

HISTORY OF VANGUARD UNIVERSITY

During the Summer of 1920, Harold K. Needham, D. W. Kerr, and W. C. Peirce opened a school to prepare Christian workers for the various ministries of the church. The new institute, Southern California Bible School, moved from Los Angeles to Pasadena in 1927. In 1939 it was chartered by the State of California as a college eligible to grant degrees, and it became Southern California Bible College—the first four-year institution of the Assemblies of God. In 1943 the college received recognition by the government for the training of military chaplains. It moved to the present campus in 1950. The name was changed to Southern California College nine years later when majors in the liberal arts were added to the curriculum.

Regional accreditation and membership in the Western Association of Schools and Colleges were granted in 1964. In 1967 the College received recognition and approval of its teaching credential program from the California State Board of Education. In June 1983 the Graduate Studies Program received approval from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. A Degree Completion Program was started in 1994 for adult learners. On July 1, 1999, university status was achieved when Southern California College registered with the Secretary of State's Office as Vanguard University of Southern California. The University is comprised of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Patty Arvielo School of Business and Management (launching Fall 2024), the School of Education, and the School of Theology and Ministry.

In addition to its founding president, Harold K. Needham, Vanguard University has had the able leadership of nine presidents: Daniel Kerr, Irvine J. Harrison, John B. Scott, O. Cope Budge, Emil A. Balliet, Wayne E. Kraiss, Murray W. Dempster, Carol A. Taylor and Michael J. Beals.

For over one hundred years, Vanguard University has been a leader in educational innovation within its denomination, preparing students for all types of ministry and professional vocations. As a Christian university, Vanguard is constantly seeking to expand its influence and service through education that provides excellence without compromise for the glory of Jesus Christ.

