

Christian Academic Network (C-A-N-)

CONSTITUTION

Vision

C-A-N- exists to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through the academic community of the UK.

Aims

We have two major aims: to encourage the integration of Christian faith into academic life, and to support and equip all university and college staff as witnesses for Christ in their workplace.

Convictions

Each Christian member of university and college staff has been uniquely gifted, specially called and placed on their campus by God. They are ambassadors for Christ in their own specialised mission field.

The academic community is one of the most influential groups in the country. We draw the next generation of leaders from graduates and therefore Christian university and college staff are strategically placed for tremendous national influence and a worldwide impact for Christ.

The existence of a vibrant and visible staff Christian fellowship strengthens, supports and enhances the credibility of the work and witness of Christian student groups on campus.

Every Christian in the university or college community has a role to play in bringing God back to the centre of our intellectual life through working in their academic discipline. Christian values and thinking can again permeate the academy and in turn society as the Christian worldview is seen as sufficient and relevant to all of life in every discipline.

A country-wide cross-disciplinary network of Christian academics and staff brings encouragement, support, stimulation and a renewed sense of corporate vision and hope to the academic community and its work.

Recognising the distinctive part played by other Christians on campus, the academic community and the wider body of Christ, we believe that by working together we can have a greater impact than working alone.

Doctrinal Basis

The doctrinal basis of C-A-N- shall be the fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in Holy Scripture, including:

- a. There is one God in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- b. God is sovereign in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgement.
- c. The Bible, as originally given, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.
- d. Since the fall, the whole of humankind is sinful and guilty, so that everyone is subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- e. The Lord Jesus Christ, God's incarnate Son, is fully God; he was born of a virgin; his humanity is real and sinless; he died on the cross, was raised bodily from death and is now reigning over heaven and earth.
- f. Sinful human beings are redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death once and for all time of their representative and substitute, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between them and God.

- g. Those who believe in Christ are pardoned all their sins and accepted in God's sight only because of the righteousness of Christ credited to them; this justification is God's act of undeserved mercy, received solely by trust in him and not by their own efforts.
- h. The Holy Spirit alone makes the work of Christ effective to individual sinners, enabling them to turn to God from their sin and to trust in Jesus Christ.
- i. The Holy Spirit lives in all those he has regenerated. He makes them increasingly Christ-like in character and behaviour and gives them power for their witness in the world.
- j. The one holy universal church is the Body of Christ, to which all true believers belong.
- k. The Lord Jesus Christ will return in person, to judge everyone, to execute God's just condemnation on those who have not repented and to receive the redeemed to eternal glory.

Key Activities

In fulfilment of its Aims, C-A-N- will pursue, through its Leadership Team (LT), those activities deemed appropriate, which may include the following:

- a. grow and support the network by facilitating an online community for our membership. Through the website and message boards members can interact, contribute ideas and view other member's websites, research interests and keep involved from afar.
- b. undertake to organise conferences and training events to bring university and college staff from across the UK together.
- c. publish paper or electronic media to inform, share information and give vision and encouragement.
- d. support, resource and encourage local staff groups on campuses for the purposes of fellowship, support, study, prayer and outreach to have an impact on their university or college for Christ.
- e. develop specialised strategies, provide resources and give training to assist Christian university and college staff in their work of teaching, research and witness for Christ. This includes the fostering of scholarly publications, informed by the Christian worldview, in the secular media.
- f. foster in the UK, as part of a global academic community, access to international resources and work with Christian lecturers and professors from every discipline across the world.
- g. encourage interaction with professionals in the field to ensure that new thinking is grounded in reality and disseminated widely.
- h. foster engagement and dialogue with others.

Membership

Whilst membership of C-A-N- is primarily intended to be open to all staff working within the universities and colleges of the UK, any one else interested in the activities of C-A-N- may become a member.

New members shall be invited to indicate their acceptance of the Constitution, including the doctrinal basis. Only those members who do so shall be eligible for nomination to serve on the LT or eligible to vote.

Membership shall cease at a member's request or upon a decision of the LT. A decision by the LT to withdraw membership shall only be taken after the LT has fully considered the best interests of C-A-N-.

Leadership Team

- a. Purpose
The Leadership Team (LT) shall transact the official business of C-A-N- and shall promote the well-being, policy and development of the Network. The Leadership Team (LT) shall encourage members in activities and contributions in accordance with C-A-N-'s stated vision, convictions and doctrinal basis.
- b. Meetings
The LT shall meet at least twice a year and at such other times as it may itself determine.
- c. Reports
The LT shall produce an annual report accounting for C-A-N-'s activities and finances over the previous twelve months, and its objectives and plans for the following twelve months. The report shall be made available to the members.
- d. Membership
The LT shall consist of
 - i) representatives drawn from the membership, a majority of whom should be practising academic staff (teaching and/or research).
 - ii) one representative nominated by Agape.
 - iii) one representative nominated by the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF).Members may be co-opted at the discretion of the existing LT members. Nominations and volunteers from among the membership may be considered for this purpose.
- e. Officers
The LT shall appoint a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer from among its own number. Officers shall serve for a term of three years, before being eligible for re-appointment. Officers shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms.
- f. Length of Term
Appointments to the LT are for three years, with re-appointment possible for a second three-year term. After six years service a member must leave the LT for at least one year before being eligible for re-appointment. The exceptions to this are:
 - i) Members of the inaugural LT shall serve initially for variable terms of one, two or three years to allow for retirement in rotation. For the purpose of determining eligibility for re-election, an initial term of less than three years shall be discounted. Such members shall thus be eligible to serve for a maximum of eight years without a break.
 - ii) A member appointed as Chair, Secretary or Treasurer shall be allowed to continue in office until the completion of the three-year term of office, before retiring from the LT. Thereafter, the normal rules for re-appointment to the LT shall apply.
- g. Convenor
The Chair shall be responsible for convening meetings and setting agendas, in consultation with members of the LT.
- h. Absence of Chair
In the absence of the appointed Chair, meetings shall be chaired by the Secretary or such other member of the LT as those present shall determine for that meeting.
- i. Quorum
A quorum for LT meetings shall be at least three members.

Finance

- a. The LT, through the Treasurer, shall be responsible for the finances of C-A-N-. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial report for inclusion in the annual Report (see Leadership Team c. above).
- b. Any bank account in which any assets of C-A-N- are deposited shall be operated by the LT and shall be held in the name of Christian Academic Network. All cheques and orders

for the payment of money from such an account shall be signed by at least two LT members.

- c. The LT shall be responsible for determining the most appropriate methods and level of funding to enable the vision to be pursued.
- d. Except with the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners, no LT member may:
 - i) receive any benefit in money or kind from C-A-N-, except the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses in attending meetings or carrying out other duties;
 - ii) have a financial interest in the supply of goods or services to C-A-N-;
 - iii) acquire or hold any interest in property of C-A-N-, except in order to hold it as trustee of C-A-N-

General Meeting

A General Meeting may be called either on instruction from the LT or written application by 10 or more members or 5% of the total membership, whichever is the fewer. Notice of such meeting and details of business to be transacted shall be sent to all members at least one calendar month before the date thereof.

The quorum at General Meetings shall consist of 15 members or 10% of the total membership, whichever is the fewer.

Sponsoring Bodies

C-A-N- is formed as a joint venture between Agape and UCCF. C-A-N-, through its elected officers, is wholly responsible for its own administration and financial management, but may receive assistance in respect of these functions from either or both sponsoring bodies, by mutual agreement. The sponsoring bodies shall have the right to withdraw their sponsorship in the event of a breach of this Constitution.

Amendments of the constitution

Any proposed amendment may be recommended by the LT or given in writing to the Secretary and signed by at least 25 members. No alterations may be made to the Constitution except by agreement of two thirds of those voting at a General Meeting. The Constitution may be amended only if prior consent of UCCF and Agape is obtained to any proposed amendments.

Dissolution of C-A-N-

The dissolution of C-A-N- may be effected only by a Special Resolution of C-A-N- in a General Meeting, such a Resolution having been put to the General Meeting by the LT (who shall have agreed to put such a Resolution by a simple majority of members present at the LT meeting in question). Such dissolution may only be effected after satisfaction of all debts and liabilities and any property remaining shall be given or transferred to such other charity or charities having objects similar to the objects of C-A-N-, as shall be determined by the LT.

Approved August 2006