
To Direct a Collaborative Process
to Propose a New Governance Plan

RESOLUTION 7-03

Overtures 7-02, 13, 15 (CW, 463, 470–71)

WHEREAS, The Concordia University System (CUS) institution presidents, in consultation with the President of the Synod, the CUS Board of Directors, and the President of the CUS, have concluded that greater integration and collaboration would strengthen the individual institutions and the system as a whole, as summarized in the following comments:

Higher Education faces an uncertain future. Most observers anticipate a serious decline in the number of colleges over the course of the next several years. Eager not only to survive but to thrive as the Church's schools, the presidents of CUS institutions are considering various approaches to our colleges and universities' relationship to one another. Presently, the relationship is marked by goodwill and collegiality, but there is very little mutual accountability or responsibility. Based on the premise that we are stronger together than apart, models that would reinforce and enhance our individual identity and authority coupled with a more robust systemic governance are being explored. How best to maintain local campus oversight and engagement on the one hand, while strengthening the ties that bind us together on the other, is the idea. The intention is to help alleviate tensions and conflict of competition. Even more compelling, the quest is to identify ways in which systemic collaboration presents opportunities for broader reach and impact.

and

WHEREAS, Such an effort at greater integration requires significant study of regional and professional programmatic accreditation, legal matters, regulatory issues, and matters of structure and governance; and

WHEREAS, The CUS institution presidents are well-positioned with the best knowledge and expertise to develop a strategic plan for the future of CUS institutions that is attentive to best practices of higher education and the needs of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and

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WHEREAS, The presidents and boards of regents of the CUS institutions have publicly embraced the theological confession of the church and are committed to consulting with the President of the Synod, the CUS Board of Directors, and the President of the CUS; and

WHEREAS, The culture of higher education is changing at an increasing rate that provides opportunities and poses challenges to the institutions of the CUS; and

WHEREAS, Colleges and universities—such as those within the CUS—with modest endowments, competitive recruitment, significant tuition discounting, and narrow financial margins are particularly at risk; and

WHEREAS, The colleges and universities of the CUS have successfully negotiated this challenging environment with the prayerful and financial support of individuals throughout the Synod, effective presidential leadership, and talented faculty and staff; and

WHEREAS, An economic downturn or governmental changes could pose a serious economic challenge to the financial stability of the CUS institutions; and

WHEREAS, The witness to Christ and the Church's theological confession at the university level is strategic and vital for the Church's future; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod Board of Directors, with the active involvement of the President of the Synod, the Concordia University System (CUS) Advisory Council (CUS institution presidents), the CUS Board of Directors, the President of the CUS, the institutions' respective boards of regents, and others as needed, and with the concurrence of the CUS Advisory Council and the CUS Board, propose a new governance plan for consideration by the 2022 convention of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That the proposed new governance plan specifically address the objectives of 2013 Res. 5-01A and 2016 Res. 7-02B by continuing to:

- strengthen all CUS institutions' connection to the Synod;
- strengthen the confessional Lutheran identity of all CUS institutions;
- review the composition, size, and selection of boards of regents;
- review the process for selecting presidents of institutions;
- review the overall governance of CUS and the boards of regents of the CUS institutions;
- review the financial models for the institutions;

and be it further

Resolved, That a report on the initial governance model proposals be disseminated to the Synod for a six month period of comment commencing not later than 15 months prior to the start of the 2022 convention of the Synod; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod in convention give thanks for the presidents, faculties, staffs, boards of regents, and communities of the institutions of the CUS for their clear and faithful witness to Christ and the church's theological confession and practice at the university level by rising and singing the common doxology.

Action: Adopted as amended (3)

It was moved to postpone consideration of Res. 7-03 until after consideration of Res.7-01A. Upon clarification that the CUS Advisory Council already exists and is functioning, the motion to postpone was withdrawn. It was moved and seconded to amend the second resolve by adding a bullet to "review the financial models for the institutions." With the consent of the body, the resolution was so modified. Following additional discussion, at the chair's initiation, debate was closed [Yes: 882; No: 40]. Res. 7-03 was adopted as amended [Yes: 856; No: 115]; thereupon, the convention rose and sang the common doxology.
