLCU) is listed with the UGC since 2005 but is not accredited by the NAAC.⁴⁶ The relationship of how these Christian schools were integrated and accredited needs to be examined further as another research article. Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agri-

41. “Rationale,” The Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, January 11, 2014, http://www.naac.gov.in/assessment_accreditation.html.

42. “Grading,” The Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, accessed January 11, 2014, <http://www.naac.gov.in/grading.html>.

43. “Eligibility Criteria for Institutions (w.e.f. 1st November 2013),” The Director, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, accessed January 11, 2014, http://www.naac.gov.in/Eligibility_HEI.html.

44. A direct link can be found here (accessed January 15, 2014): http://web5.kar.nic.in/naacloi_new/NAAC_allcycles_acclist.aspx.

45. Gnanaraj, “Current Trends in Evangelical Theological Education in India,” *Journal of NATA* 2, no. 1 (May 2012): 60.

46. “MLCU Act,” Martin Luther Christian University, February 10, 2014, http://www.mlcniv.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=74&Itemid=134. See also Gnanaraj, “Current Trends,” 59-60.

culture, Technology & Sciences (SHIATS), for example, has a Protestant background and is a school that is accredited with the NAAC.⁴⁷ As a Deemed University, it “is offering ‘Theology’ as an academic discipline . . . The University as a minority institution, may conduct its courses in ‘Theology’ in whatever mode it wants to, as it has the right to do so.”⁴⁸ However, its program is not as highly sought after by the larger Christian community. We have yet to receive a student applying to our school from SHIATS. Seminaries affiliated to Serampore or accredited by ATA currently are valued more among Indian churches.

There is general criticism, according to some evangelicals, that many divinity faculties or Christian studies programs in well-established universities teach Christian subjects in a secular perspective or it is heavily Roman Catholic in orientation. In the case of Madras University, the leadership of Christian Studies may appear too secular or postmodern for evangelical pastors to recommend to their congregation members for education.⁴⁹

What Is Affiliation?

Affiliated is another tricky word. In its simplest sense, when one school is affiliated with another school, it usually means that a larger school shares resources with a smaller school in an official capacity such as its library. In some cases, academic collaboration in projects may occur. Legally, the schools operate independently. Thus, to put the word “affiliated to” on a diploma may appear odd for someone who is unfamiliar with the Indian system; it invites questions on the validity of the degree: Why bother to state an affiliation on a diploma if both schools are accredited unless one of them is not properly accredited?

Jayaram explains that the affiliation system began in the mid-nineteenth century. Using the University of London as a model, the

47. For example, Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences (SHIATS) is listed under the UGC as a Deemed-to-be-University. It was accredited by the NAAC in 2005 and again in 2013. As a Deemed-to-be-University, it is not under the AICTE. It has a faculty of theology. “About Us,” Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, accessed February 10, 2014, <http://shiats.edu.in/aboutus.asp>. See Gnanaraj, “Current Trends,” 59-60.

48. “Gospel & Plough School of Theology,” Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, accessed February 14, 2014, http://shiatsmail.edu.in/webwapp/faculty/Colleges/coll_Theology.asp

49. G. Patrick (or Patrick Gnanapragasam) is the only faculty member listed in the Christian Studies Department. He co-edited the following book with Elisabeth Schussler-Fiorenza: *Negotiating Border: Theological Explorations in the Global Era* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2008).

first three universities—Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras—became “pioneer universities,” which “consisted largely of affiliating and examining bodies with very little intellectual life of their own.”⁵⁰ The university system in India, for the most part, follows this arrangement:

[T]he largest number of Indian universities belongs to the affiliating type. They have university departments that provide instruction at the post graduate level and undertake research. A large number of colleges offering first-degree-level education are affiliate to these universities. A major task of such universities is to oversee the academic standards of affiliated colleges.⁵¹

Institutions and colleges are affiliated to universities. India considers them as smaller educational establishments to be linked to something bigger. They have a specific role in relation to the university.

In India, colleges with affiliations may be accredited. For example, Kristu Jayanti College is affiliated to Bangalore University. Both are accredited by the NAAC. Having said that, there is danger among private universities which the UGC warns the public about. Private universities, unlike the other types of universities, cannot create affiliated colleges:⁵²

[S]ome of the State Private Universities have affiliated colleges and started off-campus centre(s) in violation of the UGC (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulation, 2003 and against the judgment of Honorable Supreme Court in case of Prof. Yash Pal & Others vs. State of Chhattisgarh & Others. Some of these Universities are running these Centres on franchising basis also which is not allowed.⁵³

Here it is important to note that the Indian government does not see the affiliation system as franchising although when a private university does franchise, it is illegal. How the UGC define franchise, and differentiate

50. Jayaram, “Higher Education in India,” 86.

51. Jayaram, “Higher Education in India,” 88.

52. For example, the University of Calcutta is an Autonomous University (not Private University). It has affiliated colleges in West Bengal such as St. Xavier College. See “Status List of Approved 374 Autonomous Colleges under the UGC Scheme of ‘Autonomous College’ as on 05.04.2011,” 27, accessed January 13, 2014, http://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/colleges/374autocolleges_april11.pdf.

53. University Grants Commission, “Private Universities,” University Grants Commission, accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.ugc.ac.in/privatuniversity.aspx>.

it from affiliation, is not explained online. Rather, the website continues to state that

Private Universities cannot affiliate an institution/college. They cannot establish off campus centre(s) beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the concerned State. However, they can establish off-campus centre(s) within the concerned State after their existence of five years and with the prior approval of the University Grants Commission. So far, UGC has not approved any off campus centre(s) of any Private University.⁵⁴

In other words, newer institutions cannot attach themselves to a UGC-approved private university without UGC permission. The UGC can approve the school as long as the newer institution meets its criteria. In light of all these qualifications, off-campus centers have yet to be approved.

Christian Higher Education

Christian schools are even more difficult to assess, especially evangelical institutions, because they lack a common accreditation system outside the UGC. There are two accrediting organizations that TTGU is familiar with but neither is recognized by any government: Asia Theological Association (ATA) and the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC). C. Barnabas sees these accrediting bodies in eras:

In the first era, the Senate of Serampore colleges prepared pastors, administrators and theological educators for the mainstream churches. In the second era, Asia Theological Association (ATA) started accrediting the evangelical institutions, which trained pastors, administrators, missionaries and evangelists for the evangelical churches and missions. These two accrediting agencies continue to train people for churches and missions even now.⁵⁵

In other words, the Senate of Serampore was established to set a standard in theological education in 1918. Fifty years later, evangelicals felt the need to participate in their own association thus they joined ATA

54. University Grants Commission, "Private Universities," University Grants Commission, accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.ugc.ac.in/privatuniversity.aspx>.

55. A third body, Indian Institute of Missiology (IIM), may be added if we take C. Barnabas' understanding of three eras of Christian education. To note, he is also the Executive Director of IIM. I did not add this group here because we have yet to see applicants with IIM backgrounds. See C. Barnabas, "The Status of Missiological Education in the Missionary Training Centres of Indian Insti-

(some schools such as Union Bible Seminary in Pune, Maharashtra are connected to both). Though there are many other accrediting bodies, these are the most well-known.⁵⁶

The two groups are often pitted against each other: ATA as evangelical is accountable to the World Evangelical Fellowship and the BTESSC as ecumenical is accountable to the World Council of Churches. Siga Arles calls this debate “not essentially innate to the Indian Christian setting . . . [but] rather an alien dichotomy that is superimposed on the Christian community in India.”⁵⁷ Despite the opinions of academics, this debate for our current purposes is not urgent for general admissions. Instead, the two bodies will be explained at some length in order to discuss issues that complicate the admissions process and some palliative measures will be offered to help alleviate such difficulties.

Asia Theological Association

ATA is the largest of these accrediting bodies as an association of theological institutions throughout Asia (and some beyond). Their purpose is to expand the evangelical faith through educational institutions by “serving its members in the development of evangelical biblical theology by strengthening interaction, enhancing scholarship, promoting academic excellence,”⁵⁸ and the list continues. In reality, when it was created in 1970, there was a need for a forum to discuss evangelical theological education in Asia especially in countries where Christian education was small, marginalized, or simply outlawed. Today, the organization boasts of having 212 members from twenty-seven countries.⁵⁹

Torch Trinity Graduate University is a member school in ATA. Although we are fully accredited by the Korean government’s Ministry of Education, we also participate in ATA because it connects us to the greater evangelical world. TTGU’s current president, David Sang-

tute of Missiology,” in *Missiological Education: Theological Integration and Contextual Implications*, eds. Ebenezer D. Dasan and Frampton F. Fox, Papers from the 13th CMS Consultation (Delhi: ISPCK, 2009), 144.

56. For a longer list of current accrediting bodies, see Gnanaraj, “Current Trends,” 58.

57. Siga Arles, *Missiological Education: An Indian Exploration*, Studies in the Gospel Interface with Indian Contexts (Bangalore: Centre for Contemporary Christianity, 2006), 407ff.

58. “About: What is ATA,” Asia Theological Association, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.ataasia.com/about>.

59. “ATA Members,” Asia Theological Association, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.ataasia.com/ata-members>. Having said that, there is a discrepancy regarding the number of ATA accredited Indian schools online between the main body and ATA India’s website.

Bok Kim, served actively at one point as ATA's board member and chairman.⁶⁰ TTGU faculty has consistently and strongly supported the school's participation since its establishment because of ATA's vast net which reaches the other side of Asia. Through ATA, TTGU is able to dialog with other evangelicals outside Korea. We, TTGU, can work with students coming from ATA-accredited schools and offer them a strong and competitive learning environment through the standards set by the Korean government. By law, each faculty member must possess a government-accredited doctorate to teach in Korean higher education institutions.⁶¹ Therefore, our school, like many other fully accredited universities on the Korean peninsula, has a 100 percent doctoral faculty. Every member of our faculty has earned a doctorate from a government recognized university from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, or Korea. These reasons and more make TTGU attractive to international students in Asia.

Unfortunately, there are more non-government accredited schools in ATA than accredited. This cannot be helped. Asia still grapples with issues of diversity and Christians are very much oppressed in many countries, even in countries where the freedom of religion exists such as India. Here, ATA agents are able to visit schools in these regions and assess their programs for ATA accreditation.

With ATA India, there are two issues that are noteworthy for those unfamiliar with India's educational context: affiliation and the two-year MDiv. There are two types of ATA membership: accredited and associate. Accredited members have programs which have been approved by the ATA. Associate members are not accredited but are serving as theological schools in their localities.⁶² They are usually on their way to becoming accredited members. In ATA India, which is currently working away from ATA's basic membership arrangement, there is one more type: affiliated. According to ATA India's website, these are "study centres" and are not accredited by the ATA but are connected to accredited schools.⁶³

60. "President's Brief Bio," Torch Trinity Graduate University, under About, under President, under Biography, accessed February 14, 2014, <http://www.ttgu.ac.kr/>.

61. English instructors, those who teach English to students, are not required by law to hold PhDs as exceptions.

62. "ATA Members," Asia Theological Association, accessed February 7, 2014, <http://www.ataasia.com/ata-members>.

63. "Members," Asia Theological Association (India), accessed February 7, 2014, <http://www.ataindia.org/members.php?lid=5>.

The problem here is the word, "study centre". ATA India should clarify what this means. Diplomas from schools affiliated with

Our school accepts students who come from ATA-accredited schools; students who come from ATA affiliated institutions are not processed at TTGU unless they have other qualifications that meet school standards.⁶⁴ However, even then, not all ATA India-accredited programs are accepted. In this case, MDivs that are two years in length are not seen as equivalent to the three-year MDiv degrees;⁶⁵ BTh graduates who move on to earn two-year MDivs (or BDs in Serampore's case) are not qualified to apply to our ThM programs unless other qualifications are met.⁶⁶

One of ATA India's best qualities is its global network and its ability to communicate with other ATA seminaries, universities, and colleges outside the country. Domestically, in contrast, it has yet to match the historical and cultural weight of Serampore supported by mainline churches throughout India. The relationship between these two bodies continues to undergo discussion.

The Senate of Serampore College

What's in a Name?

There are three organizations to consider containing the name of Serampore: "Serampore College, Hooghly," the "Senate of Serampore College (University)" (SSC), and the "Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College" (BTESSC). In short, Serampore College, or more simply, Serampore, can refer to any of these three bodies or all of them together depending on the context.

For the record, "Serampore College, Hooghly" is classified as a Non-Government College under the UGC, accredited by the NAAC, and affiliated with the University of Calcutta.⁶⁷ This differs from the "Senate of Serampore College (University)" (SSC). The SSC states that

ATA India schools do not present themselves as study centres but a theological school. See following footnote.

64. For example, a 2011 MDiv diploma from Asia Evangelical College & Seminary in Kathmandu, Nepal, states that it is "Affiliated with Asia Evangelical College & Seminary, Bangalore, India (ATA)". This applicant could not be processed for the ThM program.

65. In India, BD earners are qualified to apply to the MTh program.

66. For example, Restoration Theological College's MDiv program is accredited by ATA India. It offers an MDiv in two years if a student has a BTh. See "Master of Divinity (M.Div [sic])," Restoration Theological College, accessed April 4, 2014, <http://www.rtcindia.org/degree-programs/master-of-divinity.html>.

67. "Colleges under Section 2 (f)& [sic, space] 12(B) of the UGC Act of 1956," University Grants Commission, accessed January 14, 2014, http://www.ugc.ac.in/recog_College.aspx.

it has the status as a university (although it is not registered under the UGC—to be discussed later).⁶⁸ The SSC sets the curriculum in affiliated schools. The accrediting organization for theological programs is the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC). Describing the three institutions seems easy enough but in practice they are intertwined. This complicates matters. A typical bachelor of divinity diploma has been transcribed below

Serampore College || Founded by Carey, Marchman and Ward, 1818 || Incorporated by Royal Charter, 1827 and || Bengal Act IV of 1918, as modified || upto [sic] 1997 by Govt. of || West Bengal || [school emblem] || This is to Certify || that [to write in graduate's name] who has completed all the requirements || laid down by the Senate of Serampore College || at [for affiliated seminary name] as an Internal student and passed the prescribed || Examinations in the year [for year] in [for grade] Class is awarded the Degree of || Bachelor of Divinity || [for signature] [for signature] [for signature] || Registrar of the Senate President of the Senate Master of the College || Serampore || Date

The top of the certificate states “Serampore College” but the middle section states that the Senate of Serampore College is conferring the degree despite the fact that the student was attending another seminary such as Eastern Theological College in Jorhat, Assam or John Roberts Theological Seminary in Shillong, Meghalaya. This invites further questions such as who is conferring the degree; which seminary did the student attend; did the graduate attend the affiliated seminary or the Senate of Serampore or Serampore College? Or more particularly, on our applications, when students write in institutions from where they have graduated, which institution do they write? In practice, students write one or the other: the name of the school they physically attended while others write Serampore. How our admissions office understand this complexity is that students have earned one degree from two conferring institutions: the SSC and the school they physically attended, which is one of the fifty or so schools affiliated to the SSC. However, this too is unclear as some may be tempted to argue that they have two

68. “The Senate of Serampore College was constituted to have uniform theological training for Christian Ministry for the Protestant and Orthodox Churches of the country and neighboring countries through the many Seminaries affiliated to the College (University) by the Bengal Act No. IV of 1918.” Serampore College, “History: A Brief Historical & Geographical Sketch,” Serampore College, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.seramporecollege.org/theology/116-2/>.

degrees—albeit the same kind (e.g. BD)—given by two different schools earned at the same time.

Although knowing the history of the SSC may not help reviewers categorize it, we can understand the dilemma of its current state since it is not registered under the UGC. The creation of Serampore College was one of the great achievements founded by the father of modern Protestant missions, William Carey, and his partners: Joshua Marshman and William Ward. Overtime, the college expanded to possess several disciplines which were eventually split into two camps: (1) Christian theology and (2) liberal arts, science, and commerce. Each camp took a life of its own. Serampore College's second side, currently called the Arts-Science-Commerce (ASC) Departments, became affiliated to the University of Calcutta. It is this part of Serampore that is accredited by the NAAC up to the bachelor's degree.

The Theology Department, in contrast, is not accredited by the NAAC or listed under the UGC. Instead, the Senate of Serampore College (University) oversees its curriculum. Under the current framework created by the UGC concerning the types of universities, the SSC does not fit in. Indeed, the UGC felt that "it was not necessary to deem it to be a University," because it "was functioning as a University in the Faculty of Divinity under a Bengal legislation (Act No. IV of 1918)."⁶⁹ With this trellis, the divinity school cannot be recognized by the NAAC because it is not under the UGC yet it is at the same time recognized by it without registration.

Some people may consider this outside status a blessing. Jesudason Baskar Jeyaraj believes that Serampore's autonomy should be seen as a form of "freedom" to affiliate seminaries which confer BTh, BD, MTh, and PhD; they move away from UGC restrictions and funding.⁷⁰ Thus, according to Jeyaraj, it has free reign and is neither under the authority of the UGC nor does it need to meet its standards. Though the SSC has the authority to award degrees and is a legal university, it does not change the fact that they are not accredited by the NAAC. Furthermore, because it is not listed as a university under the UGC, potential applicants may believe that it is a "Fake University" even though it is not

69. "University Grants Commission and Serampore College (University)," Senate of Serampore College, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://senateofseramporecollege.edu.in/ugc-serampore-college.html>.

70. Jesudason Baskar Jeyaraj, "National Building with the People of Other Faiths: A Need for New Models of Missiological Education," in *Missiological Education: Theological Integration and Contextual Implications*, eds. Ebenezer D. Dasan and Frampton F. Fox, Papers from the 13th CMS Consultation (Delhi: ISPCK, 2009), 188.

listed as such.⁷¹ It takes extra work on the part of the SSC to vindicate its status which they do on their website. However, explanations do not end there.

The SSC functions in a way that will seem unfamiliar. Depending on which side of the debate a person takes, the system is usually either misunderstood or controversial (or worse). Some people argue that it is simply modeling a university system of “affiliating colleges, supplying the curriculum, conducting the exams and conferring the degrees”⁷² across India and all the way to Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. These affiliated seminaries at first appear like modern-day satellite campuses. However, not only do they predate them, they do not share the same name. Affiliated institutions are more like independent institutions linked by a given-and-take shared curriculum and examination set by the SSC.

Thus its history and how it functions need to be examined more carefully. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there was a need to create a standard system of theological education throughout India. A council was created in 1918 whose body consisted of representatives from different traditions.⁷³ A “common accrediting body”⁷⁴ was formed:

The Senate of Serampore College was constituted to have uniform theological training for Christian Ministry for the Protestant and Orthodox Churches of the country and neighboring countries through the many Seminaries affiliated to the College (University) by the Bengal Act No. IV of 1918. Since then, the College began to affiliate other colleges and seminaries to offer theological degrees and became a University for theological education in South-East Asia.⁷⁵

In other words, the SSC as an organization set courses and examinations for other schools to follow and take. The SSC was declared to be a university under the Bengal Act of 1918 which allowed it to affiliate

71. “Fake Universities,” University Grants Commission, accessed January 17, 2014, <http://www.ugc.ac.in/page/Fake-Universities.aspx>.

72. Jeyaraj, “National Building, 188.

73. “History: A Brief Historical & Geographical Sketch,” Serampore College, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.seramporecollege.org/theology/116-2/>.

74. “A Brief History,” Serampore College: Arts Science Commerce Department, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.seramporecollege.org/arts-science-commerce/history>.

75. “History: A Brief Historical & Geographical Sketch,” Serampore College, accessed January 14, 2014, <http://www.seramporecollege.org/theology/116-2/>.

institutions and “grant them the same privileges as to those studying at the College in Serampore.”⁷⁶ The BTESSC was established when the SSC and the Board of Theological Education (BTE) in 1975 united.⁷⁷

Affiliation with the SSC means that the Senate controls the curriculum of affiliated colleges. Roger Gaikwad, while explaining the history of the SSC, states that when seminaries are affiliated, they

... follow the rules, regulations and curricula of the SSC. These institutions enjoy a semi-autonomous status having the provision to conduct examinations in a certain number of subjects as well as the provision to offer special contextually related papers (whose syllabi, however, have to be approved beforehand by the SSC).⁷⁸

Indeed, the SSC takes pride in how it strictly oversees the affiliation program. Arles states that Serampore has contributed much to the development of Christian ministry in India by providing an umbrella structure as the degree granting authority. It attempts to unify the theological focus of the colleges with a common curriculum, provides for common theological research and interaction among educators and evaluates the colleges for excellence.⁷⁹

However, Mark Laing scrutinizes that the SSC lacks the flexibility to move quickly to address new trends.

Senate affiliation means that the syllabus offered is centrally determined, although beyond the essential core courses, colleges can offer a range of optional courses, based on the strengths and competencies of the individual colleges. There are a few colleges, like Union Biblical Seminary, which have dual accreditation. Central control under Senate ensures the maintenance of good academic practice in colleges and the standardisation of the quality of the BD degree between affiliated colleges. However, this top-down hierarchy, with the centralisation of control by the Senate, can also make the Senate an unwieldy behemoth and the possibility of

76. “Affiliation to Serampore College (University)” Senate of Serampore College (University), January 15, 20014, <http://senateofseramporecollege.edu.in/affiliation-serampore-college.html>.

77. Melancthon, “Graduate Biblical Studies in India,” 120.

78. Roger Gaikwad, “The Extension Programme of the Senate of Serampore College,” in *Diversified Theological Education: Equipping All God’s People*, ed. Ross Kinsler (Pasadena: William Carey International University Press, 2008), 92. In the first part of this chapter, he is not dealing with an extension program but rather the history of the SSC.

79. Arles, *Missiological Education*, 7.

radical change to the syllabus conceptually improbably and impossible to execute.⁸⁰

Laing continues to criticize the SSC that it is “not explicit about the organising rationale for the BD.”⁸¹

Despite the questions and debates that arise from the SSC affiliation system, the reality is that it is the oldest, and in the eyes of some Indian Christians, a more prestigious form of Protestant theological education in India. When students graduate from their seminary, they also graduate from the SSC. Jeyaraj calls the SSC as “the key affiliating body of more than 50 theological colleges in India and well recognized by the mainline churches.”⁸²

In addition, though the SSC is not under the UGC, it is well-received in the government of the north-eastern part of India. Wati Longchar states that for this geographical context that

Unlike the other parts of India, theological education is well recognized by the Government, the church and society. Some theological colleges receive indirect grant for infra-structure development, whereas others receive indirect support. Students from Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya and Mizoram receive government scholarship. In Nagaland, Serampore degrees are recognized for employment in State Services. Nagaland University (a Central University) recognizes M.Th [sic] degree for pursuing Ph.D [sic] study.⁸³

Thus, a degree from the SSC is favorable among mainline churches and can be recognized at a regional government level.

Inquiries

Other Issues

There are other issues that also need to be dealt with. Firstly, there are questions concerning perspectives and value judgment. For example,

80. Mark Laing, “Recovering Missiological Ecclesiology in Theological Education,” in *Missiological Education: Theological Integration and Contextual Implications*, eds. Ebenezer D. Dasan and Frampton F. Fox, Papers from the 13th CMS Consultation (Delhi: ISPCK, 2009), 48.

81. Laing, “Recovering Missiological Ecclesiology,” 48.

82. Jeyaraj, “National Building,” 188.

83. Wati Longchar, “India: The Development of Theological Education in North East India,” in *Training to Be Ministers in Asia—Contextualizing Theological Education in Multi-Faith Contexts: Historical, Contextual and Theological Perspectives from Different Asian Countries*, ed. Dietrich Werner (Tainan, Taiwan: PTCA, 2012), 154.

from an educational perspective, there is the question of how should we see affiliation in light of India's higher education historical development and assess its value especially from a global perspective. From a geopolitical perspective, we need to consider the Central Government's commitment to remain secular and thus by doing so marginalizing religious studies (for Christians, theological studies). The result is that such process impacts the Christian people and their education. Christians will find it more difficult to integrate into society's mainstream. From a theological-educational perspective, SSC's importance and value needs to be assessed as well not only in terms of how they affiliate schools but also on how their system is compatible to our educational framework.⁸⁴ From a geographical perspective, it would be interesting to see how many Indian schools provide Christian education not just in India but for neighboring countries such as Nepal and Myanmar.⁸⁵

Therefore, secondly, compatibility becomes an important issue, not just for the SSC but also for others like it. There are compatibility issues with the British and American systems of theological education that need to be ironed out. How can we reconcile an English form of education to an American style of earning degrees in Christian studies? Already mentioned was that India's two-year BD and MDiv that follow after the BTh and that at our school, they are not considered equal to a three-year MDiv unless other qualifications are met.⁸⁶ These questions

84. A more personal concern is how Indian students can better prepare themselves for an education outside the affiliation system or how our school can help them acclimate to our system. I speak from my own experience with Indian students.

85. This question was raised by Miyon Chung, who is teaching at Morling College in Australia.

86. For the record, British universities do not have a standard approach to the BD. Oxford, for example is no longer offering the degree. See "Special Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Divinity," Oxford University, under Central Administration, under Examination Regulation, under Special Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Divinity, accessed April 4, 2014, http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/31-68_S_R_Degree_of_Bachelor_of_Divinity. Whereas in Scotland, a BD is sometimes seen as a second bachelor's level degree but is three or four years in length (not two years). For example, St Andrews' BD is a three-year program for those who already have a degree in another subject. "Courses Available," School of Divinity, University of St Andrews, accessed April 4, 2014, <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/admissions/ug/courses/>. "Bachelor of Divinity," University of Edinburgh, accessed April 4, 2014, <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/studying/undergraduates/degree-programmes/bachelor-divinity>.

demand further investigation and explication at the administrative level beyond the simple information previously explained above.⁸⁷

There is a third matter. Sometimes a national government has rules and regulations regarding international admittance—some of which are difficult to apply for various reasons. In Korea, for example, on one level, the Ministry of Education favors students with a four-year bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) for graduate school admittance. Obviously, a strict application of “four-year” would exclude a large portion of the English-speaking world that possesses a three-year bachelor's degree from a British or British-type university or college. On another level, the Korean Ministry of Education wants students coming from accredited institutions. We have accepted many students from the West from government-accredited Christian schools such as Biola University in La Mirada, California. However, this is nearly impossible for people coming from Asia where Christianity is marginalized (or even outlawed) by a national government.⁸⁸ Other assessment is necessary especially in light of our school's purpose which is to reach the Majority World. Our school administration must handle these issues delicately because we are a government-accredited graduate university.

For further research on the Indian education system, a glossary of terms needs to be created. Besides the words, college and affiliation, there are many other terms which are thrown in conversation but have different meanings such as extension and distance education and study centers. After establishing terms and definitions, it would be ideal if someone can map out relationships between larger and smaller schools (such as colleges, study centers, and institutions) in the Indian context to help foreigners understand the education system better.

Admissions

For now, there are at least four practical solutions that our school can change on our applications to determine the status of a school's accreditation. The first was already mentioned: add “after the 12th grade” to “post-high school.” The goal is to have applicants to list all the institutions they attended which are considered as higher education and accommodate as many applicants with different backgrounds as possible.

87. In addition, there are other issues because ATA India also approves MDiv programs which are two years in length whereas our school expects MDiv programs to be three years in length. Languages are also problematic from Greek, Hebrew, and sometimes the English language.

88. At this point, I am referring to other countries not just India.

The second solution is to create an extra affiliation column next to schools they attended. Sometimes, new admissions reviewers are confused. We ask applicants to send us copies of their degrees with their applications. The copies sometimes did not reflect what they wrote in their applications. Adding the extra affiliation column next to the attended school will alleviate confusion to let reviewers know the school is affiliate to Serampore.

Thirdly, we need to use government-run online resources when available for secular degrees. The NAAC's online database of accredited universities will cover most universities in question. If it is a technical institution, one can check India's list of technical schools on the AICTE website. Open and distance learning can be found online as well. Three helpful websites are listed below:

NAAC	www.naac.gov.in ⁸⁹
AICTE	www.aicte-india.org ⁹⁰
ODL	www.ugc.ac.in ⁹¹

Finally, we need to ask students to enter the full addresses of their institutions. Diplomas usually state the name of the institution, degree conferred, date of graduation, and the graduate's name. The location of the school is rarely on a diploma. If students were to enter the addresses of their schools, this will allow our admissions office to check on the accreditation status online. The NAAC's website requires not just the name of the institution but also the type of institution (university or college) and region (such as West Bengal or Assam).

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to understand India's tertiary education and accreditation systems for Christian education. Most Christian schools at the tertiary level have yet to be registered and accredited by the government, which is a subject of great interest for graduate schools outside the country like Korea. In India, the relationship between the

89. A direct link can be found here (accessed January 15, 2014): http://web5.kar.nic.in/naacloi_new/NAAC_allcycles_acclist.aspx.

90. A recent copy of approved institutions can be found here (accessed January 15, 2014): http://www.aicte-india.org/downloads/12_13_Approved_Institutes_Dec_19_2012.pdf.

91. A direct link can be found here (accessed January 15, 2014): https://docs.google.com/a/ttgu.ac.kr/forms/d/1DV_SUcQP0co8nKgF7NF3cDrTgB-Dj3zyWlq5WvR7LS0/viewform.

Central Government and schools remains ambiguous perhaps due to lack of governmental delegations over religious education. Many questions arise from this unclear relationship. A vast majority of theological programs are not listed by the UGC and thus unable to be accredited by the NAAC. Although Christianity is legal, it appears to have been marginalized (albeit with other religions) by the government educationally.

The second issue is global compatibility which is currently being discussed between ATA and the SSC. They are the two largest accrediting (ATA) and affiliating (Serampore) bodies in India. However, despite the respect they have from the indigenous churches, if the colleges in India fail to produce quality students “bridge” programs may need to be created for their transition into higher degrees. For example, if a student is lacking sufficient level of biblical languages or English writing skills, he or she may have to stay one more year to catch up. Many Western schools have implemented a yearlong program to help foreign students prepare for university or graduate school education.⁹²

For admission personnel at TTGU, they need to (1) be aware that educational terminologies such as “college” and “high school” can vary according to different geographical locations; (2) ask for schools’ addresses to review their accreditation status; (3) make use of government internet sites to verify accreditation; and (4) create more suitable applications forms that allows the applicant to describe the complex educational background of countries such as India. As a final note, there is a need to develop internal guidelines, which are based on a common knowledge of global education and international admissions, for TTGU personnel involved in international admission.

92. For example, the University of St Andrews has a Foundation Year Programme “for international students who do not have the academic or language qualifications that the University requires for direct entry to a degree programme.” See “Frequently Asked Questions,” University of St Andrews, under English Language Teaching, accessed February 14, 2014, <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/elt/foundation/frequentlyaskedquestions/>.

Appendix:
Christian Population from India's 2011 Census⁹³

Region & Union Territories	Number of Christians	Religious Communities (Population)	Christian Percentage
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	77,178	356,152	21.7%
Andhra Pradesh	1,181,917	76,210,007	1.6%
Arunachal Pradesh	205,548	1,097,968	18.7%
Assam	986,589	26,655,528	3.7%
Bihar	53,137	82,998,509	0.1%
Chandigarh	7,627	900,635	0.8%
Chhattisgarh	401,035	20,833,803	1.9%
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	6,058	220,490	2.7%
Daman & Diu	3,362	158,204	2.1%
Delhi	130,319	13,850,507	0.9%
Goa	359,568	1,347,668	26.7%
Gujarat	284,092	50,671,017	0.6%
Haryana	27,185	21,144,564	0.1%
Himachal Pradesh	7,687	6,077,900	0.1%
Jammu & Kashmir	20,299	10,143,700	0.2%
Jharkhand	1,093,382	26,945,829	4.1%
Karnataka	1,009,164	52,850,562	1.9%
Kerala	6,057,427	31,841,374	19.0%
Lakshadweep	509	60,650	0.8%
Madhya Pradesh	170,381	60,348,023	0.3%
Maharashtra	1,058,313	96,878,627	1.1%
Manipur	737,578	2,166,788	34.0%
Meghalaya	1,628,986	2,318,822	70.3%
Mizoram	772,809	888,573	87.0%
Nagaland	1,790,349	1,990,036	90.0%
Orissa	897,861	36,804,660	2.4%
Pondicherry	67,688	974,345	6.9%
Punjab	292,800	24,358,999	1.2%
Rajasthan	72,660	56,507,188	0.1%
Sikkim	36,115	540,851	6.7%
Tamil Nadu	3,785,060	54,985,079	6.9%
Tripura	102,489	3,199,203	3.2%

93. Christians include Protestants and Catholics. Census India, "Population by Religious Communities," Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner India, accessed February 14, 2014, http://censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_data_finder/C_Series/Population_by_religious_communities.htm.

Uttar Pradesh	212,578	166,197,921	0.1%
Uttaranchal	27,116	8,489,349	0.3%
West Bengal	515,150	80,176,197	0.6%
Total	24,080,016	1,028,610,328	2.3%