

Preparing Leaders for Eternity

CANADIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE



Canadian Union College (CaUC), Alberta, Canada.

Seventh-day Adventist universities and colleges were established for three fundamental reasons: (1) to prepare people for the kingdom; (2) to train workers for the church; and (3) to prepare an educated laity to serve the world.

Seventh-day Adventist postsecondary education in the North American Division (NAD) is being challenged by elements from within the church. Questions are being asked that threaten its very existence: “Can higher education meet the ideals as set forth in the writings of our prophetess, Ellen G. White?” “Can higher education prepare young men and women for leadership within the church?” “Are the campuses of our

colleges and universities becoming so secularized that the church’s doctrines are no longer seen as relevant?” As we ponder these questions, it may help to review the principles and counsel upon which our institutions were established.

By Reo E. Ganson

With few exceptions, NAD universities and colleges were established in connection with the organization of union conferences. This is clearly evidenced in the current or former names of schools such as Pacific Union College, Columbia Union College, Atlantic Union College, Union College, Canadian University (Union) College, and Southwestern Union College (now Southwestern Adventist University). The establishment and naming of these institutions paralleled the church’s pioneer evangelistic work at the dawn of the 20th century. Why did our pioneers establish colleges and universities? To answer that question, let’s look at the following words of inspiration:

“When I was shown by the angel of God that an institution should be established for the education of our youth, I saw that it would be one of the greatest means ordained of God for the salvation of souls. . . . If the influence in our college is what it should be, the youth who are educated there will be enabled to discern God and glorify Him in all His works; and while engaged in cultivating the faculties which God has given them, they will be preparing to render Him more efficient service.”¹ “It should be the object of our colleges to prepare workers for home and foreign fields.”² “God would not have us in any sense



Although CaUC's students are culturally diverse, they are unified by similar spiritual and moral belief systems.



At CaUC, three out of four professors hold a Ph.D., evidence that Adventist education equals quality academics.



At CaUC, students can prepare for a variety of careers where they can combine professional success and moral leadership.



A 10-to-one student-teacher ratio gives CaUC professors the chance to mentor their students both academically and spiritually.

behind in educational work. Our colleges should be far in advance in the highest kind of education. . . . If we do not have schools for our youth, they will attend other seminaries and colleges, and will be exposed to infidel sentiments, to cavilings and questionings concerning the inspiration of the Bible. There is a great deal of talk concerning higher education, and many suppose that higher education consists wholly in an education in

science and literature; but this is not all. The highest education includes the knowledge of the word of God, and is comprehended in the words, 'That they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' John 17:3."³³

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Is this really happening today in North America? The answer is a resounding "YES." The evidence can be seen in many diverse ways on different campuses. For example, the Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences was developed to meet the need for personnel within the Florida Hospital network. It not only meets this need, but also creatively shares the love of Christ with every student who walks its corridors. Canadian University College (CaUC) continues to support the three fundamen-

tal reasons for existence. Our Campus Ministries, through its multiple in-reach and outreach programs, invites young people to commit themselves to service both on campus and to the world about them.

The ratio of alumni to church leadership is overwhelming in Canada. Within the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference, 83 percent of the current pastors; 91 percent of teachers; 100 percent of the nursing-home administrators; and 75 percent of the conference office personnel attended CaUC.

Adventist higher education ensures that church workers possess not only professional skills, but also a strong Christian philosophical underpinning for their disciplines. Our universities and colleges provide an environment that models the mission of service. The church is much more likely to get church treasurers from among business graduates of Adventist schools than from non-denominational institutions.

Today's university and college campuses also reflect the internationalism of the church. With the interconnectedness of institutions and the worldwide network through accreditation, every student experiences the social/international/cultural values of the church. Future workers experience a sense of the wider church, its challenges and mission.

The universities and colleges of North America provide a safe base for the youth of the church to explore new perspectives, find personal growth, and prepare for domestic and foreign service both within the church and in the surrounding community. Seventh-day Adventist higher education is preparing leadership for eternity. ☞



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REFERENCES

1. Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publ. Assn., 1954), p. 329.
2. _____, "One College Better Than Two in the Northwest," *Manuscript Release Volume 21*, p. 462.
3. _____, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1913), p. 45.



The Chan Shun Science Centre at CaUC provides a state-of-the art environment for study.



At CaUC, students can prepare for medical and other health-related careers that serve both the church and society.



Campus Ministries, such as small groups that meet for prayer and Bible study, foster a reliance on Christ as the source of knowledge and strength.