



# A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE NEEDED IN MISSIONS EDUCATION

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Ralph Winter believed that ministerial schools both at home and abroad tend to go wrong in three ways. First, they attract the wrong students. Second, they offer the wrong curriculum. Third, they present their course work and diplomas in the wrong package.

He saw that the real leaders, the gifted people that God could readily utilize in a pastoral capacity, are right there in the churches. This reality birthed his vision for extension education, or that form of education which does not disrupt the student's productive relation to society. Early on he challenged our growing staff, "If there is a pressing need for fundamental re-engineering in our inherited schooling patterns, we had better look into it." Thus from the beginning, getting the right training to the right people was a founding principle of William Carey International University (WCIU).

WCIU was born as a corporation on February 25, 1977. Within a year, it was authorized to grant a Ph.D. degree, and, about five years later, gained the highest State distinction, "Full Institutional Approval." Dr. Winter designed WCIU as a "laboratory university," the goal of which was not to attract as many students to itself as possible, but to hammer out the most flexible graduate programs that would serve the mission community, and to demonstrate to existing Christian graduate institutions both at home and abroad how they might do likewise. One of the first projects tackled by WCIU was the development of a mission-oriented graduate level TESOL program (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), which was eventually handed over to Biola.



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In his later years, Dr. Winter's biggest project was the development of a complete off-campus curriculum that radically integrates both college and seminary studies into a single 32-semester-unit M.A. degree program, which he called World Christian Foundations (WCF, see [worldchristianfoundations.org](http://worldchristianfoundations.org)). This curriculum has now been re-packaged as a freshman year of Insight (see Becky Lewis' article in this section). A "taste" of these study programs has also been encapsulated in a 3-unit course, Foundations of the World Christian Movement, which Ralph Winter considered to be a summary of his missiology, and which represents his latest thinking in this field. (For information on this course go to [www.uscwm.org](http://www.uscwm.org).)

One or more of these curricula, offered through the Training Division of the U.S. Center for World Mission, are being used by groups like Trinity Evangelical University (Deerfield), Northwestern College (St. Paul), Eternity Bible College and Philadelphia Bible College in India. A North American agency or church can now train their people using older and more experienced staff as mentors to guide students through the program without having to create their own curricula or administer complex programs. Over forty agencies have signed Memos of Understanding with WCIU, agreeing to recommend their workers for WCIU study programs. When accepted as students, their workers, in turn, receive tuition discounts.

These are just a few of the innovative ideas Ralph Winter dreamed up to move mission education forward into the 21st century. He came up with so many incredible ideas, it may take us twenty years just to implement them all! As we look to the future, we envision more and more partnerships with agencies and educational institutions around the world to further the cause of the Kingdom in every people, as was the vision of WCIU's founder and former president, Dr. Ralph Winter. 🌐