

True North College FAQs

Q1: What is True North College all about?

We believe you were made to live a life of influence that has a lasting impact on the world around you. We believe each person has a unique calling and potential they need only to step into. Who we are as a college flows directly out of this conviction. Our desire is to come alongside of you and equip you to lead in a way that draws the best out of you, not for your own glory, but for Gods glory and the expansion of His kingdom.

Our goal is to connect with each student in a way that equips them to become spiritually mature, healthy and effective leaders. Our main focus is people; serving people, teaching people and equipping people for ministry. We are all about helping people grow into the influential leaders God has called them to be and live out the full potential in which God created them to live.

The purpose behind our vision is to offer potential leaders an avenue through which they can express their personal desire to know God and their ministerial desire to lead others in knowing God. Leadership is the focus. Tracks of study are designed to make a way for students who have different motivations or goals with respect to leadership to still have a place in the college.

- Students who want to be led (non-diploma or non-certificate seeking) can audit individual courses for self-enrichment and academic exploration (no academic evaluation or credit).
- Students who want to be led and lead themselves (Certificate in Biblical Studies track) can take the equivalent of 30 credit hours of courses that include academic evaluation for credit.
- Students who want to be led, lead themselves, and lead others (Diploma in Practical Theology track) can take the equivalent of 60 credit hours of courses that include academic evaluation and ministry leadership evaluation for credit.
- Students who want to be led, lead themselves, and lead others (Diploma in Ministry Leadership track) can take the equivalent of 60 credit hours of courses that include academic evaluation and ministry leadership evaluation for credit.

Q2: Is True North College a real academic institution?

True North College is a church-based specialty academic institution that serves its appropriate constituencies with excellence in ways consistent with what it claims to be. It is important to understand – perhaps this is the underlying impetus of the question at hand – what True North College does not claim to be:

1. It is not a traditional college or university that makes available, among other things, student housing, meal plans, sports facilities and intercollegiate athletics.
2. It is not a university that offers a variety of four-year degrees in a multitude of academic disciplines.
3. It is not a community college that offers two-year degrees in a multitude of academic disciplines.
4. It is not a state college that is sanctioned by the State of New Jersey to grant traditional academic degrees – in the case of True North College what otherwise would have been called an “Associate of Arts, A.A.” degree – having been licensed to do so by the State of New Jersey.
5. It is not a liberal arts college or university that offers “General Studies” courses in the disciplines of literature, history, philosophy, modern languages, economics, geography, political science, computer science, social science, math, and science.
6. It is not a college that is independent of the local church having its own corporate identity and oversight.

True North College is a ministry of True North Church and is under its oversight. It is a specialty academic institution that offers Christian leaders the opportunity to take courses in bible, theology and ministry. As such, it does not offer Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees but only offers non-degree certificates and diplomas. It is a non-traditional academic institution that is not licensed by the state inasmuch as it does not offer secular degrees but only non-degree bible, theology and ministry certificates and diplomas. It is understood that these one and two-year non-degree certificates and diplomas are not Associate of Arts (A.A.) degrees, and so, cannot be accredited as such. It is also understood that non-traditional Christian accrediting institutions (like Transworld Accrediting Commission International) can accredit non-degree granting academic institutions such as True North College.

Q3: Is True North College accredited?

True North College is pursuing accreditation with Transworld Accrediting Commission International (TACI) which is “a professional, federally recognized, non-profit church educational organization whose philosophy is to demonstrate accountability to the consuming public for education obtained in non-traditional evangelical educational institutions. This accountability is demonstrated by institutions that are accredited by TACI, having documented evidence of compliance with TACI standards of structure and governance, material resources, policies, faculty and curriculum” (TACI website).

Currently, True North College is an Associate Member of TACI. In keeping with the nature of accreditation and its concurrent procedures and timeline, True North College anticipates receiving full accreditation from TACI soon after its first year of operation and prior to its first graduation of students (who would then receive their certificate or diploma from a TACI accredited college).

Q4: Is True North College a licensed college in New Jersey?

True North College is not licensed by the State of New Jersey since the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education in New Jersey does not grant licensure to church-based, two-year bible colleges. Thus, True North College may not grant Associate of Arts (A.A.) degrees. True North College will be accredited to grant non-degree diplomas and certificates.

New Jersey licensure requires that a 60 credit two-year degree includes 45 General Education credits (these would not include bible, theology or ministry courses). This would only leave 15 credits (5 out of 20 courses) that could be bible, theology or ministry courses. By definition, to be true to its calling as a bible college, True North College must offer programs that consist of more than 5 of 20 courses that are bible oriented. In this sense, then, the State of New Jersey does not make it possible for a two-year bible college to be licensed by it. And so, True North College is not licensed by the State of New Jersey and is a non-degree granting academic institution.

Q5: What is the difference between a two-year Associate of Arts Degree from a local community college and a two-year Diploma in Practical Theology or Diploma in Ministry Leadership from True North College?

The difference is two-fold. First, the Associate of Arts degree is a state sanctioned, and, therefore, state recognized degree. The Diploma in Practical Theology and Diploma in Ministry Leadership are not state sanctioned, and, therefore, not state recognized degrees. True North College is a non-degree granting institution while a local community college is a degree granting institution. Second, the Associate of Arts degree from a local community college is a general secular degree in that the bulk of its courses are General Education courses and none of its courses are bible, theology or ministry courses. True North College diplomas are non-degree, non-secular diplomas in that none of its courses are General Education courses and all of its courses are bible, theology and ministry courses.

Q6: What can I do with my True North College diploma or certificate?

First and foremost a True North College certificate or diploma will represent a wealth of bible knowledge gained and a great leap forward in your relationship with God. You will use your True North College certificate or diploma to know God more fully and make God known more effectively.

You may use your True North College certificate or diploma to move on in the education process and pursue a degree from another academic institution. Of course, you may also use your True North College certificate or diploma to gain employment in a variety of fields and/or be better equipped to work in your present situation of employment.

Q7: Will my courses from True North College transfer to other colleges and universities?

TACI accredits hundreds of non-traditional Bible Colleges and Institutes – which are similar to True North College – throughout the United States and internationally. Once accredited with TACI, credits from True North College can more easily transfer to TACI accredited schools but may also be able to be transferred to other non-TACI accredited bible colleges and Christian universities.

It should be understood that accreditation is a mechanism through which the legitimacy and value of an academic institution and its courses, certificates and diplomas may be recognized as commensurate, to one degree or another, with another academic institution and its courses, certificates, diplomas or degrees. Academic institutions may consider accepting credits from True North College based on its accreditation and/or based on other factors (for example, the relationship that institution has with True North College or the knowledge that institution has of a variety of aspects of True North College like its faculty, curriculum or church affiliation).

In any case, in order to transfer credits, another institution will have to assess the nature of the courses that are being proposed for transfer and determine whether or not they line up with courses that they offer. This is the “like for like” dynamic considered when transferring credits. Bible, theology and ministry courses can be considered for transfer inasmuch as they line up with, and in that sense, could replace or satisfy requirements for similar courses. In keeping with this process, it is understood that a ministry course from True North College could not be transferred for a General Education course like Biology 101 at a secular college or university. Since True North College is a two-year bible college that only includes bible, theology and ministry courses, courses taken at True North College could not be transferred to secular colleges (which might only be able to match up one or two general religion or public speaking courses) regardless of the accreditation that True North College has or does not have.

And so, the most likely situation in which True North College courses would be transferred to another academic institution is in the arena of other Christian academic institutions. Like for like institutions offer like for like courses that can then more easily be transferred from one institution to another. Of course, on the top of the list for True North College possibilities are other TACI schools. Christian institutions which have some level of relationship with True North College and/or some knowledge of True North College may consider the transfer of courses. Otherwise, Christian academic institutions, in general, may also accept courses from True North College.

Q8: Will a True North College diploma or certificate be recognized by potential employers?

Similar to the “like for like” dynamic that guides the transfer of credits from one academic institution to another, there is also a “like for like” dynamic that guides how potential employers might look at a True North College certificate or diploma. Employers who are looking for mechanical engineers will probably not give much weight to a True North College certificate or diploma not because of the legitimacy of it but because of the functionality of it with respect to the way it matches up with what they are looking for in the position. At the same time, employers who are looking for ministry workers may give considerable weight to a True North College certificate or diploma especially if that employer is somehow associated with or has knowledge of organizations affiliated with True North College and/or True North Church. In addition, employers looking to fill general career positions (who would require a two-year educational experience) might also look favorably on a True North College diploma especially if they were looking for potential leaders.

Q9: Who should attend True North College?

No matter what age you are or season of life you find yourself in – from a teenager fresh out of high school, someone looking to fill a gap year, or a parent with kids, a career and a busy schedule – we have a track designed with you in mind.

This outlook is a unique and intentional characteristic of the college. You may see yourself as a traditional full-time student looking to really be immersed in the college experience or maybe you’re a single mom just wanting to take one course each semester. No matter what your season of life, we have a plan that will work for you and your schedule so that you will be able to attend True North College.

True North College students are leaders. True North College looks to impact leaders so they can impact others. This strategy is designed to reproduce and mobilize leaders by:

- TEACHING students about leadership - Students learn leadership principles from what is taught in the classroom where the process of teaching/leading is modeled by the instructor.
- TRAINING students how to lead – Students practice leadership (self-leadership and leadership of others) as they complete their assignments.

- EQUIPPING students to be resourced leaders – Students go forth with leadership tools (including teaching materials used to teach them) that they can use to teach/lead others.

Most students enrolled in True North College attend True North Church. However, students who attend other churches may also enroll. Students will come to us from a variety of backgrounds, occupations, and academic experiences. Some enrolled students will hold previous degrees while others may be fresh out of High School looking to start their college experience. The diversity of students that we have is a unique and positive feature of True North College.

Q10: Why should I attend TNC over another school?

We know prospective students are looking at various schools and weighing their educational options. True North College is designed to offer a unique style and approach. We are a college directly connected to a healthy, vibrant and life-giving local church. This allows us to pair academic learning with real life challenges and hands on ministry training in a fast paced environment.

Training for ministry is a major focus of TNC. We are not looking for students to simply acquire knowledge but to also practically apply that knowledge into their own world. This approach shines through in how we structure courses, lead class sessions, implement course requirements, and structure our practicum and internship courses. We believe so much in the equipping principle that we literally “entrust” our curriculum to our students “who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). At the beginning of each course, the student receives the same teaching materials that the professor uses to teach the course. This unique approach encourages students to take the course themselves and then teach the course to others. We believe that this strategy of multiplication is God’s strategy to grow His kingdom.

Q11: Should I attend TNC even if I don’t plan to work in ministry?

We understand that not all of the graduates of True North College will have a desire to work in ministry. That’s the point! Our definition of ministry is a lot broader than the one many Christians have. Ministry is more than what happens inside the walls of a church building. Ministry involves any place or location where Christians work and live. In short, ministry is everywhere, and can be done by anyone who is a Christ follower no matter your occupation. Whether you are a stay-at home parent, a business owner, a teacher or you travel the world taking photographs, you can be instrumental in advancing the kingdom of God.

Our courses are designed to instill practical ministry skills in you no matter your career. For example, our practical theology track isn't just for people who want to be pastors or professors. Theology (the study of God) is an essential part of being a great politician, or running a company, or working at a bank or leading a family. Everything we do to equip students at True North College can and should be applied to all areas of life because that is how God created you to live. God did not create you to separate your Christian life and your secular life into two distinct areas. Everything we learn about God, the church, our identity and our purpose should reach every aspect of our lives as it flows out from our minds to our hearts and through our hands.

Q12: How much is tuition/fees?

Tuition

\$100 per credit (\$300 for a 3 credit course)

\$50 per credit for audit status (\$150 to audit a 3 credit course)

Fees

\$10 per credit (\$30 for a 3 credit course)

Q13: Who teaches courses at TNC?

Most courses are taught by True North Church pastors including the Senior Pastor, Jesse Eisenhart (who also serves as Chancellor of True North College), the Senior Associate Pastors, Dr. John Mannion (who also serves as President of True North College), Erich Eisenhart and Joanne Eisenhart, and the Discipleship Pastor, John Kelly (who also serves as Dean of Students of True North College).

Q14: Does TNC have a library?

True North College has a library available for student use. Students may use the library to study or to check out books from the general collection. Books can be checked out for the purpose of completing course assignments or for personal study. Electronic resources can also be accessed in the library. Electronic resources and reference books may not be checked out but can be used in the library.

Q15: When are classes scheduled?

The school calendar is structured according to a semester system. There is a 16 week Fall Semester that runs from late August to December with a one week Fall break. There is a 16 week Spring Semester that runs from January to May with a one week Spring break. There is also a 16 week Summer session.

Each semester includes Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday night courses that are scheduled from 7:00-9:30 p.m. Saturday courses are scheduled from 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-3:30 p.m. The Summer session has a reduced number of courses.

Q16: How much time each week will I need to give to each course I take?

Each 3 credit course taken during a 16 week semester will necessitate approximately 7 hours of the student's time each week (2 ½ hours in class and 4-5 hours outside of class).

For example, if a student takes two courses in a semester, taking one Tuesday night course (7:00-9:30 p.m. every Tuesday night for 16 weeks) and one Saturday morning course (9:00-11:30 a.m. every Saturday morning for 16 weeks), that student will spend 5 hours each week of the semester in the classroom and 8-10 hours each week doing assignments outside of class for a total of 14 hours of time each week devoted to school. A student taking a full load of courses in a semester (5 courses or 15 credit hours) will need approximately 35 hours of time each week for class and assignments combined.

Q17: Are there different tracks or programs of study?

The Diploma in Ministry Leadership can be completed in two years. The Diploma in Practical Theology can also be completed in two years. The Certificate in Biblical Studies can be completed in one year. Many students pursue a diploma or certificate over a longer period of time as part-time students. Some students take courses as audit students and do not pursue a diploma or certificate.

Q18: Do I need to apply to the college?

If you are only looking to take courses for audit, you do not need to apply. You can register for courses as an audit student without having applied to the college. Each semester, one course will be designated as an “open enrollment” course. This course will be open to students who are already admitted to True North College and would be taking the course for credit as well as to students who are not yet admitted but who want to audit a course. This course will be the only course available in the semester for students to audit.

If you want to take courses for credit toward a certificate or diploma, you must apply first and be accepted before you can enroll for courses. Prospective students can submit applications online. There is an application fee of \$20. Once the application is submitted, an interview will be scheduled with an academic advisor and a decision regarding acceptance will be made within one week.

Q19: Where is the college located?

The True North College offices, classrooms, and library are located at the True North Church Mullica Hill campus at 333 Aura Road, Mullica Hill, NJ.

Q20: How can I get more information?

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