

# An Overview

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## Statement of Purpose

### Identity and Mission

#### Our Identity:

Union University is an academic community, affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, equipping persons to think Christianly and serve faithfully in ways consistent with its core values of being Christ-centered, people-focused, excellence-driven, and future-directed. These values shape its identity as an institution which prioritizes liberal arts based undergraduate education enhanced by professional and graduate programs. The academic community is composed of quality faculty, staff, and students working together in a caring, grace-filled environment conducive to the development of character, servant leadership, and cultural engagement.

#### Our Mission:

Union University provides Christ-centered higher education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society.

### Core Values

- **Excellence-Driven:** We believe that excellence, not mere compliance, is the goal of our teaching, our research, and our service. We are not motivated to excellence out of pride but out of a desire to do all things for God's glory because He cares about our work and wants to be involved in everything we do. We will not be satisfied with mediocrity but will pursue excellence in all things. This means our truth claims carry with them the challenge of living out that truth in the minutes and hours of our daily life. Thus we will pursue excellence, without arrogance.
- **Christ-Centered:** A cohering core value of our guiding vision is a call to faith, a call to be Christ centered in all that we are and in all that we do. We will seek to build a Christian liberal arts based community where men and women can be introduced to an understanding and appreciation of God, His creation and grace, and to humanity's place of privilege and responsibility in this world. We will seek to establish all aspects of life and learning on the Word of God, leading to a firm commitment to Christ and His Kingdom. To be a Christ-centered institution calls for us to establish the priority of worship and service in the Christian life while seeking to develop a generation of students who can be agents of reconciliation to a factious church in a hurting and broken world. This commitment calls for all faculty and staff to integrate Christian faith in all learning and doing, based on the supposition that all truth is God's truth and that there is no contradiction between God's truth made known to us in Holy Scripture and that which is revealed to us through creation and natural revelation.
- **People-Focused:** A third pillar on which we will build our common commitments is the core value of being people focused. At the heart of our commitment to being people focused is the visible demonstration of valuing one another. We will give honor to one another through our words and actions, and by committing to each person's success. We therefore jointly commit ourselves to the success of Union University.
- **Future-Directed:** We will seek to maximize the windows of opportunity the Lord has presented to us to the greatest degree that resources allow. All of our resources and efforts must, by God's grace, be maximized to fulfill our common mission. A commitment to being future directed means we want to have a short-term focus and

a long term view. We want to involve ourselves in efforts that prepare us effectively to impact the world of the 21st Century.

## EXTERNAL ASSOCIATIONS

### Accredited By

Union University is accredited by the *Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools* (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097: Telephone 404-679-4501) to award baccalaureate, masters, education specialist, and education doctorate degrees. The University also has the following discipline-specific accreditation:

*American Chemical Society*  
*Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education*  
*Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs*  
*Council on Social Work Education*  
*National Association of Schools of Art and Design*  
*National Association of Schools of Music*  
*National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education*  
*Teacher Education Program, Tennessee State Department of Education*  
*Tennessee Health Related Boards*

### Member Of

American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education  
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
Associations for Christians in Student Development  
Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools  
4 Baptist Association for Student Affairs  
Concurrent Admissions Program  
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities  
Council of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs of the National League for Nursing  
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences  
Council on Undergraduate Research  
Council for the Advancement and Support of Education  
National Art Education Association  
National Association of College Admissions Counselors  
Service Members Opportunity Colleges  
Southern Council of Collegiate Education for Nursing  
Tennessee Association for Counseling and Development  
Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers  
Tennessee College Association

## THE CAMPUS

The uniqueness of the Union University campus, located on U.S. Highway 45 Bypass and Union University Drive in Northwest Jackson, is related to the academic facilities and student housing. Union's campus is designed with the student as its axis. All facilities, programs, and personnel are interrelated in an attempt to meet the needs of students.

A second campus site is located in the Memphis suburb of Germantown, Tennessee. Programs in Nursing, Business and Education are available.

An abbreviated description of Jackson campus facilities follows. A more detailed description of each building as well as the services available in each, is presented in the *Campus Life Handbook*.

## Penick Academic Complex

The Penick Academic Complex houses the G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel, Fred DeLay Gymnasium, E.T. “Rocky” Palmer Activities Center, Joseph H. Miller III Science Center, the W. D. Powell Theatre, Waldrop Administrative Center, Union Station, Computing Services, and Emma Waters Summar Library.

The Waldrop Administrative Center contains the offices of Career Services, the Registrar, Business Services, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the President, and University Relations.

The Emma Waters Summar Library, through its holdings and subscriptions and through its membership in regional and international networks, has access to journals and books from over 21,000 major libraries throughout the world. The Instructional Media Center houses a growing collection of media hardware and software available for student and faculty use.

## Blasingame Academic Complex

The McAfee School of Business Administration and the School of Education and Human Studies are located in the Blasingame Academic Complex.

## Hammons Hall

Hammons Hall contains the Lifeway Bookstore as well as the offices for Institutional Advancement, Church Services, Testing, and Adult Studies. General classrooms, conference rooms, the Alumni Suite, and a community room are also housed in Hammons Hall.

## Jennings Hall

Jennings contains the departments of Communication Arts, Music, and Christian Studies. It also houses the R. C. Ryan Center for Biblical Studies and the Hartley Recital Hall.

## Residence Life Complex

Union University recognizes and is fully committed to the value of the educational experiences—spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally—which occur within the on-campus residential environment. Therefore, all students under 21 years of age by September 1 are required to live in the residence complexes, unless exception is granted by the Director of Residence Life. Exceptions include students living with parents/guardians, those who are married and students who have medical problems requiring off campus residency. All resident students are required to sign a residence life contract for the academic year. For information on Residence Life community values, philosophy, fees, family housing, reservation and procedures please refer to the *Campus Life Handbook* located on Union University’s website at [www.uu.edu](http://www.uu.edu).

Single student housing, arranged in 3 complexes (Hurt, Watters and McAfee), features private bedrooms in apartment-like units. Each apartment is on one level in a 2-story construction. All lead to the 3 Commons Buildings which house the resident directors, provide facilities for lounge areas, laundry and recreation.

Family housing is located in the Warmath Apartments, north of single-student housing. The complex consists of 32 two-bedroom apartments.

## Hyran E. Barefoot Student Union Building

The Barefoot Student Union Building houses the University’s cafeteria (Gilbert-Powers Student Commons), Coburn Dining Room, President’s Dining Room, Lexington Inn, Eldon Byrd Faculty Dining, Harvey Auditorium, Campus Printing and Mail Services, offices for Student Services (Dean of Students, Student Government Association, Student Activities Council, Counseling, The Learning Center, Student Leadership Devel-

opment, Residence Life, Health Services, Coordinator of University Activities, and Campus Security), offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, Enrollment Services, Campus Ministries (Missionary-In-Residence), Prayer Chapel, and the Missionary Wall.

## The University's History

Union University is an heir of three antebellum Tennessee schools: West Tennessee College and its predecessor, Jackson Male Academy, both located at Jackson, and of Union University, located at Murfreesboro. It is the inheritor of another college in 1927, Hall-Moody Junior College of Martin.

Jackson Male Academy, founded in 1823 shortly after the opening of West Tennessee for settlement, was chartered by the legislature in 1825, making it the earliest school whose roots are linked with what later became the Southern Baptist Convention.

West Tennessee College originated in the mid-1840s when supporters of the Academy secured a charter for a college and received an endowment from the state to come from the sale of public lands. Under its charter, the property rights and governance of the Jackson Male Academy were vested in the trustees of the College. The College offered three degrees—bachelor of arts, bachelor of philosophy, and master of arts—and had four departments: Moral Philosophy, Languages, Mathematics, and Natural Philosophy and Chemistry. West Tennessee College continued until 1874, when at a time of depressed economic conditions, the trustees offered the College's buildings, grounds, and endowment to Tennessee Baptists in the hopes of attracting a southwestern regional university planned by the state's Baptist leaders.

Meanwhile, after years of discussion and the raising of an endowment, the Baptist General Assembly of Tennessee in 1848 established Union University at Murfreesboro, near the geographical center of the state. The school came upon hard times when in 1859 its highly respected president, Joseph Eaton, died and when during the Civil War its campus was badly damaged. It reopened in 1868 only to close again in 1873, largely because of its financial condition and an epidemic of cholera.

Southwestern Baptist University, the immediate predecessor of the present Union University, was established from a desire by Tennessee Baptists, who still had a separate convention for each of the state's three Grand Divisions, for greater unification. Education became the core issue around which such unification was promoted. Committees of the three conventions met jointly in Humboldt in 1873 and issued a resolution supporting the establishment of a first-class regional university. An Educational Convention met in Murfreesboro in 1874, and following that a committee was appointed to select a location for the proposed university. The committee recommended the acceptance of the offer made by the citizens of Jackson to assume ownership of West Tennessee College.

In September 1874, the new institution opened at Jackson as an academy, and in 1875 it was chartered as Southwestern Baptist University. In 1907, T. T. Eaton, a trustee at Southwestern from its beginning, bequeathed his 6,000 volume library to the college. He was a former professor at Union University at Murfreesboro, where his father, Joseph Eaton, had been president. Shortly thereafter the name of Southwestern Baptist University was changed to Union University to honor the Eatons and others from Union at Murfreesboro who had had a major impact on Southwestern as faculty, administrators, trustees, and contributors. In a further move to unify its educational efforts, the Tennessee Baptist Convention in 1925 secured a new charter which vested all rights, authority, and property of Union University in the Convention, including the election of the University's trustees. Two years later, the Convention was able to consolidate Hall-Moody Junior College at Martin (1900-1927) with Union University. During the 1920s, Union discontinued its graduate program, its Law Department, and its high school and added a bachelor of music degree program.

After a major fire in 1912, several new buildings were constructed, including the centerpiece of the campus for the next 60 years, Barton Hall. In 1948 the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools granted Union University its original accreditation. In 1962, at the request of local physicians, Union developed a nursing program with the assistance of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital.

Because of the deterioration of its aging campus, Union in 1975 moved from near downtown to a new campus located along Highway 45-Bypass in north Jackson. Since then, enrollment has increased from about 1,000 students to nearly 2,500; the multi-purpose Penick Academic Complex has been enlarged several times; many additional housing units have been erected; and several buildings have been constructed, including Blasingame Academic Complex, Hyran E. Barefoot Student Union Building, Hammons Hall and Jennings Hall. Part of the reason for growth derived from new academic programs and graduate studies in education and business administration.

Union's presence in Memphis area began with a medical school from 1878 to 1911 with 2,625 M.D. degrees awarded. From the early 1950's to the early 1970's, Union opened an Extension Center at Prescott Memorial Baptist Church near Memphis State University. From 1987-96, Union offered the degree completion program leading to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN track) in Memphis. There were over 300 graduates of this program. The institution suspended its operations in Memphis for one year as it planned the establishment of a stand alone satellite campus specifically for adult students. Under the leadership of President David S. Dockery, who was elected Union's fifteenth president in 1995, Union established this satellite campus in the Memphis suburb of Germantown with programs in nursing, business administration, and education.

To broaden its connection with the wider Christian higher education movement, Union in the mid-1990s joined the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. The University also adopted a new campus master plan to accommodate the University's growth well into the twenty-first century.

In the 1990s Union has had its greatest intercollegiate athletic success as Union's Lady Bulldogs basketball team of 1998 finished first in the NAIA National Basketball Tournament.

Also during the 1990s the university reinitiated its graduate programs with the MAEd, the MBA and the MEd. An undergraduate degree completion program in business was added in 1997 which significantly impacted the area business community. Since 2000, the MSN, MAIS, EdS in Educational Leadership and the EdD have been developed and implemented.