

## 7. Student Life

### 7.1. *Social, Religious and Recreational Dimensions*

As a Catholic institution, Christendom College seeks to maintain a community life that promotes the academic, spiritual, and social, development of the whole human person. More than just a place to take courses, the Christendom Graduate School is a fellowship of scholars who are also united in liturgy and in leisure. A variety of activities outside the classroom help foster this fellowship and personal growth.

Christendom College does not have residences for graduate students during the fall and spring terms. However, many residents in the area rent rooms and apartments to Christendom students, and the Graduate School maintains a list of these to aid students in their search for housing. Room and board are available for summer students attending on-campus summer courses on the Front Royal campus.

Christendom College offers daily Mass and Confession in Christ the King Chapel. During the summers, community Morning and Night Prayers are an essential part of the community life.

Social activities at the Christendom Graduate School vary according to the desires of the current student body, and include receptions at the graduate school, guest speakers, parties at the homes of students or faculty, hikes, field trips, pilgrimages, and informal get-togethers to watch movies, to discuss topics or to go out to eat. During the summers, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, tennis, basketball and racquetball are additional favored activities.

### 7.2. *Student Conduct*

In light of the gospel message, the Graduate School expects all students to conduct themselves in accord with the principles of justice and Christian charity. Christendom will strive to treat students with the same principles, and to provide due process in the investigation of any alleged infraction. The Christendom Graduate School defines academic misconduct to include violations of the academic regulations, cheating, plagiarism, disruption of class activity, falsification of information or documents, and lying. Penalties for any misconduct (academic or otherwise) may include permanent dismissal, temporary suspension, probations, or a formal warning. Students accused of misconduct and facing dismissal have the right to a hearing before a disciplinary committee consisting of the Dean of the Graduate School, two professors, and a graduate student whom both the Dean and the accused student approve. The judgment of this disciplinary committee is final.

The Christendom Graduate School expects that all faculty, staff, and students abide by the sexual misconduct policy promulgated by Christendom College. This policy can be found in section IV of the Christendom College Student Handbook, linked here: <https://www.christendom.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/22-23-Christendom-College-Student-Handbook.pdf>. This policy applies both to in-person interactions and to online interactions.

### 7.3. *Grievances and complaints*

Christendom College seeks to maintain effective and supportive relationships between students and faculty/staff members within the Graduate School. Students are encouraged to make efforts to resolve misunderstandings and conflicts with school staff or faculty members before serious problems develop. Students are encouraged where possible to seek resolution through informal means as a first-approach to resolving the issue at hand. However, when a student believes he or she has been treated unjustly, in a way that violates his or her personal rights or is in opposition to Graduate School policies, the student may complain to the Graduate School and expect appropriate resolution. There are two avenues for registering a complaint with the Graduate School. These are the Informal Student Complaint and the Official Grievance. If normal channels of communication

break down and/or a situation does not permit or lend itself (e.g. sexual harassment) to informal resolution or does not seem to be resolving itself, students are encouraged to seek recourse through the official grievance process. The Graduate School accepts SCHEV (State Council for Higher Education in Virginia) oversight in resolving complaints from students taking distance education under the aegis of SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements).

Issues regarding academic grades are not handled under the grievance policy (for academic grade appeals, please see under “Grading”, §6.2.7, above). A student who wishes to appeal a grade should first appeal directly to his or her professor. If the matter is not resolved by direct appeal to the professor, the student may have recourse to the Dean of the Graduate School. A student with an unresolved appeal within one of the Dean’s own courses may have recourse to the Dean of Students. Appeals to the Dean of the Graduate School (or Dean of Students) should be made in writing.

### 7.3.1. Informal Student Complaints

Informal Student Complaints are complaints or conflicts which do not escalate, either by their nature or by the request of the student, to the level of an Official Grievance, yet are still important in the evaluation process for the Graduate School. Informal complaints should be made to the Dean of the Graduate School.

### 7.3.2. Official Grievances

Official Grievances are official complaints of a more serious nature permitted to be submitted by faculty, staff or students.

**The procedure for an Official Grievance.** Students who wish to file a grievance must begin by submitting a Student Grievance Form (available in the Student Resources section of the Graduate School website) with their attached grievance letter. Completed grievances are to be returned to the Dean of the Graduate School. If a student wishes to file a grievance against the Graduate School Dean, the student submits the grievance to the office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs who will appoint appropriate College officials as a committee to investigate and resolve the grievance.

All grievances must be filed within ninety calendar days after the incident/event/issue causing the grievance occurred. After filing a grievance, the student is contacted within ten business days with an initial response, although, often progress will be made sooner than the ten-day time frame. During the entire grievance process every effort is made to respect confidentiality.

The Graduate School Dean, Vice President of Academic Affairs or their designee investigates the grievance and communicates with the appropriate students, staff, or faculty to address the problem, as is warranted. Resolution of the grievance occurs once the final response or outcome is determined. The student filing the grievance is notified of the action or non-action that will be taken in response to the grievance.

If the determined resolution is not perceived to be sufficient by the student, the student may appeal to the Grievance Appeal Committee, by submitting to the office of the President a letter of appeal addressed to the Grievance Appeal Committee. This committee is made up of members chosen by, but not including, the President of the College. The committee will make a decision to hear or decline the letter of appeal. In the case that the appeal committee declines the letter of appeal, the previous resolution decision remains in effect. If the Appeal Committee accepts the letter of appeal, the student will have his or her case heard and subsequently the

committee will determine whether a new resolution will take place or the resolution will remain as decided by the prior College official. The decision of the Grievance Appeal Committee is final.

The above mentioned procedures are for the allowance of student grievances when a student feels he or she is personally afflicted by unjust treatment and seeks fair resolution. Complaints about College policies, simply in their nature, definition, or enforcement, are not to be addressed through this process. Rather, students should initiate contact with the Dean of the Graduate School.

#### 7.4. *Intellectual Property*

Any intellectual property produced by a student at Christendom College, excluding tests, exams, and quizzes, to fulfill in whole or part the requirements of a course in which the student is registered, will be owned by the student. The College does not claim ownership of such intellectual property.

#### 7.5. *Procedures to Protect the Privacy of Online Students*

The Graduate School observes the following procedures to protect the privacy of online students:

1. Registration for online courses is securely received at the Graduate School office via our password-protected Populi platform or the USPS.
2. The only staff members who see this registration information are the Administrative Assistant to the Dean and the Registrar/Business Officer.
3. Social Security numbers are not asked for as part of the registration process. Those Social Security numbers received with the application to the MA program are kept in the students' files under lock. Social Security numbers are used only for tax reporting purposes (1098-T forms).
4. Students' access to the online classroom is password protected and integral to the registration process in Populi.
5. Access to the classroom (and thus to the students' work and grades) is provided only to the student, the professor of the course, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Registrar and the Classroom Technician.

#### 7.6. *Student Achievement*

At the Graduate School, student achievement is evaluated through three primary measures: Success rates on the capstone comprehensive exam, annual number of graduates, and certain metrics of our student satisfaction survey.

The mission of Christendom College is to “form the whole person for a life spent in the pursuit of truth and wisdom” so that students are prepared “for their role as faithful, informed, and articulate members of Christ’s Church and society.” The comprehensive exam and graduation rates, as indicators of intellectual preparedness, reflect the level at which our students succeed in pursuit of truth and wisdom. Additionally, the relevant sections of our student satisfaction survey also reflect the level at which our students think they are equipped for life specifically as faithful, informed and articulate members of Christ’s Church and society.

##### 7.6.1. *Comprehensive exams*

An indication of success for student achievement in any given year is a pass rate of 95% with at least 10% earning a superior pass (P+) and not more than 10% earning a marginal pass (P-). Comprehensive exam scores from the last seven years are reported in the following table and reflect student success.

#### **Comprehensive exam results from AY’14-15 to AY’ 21-22**