



LICENSE & ACCREDITATION 2021

INTRODUCTION

Thales College is licensed by the [Board of Governors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) to offer academic programs and grant undergraduate degrees.

Thales College does not intend to pursue accreditation by [The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges \(SACSCOC\)](#), which accredits degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southeastern United States, including North Carolina.

What is a license? The State of North Carolina requires colleges and universities to obtain a license to offer academic programs and grant degrees. When it intends to offer an academic program, the college or university submits the prospective program description, all course syllabi, and faculty qualifications through a [UNC system agency](#) that reports to the UNC system Board of Governors. After peer review and an opportunity for revision, if necessary, the Board of Governors decides to grant, or not grant, a license for the program.

If the college itself is new, like Thales College in 2019, the college must provide its mission statement, personnel, all of its policies and evidence of financial viability. The college submits the application through the same UNC system agency. In February 2020, the UNC Board of Governors granted Thales College a license to offer its first degree, the Bachelor of Arts in the Liberal Arts and Sciences.

What is regional accreditation? Regional accreditation is a voluntary process but a requirement to participate in the [Federal Student Aid program](#) and their [state equivalents](#). The regional accreditation process is designed to maintain a minimum standard of institutional effectiveness by documenting evidence of student learning outcomes and of actions taken to ensure quality and ongoing improvement in essential areas of institutional work, notably mission integrity, academic quality and improvement, administrative effectiveness, legal compliance, and financial stability. [Seven regional accrediting commissions](#) periodically review institutions in their respective regions.

Most US colleges and universities are accredited. The main reason they participate in the accreditation process is to acquire funding through the Federal Student Aid program and state equivalents.

What is specialized or professional accreditation? Specialized or professional accreditors establish accreditation standards for undergraduate and graduate programs in particular disciplines, such as law, medicine, and religion.

WHY THALES COLLEGE DOES NOT PURSUE REGIONAL ACCREDITATION

Thales College has decided not to pursue regional accreditation because it does not intend to participate in the federal or state financial aid programs. The College provides an affordable education not funded by low-interest government loans and the resulting student debt. The accreditation process itself introduces tasks beyond what faculty and administrators would ordinarily perform, which increases operating costs and thus costs to students and their families. Regional accreditation is not necessary to maintain academic quality and implement continuous improvement practices like internal and external review.

Because of this decision, some Thales College students may encounter obstacles to credit transfer or graduate school admissions, but based on our analysis, those obstacles would be manageable for most students.

TRANSFERRING THALES COLLEGE COURSE CREDIT

Regional accrediting commissions do not prohibit colleges and universities from accepting transfer credit from unaccredited colleges. For example, in the Southeastern US, where Thales College is founded, [SACSCOC's](#) “accreditation standards do not mandate that institutions accept transfer credit only from regionally accredited institutions.” SACSCOC’s standards do “require member institutions to analyze credit accepted for transfer in terms of level, content, quality, comparability, and degree program relevance.”

Regional accrediting commissions leave the decision up to individual colleges and universities. Accreditors require their institutions to publish clear review policies that ensure academic quality while enabling students to move easily from one institution to another without spending time and money on comparable courses twice. Accreditors advise their institutions not to impose artificial impediments and meaningless requirements on the transfer process but to base credit acceptance decisions on the nature,

content, academic rigor and level of potential transfer credit, and [not merely on the accreditation status of the college.](#)

Some regional accrediting commissions, [such as the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), advise their institutions to define a special process for accepting transfer credits from unaccredited institutions. They offer this advice because a college might lose its accreditation or not be accredited for reasons that do not impact the academic quality of its programs. The process should consider those reasons when evaluating the academic comparability of courses for transfer credit.

Regional accrediting commissions also recognize that colleges and universities serve students by accepting credits for learning that takes place outside a college classroom, such as workplace courses and military training. [Accreditors emphasize a student-centered approach](#) that allows students to change institutions as their circumstances and goals change, while assuring the academic quality of their education.

Colleges and universities themselves often state that transfer courses must come from a regionally accredited institution. In light of the general guidance of regional accrediting commissions outlined above, it is fair and reasonable that students transferring from unaccredited colleges ask that their credits be evaluated for academic quality and comparability. If an institution finds Thales College courses comparable to its own or to courses from other institutions that it is willing to transfer, it may transfer credit but is not obligated to.

In sum, colleges and universities themselves determine whether to accept transfer credit. Regional accreditation commissions assume that some of these courses may come from unaccredited colleges, expect that those courses be evaluated on their merits, and require their institutions to publish their policies.

GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Regional accrediting commissions mentioned above accredit most of the institutions that host graduate programs and, as with transfer credits, expect institutions and graduate programs to establish their own admissions criteria and publish their policies.

In addition, specialized or professional associations sometimes accredit programs in their particular fields. In some subjects, such as psychology and law, their accreditation often has a great influence on the ability of a graduate program's degree holders to work in that field.

Some of these accreditors prohibit their members from accepting applicants who graduated from non-accredited schools, and others do not. For example:

Business: The [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business](#) (AACSB) does not require its members accept applications only from accredited undergraduate institutions. AACSB standard 6.1 states that “Normally, graduate business degree program admission criteria should include the expectation that applicants have or will earn a bachelor’s degree prior to admission to the graduate program” but does not say that the undergraduate degree institution must be accredited.

Law: The [American Bar Association](#) (ABA) requires that their law schools accept applications only from graduates with a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution. Thus, Thales College students could not apply to an ABA-accredited law school. They may apply to non-ABA accredited law schools. There are some non-ABA law schools, such as the [Nashville School of Law](#), that have long standing and respected programs, but there are also poor quality schools, and the [Law School Admissions Council](#) [rightly advises](#) applicants to research the quality of the program and limitations, if any, of a degree from that school.

Psychology: The [American Psychological Association](#) (APA) requires that its members accept applications only from graduates with a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution. Under this policy, Thales College students could not apply to an APA-accredited program. Some graduate schools in psychology accept applications from unaccredited schools if the applicant has their degree validated by a service such as [World Education Services](#) (WES), typically used by international students applying for graduate programs in the US.

Economics: Professional associations in economics, like the [American Economic Association](#) exist, but they do not accredit graduate economics programs. Thales College graduates could apply for these programs if the school and institution policies or admissions representatives permit.

Humanities: Professional associations in the various humanities disciplines, like the [American Historical Association](#), exist, but they do not accredit graduate humanities

programs. Thales College graduates could apply for these programs if the school and institution policies or admissions representatives permit.

Religion: Graduate programs in theology or ministry typically do not require an accredited undergraduate degree. The Association of Theological Schools standards state that “Students without an accredited baccalaureate degree or its equivalent may be admitted to a master’s degree if the school documents through rigorous means that those students are prepared to do master’s-level work.”

In sum, Thales College graduates may encounter obstacles when applying to graduate school, but graduating from Thales College will not bar students from all graduate school opportunities. It will often depend on the subject, institution, and the program’s teaching faculty, who may influence the application process.

IS THALES COLLEGE A DIPLOMA MILL?

No. The regional accreditation process also exists to identify [diploma mills](#), which provide a degree for a fee but require little to no academic work. By contrast, Thales College resembles other liberal arts colleges except that it is not accredited, it holds seminars on its campus in Raleigh and requires attendance daily, it places its students in internships in which they are evaluated, and it is affiliated with [Thales Academy](#) and [CaptiveAire Systems](#), which are both leading organizations in education and business, respectively.

CONCLUSION

To support its students who would like to transfer academic credit to other institutions or apply to graduate school, Thales College will provide transcripts, syllabi and any other requested documents, and our faculty will respond to questions from other institutions about our courses. The College will seek credit transfer articulation agreements with other institutions and maintain lists and relationships with graduate schools to which our students may apply.

Thales College recommends that students retain copies of all of the work they complete for Thales College courses, and the College uses a learning management system that facilitates this task. If a student decides to transfer away from Thales College, that coursework may also be an important part of a student’s request for transfer credit and graduate school.