

Campus Crusade switches its name to 'Cru'

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [August 23, 2011](#) issue

Campus Crusade for Christ is out. "Cru" is in. The 60-year-old evangelical ministry recently announced its new name, saying the old name had become problematic.

"We've been having issues with two words in the name—*campus* and *crusade*," said Steve Sellers, a vice president who oversees the ministry's U.S. operations, in an interview. The change was announced at a staff conference July 19 in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Though the Florida-based organization began on campuses in 1951, it expanded to some two dozen ministries focused on topics such as families, athletes, the military and inner cities.

When Campus Crusade was founded by the late Bill Bright and his wife, Vonette, the word *crusade* typically referred to the stadium-sized events held by evangelists like Billy Graham.

"In today's culture it carries more weight in terms of its historic meaning," Sellers said, with people thinking "more to the days of the Crusaders and dealing with the Middle East as opposed to a positive use of the word."

Cru isn't the only religious organization that has moved away from *crusade*.

Wheaton College, Graham's alma mater in Illinois, changed its mascot from Crusaders to Thunder in 2000. Graham's son Franklin leads "festivals" instead of crusades, and his grandson Will holds "celebrations." Most recently, Crusader Lutheran Church in Rockville, Maryland, changed its name to Living Faith Lutheran Church out of concern that the old name had "militaristic" and "non-Christian" overtones.

Sellers said the Crusade-to-Cru change is part of that trend. "We don't want the words that we use to get in the way of the message that we have," he said. In a Frequently Asked Questions feature on its website, the ministry explained why leaders also opted to take the word *Christ* out of its title.

"Cru enables us to have discussions about Christ with people who might initially be turned off by a more overtly Christian name," the response read.

Sellers said the name of the umbrella organization, Campus Crusade for Christ International, will still be used. —RNS