

# STUDENT HANDBOOK



RICHMONT  
GRADUATE UNIVERSITY™

2021-2022

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

## 2021-2022

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# Section One: Introduction



## Welcome to the Student Handbook

The Student Handbook is a practical resource of information for the students, faculty, and staff of Richmond Graduate University. The policies and procedures stated in Richmond's Graduate Catalog apply to the entire university and take precedence over those stated in the Student Handbook. Students can access the Richmond Graduate University Graduate Catalog online at [richmont.edu](http://richmont.edu).

Richmont Graduate University students are responsible for being informed of all general policies and procedures outlined in the Graduate Catalog, as many policies and procedures are not necessarily outlined in the Student Handbook. Any discrepancies between the Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook should be discussed with the Records Office or Dean of Students.

The Student Handbook references numerous forms. Most forms are available on the university website or the Student Resources page. Please contact the Records Office with any questions.

Revisions to the Student Handbook are made annually. Richmond Graduate University reserves the right to change policy or procedures at any time, including those related to admission, instruction, student evaluation, and graduation. All changes are effective at such times as the university administration determines and may not apply only to prospective students, but also to currently enrolled students. Students will be notified of any updates to policies and procedures.

## **Richmont Graduate University Statement of Faith**

Richmont is founded on principles that adhere to the following National Association of Evangelicals Statement of Faith. It has been affirmed by more than 70 denominations and thus represents a broad evangelical consensus. All faculty members affirm this statement, and students who attend Richmont are taught from a Christian perspective.

**We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.**

**We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.**

**We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.**

**We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whom the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.**

**We believe God's redemptive purpose will be consummated by the return of Christ to raise the dead, judge all people, and establish His glorious kingdom.**

**We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.**



## **Richmont Graduate University Mission Statement**

Richmont Graduate University provides Christ-centered education and research that advances God's work of healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, churches, and communities.

### **Student Affairs Mission Statement**

The department of Student Affairs offers support and encouragement to students in order to promote effective professional training and foster personal Christ-centered transformation throughout the experience at Richmont Graduate University. The Student Affairs department seeks to enhance student learning and development by providing opportunities for leadership, personal and professional growth, interpersonal skills enrichment and increased social and community responsibility and service. The Office of Student Affairs desires to create opportunities and spaces to connect students to each other, to the University, and to God.

## University Accreditation

### Regional Accreditation

Richmont Graduate University is accredited by the **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)** to award the master's degree. SACSCOC is one of the six regional accrediting agencies recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Accreditation is a voluntary process of internal and peer review for the improvement of academic quality and demonstration of accountability.

If there is evidence of significant non-compliance of the Commission's requirements or standards, please contact the Commission at the address or phone number below.

Commission on Colleges 1866 Southern Lane Decatur, GA 30033-4097 (404) 679-4500 <http://www.sacscoc.org/>

Richmont Graduate University is committed to the systematic review of its academic programs to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Support services units engage in a similar review process to improve the delivery of services to students and other constituents.

### State Authorization

Richmont Graduate University is authorized by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Committee and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. This authorization is renewed annually based on an evaluation of minimum standards concerning the quality of education, ethical business practices, health and safety, and fiscal responsibility.

#### **Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission**

2082 East Exchange Place, Suite 220 Tucker, GA 30084-5305 (770)414-3300  
<http://www.gnpec.org/>

#### **Tennessee Higher Education Commission**

404 James Robertson Parkway, Suite 1900 Nashville, TN 37243-0830 (615)741-3605 <http://tn.gov/thec/topic/authorized-institutions-data>

## Facilities

### Campuses

The University's campuses are located at the following addresses:

Atlanta Campus  
1900 The Exchange SE, Bldg 100  
Atlanta, GA 30339  
(404) 233-3949  
(888) 924-6774 – Toll Free  
(404) 239-9460 – Fax

Chattanooga Campus  
1815 McCallie Ave.  
Chattanooga, TN 37404  
(423) 266-4574  
(888) 924-6774 – Toll Free  
(423) 265-7375 – Fax

[www.richmont.edu](http://www.richmont.edu)

### Libraries

Both the Ruth Holt Library in Atlanta and the Poindexter Library in Chattanooga are essential partners with the faculty in the instructional and research endeavors of Richmond Graduate University. Our purpose is to foster the development of creative reasoning and critical thinking skills that lead to intellectual, spiritual and social growth. This is accomplished by working to meet the information needs of the University's community with programs and collections that advance scholarship, develop critical competencies, promote lifelong learning, and otherwise serve the needs of the curriculum. The Richmond librarians, in collaboration with Richmond teaching faculty and periodic surveys of comparable institutions, determine library holdings for the Library collections.

The combined physical collections of Ruth Holt Library and Poindexter Library total more than 49,000 catalogued items providing a rich resource for integration studies. Computers and a wireless network equipped with T1 access to the Internet provide students with access to resources such as PsychInfo, PsychArticles, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, Religion and Philosophy Collection, ProQuest Religion, and many other databases via GALILEO (Georgia Library Learning Online) and TEL (Tennessee Electronic Libraries). In addition to print journal holdings of titles relevant to integration studies, the libraries provide access to many full-text online journals. Interlibrary loan services are provided through both libraries for materials held in LYRASIS (formerly SOLINET) member libraries, providing access to materials not available in the Richmond libraries.

The Richmond libraries maintain contractual agreements with other libraries, providing Richmond students with privileges at other area college and university libraries. Atlanta Richmond students have borrowing privileges at the libraries at Kennesaw State University and the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary – North Georgia. Additionally, the Atlanta area hosts more than forty institutions of higher learning, including four major universities and three theological

seminaries. Richmond is a member of the Georgia Private Academic Libraries Associations, which provides access to many of these libraries. Chattanooga students have privileges at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga library.

### Counseling Centers

Richmont has developed a network of counseling centers housed in churches of a variety of denominations throughout the Atlanta and Chattanooga metropolitan areas. Additionally, Richmont houses the Henegar Counseling Center and Richmont Trauma Center. Through these centers Richmont faculty, doctoral and master's level clinicians, and student interns (under the supervision of licensed mental health professionals) provide counseling to individuals, families, and groups.

These counseling centers provide mental health services to both the general public and student community. Additionally, they serve as a laboratory for the development and implementation of spiritual transformation within the standards of professional mental health practice. All of these counseling centers, as possible internship sites, also provide students a context in which to develop and practice the skills taught in the academic curriculum in the School of Counseling.

# **Section Two: General Information**

## Student Information

### Housing Information

Richmont Graduate University does not maintain student housing or dormitories. Information concerning private housing is available through:

Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
223 Perimeter Parkway  
Dunwoody, GA 30346  
[www.atlantaclassifieds.com](http://www.atlantaclassifieds.com)

Chattanooga Times Free Press  
400 E 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Chattanooga, TN 37403  
[www.timesfreepress.com](http://www.timesfreepress.com)

### Atlanta Information

Atlanta, known as the “Gateway to the South,” is a respected center of learning as well as a southeastern center of business and commerce, finance, transportation, medicine and health care, sports and recreation, and the arts. Information about the arts, banking, public transportation, churches, employment, medical services, motor vehicle registration, points of interest, recreation, shopping, sports, taxes, utilities and voting can be obtained at:

[www.metroatlantachamber.com](http://www.metroatlantachamber.com)

### Chattanooga Information

Richmont is pleased to also offer its degree programs in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the “Scenic City of the South.” Long noted for its history and tourist appeal, Chattanooga more recently has garnered international attention for its downtown revitalization and environmental leadership. Information about services and opportunities in Chattanooga can be obtained at:

[www.chattanoogaachamber.com](http://www.chattanoogaachamber.com)

### Student Community Website

The University maintains a digital bulletin board called the “Richmont Student Community.” This is a website where Richmont students, staff, faculty, and alumni can post opportunities for jobs, housing, book sales, etc. that are exclusively offered for current Richmont students. Anyone with a Richmont email can create an account and post a listing. Each listing has to be approved by the Office of Student Affairs.

Students can access the Richmont Student Community here:  
<https://studentcommunity.richmont.edu/>

### **Additional Information**

Please visit our website at [www.richmont.edu](http://www.richmont.edu) to obtain additional information about Atlanta or Chattanooga and to view directions and maps to the Richmond campuses.

## **Student Life**

Richmont students come from a wide range of geographic regions and backgrounds. This diverse student body provides excellent opportunities for learning and social life.

Richmont provides opportunities for students to participate in a wide range of activities and courses designed to enhance their educational experience. These activities include, but are not limited to: diversity celebrations, alumni reunions, informal gatherings and a variety of guest speakers and professionals. Official student activities will be coordinated through the Office of Student Affairs.

### **Orientation**

All new students are required to complete an orientation process to learn about Richmond Graduate University and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that are essential for success as a graduate student. Admitted students begin receiving information about orientation with other new student materials.

### **Communication within the University**

Effective communication between the university and its students is essential for student success. As a result, there are several methods of communication that allow Richmond to connect with students, and that also allow students to connect with Richmond staff and faculty.

#### **Email**

Richmont faculty, staff, and students all have a Richmond email address. It is the student's responsibility to check email regularly, since this is the primary method of communication from Richmond staff and faculty. Students are responsible for all information communicated to them via their Richmond email account.

#### **Faculty & Student Mailboxes**

Faculty and staff have mailboxes on their respective campus. Forms for signature can be left at the front desks, to be placed in their mailbox. Students are provided a student mailbox on each campus upon entering their program. On-campus students are responsible to check their mailbox.

#### **Faculty & Faculty Advisor Appointments**

Students are responsible to contact faculty and advisors to schedule



necessary appointments. Students can reach faculty through their Richmond email account, phone, or in person.

### **Bulletin & Magnetic Boards**

There are bulletin and magnetic boards in the Student Lounge on each campus. Additional announcements, advertisements for roommates, etc. may be posted by students at these locations.

### **Changes in Personal Information**

Please keep the Records Office informed when you change any of your biographical data (name, address, phone number, etc.). The Records Office will note the change in the directory.

### **Student Identification Cards**

Each student at Richmond Graduate University receives a Student ID card upon matriculation into the program. This card allows access to the campus building.

### **Campus Alerts**

Richmont utilizes a campus alert system to alert students when either campus will close due to weather or other emergencies. Students are automatically enrolled in this program upon matriculation, using their phone number and Richmond email address. In the event of a campus closing, Richmond will alert students to the status on each campus. Please make sure to check your Richmond email and/or cell phone regularly during these times.

### **Library Services**

Richmont has an extensive academic library on each campus. Library instruction in the use of all library resources is provided for all students. Individual and small group training is available to all students upon request.

Students have access to many library materials and databases online. All passwords for databases are provided at Orientation. Students can access all of the databases on the Richmond website. With most of these databases, students can e-mail articles to their email address for use later or download onto your data storage device.

### **Training & Continuing Education**

Richmont conducts and sponsors conferences on counseling and ministry with a Christian emphasis designed to bring together counselors, psychologists, other mental health professionals, ministers, and others in the helping fields to participate in training and spiritual renewal. These conferences offer periods of instruction, support, building of professional relationships and renewal for people in the helping ministry.

### Counseling Referral Lists for Students

Richmont maintains referral lists for local professional counselors and spiritual directors for students who provide reduced-fee counseling for Richmont students. In accordance with ethical guidelines on dual relationships, faculty members do not counsel students. Lists of the referenced counselors are available to students on the Student Resources page. Additional assistance can be provided by contacting the Office of Student Affairs.

### Mentorship

Students have access to a wide selection of alumni mentors during their time at Richmont and after they graduate. All alumni mentors commit to reach out and answer questions, and to pray for their Richmont student. Each mentor relationship is unique, and many mentors develop a lasting relationship with their Richmont student.

## Career Services

Richmont has a Director of Career Services who serves as a resource to students as they prepare to secure a job following graduation. The director provides feedback about the student's studies, resume and interviewing skills as well as providing information about upcoming employment opportunities. Career Services maintains a database of information that students can access online through the Student Resources page.

## Accommodations for Students

The Office of Student Affairs assists the University in fulfilling its commitment to educate and serve students with disabilities who qualify for admission. The Office of Student Affairs coordinates and provides a variety of academic and support services to students. Richmont's mission is to promote equal educational opportunities and a welcoming spiritual, academic, physical, and social environment for students with disabilities at Richmont Graduate University.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, provides the foundation for equal access for students with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 furthers civil rights of persons with disabilities by mandating equal educational opportunity.

Richmont Graduate University will provide reasonable accommodations to the known physical and mental limitations of a qualified individual with a disability, unless to do so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the university or unless it would fundamentally alter a degree or course requirement.

A student who desires accommodations should complete the Richmond Student Accommodations Application and submit it along with the other required documentation to the Office of Student Affairs.

Following approval of the required documentation, the student will complete a Syllabus Addendum Form for each of the student's courses, each semester. This form is signed by the student, faculty of the specific course, and ADA Coordinator to assure that all parties agree on the reasonable accommodations per that course.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Richmont Graduate University is committed to honoring our mission and our students by setting standards of excellence in the areas of academics, clinical work, interpersonal skills, and personal growth. The university is also committed to students' engagement in the evaluation process, which includes providing students with full information about the process, their roles and the role of the faculty. As part of this process, we ask that all students review all program materials including, but not limited to, those posted on the University website, the Graduate Catalog, student handbooks, clinical training manual, and this document. A separate list of student rights and responsibilities is provided for students within each School.

### Copyrighted

### Material

Richmont Graduate University recognizes the legal rights of copyright holders in any form. It prohibits illegal downloading, copying and sharing of such materials, either in physical form or digitally. Failure to follow this policy has both legal and University disciplinary implications. Students may also contact their campus librarian for further information and for assistance in legally obtaining research materials.

### CAMS

Every student has access to the CAMS Student Portal during their time as a student. The CAMS Student Portal has four primary purposes in Richmond courses:

- 1) to provide students an opportunity to receive timely information about course assignments, grades, and announcements;
- 2) to promote thoughtful, intentional interaction between course instructors and students (as well as between students) as they work on course materials;
- 3) to provide method for students to complete quizzes and exams and upload papers;
- 4) to enhance Richmond students' learning experience.

It is at the professor's discretion to use CAMS in any Richmond course. Students are responsible to check CAMS each week, beginning one week prior to the start of the course. Students are expected to be familiar with all course materials within CAMS. If a student encounters technical problems with CAMS or is unable to log into their Student Portal, please contact the Help Desk/IT Department (helpdesk@richmont.edu).

### Internet Access & Software

Students are responsible to maintain continuous access to a working and dependable internet provider, as well as reliable email software that can send and receive attachments. It is highly recommended that you have access to Microsoft Office software (Word, PowerPoint, etc.) for assignments.

### Class Attendance

Students are permitted one unexcused hour of absence per hour of course credit. Necessary absences may be excused with permission of the instructor; this must be done in advance except in acute emergencies. Please see the Graduate Catalog for the complete attendance policy.

## Program of Study

Students and the Records Office personnel complete a Program of Study *before they matriculate into their perspective program* within the first semester of their enrollment. Template sequences for each degree program and certificates are provided for students to complete their program. Using this as a guide, the student develops a program of study *with the Records Office*, outlining the sequence in which he or she plans to take the courses for the selected program with the assistance of the Records Office. The Program of Study is signed and approved by the student and the Records Office. The signed document is kept on file in the Records Office and with the student's advisor. Students who deviate from their Program of Study are required to resubmit a Program of Study for the following reasons: change of degree, change of certification(s), or change in length of time to complete the degree. A Program of Study is required to complete a student's academic file.

## Advisement

Upon acceptance to Richmond, each student is assigned an academic advisor. The advisor assists the student in becoming acclimated to the Richmond community, in career planning, and in a variety of other aspects of involvement in the university's program. Though the advisor may guide students through the process of selecting courses, ultimately the student is responsible for following their Program of Study and the university degree requirements and policies as

outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Advisors will also provide to their advisees feedback from faculty about the student each semester.

### Academic Calendar

Richmont operates on a semester schedule. Fall and spring semesters are 15 weeks; and the summer semester is 10 weeks, with weekly classes extended to meet contact-hour requirements. Although a rare occurrence, Richmont maintains the prerogative to change the Academic Calendar should the need arise. Please consult the current Graduate Catalog or university website for the Academic Calendar.

### Children & Guests Policy

The facilities of Richmont Graduate University are restricted to use by students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University, except when all or part of the University location, its buildings, or its facilities are open to the general public for a designated time and purpose. A “guest” of the University is a person invited by an officer, employee, or student to visit the campus at a specific time and place for a designated purpose. Guests must sign in and out at the front desk. Personal guests of students are permitted as long as they restrict the length of their campus visits and abide by all appropriate guidelines and policies related to their visit, including but not limited to not disrupting the student or any other person’s work or other appropriate use of the campus. By inviting a personal guest on campus, the student assumes responsibility for that guest and should remain with the guest. Guests are not permitted to attend class with a student unless the student obtains the faculty member’s prior permission. Such permission will only be granted in very special and limited circumstances.

Arranging childcare is the personal responsibility of students who have children. Students are not authorized to bring children to a university facility for extended periods of time. Frequent or lengthy visits of children are not permitted, as they may create disruptions and distractions and present a liability to the University for their safety. Minors under the age of 12 should not be left unsupervised at any time at any of the university facilities. Children may not attend class, use university equipment, or be left unattended on university property. Childcare issues frequently arise when university holidays and those of the child’s school do not match, or when a child is sick and cannot attend school or daycare. Students must plan for these challenges in advance. Asking a faculty member to allow a child in class is not an option, as faculty members are not authorized to allow children to attend class.

## Self-Care and Professional Responsibility

Graduate school presents many challenges to developing professionals, leading students to occasionally neglect maintenance of an appropriate balance between professional activities and self-care. Richmont reminds students that

development of professional competencies is dependent upon effective self-care behavior (i.e., sleep, adequate nutrition, exercise, medical health and mental health care when needed, social support, church involvement, etc.).

It is the student's responsibility to maintain effective self-care behaviors while in graduate school. Students have access to their advisor, enhancement programs, mentors, and other resources while enrolled. Students are made aware of these opportunities at their orientation and in a bi-annual email. Students also have access to a list of low-cost counselors in the greater Atlanta and/or Chattanooga areas to assist them in this regard.

Richmont's graduate training programs are a small professional community in which students support one another in developing effective self-care behaviors, much like the broader profession will be upon graduation. When a student recognizes that another student regularly neglects his/her self-care, the student should try to offer assistance to the other student in obtaining help before discussing it with a faculty member. Should the other student continue to engage in significantly unhealthy self-care behavior following peer assistance, you, as the observer, should discuss your concerns with your advisor or dean. This is your professional responsibility. Faculty may also discuss observed concerns with students regarding neglect of regular self-care.

Faculty are open to requests for accommodations in particularly distressing periods (e.g., personal or family tragedy, illness, etc.). In such situations, consistent with demonstrating professional competence, the student should bring the situation to the attention of his or her advisor (or faculty member) in order to plan for how to handle the potential program hiatus (e.g., coursework, clinical cases, etc.). The Records Office can offer assistance if the need for extended absences arises. Students should also be sure to address financial considerations (loans, assistantships, impact on tuition fellowship, etc.) when considering a hiatus from the program.

## THRIVE: Wellness & Self-Care Initiative

Richmont Graduate University desires for you to succeed in your graduate program and succeed in your new career to the fullest. Developing as a professional in mental health service or in ministry is a process that is both rewarding and challenging. We want to prepare you to experience your new career to the fullest. **THRIVE is our campus-wide emphasis on wellness that helps you to focus on wellness.**

Richmont is interested in your overall wellness, not simply your academic performance. We want you to live a satisfying life while you are in graduate school and develop and practice the tools to find fulfillment in your life after

graduation. Your faculty advisor at Richmond will be an integral part of this process for you. Each semester you will meet with them to talk about your plan for wellness. You will regularly review your wellness goals, hopes, and obstacles with them.

### What is THRIVE?

- **Wellness Activities** on campus through small and large group activities (mindfulness groups, student led support groups, yoga groups, etc.)
- **Individualized, Student-Developed Wellness Plans** (developed with your advisor)
- **Regular review of your wellness goals** with your advisor
- **Annual snapshots of your wellness** through brief online assessments
- **Support and encouragement** from faculty, staff & peers who are all working on their own personal wellness goals.

Richmont cares deeply about the wellbeing of our students. The university places strong emphasis and value on wellness in spiritual, relational, physical, emotional, and mental domains for our staff, faculty, and students.

## Office of Diversity & Inclusion

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) was formed to lead Richmond's aspirations for the intentional cultivating of a university-wide environment of safety and inclusion for all faculty, staff, students and alumni from marginalized populations. With the goal of addressing discrimination and inclusion concerns, it is intended to emulate Christ, cultivate community, and of course, embrace diversity. ODI welcomes all students, faculty, staff and alumni to seek us out and find support for any diversity and inclusion needs.



# **Section Three: Academic Policies & University Requirements**

## Matriculation Requirements

All applicants to Richmond are reviewed by the Admissions Committee on a rolling basis. The Committee reviews all applications from a holistic approach, taking all aspects of the application into consideration.

Each School of Counseling & School of Ministry applicant shall have:

1. A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university recognized by the Council for Higher Accreditation (CHEA).
2. An undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with a GPA below 3.0 can be considered for admission.

Each School of Counseling applicant will also have:

3. GRE aptitude scores (Verbal + Quantitative) greater than 300 with at least a 3.5 on the writing section; or a Miller Analogies Test (MAT) score greater than 400.
  - a. The GRE/MAT may be waived for students who have successfully completed 12 hours of master's level work in a regionally-accredited program as listed above, with a GPA 3.0 or above prior to application at Richmond.
  - b. Applicants that score below the minimum requirement may be considered for conditional admission.
  - c. Applicants with disabilities that may compromise the validity of the GRE or MAT scores may petition the Admissions Committee.
4. All Counseling applicants are recommended to have completed basic undergraduate psychology course and an introductory semester in psychological statistics. Students who have not completed at least 12 semester hours in psychology or a closely related field must take CED5102: Introduction to Counseling during their first semester.

## Grades

### Computation of Grade Point Average (GPA)

The cumulative grade point average is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned in courses by the total number of credit hours attempted. Passing grades received in pass/fail courses are not included in this computation. (Richmont does not round up a GPA.) The grade points for academic letter grades are for credit hours attempted. Grades and grade status are further defined in the Graduate Catalog.

## Academic Policies & Records

### Academic Integrity

In keeping with Biblical principles and the desire to exemplify excellence in scholarship, Richmond students are held to the highest standards of academic integrity. Truthfulness is of the very nature of God, who is Truth itself. Truth is a prominent theme in Scripture, and God's faithfulness and dependability rest in truthfulness. The Biblical admonitions against false witness, lying, and dishonesty are also prominent.

Richmont is committed to intellectual, spiritual, and moral growth. Upholding the standard of academic integrity with its reliance on honesty is the responsibility of both faculty and students. In addition to maintaining integrity in their own academic pursuits, the faculty has the right and obligation to set and clarify academic requirements for the work of students. Academic integrity is the personal and collective responsibility of all students and faculty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

#### Providing or Receiving Unauthorized Assistance

Collaboration is valued and encouraged in the Richmond student community. Students are expected to be mindful of when this is appropriate, and to check with professors when unsure about collaborating with others in academic endeavors. No student at Richmond is to provide or receive any form of unauthorized assistance on any assignment, paper, examination, project, etc. This includes, but is not limited to, copying from the assignment or examination of another, allowing one's own assignment or examination to be copied, viewing an examination prior to the date it is to be administered, giving or receiving unpermitted aid on any take-home or on-line examination, or the use of any unpermitted sources (texts, notes, online sources), etc. Also, students who wish to create examples of assignments to aid other students must receive permission from the professor prior to doing so.

#### Plagiarism

*Plagiarism* is the presentation of the words or ideas of others as one's own. Plagiarism involves failure to acknowledge material which is copied from others, or the failure to acknowledge one's indebtedness to the work of another for important thoughts presented, whether they are written or spoken. Plagiarism includes submitting material obtained online or from another source, without properly citing the source. Ideas that are paraphrased from the work of another must be cited. Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, Richmond requires that all sources be cited. Citing sources appropriately is required of all

assignments at Richmond, including online discussion posts and classroom presentations.

### Self-Plagiarism

*Self-plagiarism* is the presentation of one's own prior work as if it is new, without appropriate acknowledgement of prior use. No assignment, in whole or in part, that has been completed for another class at Richmond or at any other institution is to be submitted in a course without prior approval of the professor. Students who have a particular research interest are strongly encouraged to build upon that interest in subsequent courses, but are to ask professors to what degree previous work may be used in a class. When use of prior work is approved, it must be appropriately cited.

### Misrepresentation and other Forms of Dishonesty

Students are expected to be truthful in all facets of their communication. Misrepresentation and dishonesty may include, but are not limited to, such acts as signing an attendance roster for another student, or asking another student to sign, dishonesty with regard to any aspects of coursework, such as reading reports, etc. Students are expected to communicate truthfully at all times, which includes not omitting important, relevant information. During internship, students must accurately represent their status and qualifications at internship sites and to clients, supervisors, etc. Further, any falsification of clinical documents, or internship documentation is a serious infraction of the academic integrity policy. Any misrepresentation or form of dishonesty related to clinical training is reported to the Dean of Clinical Training as well as the Dean of the School of Counseling. (See Clinical Training Manual for more information)

### Digital Impropriety

The use of electronics in education necessitates specific considerations regarding digital integrity. Students, faculty, and staff use computers daily. To ensure electronic security, Richmond prohibits the sharing of passwords for any accounts governed and maintained by the university. Additionally, all students and faculty must take precautions against others obtaining access to their university computer accounts. Digital impropriety also includes, but is not limited to the unauthorized copying, uploading, posting, or otherwise sharing of materials related to a course in any online platform or through any digital means. Additionally, students who take courses online must accurately present themselves in the online classroom. Students in live sessions may not have another person sign in for them during a session, and must remain present the entire time they are signed in to the session.

**Any infraction of these standards, intentional or unintentional, is taken very seriously.** Consequences may include completing an additional assignment,

receiving a zero grade for the assignments, and in some cases, failing the class. Infractions may also impact a student's ability to participate in commencement. Infractions of the academic integrity policy may be grounds for dismissal at any point in a student's enrollment, up to the time of graduation. All infractions of the academic integrity policy, intentional or unintentional, are reported to the dean of the school in which the student is enrolled, and presented at the Student Qualifying Evaluations for the School of Counseling.

Disposition of cases involving alleged academic dishonesty is the initial responsibility of the faculty member involved. During Student Qualifying Evaluations, instances of academic dishonesty will be discussed by the faculty. Students may appeal the decision of the faculty member to the Academic Affairs Committee. If this resolution is unsatisfactory to one of the parties involved, further appeal may be made to the President.

Allegations that any member of the Richmond faculty or staff has failed to abide by the Statement of Academic Integrity may result in Richmond's invoking the published Procedures for Processing Grievances as outlined in the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook.

### Academic Performance

Richmont students are expected to maintain the highest standards of scholarship with a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 (B). Any student whose cumulative grade-point average falls below 3.0 during a given semester will receive a letter of scholastic warning from the Records Office. Students who receive a term GPA of less than 3.0 in two successive semesters will be subject to dismissal. A student dismissed for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA may reapply after one year and must meet full admission criteria for the master's program at the time of re-application, in addition to any requirements stipulated at the time of dismissal.

### Auditing Courses

The audit status is for persons wishing to enhance their knowledge of the spirituality and ministry, the integration of psychology and theology, or to enroll in classes for personal enrichment or obtain continuing education credit (with the approval of their agency). Courses which focus on the Bible, theology, or the integration of psychology and the Christian faith are open to qualified persons who are not seeking a graduate degree. However, because Richmond trains professional counselors, not all courses are suitable for the audit student. Some courses require a prerequisite (see the Graduate Catalog). Please see the Graduate Catalog for a complete description of audits at Richmond Graduate University.

### Registration Policies and Procedures

Please consult the Graduate Catalog for a complete overview of the registration procedure. For more detailed information, please contact the Records Office.

Preregistration dates for new and returning students are scheduled during the preceding semester and can be found on the Academic Calendar.

### **Add/Drop/Withdrawal Procedures**

Information on Add/Drop/Withdrawal procedures and costs for weekly and intensive classes is available in the Graduate Catalog. The student has the responsibility of submitting the Add/Drop/Withdrawal Form to the Records Office for processing and is responsible for fees and penalties incurred for late submission.

### **Incomplete Grades**

If a student is unable to complete the semester's work for a course, he or she may request an incomplete (I) grade. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for a full description of the process of requesting an Incomplete.

### **Institutional Withdrawal Policy**

Information on the policy and procedures of institutional withdrawal is available in the Graduate Catalog. Students who wish to withdraw from Richmond must complete an Institutional Withdrawal Form and submit it to the Records Office.

### **Transfer of Credits**

Students should be aware that transfer of credit is always the responsibility of the receiving institution. Whether or not credit hours transfer is solely dependent upon the decision of the receiving institution. Any student interested in transferring credit hours from Richmond to another institution should check with that institution directly to determine to what extent, if any, credit hours can be transferred. Please see the Graduate Catalog for policies and procedure for transfer of credit.

### **Academic Exception Policy**

Students may petition the Dean of the School of Counseling or Dean of the School of Ministry for exceptions to academic policy or to make changes to their program of study. Depending on the request, the Dean may act on the petition or refer the request to the faculty (i.e., Academic Affairs Committee). The appropriate form for academic exception may be requested from the Records Office.

### **Policy to Comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA policy in its entirety is available in the Graduate Catalog. Students should address questions about FERPA policy with the Records Office. Students will be notified of their FERPA rights annually by publication of this information on the Richmond Website. Copies also will be available from the Records Office.

## Privacy

Richmont considers the privacy of each student as an important matter. Whether the student is on-campus or online Richmont strives to ensure the right of privacy. In that regard, Richmont does the following:

- Provides secure servers for CAMS, email, etc.
- Provides each student with an individual email account. These accounts are password protected. University faculty will communicate to students using this system.
- Provides password protected access to learning platforms, including CAMS and Moodle.
- Follows the policies of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). See the Graduate Catalog for a full explanation.

## Authentication

In order to ensure the proper identification of each student, Richmont does the following:

- During the first registration/orientation, the student must show a government-issued picture identification that verifies their name and address.
- Each student is issued a Student ID photo identification card.
- Unique secure passwords are issued to each student for University email and learning platforms.
- Live online classes and online instructions pages are monitored from time-to-time by a university employee to verify student identity.

## Directory Information & Changes in Personal Information

Richmont designates the following items as directory information: student name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, degree sought and certificates, part-time or full-time status, degrees and awards received, previous schools attended and photographs. The University may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless notified in writing to the contrary. Such notification must be received within three school days of the official date of registration to ensure that directory information will not be included in university publications.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Richmont follows the SAP policy required for Title IV (Financial Aid) compliance, which is set in accordance with the mandates of the Department of Education. Please see the Graduate Catalog for the full policy and procedures regarding SAP.

## Transcript Requests

Official transcripts will be released by Richmont only upon receipt of a request from the student via [www.parchment.com](http://www.parchment.com). Unofficial transcripts are also provided to current students upon request without charge for academic advising and personal use. The unofficial transcript is presented directly to the student on plain white paper and may be duplicated. This transcript is not suitable to obtain



employment, transfer to another education institution, or verify degree.

### **Graduation Requirements**

All students must apply for graduation in the spring term prior to their expected graduation. Students will be notified via email when applications for the upcoming year are available, and the due date for graduation applications is published in the Academic Calendar. Applications for graduation notify the Records Office to review the student's transcript to determine that all degree requirements have been met. Applications also alert the Records Office to include the student in all communications regarding graduation and to order diplomas and regalia for each student. Please consult the Graduate Catalog or the Records Office for detailed procedures regarding graduation application and requirements.

## **Commencement**

### **Commencement Participation**

Richmont holds commencement each May. Students who are within three courses of meeting graduation requirements during the spring semester are permitted to participate in the ceremony. A notation will appear in the commencement program indicating that the student is participating under this policy. Degrees will not be conferred nor will diplomas and transcripts be available without completion of all coursework as dictated by the degree program.

### **Commencement Attire Policy**

There is no greater expression of community at Richmont Graduate University than our commencement ceremony. Commencement is a special ceremony, officiated by the President of Richmont where faculty, staff, parents/families, and alumni share the excitement and importance of student's academic accomplishments. It is also a time for the Board of Trustees to pay special tribute to students who have achieved the distinct honor of the Richmont degree.

Guidelines for appropriate attire at Commencement have been established by the Richmont Commencement Committee (RCC) in order to preserve the dignity and importance of the occasion and to show respect for the University, its graduates, and their families. On this day, we are one, and our attire reflects this. Formal academic regalia consisting of black academic gowns and mortarboards are the dress of the day. Students may choose what attire they wish but it is recommended to wear dark dress slacks and skirts/dresses that hit around the knee. With the exception of decorated caps (which are permitted) non-permitted accoutrements that draw attention to an individual and detract from the occasion, can compromise the image we seek to project as a university, and are not acceptable. Any change to academic regalia (beyond the decoration of the mortarboard) is not permitted and may prevent a student from participating in

## Commencement

exercises.

In addition to the traditional cap and gown regalia, students have the possibility of wearing stoles and cords. Richmond supports the wearing of cords or stoles at Commencement exercises by students who have earned these privileges through achieving clinical excellence, academic excellence, or through a Richmond organization who has attained approval of the stole through the Richmond Commencement Committee (RCC). All cords and stoles are submitted for approval to the RCC by December 1<sup>st</sup> for the following commencement ceremonies. Students are unable to submit requests for approval of additional regalia attire as only organizations within the university can submit requests that represent a group of students such as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Clinical Affairs, Student Affairs, and Academics.

Students may wear only one stole of their choice during official commencement activities.

## Financial Information

Tuition and fees provide resources for faculty, administrative staff, theology and integration courses, clinical colloquia, supervised practice in a counseling setting, assessment consultation, community education experiences, technology tools, and other special aspects of the Richmond program. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for current information on tuition, fees, and financial procedures.

### Financial Aid and Loans

Some students finance their education through bank and state loans. Richmond qualifies for Federal Stafford subsidized, unsubsidized, and GRADPLUS loans for graduate students. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for more information.

### Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of work-study positions are available at Richmond. Students will receive electronic notifications when positions become available. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for additional information regarding the application procedure.

### Scholarships

Applications for scholarships are available online at [www.richmont.edu](http://www.richmont.edu) or from the Admissions Office. The application deadline for all scholarships is May 1. Please consult the university website for all current scholarship opportunities.

# **Section Four: Program Evaluation & Grievances**

## Program Evaluation

To assure the continued strength of the programs within the university, several types of ongoing evaluation procedures are maintained throughout the academic year. Student input plays an essential role in institutional decisions affecting student life and welfare. Throughout the academic year, students provide feedback to their course instructor and to Richmond through email, telephone, and in-person appointments.

Students are also consistently surveyed regarding all major components of the institution as well as individual courses. This feedback is utilized to make general improvements and is given to the individual instructors to make adjustments in order to improve courses. These student surveys are typically completed online.

### Student Evaluation of Program

Students are asked to complete the General Student Survey at the completion of each academic year. Students are asked their opinion about their program's effectiveness, student life, student processes, integration, etc. After completing their final semester, students complete the Graduating Student Survey.

### Student Evaluations of Course/Instructor

At the end of each course, students are asked to provide feedback through an online evaluation. Students are asked to rate the instructor and course content.

## Academic Appeals Policy

When a student believes a faculty member has treated him or her unfairly related to a course taught or grade received in a course for which the student is registered, the student is encouraged to speak with the faculty member regarding their concern and attempt to reach a mutual agreement. Under very rare circumstances, a student and faculty member may not be able to resolve a matter through informal conversation or a student may wish to appeal a decision made by the faculty committee of their School (Academic Affairs Committee for School of Counseling and Faculty Council for School of Ministry). In those cases where a student desires to appeal a decision, the following appeal procedure should be utilized.

The written notice of appeal must contain the following:

1. A copy of the decision being appealed;
2. A written statement of the grounds for appeal, which at a minimum should contain a list of alleged errors in the decision or procedure and statement of why the decision or sanctions are in error;
3. Documentation (if appropriate) to support the student's position regarding the alleged errors;

4. A requested remedy; and
5. The signature of the student and date the appeal is being submitted.

The student will give a copy of the statement to the faculty member (if the appeal is related to a specific grade) and the Dean of their School and attempt to discuss and resolve the matter with the faculty. If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student and faculty member, the student has the right to appeal directly to the Dean. If the complaint is not resolved by the Dean to the satisfaction of the parties involved, the student has the right to request the referral of the matter to the faculty committee of their School.

The Committee receives complaints only by referral from Dean of their School. The Academic Affairs Committee or Faculty Council will meet to discuss the student's written complaint and may request an interview with him or her to gain greater clarity. After the Committee makes their determination, the Dean will respond in writing to the student and any other parties involved in the decision. All appeals must be received within 30 calendar days from the date that the grade was submitted to the CAMS Student Portal or 30 calendar days from the notification of the decision by the institution that the student desires to appeal. If the complaint cannot be settled at the Academic Affairs Committee (School of Counseling) or Faculty Council (School of Ministry) level, a student may appeal to the Provost.

If the complaint cannot be settled at the institutional level,

A student at the Atlanta campus may contact:

Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary  
Education Commission  
2082 East Exchange Place, Suite 220  
Tucker, GA 30084-5305  
770.414.3300  
<https://gnpec.georgia.gov/>

A student at the Chattanooga campus may contact:

Tennessee Higher Education  
Commission  
404 James Robertson Parkway, Suite  
1900  
Nashville, TN 32743-0830  
615.741.5293

## Academic Dismissal

Reapplying to Richmond Graduate University after being dismissed is not considered an appeal of the dismissal decision. In this scenario, a student would be able to apply for readmission to the university one year after dismissal or the time frame specified in the dismissal letter. Reapplication after dismissal does not guarantee that a student will be readmitted to the institution.

## Student Grievance Procedures

Updated 6.2021

Richmont Graduate University maintains that all people should be treated with dignity and strives to treat everyone with respect. Richmont students are expected to demonstrate compassion for individual persons, sensitivity to the needs of the communities of which they are a part, a commitment to justice and inclusion, a burden that the whole of God's will be obeyed on earth, personal integrity, a desire for moral growth, and mutual accountability. The university Community Standards discusses the importance of respect for people and how we strive to live in community together.

We always encourage students to communicate clearly with staff and faculty so that any concerns can be dealt with before the problem escalates, and the Office of Student Affairs is here to aid in that process. Students are encouraged to work with the Office of Student Affairs (or another advocate or support noted below) to settle grievances informally through open dialogue with all parties involved.

## Grievances Between Students and University Employees

### Types of Student Grievances

There are two types of student grievances: Academic and Non-Academic.

#### Academic Grievances

These are defined as any situation related to academic concerns, including, but not limited to, complaints regarding academic assignments, grades, problems with a faculty member specifically related to academic issues, and grievances related to the Records Office. Academic grievances are handled by the Dean of the School of Counseling or Dean of the School of Ministry. Please see the Academic Appeal Policy for instructions on "Academic Grievances."

#### Non-Academic Grievances

Non-academic grievances cover a wide range of situations and may apply to instances when a faculty or staff member has violated the university's Community Standards. Any grievance not related to academics falls under this category. ***Students must file a grievance within 30 days of the incident or most recent incident.***

*NOTE: Should any situation arise in which a student fears for his or her safety or well-being, that student should not hesitate to involve other parties such as security or law enforcement. Student safety is a top priority.*

In cases where the student has a concern or believes that a university Community Standard has been breached by a faculty or staff, the student is first encouraged to reach out for consultation and/or support from one of the following:

- Consult with their faculty advisor or a trusted faculty for support and guidance
- Consult with a Student Advocate from the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) for support and guidance; Students can be connected with an ODI representative by emailing [ODI.adovocate@Richmont.edu](mailto:ODI.adovocate@Richmont.edu)
- Consult with the Office of Student Affairs for support and guidance. Students can connect with Student Affairs by emailing [studentaffairs@richmont.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@richmont.edu)

### Levels of Non-Academic Grievances

Two levels of grievances exist - Informal and Formal. Both levels are written complaints by the student. Records of the complaint will be maintained in the Office of Student Affairs.

#### Informal Non-Academic Grievances

All informal grievances are taken seriously. The reason this first step is categorized as “informal” is because it may involve any of the following actions to facilitate resolution:

1. Explaining university policies to students
2. Encouraging students to communicate directly and clearly to other parties
3. Helping students to consider their own role in the situation
4. Speaking to other parties involved (with the student's permission) to clarify misunderstandings by either party
5. Other means of advocacy as needed

In an informal grievance, the Office of Student Affairs will review the information provided and investigate the grievance with the relevant departments in a timely manner. As is the case with any type of grievance, the student is first encouraged to reach out for consultation and/or support from any of the resources previously listed. All information will be confidential and kept on a “need-to-know” basis. The Office of Student Affairs will alert other relevant administration if an informal grievance has been expressed regarding faculty or staff within their department.

The Office of Student Affairs may request a meeting with the student filing the grievance to better understand their concern and the context of their situation.

Upon completion of the informal inquiry, the findings and any recommended resolution as required are communicated to the student in writing.

#### Formal Grievances

If an informal grievance has been filed and, despite the efforts of the Office of Student Affairs, the student decides that there has not been a satisfactory



resolution to the situation, the student can choose to file their complaint at the level of a formal grievance. This process necessitates the convening of a committee to hear the complaint and reach a final decision.

The Student Grievance Committee is a standing committee of Richmond Graduate University. If any staff or faculty member on the standing committee is involved in the situation, he or she will not be a part of the committee hearing the case and will take no part in the review of the case. No one who is a close personal relation to the student may serve on the committee.

The Student Grievance Committee includes:

- Dean of Students
- Student Services Officer
- Dean of School of Counseling
- Dean of School of Ministry
- Director of Office of Diversity and Inclusion

### How a Student Can Submit an Informal or Formal Grievance

Informal and formal grievances should be filed online at [richmont.edu/current-students/grievance/](https://richmont.edu/current-students/grievance/).

Students may file a grievance through the Office of Student Affairs. In order to file a grievance, the individual must provide a written and signed statement detailing the factors relating to the grievance.

All matters related to an informal grievance are confidential.

Parties against whom **formal grievances** are made have the right to know the nature of grievances made against them. However, a student's identity can be kept anonymous in the cases of an **informal grievance**. Records of Grievances are maintained for 5 years.

As a reminder, students are encouraged to seek support through a trusted faculty or administrator before or alongside their submission of a formal grievance. Additional advocacy support for discriminatory concerns can be obtained by emailing [ODI.Advocate@richmont.edu](mailto:ODI.Advocate@richmont.edu).

### An informal grievance will include the following information:

- Student (Complainant) Name
- Campus
- Name(s) of individual(s) involved
- Date(s) of incident(s)
- Stated Concern or Informal Complaint
- Signed and dated by the Student (Complainant)

**A formal grievance will include the following information:**

- Student (Complainant) Name
- Campus
- Type/Category of Formal Grievance
- Name(s) of individual(s) involved
- Date(s) of incident(s)
- Specific Community Standard(s) that was/were violated
- Location of the Incident(s)
- Describe in detail the alleged grievance(s)
- If possible, names, and contact information of witnesses or potential witnesses
- Any other relevant information
- Acknowledgement that the committee and involved parties have a right to know the nature of the grievance filed against them
- Signed and dated by the complainant

**University Procedures When a Formal Student Grievance is Submitted**

When a formal grievance is submitted, the grievance is received by the members of the Student Grievance Committee.

1. Within two (2) business days of receipt of the formal grievance, the Committee will notify the student their grievance has been received and will be reviewed by the Committee.
2. The Dean of Students will meet with the student (Complainant) to discuss the nature of the grievance and to discuss the grievance process, and to request additional information and/or documentation if needed. The Student will be provided with an overview of the steps to be taken during an investigation.
3. The Dean of Students will notify the Respondent (person against whom the Grievance has been submitted) of the formal grievance submitted against them and will schedule a time for the Respondent to meet with the Student Grievance Committee.
4. The Student Grievance Committee will meet with the Respondent to receive the respondent's response to the complaint, request names of witnesses, request evidence, and to review with the respondent the scope and nature of the investigation.
5. The Student Grievance Committee will meet to discuss the student's complaint and may request a second interview with the Student (Complainant) to gain greater clarity.
6. The Student Grievance Committee may meet again to discuss any new information discovered from these meetings. Following this meeting the

Committee will complete a “Written Response of the Student Grievance Committee” including the grievance and decision of the Committee.

7. After the committee makes a determination on the submitted grievance, the Dean of Students will respond in writing to the Student and the Respondent within 60 days of receipt of the filed formal grievance.
8. After completion of the investigation, the Dean of Students shall meet with the senior administrator(s) responsible for the involved student, faculty or staff member to review the Student Grievance Committee’s report and reach conclusion based on a preponderance of evidence (i.e., more likely than not standard) regarding the allegations and appropriate corrective action(s), if any.

### Written Response of Student Grievance Committee

It is the goal of these procedures that, to the extent possible, the above steps be completed within sixty (60) calendar days of receiving the formal complaint.

The Student Grievance Committee shall forward to the Complainant and Respondent a Written Response that includes the following:

- a summary of the investigative report including the conclusion reached regarding the grievance in the complaint and the rationale for that conclusion,
- a description of suggested resolutions, if any, to resolve the concerns/grievances that occurred, and to prevent similar issues from occurring in the future, and
- a description of the complainant’s and respondent’s right to appeal either the finding or the appropriateness of the corrective action(s).

### Reconciliation When Possible

Beyond the final decision of the student’s grievance, Richmond desires to promote reconciliation when possible. The Student Grievance Committee will support mediation between parties involved following the final grievance decision. As a means to achieve restorative outcomes or reconciliation, the following principles are considered primary:

- Clarity and agreement among all parties regarding the facts in a given incident
- Clarity and understanding regarding the roles and responsibilities of the individuals involved and of the university
- Willingness by those involved to accept responsibility for their actions
- Communication by those involved regarding desired steps for reconciliation
- Honored confidentiality throughout the process for both parties.

### Student Right to Appeal

Students have a right to appeal the decision of the Student Grievance Committee and can submit their written appeal to the Provost within 15 days of notification of the committee's decision.

### University Response to Faculty/Staff Violation of Community Standards

If it is found that a faculty or staff member's behavior is not consistent with the Community Standards of Richmond, penalties as delineated in the Faculty Handbook or Employee Handbook will be imposed. The specific penalty imposed will be determined by the nature and severity of the violation and will take into account any past disciplinary record. The faculty or staff member's right of appeal is outlined in the Faculty Handbook and in the Employee Handbook. Every reasonable effort is made to protect the privacy of all parties.

### State Authorization Resources

If the complaint is not settled at the institutional level, a student who resides in the state of Georgia may contact:

Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission  
2082 East Exchange Place, Suite 220  
Tucker, GA 30084-5305  
770-414-3300  
<http://gnpec.org/consumer-resources/>

Regarding complaints not settled at the institutional level, a student who resides in the state of Tennessee may contact:

Tennessee Higher Education Commission  
404 James Robertson Parkway  
Suite 1900, Parkway Towers  
Nashville, TN 37243-0830  
615-741-5293

## Grievances Between Students

If a student of the Richmond community has a grievance with another student based on stated Richmond standards and policies, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The student should first talk to that student in accordance with Scripture and out of respect for the student if this is at all possible.
2. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, the concern should then be presented to the Dean of Students. This concern should be presented in written form.

A student allegedly violating the Community Standards of Richmond will receive complete and full instruction by Richmond regarding Student Discipline Procedures including the right of appeal as listed in this publication. While the

charge is pending, the student will be allowed to continue in courses and register for the upcoming term unless the alleged violation is severe enough to present a danger to our community. Withdrawal from courses does not preclude the imposition of penalties.

Students who are found to be in violation of rules, procedures, or policies may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions which may be imposed on a temporary or permanent basis: probation, suspension, transcript annotation, and expulsion. Probation might include developing a plan for change, such as classes added, counseling, and limiting semester hours. Suspension would entail a semester's break. Transcript annotation would entail including a note in the student's official file regarding the incident, and expulsion would mean a final loss of student status.

The Student Affairs Committee will review disciplinary penalties. The penalty imposed will be determined by the nature and severity of the violation and will take into account any past disciplinary record. The university is not limited to the listed penalties.

**Action at the Administrative Level:** As soon as possible after the alleged incident, the Dean of Students should discuss the matter with the student. This discussion should be conducted in a manner that protects the rights and confidentiality of the student. The Dean will fill out an incident report based on the verbal report of the initiator.

If the Dean believes an infraction may have occurred, he or she (with the advice of the Academic Dean if necessary) will determine the appropriate penalty. The Dean will deliver to the student the notice of charges, which includes a statement regarding the student's right of appeal.

**Student Action:** If the student wishes to challenge any charges, the student must submit a written rationale within 2 business days of receipt of the notice of charges. The statement of challenge should be addressed to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will present the challenge to the Student Grievance Committee for review. (The Student Grievance Committee must review disciplinary penalties regardless of appeal. If the student has also filed an appeal denying the charges, the hearing committee will delay any review of disciplinary penalty recommended pending review of the charges.)

**No Appeal by the Student:** The Dean of Students will then file the incident report and notice of the charges in the student's file. Any recommendation of a disciplinary penalty will also be forwarded for appropriate review by the Student Grievance Committee. Upon approval, this will also be filed in the student's file.

**Appeal by the Student:** If the student submits a written appeal within 2 business days, the Dean of Students will forward the charges to the chair of the hearing committee and will notify the initiator to set forth in writing a comprehensive statement describing the incident. This statement will be presented to the committee and to the student at least two (2) business days prior to the hearing.

### **Hearing Committee Process**

The Hearing Committee, appointed by the Dean of Students, will use the following guidelines to govern the hearing of the appeal:

1. Within two (2) business days after the committee receives the charges, a hearing date (set within 7 days after the committee receives the charges) will be determined. The committee will notify the students involved of the time, date, and place of the hearing. Copies of all charges and related materials for the hearing will be provided to the students at least two (2) business days in advance of the hearing.
2. The initiator and the student will be allowed to make oral presentations, call witnesses, and present any documentary evidence regarding the incident in question. Notes will be kept of the hearing. The hearing will not be open to observers. Any students involved will have the option of choosing one person who has had no formal legal training to accompany them throughout the hearing.
3. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee will meet in closed session and will make its recommendation on a finding of responsibility or not concerning the violation based on the preponderance of evidence with respect to the charges. The committee will forward to the Dean of Students its findings and recommendations in a written report within two (2) business days of the hearing.

### ***Decision of Appeals:***

Within two (2) business days of receiving the committee's written report, the Dean of Students will make the final decision regarding guilt or innocence. The Dean of Students will notify all appropriate parties of the decision.

If the Dean of Students finds the student "not guilty," the matter will be terminated and no notice of charges will be filed. If the Dean of Students finds the student "guilty," the notice of charges will be placed in the student's file. Penalties stipulated will be imposed.

### ***Appeal of the Decision of the Dean of Students:***

If the student or initiator wishes to appeal the decision of the Dean of Students regarding guilt or innocence of the charges of academic dishonesty, the student or initiator may appeal to the Provost. The student or initiator must submit a written statement of appeal to the President within five (5) business days of notification of the Dean of Students' decision. The basis of appeal must be on the grounds that the Dean of Students' decision was arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory.

**Student Grievance Committee Action:** In cases where a disciplinary penalty has been recommended, the Student Grievance Committee will conduct a hearing to review the disciplinary penalty. The committee will review the original report, the charges, and the student's statement of challenge of the disciplinary penalty, if any. The initiator and the student charged will be allowed to appear at the hearing to discuss the imposition of disciplinary penalties. Only the recommendation concerning the disciplinary penalty to be imposed will be considered by this committee. Issues of guilt or innocence are to be determined at the appropriate level (as aforementioned).

The Student Grievance Committee will provide its recommendation within two (2) business days of its hearing to the President regarding appropriateness of the disciplinary penalty recommended by the Dean of Students and/or whether other disciplinary penalties should be imposed in addition to or in lieu of those already recommended by the Dean of Students.

**Provost Action:** The role of the Provost in handling student appeals regarding the charges has been explained (as aforementioned). Based on the recommendation, the Provost will render a decision within five (5) business days of receipt of the recommendations by the Student Grievance Committee. The Provost will notify the student, the Dean of Students, and the initiator of the committee recommendations and of the President's decision.

**Note:** In cases of flagrant infractions of the Community Standards of Richmond the Institute reserves the right to dismiss or suspend any student without this appeal process. If, in the opinion of the President of Richmond, an infraction is of such nature as to warrant immediate action, he/she may dismiss or suspend the violator.

# **Section Five: Community Standards**



## Community Standards

Updated 12.2020

Men and women of God are suited for Christian service by moral character as well as by academic achievement and spiritual gifts. Among their qualifications should be compassion for individual persons, sensitivity to the needs of the communities of which they are a part, a commitment to justice, a burden that the whole of God's will be obeyed on earth, personal integrity, a desire for moral growth, and mutual accountability. Richmond students are expected to exhibit these moral characteristics.

The ethical standards of Richmond are guided by an understanding of Scripture and a commitment to its authority regarding all matters of Christian faith and living. The Richmond community also desires to honor and respect the moral tradition of churches that entrust students to us for education. Ethical standards for counselors are also relevant, and students are also expected to learn and abide by these.

Richmont urges the practice of loving confrontation when any member of a Christian community feels that another member is living in violation of what the Bible teaches about Christian conduct. Richmont, therefore, encourages individuals to follow, where feasible, the steps of verbal confrontation and dialogue described in Matthew 18:15-22.

The use of Richmont disciplinary procedures should always be viewed as a last resort. In no way do they exempt Richmont from making every possible effort to guide the honest pursuit of truth, to encourage wholesome approaches to sexuality, to support stable family life, or to model community relationships that convey respect for people and property.

Richmont is committed to providing education and counseling resources to those of its community who are in special need; to extend Christian charity to those involved in strife, marital conflict, or the struggle for sexual identity; and to demonstrate the personal forgiveness available through Christ for all human failure.

## Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

Richmont is committed to the intentional creation of an environment of belonging that celebrates the uniqueness and diversity of our students, faculty, and staff, with the goal of advancing God's healing, restoration, and transformation in the lives of individuals, families, churches, and communities.

## Statement on Nondiscrimination

Richmont does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, handicap or disability, or age, in any of its policies, procedures, or practices in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to race, color, and national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (pertaining to gender), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (pertaining to handicap), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (pertaining to age). This nondiscrimination policy covers admission and access to Richmont programs and activities, as well as employment at Richmont. Additionally, Richmont opposes physical abuse, verbal abuse, or implied threat toward any person. Richmont courses are taught from a Christian perspective. Richmont does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs. Richmont recognizes the rights of all people to live peacefully in society and freely express their beliefs.

Members of the Richmont community with a concern or complaint which may involve discrimination are encouraged to discuss the concern with a designated investigator as identified in Richmont's Statement on Sexual Harassment. Richmont will follow the "Complaint Resolution Procedures" outlined in the Statement on Sexual Harassment for investigating and resolving discrimination complaints.

## Statement on Nondiscriminatory Language

The faculty of Richmont has adopted the following statement recommending the use of nondiscriminatory language by all members of the Richmont community. Richmont has adopted the statement to be consistent with Richmont's clear commitment to the full equality of women and men and to the training of women as equal partners with men for all areas of Christian ministry.

*As members of the Joint Faculty of Richmont, we are committed to the use of nondiscriminatory language in all areas of the community's life. We recognize that many women and men no longer find 'man,' 'men,' and 'mankind' acceptable as generic terms. We understand that such exclusive language, though once normative in our speaking and writing, now tends increasingly to alienate a substantial group of people. We wish to challenge patterns of language that may be doing harm even when harm is inflicted unconsciously and without intention. As Christians desiring to support human equality, we intend to avoid exclusive language, which might express or encourage discrimination within the church or society. We pledge ourselves as faculty and encourage students, staff members, and administrators to use language which includes women and men*

*in all our teaching, writing, witness, and worship.*

## Statement on Academic Integrity

Truthfulness is of the very nature of God, who is Truth itself. Truth is a prominent theme in Scripture, and God's faithfulness and dependability rest in truthfulness. The Biblical admonitions against false witness, lying, and dishonesty are also prominent.

Richmont is committed to intellectual and moral growth. Upholding the standard of academic integrity with its reliance on honesty is a responsibility of both faculty and students. In addition to maintaining integrity in their own academic pursuits, the faculty has the right and obligation to set and clarify academic requirements for the work of students. Academic integrity is a personal responsibility of students to represent their own work in reports, papers, or examinations only what they are entitled to honestly present. It includes a collective responsibility to assure that all uphold the spirit and letter of academic integrity. Conduct regarded as violating academic integrity includes:

**Dishonesty** is copying from the examination of another, allowing one's own examination to be copied, reading without instructor's consent a copy of the examination prior to the date it is given, giving or receiving unpermitted aid on a take-home examination, or the submission of the same work product in more than one course without the express permission of the instructor(s).

**Plagiarism** is the passing off of another's ideas or writings as one's own. It involves failure to acknowledge material, which is copied from others, or failure to acknowledge one's indebtedness to another for the gist of important thoughts in a formal statement, written or oral.

Allegations that any member of the Richmont community has failed to abide by the Statement of Academic Integrity may result in Richmont administration following the procedures in Student Behavior Expectations & Discipline Procedures.

## Statement on Academic Freedom

In the pursuit of truth before God, faculty members are free to express their individual positions, in their writing, speaking, teaching, and activities. While free to develop, change, and accept any academic position, the unique task of the institution requires that the ultimate positions of faculty members not be at variance with the basic theological stance of the community as set forth in the Statement of Faith and other official statements derived from it and approved by vote of the faculty and board.

Richmont recognizes that as its faculty members pursue their respective disciplines, scholarship will create a healthy and dynamic tension, which Richmont must encourage. Therefore:

**Students** are free to learn and to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in the Richmont community. In their public expressions, students and student organizations should make clear that they speak only for themselves, and not for the university.

**Faculty members** are responsible for safeguarding the academic freedom of their students to learn by encouraging free inquiry into controversial issues, presenting alternative viewpoints, refraining from undue influence of the process of learning, taking dissenting student opinion seriously, and offering a forum for discussion.

## Intellectual Property Policy

Intellectual property (IP) refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names, and images used in commerce.

**University** means Richmont Graduate University.

**Creator** refers to any person employed by or enrolled at the University who produces works considered to be Intellectual Property.

**Substantial use of university facilities** means the extensive unreimbursed use of major university laboratory, computational facilities, or human resources. The use of these facilities must be important to the creation of the intellectual property; merely incidental use of a facility does not constitute substantial use, nor does extensive use of a facility commonly available to all faculty or professional staff (such as libraries and offices). Use is considered "extensive" and facilities will be considered "major" if the use of similar facilities would cost the creator more than \$2000 (two thousand dollars) if purchased or leased in the public market.

### Ownership of Intellectual Property

Ownership of IP produced in the normal course a creator's connection to the University shall remain with the University. The ownership of textbooks, scholarly monographs, trade publications, student theses, maps, charts, articles in journals and newspapers, novels, nonfiction works, supporting materials, artistic works, and like works shall reside with the creator(s). Except for textbooks, the University shall have royalty-free use of the work within the University, unless otherwise agreed in writing. Students may request a one-year embargo on the display of their thesis to allow for the possibility of publication.

Funded research, other creative works, and future forms of Intellectual Property creation may involve circumstances not covered in this policy. Creators who collaborate with others outside of the University may also be involved in conflicting Intellectual Property claims. In these cases, creators should consult with the University President in advance to clarify Intellectual Property rights.

### Resolution of Disputes

All disputes over Intellectual Property rights shall be settled by the university President, taking professional advice if needed.

### Dissemination of Policy

This Intellectual Property Policy is included in the Administrative Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and Student Handbook.

## Statement on Respect for People and Property

As a community of Christians with special commitment to acting out of love toward one another, Richmond expects community behavior that demonstrates the highest standard of respect for people and property. Scripture is replete with exhortations to look out for the welfare of others and build up each other, to be good protectors and stewards of the possessions God has given us and to be honest and keep one's word. Richmond is committed to fostering respectful interpersonal relationships regardless of gender, race, age, handicap, or national origin.

Basic standards for respectful conduct at Richmond are similar to those of other institutions of higher education in societies with the legal foundation of respect for people and property. Occasions may arise when specific standards relevant to this community are not fully recognized. Accordingly, the following examples of behaviors that are not acceptable according to the Statement on Respect for People and Property may be cause for disciplinary action. When appropriate, these may be reported to civil authorities for legal or other action.

**Dishonesty:** Richmond regards as unacceptable lying, misrepresentation, or deception in representations an individual makes about self or others, especially in formal statements.

**Injurious or offensive action:** Physical assault, infliction of psychological injury, and the spread of malicious rumors are unacceptable. Prejudicial treatment based on gender, race, age, and physical challenge is both offensive and injurious and will not be tolerated under any conditions. Persistent profane or obscene language that gives offense is subject to disciplinary action.

**Disruption:** Acts by individuals or groups that substantially interfere with the rights of others or interfere with the normal activities of Richmond are unacceptable. Disruptive activities in classrooms, libraries, offices, or other campus meeting assembly areas are included.

**Stealing or destruction of property:** Theft of or damage to the property of another person or of Richmond is unacceptable. Defacing or rendering library material unusable shows little respect for people or property. Unauthorized possession or use of Richmond materials or equipment is stealing.

**Purposeful violation of institutional policies:** Purposeful violations include refusal to comply with contractual arrangements with Richmond offices or services and unwillingness to abide by established Richmond policies.

## Student Behavioral Expectations & Discipline

The following are sanctions permitted for students whose behavior is in violation of any policy or standard within the Richmond Community Standards, Policy on Sexual Misconduct & Sexual Harassment, or Policy on Alcohol and Illegal Drugs. Students who are found to be in violation of rules, procedures, or policies may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions which may be imposed on a temporary or permanent basis: warning, disciplinary probation, suspension, transcript annotation, interim suspension, and dismissal.

1. **Warning:** Is intended to make a student aware of inappropriate actions/behaviors in order to preclude the possibility of the inappropriate actions/behaviors from reoccurring.
2. **Disciplinary Probation:** A designated period of time in which privileges of continuing in Student status are conditioned upon future behavior. Conditions may include the potential loss of specified privileges to which a current student would otherwise be entitled, or the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the Student is found to violate the Richmond Community Standards or any University policy during the probationary period.
3. **Suspension:** Temporary suspension of the Student from active Student status or Student status due to a serious breach of Community Standards. Suspension will mean a temporary separation from the university for a period to be determined by University administration.
4. **Dismissal:** Permanent separation of the Student from Student status at Richmond Graduate University. Expulsion, withdrawal in lieu of expulsion, and withdrawal with pending misconduct investigation or disciplinary proceeding shall be entered on the Student's transcript permanently,

without exception. This requirement shall not be waived in connection with a resolution agreement.

### Interim Suspension

In egregious cases, the President may impose interim suspension where there is reasonable cause to believe that separating a student from the University is necessary to protect the personal safety of persons within the University community or University property, and to ensure the maintenance of order.

During the interim suspension, the Student charged may not, without prior written permission from the President, enter a Richmond campus other than to attend the hearing regarding the merits of his or her interim suspension and any disciplinary hearing. The president may also restrict the Student's participation in University activities on a case-by-case basis, such as attending off campus activities or participating in online courses. Violation of any condition of the interim suspension shall be grounds for dismissal.

### Notice and Opportunity for Hearing

A Student placed on Interim Suspension shall be given prompt notice of the charges against him or her and a factual description of the alleged conduct to form the basis for the charges. The Student may make a written request for a hearing to determine whether continued interim suspension is appropriate by filing a request with the Dean of Students.

Within 10 Working Days of the written request for a hearing, the Dean of Students shall conduct a hearing to determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that the continued interim separation of the Student is necessary to protect the personal safety of persons within the University community or University property, and to ensure the maintenance of order.

The hearing will include a meeting between the Student, the Dean of the School, and the Dean of Students. Following the hearing, the Dean of Students will issue a final decision regarding the interim suspension. Notice to the Student charged and to the Complainant (if relevant) shall be sent to the party's Richmond email account.

If the University decides there is reason for the interim suspension to continue, it shall remain in effect until the University closes the disciplinary matter, whether by resolution agreement, final decision or dropped charges, but in no case longer than the President has determined is required to protect the personal safety of the persons within the University or University property, and to ensure maintenance of order. The student has the right to appeal all decisions to the President.

### Multiple Sanctions



More than one sanction can be imposed for a single behavioral violation.

### **Administrative Hold & Withholding a Degree**

The University may place a registration hold on registration transactions and release of records and transcripts of a Student who has been sent written notice of a pending investigation or disciplinary case concerning that Student, and may withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the completion of the process set forth herein, including the completion of all sanctions imposed.

### **Record of Student Discipline**

A record of disciplinary probation or suspension is entered onto a student's transcript, with beginning and end date, for the duration of the sanction. A record of dismissal shall note the effective date of discipline and remains on the transcript permanently, without exception. A record of withdrawal in lieu of suspension or dismissal and withdrawal with pending misconduct investigation or disciplinary proceeding remains on the transcript permanently, without exception. These requirements shall not be waived in connection with any resolution agreement.

### **Confidentiality**

Richmont values responsible speech and seeks to create and maintain a redemptive environment; therefore, in the mediation and complaint resolution procedures regarding Community Standards, every reasonable effort is made to protect the privacy of all parties. All records pertaining to investigations conducted by the designated administrator and the Fact-Finding Committee and to the disposition of the complaint shall be maintained by the designated administrator and, upon disposition of the complaint, by the Office of the President in conformity with state and federal privacy and disclosure requirements and Richmont policies and procedures. Such records will be made available to individuals involved or alleged to be involved in a complaint, to Richmont officials who have a need to know, and others only in accordance with applicable state and federal law, and only to the extent required by law.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Richmont strictly prohibits retaliation against a member of the Richmont community who opposes the practice prohibited by this policy, who files a complaint, against whom a complaint is filed, or who otherwise is a participant in the informal or formal complaint resolution procedure. Such retaliatory conduct includes, but is not limited to, decreasing an employee's pay, reducing a student's grade, or downgrading a person's performance evaluation.



# Section Six: School of Counseling

## School of Counseling Mission Statement

Richmont Graduate University School of Counseling provides graduate programs that integrate counselor education and Christian faith. We are committed to academic and clinical excellence through educating counselors to be spiritually sensitive practitioners.

## Programs of Study

Richmont Graduate University's School of Counseling offers the following degree programs:

- Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- Master of Science in Pastoral Care and Integration

Richmont seeks to equip students with knowledge and skills to enhance their ability to provide professional counseling and/or marriage and family therapy to address a variety of personal and interpersonal issues. Students are involved in clinical laboratory experiences, practicum and internship training from the beginning of their graduate education experience. In addition to the core curriculum of counseling courses, all Richmont students complete coursework in Biblical studies, practical theology, and the integration of professional counseling, applied psychology and practical theology. The goal of these experiences is to provide Biblical and scientific data from which the student can build a model of counseling.

### Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The MACMHC curriculum is designed to offer course work deemed crucial for the academic requirements of licensure as a professional counselor. The curriculum (clinical mental health counseling focus) is fashioned to develop a broad range of understanding of human behavior and personality, therapeutic change strategies, and standards of professional counseling practice. Richmont seeks to attract academically minded students who have a heartfelt desire to integrate professional counseling, applied psychology and Christian faith. The Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MACMHC) is conferred by the Richmont Graduate University for satisfactory completion of the requirements (67 semester hours) as specified in the Richmont Graduate Catalog. Required course list, course descriptions, and recommended course sequence is provided in the Graduate Catalog.

### Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Mission Statement

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MACMHC) is designed to provide specialized graduate training in proven counseling methods combined with sound theological principles. This degree fulfills the academic requirements

in most states for licensure as a professional counselor (LPC) and certification as a national certified counselor (NCC).

### Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Objectives

#### Objective 1: Theoretical and Clinical Knowledge

*Students will gain knowledge of theoretical and empirical foundations of the field of clinical mental health counseling and its practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society covering the eight main CACREP content areas.*

#### Objective 2: Counseling Clinical Skills

*Students will acquire skills of interpersonal therapeutic processes, clinical assessment and treatment interventions through direct counseling practice in the clinical training sequence courses, including supervised counseling practicum and internships.*

#### Objective 3: Professional Identity and Ethical Character

*Students will develop a practical understanding of counseling ethics, law, and professional standards; will act in accordance with the ethical codes; develop a strong professional counselor identity; develop an ongoing commitment to personal and professional wellness; and demonstrate good personal deportment for the counseling profession and an ethical and moral character.*

#### Objective 4: Theological Understanding and Spiritual Formation

*Students will participate in curricular activities promoting personal spiritual formation and demonstrate competency to effectively engage clients of diverse faiths, values, and spiritualities in counseling from a Christian foundation.*

### Master of Science in Pastoral Care and Integration

This degree is **not designed to lead to licensure as a counselor or marriage and family therapist**, although M.S. graduates may pursue further study in counseling elsewhere or use this training to supplement training received at another institution.

The M.S. is designed for students seeking theoretical training in the integration of counseling and theology, professionals who wish to learn how to integrate their faith and practice, students who are concurrently receiving training at another institution in a program that leads to a counseling related credential and who wish to formalize their training in integration, and pastors who counsel as a part of their ministry and wish to gain additional skills. The M.S. degree requires 32 hours of coursework and is designed to be completed in one year. Students also have the option to take courses as Graduate Certificates:

- Certificate in Pastoral Care (17 Credit Hours)
- Certificate in Integration (15 Credit Hours)

## Clinical Training

Students in the Masters of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling complete clinical sequence courses and a clinical practicum and internship. Clinical courses include Helping Relationships, Applied Practicum & Treatment Planning Lab, Practicum, Internship I, and Internship II.

Students receive assistance in locating an outplacement internship site. Students on the Atlanta campus also complete an internship at a Hope Counseling Center site.

All details regarding Clinical Training courses and internship can be found in the Clinical Training Manual. Students have the responsibility to be familiar with and to follow the policies and guidelines outlined in the manual. Please refer to it as often as necessary throughout your clinical training sequence.

### Licensure and Certification

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree is designed to meet the standards for accreditation under the Council of Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). With a Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree, students should have the necessary academic requirements to be licensed as a professional counselor in most states. However, students should contact a specific state's board of examiners in the state(s) where they desire to be licensed to determine whether additional academic or clinical coursework might be required for licensure eligibility.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain requirements for licensure in the state in which they desire to obtain licensure.

State Licensure Board contact information may be obtained at: <https://nbcc.org/directory>

Students should take particular note of the following areas when reviewing state requirements:

- Required hours for specific academic coursework
- Required Practicum and Internship hours, qualifying activities, and supervisor qualifications
- Academic institution accreditation requirements
- Accreditation requirements for online learning programs

Richmont maintains information on whether the CMHC degree requirements meet current state licensure requirements in the United States on the university website: <https://www.richmont.edu/academics/school-of-counseling/licensure/>

## School of Counseling Certificates

The following certificates are available as part of all degree programs in the School of Counseling:

- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Addictions Counseling
- Child and Adolescent Counseling
- Christian Sex Therapy
- Spirituality and Counseling Practice
- Trauma Counseling

Students pursuing certificates must take a minimum number of courses to complete one certificate, and prerequisite courses may be required. Students should consult the Graduate Catalog for a list of specific courses and course descriptions for each certificate.

Students may obtain multiple certificates, but should consult the Graduate Catalog for rules and guidelines regarding multiple certificates. Moreover, certain restrictions are noted in the Graduate Catalog for certificates with the M.S. degree.

### Thesis Option

Students who hope to pursue additional graduate training (such as a doctoral degree) or desire focused research on a topic of interest are encouraged to select the thesis option. Students who select it work closely with their thesis mentor to develop an empirical or scholarly theoretical project, which is evaluated and approved by the student's mentor. A final thesis is written by the student and approved by the mentor and Director of Research. The thesis is then submitted to the Dean of the School of Counseling for credit toward the master's degree. The format will be such that it is an article ready to be submitted to a journal or presented at a conference. Admission to the thesis option is subject to restrictions as determined by the Director of Research and the Dean of the School of Counseling. A detailed description of the thesis program is available through the Richmond website, the Director of Research, and the Records Office. The Thesis Manual, which contains the specific requirements and procedures for completing this option, is available at the Student Resources page or by contacting the Director of Research. Additional information is provided in the Graduate Catalog.

## Academic Policies

A complete description of all Richmond Graduate University's academic policies is provided in the Graduate Catalog for the University's programs of study.

### Program Sequencing

The Master of Arts degree programs in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is sequenced on a two, three, and four-year cycle. Students may choose to attend full-time and complete the degree in two years or proceed at a more comfortable pace and complete the degree in three or four years. Additional information on program sequencing is provided in the Graduate Catalog.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Richmont Graduate University is committed to honoring our mission and our students by setting standards of excellence in the areas of academics, clinical work, interpersonal skills, and personal growth. The University is also committed to students' engagement in the evaluation process, which includes providing students with full information about the process, their roles and the role of the faculty.

Richmont encourages expression of ideas by students. Any official publication should be coordinated through the Dean of Students Office for approval. Richmont students have the right of freedom of expression and the right of the presumption of innocence and procedural fairness in the administration of discipline.

As students should know their rights and responsibilities, Richmont asks that all students review all program materials including, but not limited to, those posted on the University website, the Graduate Catalog, this Student Handbook, and Clinical Training Manual.

### School of Counseling Statement of Student Rights & Responsibilities

All Richmont Graduate University School of Counseling students sign a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities form prior to matriculation and are reminded of their rights and responsibilities bi-annual in a university-wide email to students.

## Writing & Research Standards

All papers are to conform to the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* unless otherwise specified by the instructor. All written documents are to reflect the highest standards of grammar, composition and style. Students are expected to have adequate computer skills to produce all course assignments and to conduct research for those assignments independently. Any student desiring assistance for the research or production of assignments (other than basic proof-reading) is required to seek prior approval from the professor.

## Student Life

### Personal Growth Expectations & Nature of Counselor Training

Participation in graduate level counseling courses can be a meaningful opportunity for personal and professional growth, self-awareness, increased insight and knowledge, and practice in making a difference in the lives of others. However, students should be aware that material covered may result in increased awareness of past and/or present emotionally-charged material from their own lives. At times this awareness may result in strong, overwhelming, or even negative responses. If and when an instructor observes these responses in a student, he or she will bring it to the student's attention for immediate discussion and consultation. Students are strongly encouraged to make faculty aware of these strong or overwhelming personal reactions related to course experiences, materials, and assignments.

While personal counseling is not required, students are also strongly encouraged to pursue their own individual counseling while in their graduate program.

### Counseling Referral Lists for Students

University campuses have referral lists for local professional counselors for students who provide reduced-fee counseling for Richmond students. In accordance with ethical guidelines on dual relationships, faculty members do not counsel students. Lists of the referenced counselors are available to students on the Student Resources page. Additional assistance can be provided by the Office of Student Affairs.

## Enrichment Programs

### Career Mapping

Richmont students in the School of Counseling are equipped with marketing and professional development strategies and skills to facilitate graduate placement and professional advancement. From the first day of class through commencement, students work to develop a personalized career map designed to provide a strong practical foundation from which to launch their careers in the settings in which they believe God has called them. As they complete certain required courses, students will begin to accumulate the resources necessary for a successful Career Mapping Portfolio. Students receive information regarding the Career Mapping Portfolio at Orientation and are encouraged to consult with Director of Career Services throughout their program with any questions.

### Programmatic Research

The goal of programmatic research at Richmont is to further the understanding of the integration of counseling and theology as it relates to the areas of mental health and spiritual growth. Students have an option of writing a thesis as part

of their training. These thesis track students will be assigned a mentor to assist them through the process and participate in a variety of research opportunities.

Richmont encourages faculty, supervisor and student research in the integration of professional counseling, applied psychology and practical theology. Members of the Richmont faculty are expected to write and publish, and several faculty members serve on the editorial boards of professional journals.

### **Lunch & Learns and Community Times**

Students are also exposed to guest speakers, including Richmont alumni, who share their varied work experiences as well as information about further graduate study. This resource provides an opportunity for students to receive more information about a specific type of client or client concern as well as providing an opportunity for networking with professionals in the area who are practicing. Students are also invited to gather for informal times of connection.

### **Continuing Education**

Richmont conducts and sponsors conferences on counseling and ministry with a Christian emphasis designed to bring together counselors, psychologists, other mental health professionals, ministers, and others in the helping fields to participate in training and spiritual renewal. These conferences offer periods of instruction, support, building of professional relationships and renewal for people in the helping ministry.

These conferences often offer continuing education (CE) credits applicable to professionals in the mental health field. Richmont does not guarantee any course as meeting requirements for continuing education. Students seeking CE approval for Richmont courses must obtain such from the organization or governing body for which continuing education is required (i.e., state board or professional organization). Richmont also sponsors and offers its facilities to a broad range of adult education programs in Bible, Christian living, and Christian mental health.

### **Professional Organizations & Professional Involvement**

Richmont strongly encourages students to join and become involved in professional organizations to enhance their experience. There are regular opportunities to participate in activities that are designed to promote students' professional development. Some of the organizations supported by Richmont School of Counseling faculty, staff and students are national, state, and local chapters of ACA (American Counseling Association), AAMFT (American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy), AACC (American Association of Christian Counselors), and CAPS (Christian Association for Psychological Studies). Student chapters may be a part of students' experiences. Opportunities to present research findings at professional conferences are also provided for interested students.



In addition, proof of professional liability insurance is required for students participating in practicum and internship courses. Insurance is included in student membership in the ACA, AAMFT, and several other organizations.

## Client & Student Confidentiality Expectation

Counselors recognize that trust is at the core of the counseling relationship. The American Counseling Association (ACA), American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC), and American Psychological Association (APA) Code of Ethics specify that counselors must respect clients' right to privacy and avoid illegal or unwarranted disclosures of confidential information. Counselors make every effort to ensure that supervisees, students, professional assistants, and volunteers also maintain clients' privacy. Moreover, privacy and confidentiality are also applicable to counseling students' efforts to avoid sharing identifying client information during class discussions, case presentations, or group supervision. This is especially relevant in courses included in the Clinical Training sequence: Helping Relationships, Applied Practicum and Treatment Planning, Group Counseling, Practicum, Internship I, and Internship II.

## Academic Advisement

Upon acceptance to Richmond, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. The advisor assists the student in becoming acclimated to the Richmond community, in career planning, and in a variety of other aspects of involvement in the university's program. Though the advisor guides students through the process of selecting courses, ultimately the student is responsible for following degree requirements and policies as outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Advisors will also provide to their advisees feedback from faculty about the student each semester.

Students in the School of Counseling have a minimum required number of advisement meetings during their time in their program. The School of Counseling also hosts Advisement Week each fall and spring semester to support on-campus meetings with faculty advisors in support of student development and student wellness. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for the advisement process and schedule of meetings.

## Endorsement Policy

Department faculty members are pleased to assist trained and qualified students in obtaining employment in the field of human services. This assistance typically occurs through writing reference letters and providing recommendations.

Students are encouraged to solicit the support of appropriate faculty. However, departmental faculties reserve the right to decline the request.

A recommendation maybe withheld if it is determined that the specific student is not qualified or adequately prepared for the position being sought. Students desiring to obtain a reference or a recommendation from a faculty member are encouraged to discuss this request in person.

## Student Evaluation

Within the School of Counseling, faculty have the responsibility to both monitor students' academic progress and their professional competence. While an individual may have the academic ability to successfully complete a graduate program at Richmond, some students remain unsuited for the necessary responsibilities of a professional counselor or marriage and family therapist. The faculty take this gate-keeping responsibility seriously.

Students are evaluated based on their performance professionally and personally during their training at Richmond. Clinical performance, academic performance, and general personal deportment are all factors considered each semester by the faculty and staff as part of the Student Qualifying Evaluation (SQE). A dean or the student's advisor provides feedback based on the SQE evaluation. At times, a remediation plan is required.

Students are encouraged to initiate a meeting with their advisors at any time to receive feedback about their progress in the program. Moreover, feedback sessions with advisors can be scheduled after the faculty has completed a review and the student has received their Student Performance Review Feedback Form.

### Policy on Retention & Dismissal of Students Related to Academics and Clinical Training

By policy, consistent with the Ethics and Standards of Practice of the *American Counseling Association*, the *American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy*, and the *Christian Association for Psychological Studies*, Richmond expects students to secure remedial assistance when needed, and dismisses from the program students who fail to comply with Richmond policies and procedures or who are believed to be unable to provide competent services due to academic or personal limitations.

Students are expected to meet the Standards of Performance and must demonstrate professional behavior and service expected of a graduate student in clinical mental health counseling. This policy is referenced during the admissions process, during the new student orientation, and on the relevant course descriptions.

Because specific skills and personal qualities are essential to adequate performance as a counselor, not every student is suited to the profession of counseling, and acceptance into the program does not guarantee continuation in the program. The admission process is designed to accept students who, through testing, prior academic performance, interviews and other applications processes, appear to have the academic, professional and personal characteristics that may lead to success in counseling. However, such judgments inevitably are based on limited data. Moreover, life circumstances, personal crises, and difficulties may arise which interfere with a student's continued success in the program. Faculty and advisors are encouraged to communicate their concerns to students throughout the semester, and not only during the SQE process.

### Problems of Professional Competence

Four categories of deficiencies present concerns and will lead to a plan of remediation and possibly dismissal from a specific degree program. These include ***impairment, failure to demonstrate competence, ethical misconduct and problematic behaviors.***

**Impairment** is defined as an interference in professional functioning, whether chemical, physical, emotional, or otherwise, that is demonstrated in one or more of the following ways:

- Inability or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior;
- Inability to acquire professional skills and reach an accepted level of competency;
- Inability to control personal stress, mental dysfunction, or emotional reactions that may affect professional or social functioning; or
- Relational and boundary setting traits or enduring behaviors that interfere with the establishment and maintenance of healthy relationships within or beyond Richmond.

**Failure to Demonstrate Competence** is defined as a lack of demonstrated skills or ability, including, without limitation, deficiencies in professional conduct, deficient interpersonal skills, academic deficiency, failure to fulfill academic requirements, neglect, repeated absenteeism, and/or similar behaviors. For a student to provide counseling services beyond his or her current level of competence would also be considered a failure to demonstrate competence.

**Ethical Misconduct** occurs when the Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct of the American Counseling Association, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and/or Christian Association for Psychological Studies are not followed. These codes are intended to provide both general

principles and the decision rules to cover most situations encountered by counselors and marriage and family therapists in their professional activities. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom counselors or marriage and family therapists work. It is the individual responsibility of each student to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct.

**Problematic Behavior** refers to a student's persistent, unmediated behaviors, attitudes or characteristics that are deemed unacceptable for professionals in training. Performance anxiety, discomfort with client's diverse lifestyles and/or ethnic backgrounds, and lack of appreciation of agency norms are examples of problematic behaviors that are usually remedied and not likely to progress into impairment status. Problematic behaviors are typically more situational and time limited rather than persisting across time and situations and, therefore, are expected to be corrected through counseling and remediation efforts initiated by either Richmond or the student without requiring further disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Although each situation is different and requires individual assessment, the following factors may indicate that the problem is more serious and may represent a more serious impairment rather than a problematic behavior that is easier to remediate:

1. The student does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problematic behavior when it is identified.
2. The problematic behavior is not a reflection of a skill deficit that can be rectified by training.
3. The quality of service delivered by the person is insufficient and cannot be restored or remedied.
4. The problematic behavior is not restricted to one area of professional functioning.
5. The behavior has the potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed.
6. A disproportionate amount of attention by faculty and/or other training personnel is required.
7. Behavior does not change as a function of feedback.
8. Behavior negatively affects the public image of the Richmond, or training site.
9. Interpersonal relationship problems suggest a personality disorder.

Identification and verification of impairment, failure to demonstrate competence, ethical violations, or problematic behaviors can arise from many sources, including, but not limited to, behavior in the classroom, a faculty member, a clinical supervisor, the student's advisor, a fellow student, or a member of the community. Both formal and informal interactions provide useful information in determining a student's need for remedial work or suitability for the counseling

profession. Richmond retains the right to intervene and move toward remediation or dismissal at any point in the student's program in the event of impairment, failure to demonstrate competence, ethical violations, or problematic behaviors.

### Student Qualifying Evaluation (SQE) Process

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) for the School of Counseling meets in May, August, and December for the Student Qualifying Evaluation Process. All Richmond students are evaluated during this process, although additional attention is given to students who are currently in the clinical sequence (Helping Relationships, Applied Practicum and Treatment Planning Lab in Counseling, Practicum, and Internship I & II).

Faculty and staff may observe a student concern at any time throughout the semester and complete a Student Concern Report. Faculty and staff are encouraged to address the concern with the student before submitting the Student Concern Report. Student Concern Reports should be submitted to the Dean/Associate Dean of School of Counseling (academic concerns), the Dean of Students (interpersonal concerns), and/or the Dean/Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs (clinical concerns). Evaluation of students serves to identify both strengths and deficiencies and to develop a remediation or action plan, when necessary.

Clinical performance, academic performance, self-awareness, and general personal deportment are all factors considered in the SQE. MS students are evaluated in interpersonal and academic levels only. Faculty rate students on Academic, Clinical, and Interpersonal areas; staff evaluate interpersonal skills only. Students' performance is assessed in the classroom and in other settings, both formal and informal, including observations from faculty and staff, the student's advisor, and clinical supervisors where applicable.

Each semester, faculty and staff rate the students on the following categories and levels:

- Meets Expectations
- Meets Expectations with Concern
  - Level 1 – Meeting Expectations with Slight Concerns
  - Level 2 – Meeting Expectations with Moderate Concerns
- Does Not Meet Expectations with Significant Concern
  - Level 3 – Not Meeting Expectations with Significant Concerns

If a faculty reports a slight or moderate concern (rating of 1 or 2), they are asked to provide specific behavioral instances or patterns of student behavior that warrant their concern. If faculty reports a significant concern about a student (rating of 3), they complete a Student Concern Report to provide more detailed information.

Each semester, the faculty's ratings and comments for each student are reviewed by the SQE Committee and a determination is made as to those students whose status warrants further review by the faculty (Academic Affairs Committee: AAC). The SQE Committee includes representatives from Clinical Affairs, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs. The choice to further evaluate a student of concern is based upon, but not limited to, evaluations from the Clinical Affairs Committee regarding the student's clinical performance, observations of the student's advisor, and feedback from faculty and site supervisors where applicable, and whether or not the problematic behavior is an observed pattern. Clinical performance, academic performance, self-awareness, and general personal deportment are all factors considered in the Student Qualifying Evaluation.

*Students in the clinical training courses (Helping Relationships, Applied Practicum and Treatment Planning Lab, Practicum, Internship I or Internship II) are given special attention during the feedback review. If the AAC feedback raises moderate or significant concerns of a clinical nature, the committee may recommend that the student be delayed from advancing in the clinical sequence regardless of their grade in their current clinical course. In situations of grave concern, such as but not limited to, major ethical violations, the committee may recommend that the student be dismissed from the program.*

Each semester, the AAC reviews and discusses the SQE committee recommendations and decides on any necessary action plan for each student. The Academic Affairs Committee has four options regarding a decision to approve the student for continuation in the program:

Each semester, the Academic Affairs Committee reviews and discusses the SQE Committee recommendations and decides on any necessary action plan for each student. The AAC has four options regarding a decision to approve the student for continuation in the program:

1. **Approval for Continuance:** If the AAC approves the student for continuance, the student receives this notice on their Student Performance Review Feedback Form. The form indicates they are either meeting or exceeding expectations in all areas. Student Performance Review Feedback Forms are uploaded into the students online academic file and students are emailed notice when they are online for review. Should a student have questions, they are encouraged to contact their advisor.
2. **Dismissal:** If the AAC determines that there is a problem that warrants dismissal, the AAC will issue a letter of dismissal to the student. The student's advisor will schedule a meeting to discuss this dismissal with the student following the AAC meeting. This meeting will be conducted by the student's advisor, and will include the Dean/Associate Dean of the School of Counseling and the student.

3. **Advisor Follow Up:** If the AAC determines there is a mild or moderate concern with a student, the committee will recommend that the student's advisor meet with the student to discuss the observed concern. A concern is categorized as "mild" or "moderate" based on the current semester ratings and cumulative ratings for the student. The advisor and student will set up an informal plan to address the concern and check back as needed. The emerging concern will be noted on the student's Student Performance Review Feedback Form.
4. **Remediation:** If the AAC determines that there is a significant concern which is not sufficient to warrant dismissal at that time, a Student Remediation Plan maybe developed. A concern is categorized as "significant" based on the current semester and cumulative ratings for the student. In instances of significant clinical concern, the letter and remediation plan will be written by the Dean/Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs. In instances of significant interpersonal concerns, the Dean of Students will write the remediation plan. In instances of significant academic concerns, the Dean/Associate Dean of School of Counseling will write the plan. For students with a significant concern, a dean and the student's advisor will meet with the student to communicate the concern and proposed Student Remediation Plan. The concern will be noted on the student's Student Performance Review Feedback Form and included in their online academic file, along with a copy of the Student Remediation Plan. (If the significant concern is a clinical one, copies of all forms will also be kept in the student's clinical file.)

### Student Remediation Plans

Student Remediation Plans highlight the observed academic, clinical, or interpersonal concerns the faculty or AAC have about a student. Student Remediation Plans can be developed at other times throughout the semester (alongside the formal SQE process). A student who is observed to have deficiencies will be invited to discuss the identified deficiencies with his/her faculty advisor and a dean and a Student Remediation Plan may be developed. Student Remediation Plans highlight the specific observable concerns (see earlier Problems of Professional Competence) and specific recommended actions of remediation. Examples of actions that may be included in the remediation plan are an increase in didactic instruction; a decrease in course load; a decrease, increase or temporary suspension of clinical, didactic, or supervisory responsibilities; altered supervision and/or faculty advisement; leave of absence; and individual psychotherapy.

The remediation process will follow the developed and signed Student Remediation Plan, which must include scheduled review dates and target dates for each issue identified. Students are encouraged to submit to their advisors their own ideas for remediation, which may be considered in revising and

finalizing the remediation plan. The remediation plan with student comments and signature along with the advisor's and dean's signatures must be placed in the student's academic file. If concerns are of a clinical nature, an additional copy should be placed in the student's clinical file.

The student's advisor will have regular follow-up meetings to evaluate the student's progress within the remediation process and recommend potential sources of guidance and assistance when necessary. Progress must be reviewed at least once every semester (fall and spring) at least two weeks before registration. Additional reviews may be scheduled as necessary. After each review, a copy of the current remediation plan, with student comments and faculty signatures, must be placed in the student's file.

In the absence of adequate progress on the goals of the Student Remediation Plan, the student who experiences difficulty in these areas will be subject to dismissal from the Richmond program. An advisor who observes a lack of sufficient progress will report to the AAC. A student may be dismissed from a course and/or the Richmond program if the welfare of the student's clientele, prospective clientele, or the functioning of the school or agency is, in the judgment of the university's faculty and administration, in jeopardy as a result of the student's behavior.

A student always has the right to make a written rebuttal, and/or to appeal AAC decisions for remediation or dismissal. If a student chooses to provide a rebuttal, the AAC will meet again to consider any new evidence presented by the student. The AAC will provide written documentation of their decision within two weeks of the time that the written rebuttal was received. If the student wishes to make an appeal of the faculty's decision for remediation or dismissal, the Academic Appeal procedures outlined in the Graduate Catalog may be followed.

Students may register for their next semester (including their next clinical course) during early registration prior to the SQE review. However, final approval for enrollment in the subsequent semester (including subsequent clinical course) is contingent upon the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Committee as stated in the Student Qualifying Evaluation process.

*Students who are not allowed to advance to the next clinical component will be notified within one week of the SQE feedback meeting by the Dean or Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs. If the student is not allowed to proceed to the next clinical training course, any fee collected specific to that course will be credited to the student's account or reimbursed. Should the student be in the final course of the clinical sequence, the decision regarding the completion of their degree will be based on the outcome of the Academic Affairs Committee's review and decision.*



The semester and cumulative SQE data for each student is maintained by the School of Counseling to track students' performance throughout the program. As noted, students (and their advisors) receive feedback about performance concerns each fall and spring semester on their Student Performance Review Feedback Forms. These forms are maintained in the student's online academic file.

*A copy of the Student Performance Review Feedback Form for students who have a documented clinical concern will be kept in the student's clinical file with the Dean/Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs.*

The Student Qualifying Evaluation process described above is designed to encourage students who would benefit from personalized support, and to minimize graduating students who are not suited for the professional practice of counseling. Richmond Graduate University acknowledges that there are limitations in identifying every student who may not have the potential to perform effectively in the role of a professional counselor. Richmond acknowledges that there are limitations in identifying every student who may not have the potential to perform effectively in the role of professional counselor.

# **Section Seven: School of Ministry**

## School of Ministry Mission Statement

Richmont Graduate University's School of Ministry provides graduate programs that advance the Gospel of Christ by increasing the capacities of students to understand God's Word, to become whole and holy people, and to lead and serve effectively.

## School of Ministry Vision

School of Ministry prepares women and men to fulfill God's call to transforming ministry.

## Programs of Study

Richmont Graduate University's School of Ministry offers the following programs. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for complete details and course descriptions.

- Master of Arts in Ministry
- Master of Arts in Ministry: Anglican Studies Concentration
- Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction

## Master of Arts in Ministry (Residential or Online)

The Master of Arts in Ministry is a 40 credit-hour degree that focuses on theology, spiritual formation, and practical leadership and ministry skills. The M.A. in Ministry has been designed to address a student's whole being as it relates to their passion for authentic ministry leadership and service. Students experience amazing transformations in their knowledge and wisdom concerning scripture, their personal relationships with the Lord as they progress through the program and their ability to invoke Christ-centered leadership. Each student will carry these transformations with them after graduation to positively impact their churches, communities, and families.

Students divide their studies equally between the curriculum areas of:

- Bible History and Theology (Knowing)
- Spiritual Formation (Being)
- Practical Ministry and Leadership Skills (Doing)

## Master of Arts in Ministry: Anglican Studies Concentration

The Masters of Arts in Ministry: Anglican Studies is a 33 credit-hour degree meant to orient students to the history and theological distinctives of Anglicanism, including ecclesial and liturgical heritage as well as its context-sensitive approach to contemporary ministry. The Master of Arts in Ministry: Anglican Studies Concentration was developed in partnership with the Mission School of Ministry in Chattanooga, TN. It is focused on preparing students for ministry leadership within the Anglican tradition.

## Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction (Combination of Residential and Online)

The M.A. in Spiritual Formation and Direction is a 40 credit-hour degree that focuses on Bible, theology, personal spiritual formation, and supervised training in spiritual direction. Students will experience challenging personal spiritual growth and in depth foundation in Biblical theology. Due to the nature of the intense training in spiritual direction, courses are offered only on a cohort model.

## School of Ministry Graduate Certificates

- Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction
- Graduate Certificate in Anglican Studies

## Academic Policies

A complete description of all Richmond Graduate University's academic policies is provided in the Graduate Catalog. Those policies will apply to the following degree programs: Master of Arts in Ministry, Master of Arts in Ministry: Anglican Studies Concentration, Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Direction, the Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction and the Graduate Certificate in Anglican Studies.

### Course Delivery Systems

Courses are offered in a variety of formats including weekly, bi-weekly, intensive and technologically mediated delivery systems. Some courses may include online assignments and discussion formats. *Course syllabi and instruction for intensive courses begin the first of each semester.*

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Richmont Graduate University is committed to honoring our mission and our students by setting standards of excellence in the areas of academics, ministry, spiritual formation, and spiritual direction. The University is also committed to students' engagement in the evaluation process, which includes providing students with full information about the process, their roles and the role of the faculty.

Richmont encourages expression of ideas by students. Any official publication should be coordinated through the Dean of Students Office for approval. Richmont students have the right of freedom of expression and the right of the presumption of innocence and procedural fairness in the administration of discipline.

As students should know their rights and responsibilities, Richmont asks that all students review all program materials including, but not limited to, those posted on the University website, the Graduate Catalog, and this Student Handbook.

### School of Ministry Statement of Student Rights & Responsibilities

All Richmont Graduate University School of Ministry students sign a Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities form prior to matriculation.

## Writing and Research Standards

All papers written are to conform to the most recent edition of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers* or as otherwise noted by the professor. All written documents are to reflect the highest standards of grammar, composition and style. Students are expected to have adequate computer skills to produce all course assignments and to conduct research for those assignments independently. Any student desiring assistance for the research or production of assignments (other than basic proofreading) is required to seek prior approval from the professor.

**ONLINE:** Writing that is done in online classes, including, but not limited to, discussion posts, essays, research papers, etc. are expected to be at a Graduate level. Proper grammar and sentence structure must be used.

### Writing Resources

Below is a table of writing resources, for School of Ministry students. This table can also be found in all School of Ministry Syllabi.

Resource	Instructions or Guide
Turabian Resources from Richmond's Library (Student E-mail and Password required to access this content)	<a href="https://richmontuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/students/SitePages/Turabian-Style.aspx">https://richmontuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/students/SitePages/Turabian-Style.aspx</a>
Grammarly	Grammarly is a writing review software that reviews your papers for grammar, style, structure and formatting. It is highly recommended that all students use Grammarly before submitting a paper. To gain access to Grammarly, contact Richmond libraries at <a href="mailto:libraries@richmont.edu">libraries@richmont.edu</a> . (Student e-mail is required to access Grammarly).
Scholarly Writing Guidelines	<a href="https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/2cec8cc8-56d6-4006-bb3c-3e0850fc6193/1/Scholarly_Writing_Guidelines.pdf">https://content.bridgepointeducation.com/curriculum/file/2cec8cc8-56d6-4006-bb3c-3e0850fc6193/1/Scholarly_Writing_Guidelines.pdf</a>
Common errors and some recommendations as provided by the Dean of the School of Ministry	<p>The following is a list of common errors found in papers, from the Dean of the School of Ministry.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Punctuation &amp; Grammatical Errors:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Quotation marks occur after punctuation marks ("Paul,"), not before ("Paul",).</li> <li>b. Semi-colons should not be used often.</li> <li>c. Capitalized words should be correct.</li> <li>d. Lists and bullet points should be avoided. Writing should remain in prose/paragraph form.</li> <li>e. <i>Inconsistent verb tense.</i> In most cases, remaining in present tense is preferable. Example: "In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul responds to the problem of pollution, providing excellent evidence for his ecclesiology."</li> <li>f. Flowery language should be avoided. Simple, concise sentences are best.</li> <li>g. Sentence fragments and run-on sentences should be avoided.</li> <li>h. Unnecessary statements of intention should be avoided. ("I would like to share with you..." "It is my opinion that...")</li> <li>i. Failing to use quotation marks when quoting material</li> <li>j. Extra spaces between paragraphs, sections, and/or footnotes.</li> <li>k. Including the title of books and article in the sentence. (Simply write, "Fitzmyer argues...")</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Please indent the first line of each paragraph.</li> <li>3. <i>Including too much quoted material</i> (not more than 5% of the paper should be quoted material).</li> <li>4. <i>Including blocks of biblical quotation.</i> Please simply reference chapters and verses (i.e., "Matthew 5:7-8 indicates...").</li> <li>5. Including sources in your bibliography that are not in your footnotes. These will not be counted.</li> <li>6. Failing to delineate the structure of the paper in the introductory paragraph.</li> <li>7. Failing to fully cite sources</li> </ol>

## Academic Advisement

Upon acceptance to Richmond, each student in the School of Ministry will receive academic advisement as needed. Because of the sequential nature of the program and the fact that many courses are offered only once per year, deviation from the planned curriculum may result in a delay in meeting requirements for graduation and inadequate preparation for coursework. Students who wish to depart from the standard sequence should consult with the Records Office and their advisor regarding proposed changes and implications for completing the program. Students who deviate from the suggested sequence of courses are held to the same standards of performance for the courses as students who have followed the prescribed sequence.

## Student Evaluation, Retention, & Dismissal Policies

Richmont students are expected to maintain the highest standards of scholarship. The minimum standard of performance is a grade of 3.0 (*B*). Any student who receives a term grade point average below 3.0 during a given semester will receive a letter of scholastic warning from the Records Office. Should the student receive a GPA of less than 3.0 in two successive semesters, he/she will be subject to dismissal. A student dismissed for failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA may reapply after one year and must meet full admission criteria for the master's program at the time of re-application in addition to any requirements stipulated at the time of dismissal.

In addition to academic performance, social and interpersonal skills are essential to adequate performance in ministry and are actively evaluated while a student is in the Ministry program by faculty and staff. In the absence of adequate progress, students who experience difficulty in these areas will be subject to dismissal from the Richmont program after warning from the student's advisor.

### Standards of Performance

By policy, students are expected to uphold standards of academic and moral excellence consistent with their commitment to Christian faith and scholarship. Richmont students must demonstrate readiness to meet the level of professional behavior and service expected of graduate students in professional ministry, including but not limited to:

- Exhibiting conduct consistent with his or her profession of faith as a follower of Christ
- Maintaining a minimum term GPA of 3.0 (*B*)
- Abiding by the formal Statement of Community
- Exhibiting adequate social and interpersonal skills

- Exhibiting emotional balance and maturity, free from any impairment that might place self or another at risk
- Conducting herself or himself with confidentiality, honesty and academic integrity
- Relating respectfully and professionally to faculty, staff, fellow students and others
- Responding to supervision, class instruction, and other sources of constructive feedback
- Recognizing his or her limits of competency
- Translating academic preparation to ministry performance

### Retention and Dismissal

Because the School of Ministry seeks to graduate women and men who qualify as Christian leaders, the faculty and administration will evaluate a student's qualifications in terms of spiritual, doctrinal, and professional standards, as well as academic standards.

## Library Resources for School of Ministry

The Richmond Graduate University Library in Atlanta and the Poindexter Library in Chattanooga are essential partners with the faculty in Richmond's instructional and research endeavors. Our library collections and programs are designed to meet the information needs of students, fostering the development of creative reasoning and critical thinking that leads to intellectual, spiritual and social growth. We also seek to advance scholarship, develop critical competencies, promote lifelong learning, and otherwise serve the needs of Richmond's curriculum.

An organized list of Library resources for Ministry students are provided on the Student Resources page. This general collection includes a good number of commentaries and Bible study materials.

To get the most use out of EBSCO eBooks you will need to create a free account (top left of the page). Once you have created your account you can save searches, take notes, download a range of pages, and view pages of the commentary online. Contact the libraries if you have any questions or if you would like to request additional materials.

If you have any other library related concerns, or need more information, you can contact library staff in several ways.

- Email [libraries@richmont.edu](mailto:libraries@richmont.edu)
- *Ask a Librarian* feature at <https://www.richmont.edu/library/library-help/chat-with-a-library/>
- Call the Atlanta Library (404-835-6137)
- Visit the library when you are on campus



## Online Technology Requirements

A student's experience in the online degree program is highly dependent on the quality and functionality of your computer equipment. Below are the minimum specifications we recommend for your computer equipment and software versions, related to the tools that will be used in the program, once you are admitted.

### Hardware

- Access to a computer with speakers, microphone, and a webcam
- Windows 7 or higher · Mac OS 10.8 or higher
- Internet Access with a minimum connection speed of 1.5 mbps
- *Use Speedtest to determine connection speed: Close all applications and other website tabs and conduct test by visiting: <http://speedtest.net>*

### Software

- Adobe Acrobat Reader (to open PDFs): <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Microsoft Office

# Section Eight: Clery Appendix

## Clery Act Policies

Richmont Graduate University takes seriously the safety and health of students, staff, and faculty who attend classes on a physical campus or online.

In 1990, Congress enacted the *Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990* (Title II of Public Law 101-542), which amended the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (HEA). This act required all postsecondary institutions participating in HEA's Title IV student financial assistance programs to disclose campus crime statistics and security information. The act was amended in 1992, 1998, 2000, and 2008. The 1998 amendments renamed the law the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act* in memory of a student who was slain in her dorm room in 1986. It is generally referred to as the *Clery Act* and is in section 485(f) of the HEA (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Chapter 1).

## Emergency Notification and Timely Warning

Richmont utilizes two different types of emergency alerts: emergency notifications and timely warnings. This section also includes information regarding emergency response and evacuation procedures for the Atlanta and Chattanooga campuses.

### Emergency Notification

Emergency notifications will be utilized for any significant emergency or dangerous situation that occurs near a Richmont campus. An emergency notification will be triggered by an event that is currently occurring on or imminently threatening the campus. Emergency notification procedures will be initiated immediately upon confirmation that a dangerous situation or emergency exists or threatens.

Richmont has a Campus Safety Designee on each campus. The Campus Safety Designees and the VP of Technology have authorization to initiate the campus emergency notification system, *Campus Cast*. The Campus Safety Designees include:

**Atlanta Campus:** President, Provost, Dean of Students

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Associate Academic Dean

The University will, without delay, taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to or otherwise mitigate an emergency.

In the event that a situation is determined to be an emergency, the Campus Safety Designee will notify the campus community upon confirmation of significant emergency or dangerous situation that involves immediate threat to health and safety of students/employees using *Campus Cast*, an emergency notification system that alerts via text message and email. In smaller-scale emergencies, not involving both campuses, the Campus Safety Designee will initiate the notification system to affected campus members.

Immediate threats to the campus community include: *a fire, an outbreak of a serious illness or virus, inclement weather, an earthquake, terrorist incident, armed intruder, bomb threat, civil unrest or rioting, an explosion, or a nearby chemical or hazardous waste spill.*

At times, a notification may be disseminated in the event of a non-immediate threat. Examples of non-immediate threats include a power outage or snow

closure, or other events that might prevent classes from meeting or necessitate a temporary campus closure.

### Emergency Notification System Annual Test

Richmont Graduate University tests the emergency notification system on an annual basis.

The variety of drills used include:

Complete evacuation, Campus Cast signal for lock-down with a request for response, and a personal Visit to each campus by the safety chairperson with the opportunity to dialog about safety procedures.

The Safety Committee, under its chairperson, will be responsible for scheduling and conducting semi-annual emergency response and evacuation drills on both campuses. The Safety Committee also will evaluate and document any drills or actual emergencies.

The Safety Committee Chairperson decides on the drill and sets a date. The chairperson sets a date for the drill and notifies all University persons via email of the date and type of drill.

The Safety Committee Chairperson emails the campus a copy of the University's emergency procedures and any additional information needed for the drill.

After the drill, the chairperson evaluates the drill and maintains a record in the Safety Committee file. Any significant findings and recommendations resulting from that evaluation come before the Safety Committee.

### Timely Warning

Timely warnings are issued for Clery Act crimes that have already occurred but represent an ongoing threat. Any Clery Act crime committed on Richmont's Clery geography that is reported to a local law enforcement agency and is considered by the institution to represent a serious or continuing threat to students and employees will necessitate a timely warning. The timely warning will be issued as soon as pertinent information is available.

Richmont's "Clery Geography" includes: any building or property owned or controlled by the university within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the university and used by the institution in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes. The Clery Geography also includes all public property that is within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the university, such as sidewalks, street, other thoroughfare, or parking lots, that are adjacent to a university building.

Richmont will alert the campus community to certain crimes in a manner that is

timely and will aid in the prevention of similar crimes. A timely warning will be issued promptly so that members of Richmond will have sufficient time and necessary information to take appropriate precautions.

### How a Timely Warning Will be Issued

In the event that a situation arises on campus, that, in the judgment of the University President, other senior administrator, or designee constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat, a campus-wide timely warning will be issued.

**Atlanta Campus:** President, Provost, Dean of Students

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Associate Academic Dean, VP of Administration

The warning will be issued to the University via *Campus Cast*, an emergency notification system that alerts via text message and email. The warning will be issued without delay.

## Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures

Richmont's emergency response and evacuation procedures are intended to ensure that Richmond has sufficiently prepared for an emergency situation on campus. In the event of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on campus, it is the responsibility of the President of the University to confirm the scope of the emergency or dangerous situation and the proper response to the emergency. In the absence of the President, other administration should be consulted.

**Atlanta Campus:** President, Provost, Dean of Students

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Associate Academic Dean, VP of Administration

Emergency notifications to the campus community will be sent, without delay, using a combination of options through the University emergency alert system, including text alerts, mass emails, and fire alarms.

Faculty, under the Provost of the University, will receive emergency response training at the bi-annual faculty training. All other employees, under the VP of Finance, will receive emergency response training at the annual employee training.

There are three types of emergencies and corresponding drills or procedures:

**SHELTER IN PLACE** – *When the threat is external (storms, persons, nearby fires, etc.):*

1. Immediately move to an interior hallway or room away from windows and doors.
2. Be aware of persons with disabilities who need help moving to a safe area and move them to a safe area. Teaching faculty should assist persons with disabilities in their classes and the Assistant to the President and Administrative Assistant and/or Facilities Manager should assist persons with disabilities in the student lounge, hallways, and office areas.
3. Wait in the safe area until an all-clear is given by local authorities.
4. Outside doors should be locked.
5. Be prepared to seek out lockable rooms as an extra measure of safety.

**LOCKDOWN** – *When the threat is internal (usually a person or persons):*

1. Outside/Entrance doors will not be locked to allow access to emergency responders.
2. Lock, if able, and barricade doors in your immediate area.
3. Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection (i.e. concrete walls, thick desks, filing cabinets).
4. Silence cell phones (do not turn off).
5. Wait for an “all clear” before leaving your safe location.

**EVACUATION** – *When leaving the building is the safest option (such as a fire, gas leak, etc.):*

1. Immediately obey evacuation alarms and orders. Everyone must evacuate. No one may remain inside a building when an evacuation is in progress.
2. Immediately shut down equipment or other operations that could create additional hazards if left unattended (i.e. classes, meetings, electronic equipment, lights, candles, etc.). Teaching faculty are responsible for shutting down equipment or other operations in their respective classrooms and the Assistant to the President and Administrative Assistant and/or Facilities Manager are responsible for shutting down equipment or other operations in the student lounge, hallways, and office areas.
3. When you evacuate, take your keys, coat, purse and any other critical personal items with you to the emergency assembly area.
4. Close doors as rooms are vacated.
5. Assist those who need help, but do not put yourself at risk attempting to rescue trapped or injured victims. Note the location of trapped and injured victims and notify emergency responders of them.

**VIOLENT OR CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR** – *When you witness violent behavior on campus:*

1. Initiate immediate contact with Local Law Enforcement (911) and campus-wide security to ensure that a timely response has begun before a situation becomes uncontrollable.

2. Leave the immediate area whenever possible and direct others to do so.
3. Should gunfire or an explosives hazard occur on campus, you should take cover immediately using all available concealment. Close and lock doors when possible to separate yourself and others from the armed suspect.

**HOSTAGE SITUATION** – *When you are on university campus are you are taken hostage:*

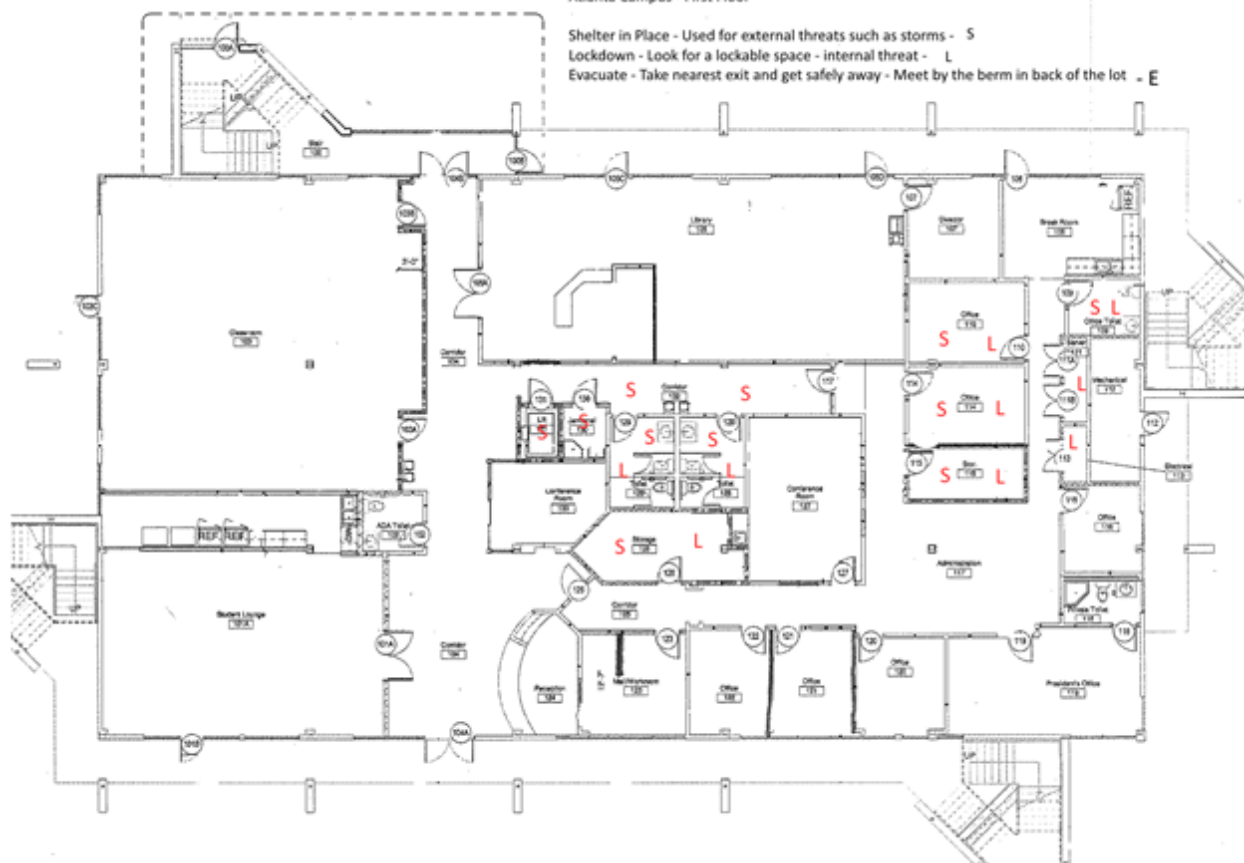
1. Be patient. Time is on your side. Avoid drastic action.
2. The initial 45 minutes are the most dangerous. Follow instructions, be alert, and stay alive. Captors are emotionally unbalanced. Don't make mistakes that could jeopardize your well-being.
3. Don't speak unless spoken to and then only when necessary. Don't talk down or attempt to rationalize with the captor. Avoid appearing hostile. Maintain eye contact with the captor at all times, if possible, but do not stare.
4. Try to rest. Avoid speculating. Comply with instructions as best as you can. Avoid arguments. Expect the unexpected, severe mood swings, irrational actions, etc. Displaying a certain amount of fear can possibly work to your advantage.
5. Do not make quick or sudden moves. If you must go to the bathroom, need medications, or first aid, ask your captors.
6. Be observant. When you are released, or if you escape, the personal safety of others may depend on what details you remember about the situation.

**"SAFE AREAS"** – In the event of an emergency within the building, please move to the assigned safe area(s). See the following pages for suggested safe areas on each campus.



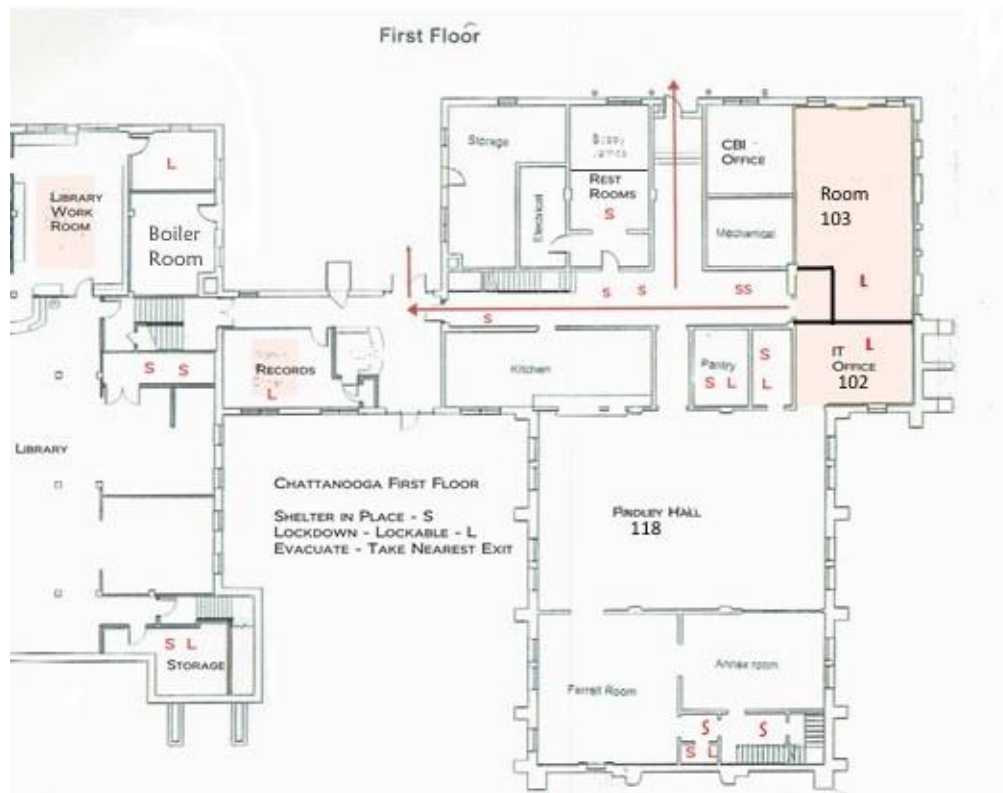
## Atlanta Campus - First Floor

Evacuate - Take nearest exit and get safely away - Meet by the berm in back of the lot - F

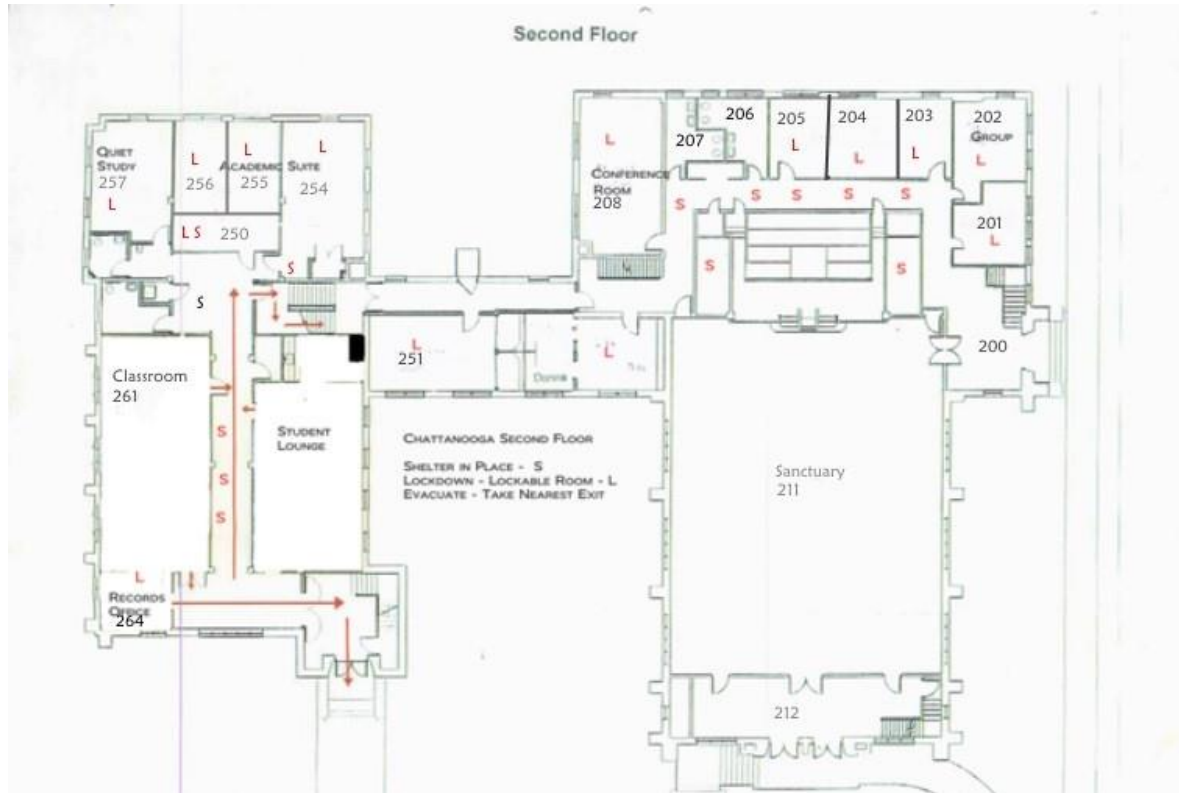




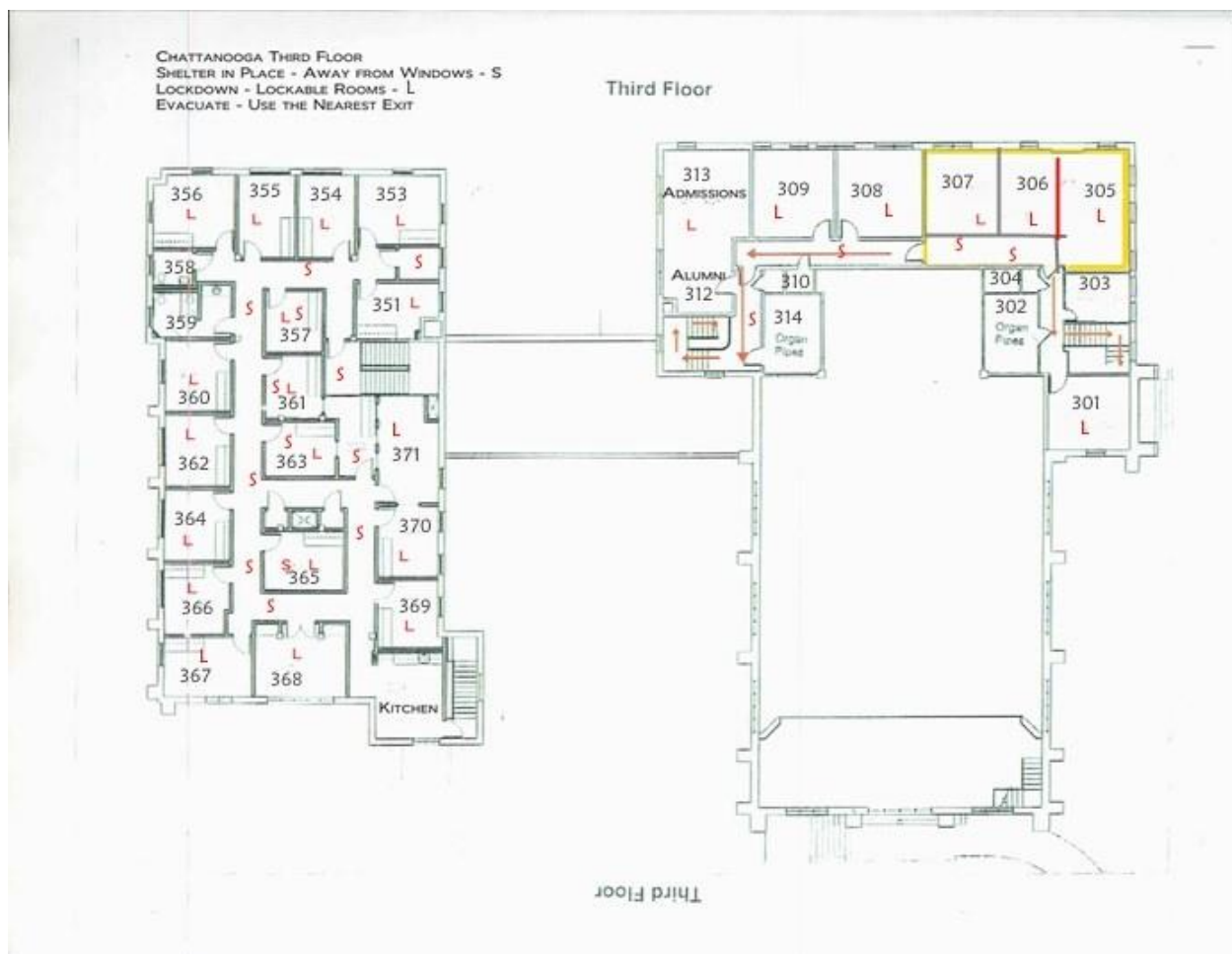
## Chattanooga Campus First Floor



## Chattanooga Campus Second Floor

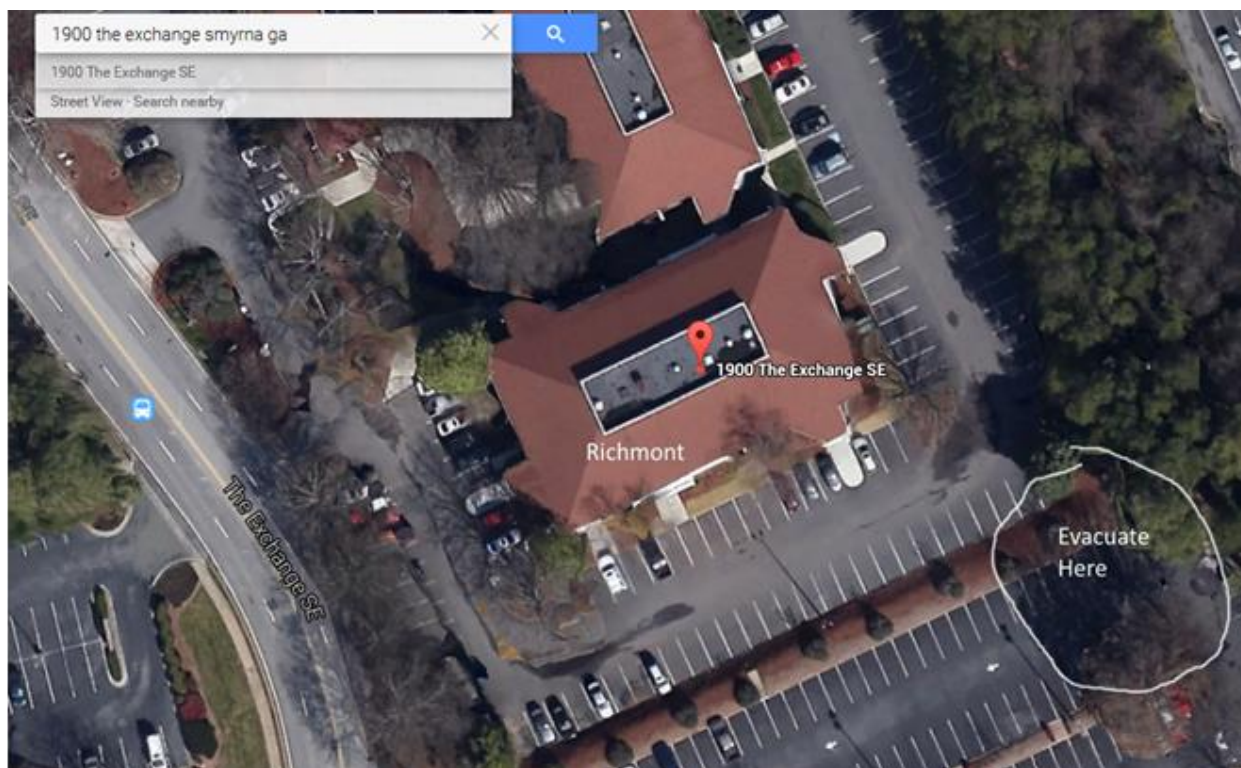


## Chattanooga Campus Third Floor



### Atlanta Evacuation Assembly Area

In Atlanta, assemble in parking lot across the berm toward the back side of the lot.



### Chattanooga Evacuation Assembly Area

Meet in front of the Richmont Graduate University Finance Building. If this isn't a safe distance, meet across the street (Oak Street).





## Clery Act Crimes

Clery Act crimes include the following: murder/non-negligent manslaughter, manslaughter by negligence, sex offenses (rape, fondling, incest, statutory rape), robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, hate crimes (any of the crimes previously listed plus simple assault, larceny-theft, intimidation or damage/destruction/vandalism of property motivated by bias in one of the bias categories), liquor law violations arrests/referrals, drug law violations arrests/referrals, weapons law violations arrests/referrals, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

### Annual Disclosure of Crime Statistics

Richmont Graduate University designates a Campus Security Survey Administrator (VP of Finance) to prepare a report in compliance with the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act*. The full text of the report is posted at [Richmont.edu](http://Richmont.edu) and is available from the Administrator in printed form upon request.

Campus crime, arrest, and referral statistics include those reported to the Campus Safety Committee, Campus Safety Designees, and local law enforcement agencies.

Each fall term the Campus Security Survey Administrator sends a link to the full report and related safety policies via e-mail to all enrolled students, faculty, and staff.

### Reporting Clery Act Crimes

All Clery Act Crimes should be reported to the Campus Safety Designee on a student's campus. The Campus Safety Designees include:

#### Atlanta Campus:

Office of Student Affairs

#### Chattanooga Campus:

Campus Security Survey Administrator (VP of Finance), Associate Academic Dean

<b>Office of Student Affairs</b>	404-835-6114	<a href="mailto:studentaffairs@richmont.edu">studentaffairs@richmont.edu</a>
<b>Campus Security Survey Administrator</b>	423-648-2421	<a href="mailto:tmcperson@richmont.edu">tmcperson@richmont.edu</a>
<b>Associate Academic Dean</b>	423-687-2405	<a href="mailto:ccochran@richmont.edu">ccochran@richmont.edu</a>

### Voluntary and Confidential Reporting of Crimes

To report a crime, a person should contact the nearest local police department (use 9-1-1 for emergencies). On-campus crimes should also be reported to the

Facilities Manager who in turn will contact the Campus Security Survey Administrator. The Campus Survey Administrator will evaluate the report in consultation with the University President for possible legal or campus safety action. The reported crime will be reflected in the daily crime log.

<b>Cobb County Police</b>	9-1-1	770-499-3900
<b>Chattanooga Police</b>	9-1-1	423-698-2525
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	423-648-2410	facilities@richmont.edu
<b>Campus Security Survey Administrator</b>	423-648-2421	tmcpherson@richmont.edu

### General Procedures for Reporting a Crime or an Emergency

Community members, students, faculty, staff, and guests are encouraged to report all crimes to the local police departments as well as to contact persons on each campus. The point of contact is the Facilities Manager. Incident reports involving students are forwarded to the Dean of Students for review and potential action. Crime reports will be evaluated for action by the Campus Security Administrator and logged in the Daily Crime Report.

<b>Cobb County Police</b>	9-1-1	770-499-3900
<b>Chattanooga Police</b>	9-1-1	423-698-2525
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	423-648-2673	facilities@richmont.edu
<b>Campus Security Survey Administrator</b>	423-648-2421	tmcpherson@richmont.edu

Richmont does not have verbal or written procedures specifically for pastoral counselors or counselors in regards to crime reporting.

### Policy Statement on Confidential Reporting Procedures

If a person is the victim of a crime and does not want to pursue action within Richmont or the criminal justice system, the university may still file a confidential report. The Facilities Manager may file a report on the details of the incident without revealing the identity of the complainant. With such information, the University can keep accurate records of the number of incidents involving students, determine where there is a pattern of crime with regard to a particular location, method, or assailant, and alert the campus community to potential danger. Reports filed in this manner are included in the annual crime statistics for the institution.

<b>Campus Security Survey Administrator</b>	423-648-2421	tmcpherson@richmont.edu
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	(423)648-2410	facilities@richmont.edu



## Crime Reporting

The Campus Security Survey Administrator is responsible for crime reporting. All incidents are to be reported to the Facilities Manager, who then reports each incident to the Safety Committee.

The Campus Security Survey Administrator facilitates the following steps (following guidelines from the Clery Act Policies):

- Maintain a log of all incidents. The log is available online for staff and students.
- Contact local police departments for a compilation of calls related to Richmond (annual). The log of these contacts is kept in the “Safety” Folder, which is a physical/paper file kept by the Campus Survey Administrator.
- File a report of all of this information with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education.

The crime report and related policies are made available to all Richmond affiliates via e-mail and posting on internal web pages. This report is also maintained in publicly available files that contain the daily crime log.

## Annual Safety Report (ASR)

The Annual Safety Report (ASR) is compiled in September of the academic year. The ASR data is maintained in the “Safety” Folder, which is a physical/paper file kept by the Campus Survey Administrator. The ASR is published annually on the University website at [Richmont.edu](http://Richmont.edu). The Campus Safety Administrator sends an annual email to the University which includes the Annual Safety Report in September of each academic year. The data can be found online here: <https://www.richmont.edu/annual-security-reports/>.

## Assessment

The Richmond Safety Committee reviews this document, along with the status of Richmond safety and security guidelines as needed. Upon review, any recommendations from the Security Committee will be presented to the Administrative Council for approval or further decisions.

## Safety Committee

This committee consists of full-time faculty (instructional, clinical, or library) and full-time staff from different departments in the institution. The diversity of those serving on this committee offers different perspectives, but also offers the broadest possible representation from within the institution. Other advisors and administrators may take part as necessary. This committee regularly meets as needed to address security issues and policies pertaining to the Richmond community.

<b>Chairperson</b>	423-648-2421	<a href="mailto:tmcpherson@richmont.edu">tmcpherson@richmont.edu</a>
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	423-648-2673	<a href="mailto:facilities@richmont.edu">facilities@richmont.edu</a>

<b>VP of IT</b>	423-648-2678	dblandon@richmont.edu
<b>Office of Student Affairs</b>	404-835-6114	studentaffairs@richmont.edu

## General Campus Safety & Building Access

During business hours, the University will be open to students, parents, employees, contractors, guests, and invitees entering through main entrance doors. Other doors are controlled by magnetic locks and can be accessed by doorbell or ID card/fob. During non-business hours access to all University facilities is by key or fob. Emergencies may necessitate changes or alterations to any posted schedules. Richmond Graduate University does not have any campus residences.

Richmont Graduate University is committed to providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment in which faculty, staff, and students may work and study. In this, Richmont has taken steps to comply with Local, State, and Federal standards.

In addition, Richmont expects that all employees will share the responsibility for safety and security of themselves, fellow employees, students and guests, and maintain reasonable care when using university property. All employees are expected to comply with the University written policies and guidelines set forth in this statement, including but not limited to, Federal, State, and Local regulatory bodies, including fire and police agencies.

Richmont comprises two campuses and four separate buildings. All employees should familiarize themselves with both campuses: all four buildings, and any specifics related to each campus and building to ensure maximum safety and security while working in all facilities.

Employees can contribute to the safety and security of all Richmont affiliates by:

- Complying with federal, state, and local regulations.
- Encouraging safety and security practices among peers.
- Reporting violations of safe practices to their supervisor or other Richmont administrators.
- Reporting on-the-job accidents in a timely manner in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
- Reporting crimes and suspicious situations to their supervisor, other Richmont administrator, campus-wide security, and/or local law enforcement.
- Being aware of potentially violent situations and treating them conscientiously (along with reporting this immediately to their supervisor, other Richmont administrator, campus-wide security, and/or local law enforcement).

- Keep all valuables locked away and/or lock your office door when you leave.
- Ask unescorted visitors entering your office to identify themselves and whom they are meeting. Immediately call local law enforcement if a person entering your office area appears to be suspicious or won't identify him- or herself.

### **While Working After Hours**

- Lock all doors to the outside.
- Keep your office door closed and locked.
- Never leave your valuables unattended.
- Remove all valuable items from your desktop and close and lock file drawers, windows, and doors when leaving your office for the day.

### **When Walking at Night**

- Walk with a coworker or security personnel as an escort.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Walk briskly and confidently.
- Have your car keys in hand as you approach your vehicle

## **Physical Facilities**

Richmont Graduate University comprises two campuses with administrative offices, libraries, classrooms, student and staff break facilities, counseling facilities, and a large chapel in the Chattanooga campus. In addition to this, both Atlanta and Chattanooga have separate buildings that serve as counseling centers. Richmont is committed to providing for the safety, security, and health of all Richmont affiliates in these areas.

One staff member is responsible for providing keys for all staff on each campus (Building Manager in Chattanooga and Office of the President in Atlanta). All Richmont employees are responsible for maintaining provided keys to Richmont facilities. In the event that keys are lost, employees should report this immediately to their supervisor and/or the parties responsible for key distribution.

Building access schedules for each campus are below. There are adjusted schedules for school breaks and holidays, which are communicated to the campus community via email.

### **Chattanooga Campus**

**1815 McCallie Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37404**

- There are surveillance cameras covering all parking lots and the main entrance (inside and outside of the building) of the facilities. The images from the cameras can be monitored and are recorded 24 hours per day. The tapes run on a 7-day cycle.

- All parking lots and entrances to the building are well lit.
- The main door is locked at 8:00 pm every week day, and beyond that time persons are buzzed in from the receptionist desk in the counseling center for access to the building.
- Parking is limited to the main parking lot after 5:30 p.m. Entrance and exit after that time is through the main (monitored) entrance.
- There is a keypad with a security code to provide entry for Richmond employees. This code is given to students during weekend intensive courses for their use in reentering the building.
- An external security service provides a security guard to work on this campus 4 nights per week (Mon-Thursday).
- A security alarm system and panic button for several departments on this campus is currently in place. This includes the counseling center in the other building on campus.

### Atlanta Campus

1900 The Exchange, Building 100, Atlanta, GA 30339

- Front and Disability Doors unlock and lock again according to a preset time. These times determine when the magnetic closure device releases hold to allow traffic to flow from outside.
- Each employee and the cleaning crew have been assigned a FOB device to access the building when doors are locked.
- All internal doors remain locked including classrooms and library spaces until an employee arrives to open each space as needed.

### Campus Police Authority and Jurisdiction

Richmont Graduate University does not maintain a campus police force or security personnel. All criminal complaints are handled through local police departments. Richmond Graduate University does not have a memorandum of understanding with local or state police agencies.

Campus community members are encouraged to accurately and promptly report all crimes in an accurate to the local law enforcement when the victim of the crime elects to, or is unable to, make such a report.

### Security Awareness and Crime Prevention Programs

Richmont stresses security awareness and crime prevention with new employees and at orientation of new students. Also, all students, faculty, and staff receive a reminder twice a year of safety and security policies along with the publication of the Clery Crime statistics report and during the period that includes a yearly emergency exercise.

Richmont Graduate University does not have any ongoing programs for students and employees that emphasize crime prevention.

### Monitoring and Recording Criminal Activity at Non-Campus Locations

Richmont Graduate University does not have any recognized student organizations at non-campus locations.

## Alcoholic Beverage Policy

It is a violation of Richmont's policy for anyone on campus to possess, consume, or sell alcoholic beverages in any public or private area of campus without prior University approval. The use of wine for communion is excluded from the need for prior approval. Organizations, individuals, or groups violating alcohol/substance policies or law may be subject to sanctions or discipline by the University. The University will refer underage drinking or other statutory violations to local police.

The possession, sale, manufacture, or distribution of any controlled substance without prescription is illegal under both state and federal laws. Any infractions of these laws will be reported to local law enforcement agencies. Violators are also subject to disciplinary action within the university.

### Policy on Alcoholic Beverages and Illegal Drugs

As a community of Christians with special commitment to acting out of love to one another and to carefully guarding our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit, Richmont expects community behavior that demonstrates the highest standard of respect for people. Scripture is replete with exhortations to look out for the welfare of others and build up each other, to be good protectors and stewards of the possessions God has given us and to be honest and keep one's word. Richmont is committed to fostering respectful interpersonal relationships regardless of gender, race, age, handicap, or national origin. Based on these principles, we have established the following standards of conduct regarding substance abuse and sexual offense.

As mandated by the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-690), Richmont Graduate University is committed to maintaining a drug-free work environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited on Richmont grounds or at Richmont activities by all students and employees. It is also a violation of Richmont policy for anyone to consume or possess alcohol in any public or private area of campus without prior University approval. In addition, it is a violation of Richmont policy for employees to work while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Certain off-campus functions allow consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Individuals or groups violating alcohol or substance use policies (either on- or off-campus) will be subject to disciplinary action by the University and, possibly,

criminal prosecution. Any infraction of federal, state, or local laws will be reported to local law enforcement agencies.

## Federal and State Law Regarding Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

The use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensing and trafficking of illegal drugs is prohibited by federal law. Strict penalties are provided for drug convictions, including mandatory prison terms for many offenses. The information below, although not complete, is an overview of potential federal statutory maximum penalties. However, precise federal sentencing is governed by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines. Please note that sentencing under these guidelines can result in penalties that are more severe than the federal statutory maximums and that are more severe than the penalties imposed under state law under certain circumstances.

A federal drug conviction may result in the denial of federal benefits such as student loans, grants, contracts, and professional and commercial licenses, up to one year for first offense, up to five years for second and subsequent offenses. Moreover, any person convicted of a federal drug offense punishable by more than one year in prison will forfeit personal and real property related to the violation, including homes, vehicles, boats, aircraft or any other personal belongings.

Persons convicted for violating Tennessee or Georgia state law for the use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensing or trafficking of illegal alcohol or drugs may be punished by: incarceration up to life in prison; fines up to \$1 million, forfeiture of assets; suspension or loss of driver's, business and/or professional licenses; and/or termination and suspension from eligibility for state employment. Georgia law prohibits the purchase or possession of alcohol by a person under the age of 21, or the furnishing of alcohol to such a person. Driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or possession of an open container of alcohol while operating a motor vehicle is illegal. It is against Georgia law, under certain circumstances, to walk or be upon a roadway while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. The punishment of these offenses may include imprisonment, payment of a fine, mandatory treatment and education programs, community service, forfeiture of motor vehicles and mandatory loss of one's driver's license.

### Drug and Alcohol Abuse Education Programs

Richmont Graduate University teaches counselors and ministers who will be required to recognize and minister to persons affected directly and indirectly by drug and alcohol abuse. Knowledge about the effects of this abuse is built into the curriculum. A course on alcohol and drug addiction counseling is a required

course for most students. In the School of Counseling, students are required to take an ethics course. This course emphasizes recognizing boundary issues and ethical conduct. Professors have experience working with the effects of drug and alcohol addiction and abuse and will readily recognize its effects.

There are two programs that are available to students. Richmond lists counselors and spiritual directors who are available at reduced rates for our students. Richmond also has an Advisement Week when students and advisors spend extra time together talking about wellness and self-care. This is an excellent opportunity to identify students under stress and to intervene before students succumb to unhealthy coping mechanism.

## Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment

Nothing matters more than the safety and well-being of every individual in our community. With that aim, Richmond continuously strives to educate the student community about the effects of sexual assault through classroom discussions presented by various faculty members (e.g., in Sexual Wholeness classes, especially those focused on trauma). Training documents are available through the Student Resources page, and literature is provided at orientation each term. Sexual harassment is antithetical to University values, a barrier to learning in the classroom, and an obstruction to productivity in the workplace.

Both legally and morally, Richmond rejects any form of sexual misconduct. Sexual harassment is prohibited by federal statute [cf. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, 1964, 42 U.S.C. Sections 2000e et seq. (1992); Title IX of the Educational Amendments, (1972), 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681 et seq. (1990)]. Similarly, all members of the Richmond community share responsibility for the creation of a campus that bears joyful witness to the God-given worth of all persons. The University's Christian identity and values require us to act in a manner honoring others.

### Biblical View on Sexual Misconduct

Every member of the Richmond community should be aware that Richmond is strongly opposed to sexual misconduct and/or harassment and that such behavior is prohibited both by policy and by law [cf. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, 1964, 42 U.S.C. Sections 2000e et seq. (1992); Title IX of the Educational Amendments, (1972), 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681 et seq. (1990)]. Sexual harassment is a barrier to learning in the classroom and to productivity in the workplace.

Richmond intends to take whatever action may be needed to prevent, correct, and if necessary, discipline behavior which violates this policy. Faculty, administrators, and supervisors have the responsibility for participation in the



creation of a campus environment free from sexual harassment, an environment that bears joyful witness to the God-given worth of all persons.

The two great commands are these: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...and mind* and *You shall love your neighbor as yourself* (Matt. 22:37, 39). As man and woman are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27), so in Christ there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3:28). Followers of Jesus are not to lord over one another (Matt. 20:25-27) but are to be in mutual submission (Eph. 5:21). Christians manifest these truths through their mutual service and love in the Body of Christ.

Sexual misconduct and sexual harassment are a violation of Christ's commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. It denies the image of God in the other, and it negates our oneness in Christ. Sexual harassment regularly involves an abuse of power. It invariably interferes with shared ministry and rends the Body of Christ.

With these things in mind, together with the realization that when one member suffers all suffer together (1 Cor. 12:26), Richmond establishes the following policy, definitions, and procedures about sexual harassment.

### Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Definitions

**Dating Violence** is defined as violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition

- dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse
- dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Chapter 8).

**Domestic Violence** is defined as a felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed

- by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim
- by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common
- by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner
- by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred;
- by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the



jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Chapter 8).

**Stalking** is defined as engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to

- fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or
- suffer substantial emotional distress (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Chapter 8).

**Sexual Assault** is defined as an offense that meets the definition of Rape, Fondling, Incest or Statutory Rape as used in the FBI's UCR program and included in Appendix A of 34 CFR Part 668 (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, Chapter 8).

**Sexual Harassment** includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature up to and including sexual assault constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of instruction, employment, or participation in any Richmond activity;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making any academic or personnel decision affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in instructional, employment-related, or other Richmond activity.

Both men and women may be victims of sexual harassment. One person may be sexually harassing another person and not be aware that his or her behavior is viewed negatively. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, consideration shall be given to the conduct of the accused, as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged conduct occurred. Richmond encourages its faculty to be sensitive to triggering language used in the classroom when teaching.

## **Consent**

Under Georgia law, **Consent** to sexual activity is defined as an informed and voluntary agreement and cannot be given by someone who is underage (generally, the age of consent is 16 years old). Georgia courts have found consent cannot be given by someone who is incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, mentally incompetent, or in fear of being hurt or suffering other dangerous consequences.

Under Tennessee law, **Consent** to sexual activity is defined as express or apparent agreement to engage in sexual activity. Consent **cannot** be given by persons who are forced, threatened, coerced, or deceived, incapable of

understanding the nature of the conduct due to youth, intoxication, or a mental disease or defect, rendered incapable of controlling their actions or understanding the nature of the conduct due to acts done to them or substances consumed involuntarily, unconscious, asleep, or otherwise physically or verbally unable to object or resist, or underage (generally, the age of consent is 18 years old). Students, faculty, and staff who are outside of Georgia and Tennessee are encouraged to verify their state's definition of consent.

### Safe and Effective Bystander Interventions

Bystanders play a critical role in the prevention of sexual and relationship violence. They are "individuals who observe violence or witness the conditions that perpetuate violence. They are not directly involved but have the choice to intervene, speak up, or do something about it." We want to promote a culture of community accountability where bystanders are actively engaged in the prevention of violence without causing further harm.

We may not always know what to do even if we want to help. If you or someone else is in immediate danger, dial 911. This could be when a person is yelling at or being physically abusive towards another and it is not safe for you to interrupt.

How to be an active bystander:

1. **Create a distraction** -- Do what you can to interrupt the situation. A distraction can give the person at risk a chance to get to a safe place.
2. **Ask directly** -- Talk directly to the person who might be in trouble.
3. **Refer to an authority** -- Sometimes the safest way to intervene is to refer to a neutral party with the authority to change the situation.
4. **Enlist others** -- It can be intimidating to approach a situation alone. Enlist another person to support you.
5. **Your actions matter** -- Whether or not you were able to change the outcome, by stepping in you are helping to change the way people think about their role in preventing sexual assault.

### Risk Reduction of Sexual Misconduct

The following tips may reduce your risk for many different types of crimes, including sexual violence (taken from Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, [rainn.org](http://rainn.org)).

1. **Know your resources.** Who should you contact if you or a friend needs help? Where should you go? Locate resources such as the campus health center, campus police station, and a local sexual assault service provider.
2. **Stay alert.** When you're moving around on campus or in the surrounding neighborhood, be aware of your surroundings. Consider inviting a friend to join you. If you're alone, only use headphones in one ear to stay aware of your surroundings.

3. **Be careful about posting your location.** Many social media sites, like Facebook and Foursquare, use geolocation to publicly share your location. Consider disabling this function and reviewing other social media settings.
4. **Make others earn your trust.** A college environment can foster a false sense of security. They may feel like fast friends, but give people time to earn your trust before relying on them.
5. **Think about Plan B.** Spend some time thinking about back-up plans for potentially sticky situations. If your phone dies, do you have a few numbers memorized to get help? Do you have emergency cash in case you can't use a credit card? Do you have the address to your dorm or college memorized? If you drive, is there a spare key hidden, gas in your car, and a set of jumper cables?
6. **Be secure.** Lock your door and windows when you're asleep and when you leave the room. If people constantly prop open the main door to the dorm or apartment, tell security or a trusted authority figure

## Procedures for Victims of Sexual Misconduct

Richmont Graduate University prohibits the crimes of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking as those terms are defined for purposes of the *Clery Act*.

### Initial Action Steps for Students: Where to Begin

If a student is a victim of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, or sexual harassment, the priority is to get to a place of safety. At that point, the student should obtain necessary medical treatment. Time is a critical factor for evidence collection and preservation in case the student decides at some point to pursue legal options. Filing a report with the local police department by dialing 9-1-1 is recommended and will not obligate the victim to prosecute at a later date.

As soon as possible, an assault should be reported to the Office of Student Affairs, especially if the alleged perpetrator is enrolled in the school or if academic changes are being requested (e.g., semester withdrawal or incompletes). The Office of Student Affairs will assist the student in notifying authorities if requested, and will help with referrals to off-campus mental health services.

The Office of Student Affairs can be contacted at [studentaffairs@richmont.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@richmont.edu).

If the alleged perpetrator is a member of the Richmont community (student, staff, faculty), an immediate investigation will be initiated, and disciplinary action may be taken. Disciplinary proceedings are detailed in this document. They provide, in part, that the accused and the victim will each be allowed to choose one person

who has had no formal legal training to accompany them throughout the hearing. Both the victim and accused will be informed of the outcome of the hearing.

A student found guilty of violating the Richmond sexual misconduct policy could be criminally prosecuted in the state courts and may be suspended or expelled from Richmond for the first offense. Student victims have the option to change their academic situations after an alleged sexual assault if such changes are reasonably available.

### Designated Investigators for Richmond Students

Students of the Richmond community with a concern or complaint, which may involve sexual harassment, are encouraged to discuss the concern with a *designated investigator* who is trained for that role. A designated investigator can provide information about applicable school policies and procedures, outline available options for addressing the concern or complaint, and, if requested, attempt to resolve the matter through informal mediation.

Designated investigators for student reports of sexual misconduct or harassment include the Dean of Students; the Dean of the School of Counseling; the Dean of the School of Ministry; and the Student Affairs Officer - Chattanooga.

Consultation with a designated investigator immediately launches a formal investigation into the alleged incident. Designated investigators will maintain a written summary of their meeting with the person filing the complaint. This written summary will constitute a *formal complaint* once the student reviews the summary and signs off on it as an accurate record of the conversation. Information about the number and location of complaints received will be logged, as appropriate, for statistical purposes and, if collected, maintained by the Office of Student Affairs.

### Staff Responsibility to Report

An individual having direct knowledge of sexual harassment by a member of the Richmond community has a clear duty to bring the matter to the attention of a designated investigator immediately. The designated investigator may serve as the complainant in such a matter and may pursue the matter through the informal and formal complaint resolution process.

### Critical Incidents

In a situation in which the health or well-being of a member of the Richmond community is threatened, the person so threatened, a designated investigator, supervisor, or another person should promptly inform the President. The President is authorized to take such action as is necessary and appropriate to ensure the well-being of the Richmond community.

## Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Complaint Resolution Procedures for Students

Both informal and formal complaint resolution processes are available to students, faculty, administrators, and staff whenever there is an allegation of sexual harassment against another member of the Richmond community. Time off with pay during the scheduled working hours of the student complainant, the student complainant's representative, anyone alleged to be involved, and any witnesses or other concerned parties will be granted, if requested, for the interview period(s) with the designated investigator.

Filing a *formal complaint* (see below for definition) constitutes notice to Richmond of a sexual harassment incident. Formal complaints must be filed in writing to a designated investigator within 90 calendar days from the time a student complainant knew or should have known of an act or acts of sexual harassment. From that point forward, the University will act swiftly to resolve the complaint through its prescribed resolution process as soon as possible for the benefit of all involved parties.

### Informal Complaint Resolution:

Informal complaint resolution begins when a student complainant asks a designated investigator for assistance beyond mere consultation. When so requested, a designated investigator may act as a mediator to clarify and overcome any misunderstanding, to arrive at a mutually agreed upon resolution of the situation, and to set conditions which discourage similar incidents or misunderstandings in the future. By way of example but not limitation, a designated investigator acting in this mediating capacity may utilize any of the following procedures:

1. Advise the student complainant of actions and resources to alleviate any discomfort or harm.
2. Discuss the matter separately with the student complainant and the person complained against (alleged perpetrator).
3. With the prior consent of both the student complainant and the alleged perpetrator, discuss the matter with both parties.
4. Where desired by both parties, serve as a mediator to set satisfactory conditions for further interaction by the parties.
5. Recommend that the formal complaint resolution procedures be utilized. If the student complainant is not satisfied with the results of the informal complaint resolution process, the student complainant may file a formal complaint. *The student complainant is not obligated to use or exhaust the informal complaint resolution process before filing a formal complaint.* If the informal complaint resolution process is used and the complainant chooses to file a formal complaint, the complainant must file a formal grievance in writing no later than 30 calendar days after the mediation process concludes.

If the student complainant withdraws the complaint or is satisfied with the results of the informal complaint process, Richmond nevertheless reserves the right to continue to pursue the matter through the formal complaint process as circumstances may warrant, or the law may require.

### **Formal Complaint Resolution:**

1. **Filing a Formal Complaint:** The student complainant shall file a written complaint with a designated administrator. The Dean of Students is the designated administrator if the student complainant and the alleged perpetrator is a student. The President is the designated administrator if the student complainant and the alleged perpetrator are faculty members or staff employees. The student complainant may ask a designated investigator or other person selected from among the members of the Richmond community for assistance in preparing the complaint. The student complainant shall record with specificity the circumstances and nature of the alleged sexual harassment.
2. **Judicial Review Board:** The President will convene and appoint a Judicial Review Board. The Board will consist of three members selected by the President. The President will serve as chair of the Judicial Review Board. If a conflict of interest or other valid reason prevents a Judicial Review Board member from serving, the President will select an alternate. The members of the Judicial Review Board at a minimum, receive annual training on the issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking and on how to conduct an investigation and hearing process that protects the safety of the victims and promotes accountability. The President shall make every effort to ensure that a fair, impartial, and representative Board hears the matter.
3. **Notification:** The President or his designee shall give the alleged perpetrator written notification that a complaint has been filed. The alleged perpetrator may file a written response with the President if he/she chooses. They may ask another person within the Richmond community for assistance (i.e., an Advisor) in preparing this response. The Advisor for the victim and alleged perpetrator may be a person of their choosing. The President shall provide a copy of the response to the student complainant.
4. **Investigation:** The following standards for investigation will be observed:
  - a. In conducting the investigation, the Board shall receive and review the complaint, the response, and other pertinent statements or documents.

- b. The student complainant and the alleged perpetrator may have a personal advisor selected from among the members of the Richmond community to assist them in the course of the Board's investigation (i.e., an Advisor). Their personal advisor may accompany them to any meeting or disciplinary proceeding. Any restriction on the presence of the advisor will apply equally to both the victim and alleged perpetrator. The President should be notified in advance of the advisor who will accompany the student complainant or alleged perpetrator to any interview or meeting with the Board.
  - c. The University President will determine which type of proceeding to utilize based on the allegations presented.
  - d. The University President will request the evidence to be used during the disciplinary proceedings.
  - e. The student complainant and alleged perpetrator shall be given the opportunity to respond to one another's statements, to present witnesses and evidence on their behalf, and to respond to evidence presented.
  - c. The Board will interview witnesses and concerned parties individually and in conformity with privacy requirements, as it deems necessary.
  - d. In determining whether or not a complaint of sexual harassment has been sustained, the Board shall consider the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the action and the context in which the alleged harassment occurred.
- 5. **Judicial Review Board Determination:** When, in the judgment of the Board, the positions of the student complainant and alleged perpetrator have been equitably heard, the Board shall issue a Final Determination. The Final Determination shall contain the following:
  - a. A statement of the issues under review.
  - b. The positions of the parties.
  - c. A finding of the results of the investigation.
  - d. A conclusion as to whether there is probable cause to believe that the conduct found to have occurred falls within the definition of sexual harassment as defined by this policy.
  - e. Recommendation for action to be taken.
- 6. **Notification:** The Judicial Review Board will provide a simultaneous notification, in writing, to both the accuser and the accused which will include:
  - a. the result
  - b. institution's procedures for the accused and the victim to appeal the result of the institutional disciplinary proceeding, if such procedures are available

- c. any change to the result; and
- d. when such results become final

The designated investigator will maintain all records of the Judicial Review Board, including its conclusions and recommendations. These records shall be transferred to the Office of the President at the time of disposition of the complaint. The records shall be maintained in conformity with state and federal privacy and disclosure requirements and Richmond's policies and procedures. A copy of the Final Determination report will be filed in the office of the President and maintained there by state privacy guidelines.

**1. Disposition of the complaint and disciplinary action:**

- a. The President will decide on the action to be taken. The factual conclusions contained in the Final Determination shall be binding upon the President for this determination.
- b. The President will discuss the decision with the designated investigator before taking action if the action to be taken is different than that recommended.
- c. The President will immediately notify the student complainant and the alleged perpetrator in writing of the disposition of the complaint after the decision has been made. If the discipline of an employee is to be undertaken or the decision involves other elements that are personal to the student complainant or alleged perpetrator, information provided to the student complainant or alleged perpetrator will be by applicable federal and state law governing the disclosure of such information.
- d. The President may initiate disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator or may refer discipline to an appropriate administrator or administrative body. Sanctions undertaken shall be in accordance with those laid down in the *Student Handbook* or the *Faculty Handbook* as applicable. Depending on the severity of the conduct, sanctions may range from placing a statement in the alleged perpetrator's personnel or student file to changing the alleged perpetrator's job position or class placement; to temporarily suspending the alleged perpetrator from work without pay or from school; or to termination of the alleged perpetrator from employment or expulsion from school
- e. The decision of the President will be made within ten working days of the receipt of the Final Determination.

- 2. Appeal:** If discipline is taken, the person disciplined has the right to file a formal appeal challenging the disciplinary action or alleging applicable policies or contractual provisions were violated. The student complainant also has the right to file a formal appeal challenging the



President's decision or alleging that applicable policies or contractual provisions were violated. The appeal must be made in writing to the Richmond Board of Trustees no later than 15 working days from the date of the President's notification of the decision. The Richmond Board of Trustees will notify the party appealing the President's decision in the matter within 15 working days of the date of the appeal. The Richmond Board of Directors' decision shall be final.

**Time Limits:** Richmond intends to resolve alleged sexual harassment incidents in as timely a manner as possible. However, the time limits set forth herein may be extended for a good cause. The total period for the investigation, from the filing of a formal complaint to the issuance of the Final Determination from the Judicial Review Board, shall not exceed 90 calendar days.

**Confidentiality:** Richmond will protect the confidentiality of the alleged victims and other necessary parties, and will complete publicly available records (including Clery Act reporting and disclosures) without the inclusion of identifying information about the victim. The university will maintain confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to the victim, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the ability of the university to provide the accommodations.

Richmont will provide written notification to students and employees about existing mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance, student financial aid and other services available for victims, both within the institution and in the community. These services are provided off-campus and from local professionals within the community.

Richmont will provide written notification to victims about options for available assistance regarding how to request changes to academic or working situations on campus in order to provide protection from the alleged or confirmed perpetrator. The university will make such accommodations if they are requested by the victim and if they are reasonably available, regardless of whether the victim chooses to report the crime to local law enforcement.

Richmont will provide the student or employee a written explanation of the student's or employee's rights and options when a student or employee reports to the institution that the student or employee has been a victim of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, whether the offense occurred on or off campus.

### **Reporting the Results of Disciplinary Proceedings**

Upon written request sent to the University President, a victim of any violent crime or non-forcible sex offence will receive a report of the results of disciplinary proceedings. This right applies to the next of kin should a crime result in a victim's death.

Richmont recognizes the requirement to provide both the accused and the accuser with simultaneous written notification of any results of institutional disciplinary hearing. These cases include allegation of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. A written request is not required.

## Sexual Misconduct Educational Programs and Campaigns

Richmont Graduate University provides information and education that promotes awareness of sexual misconduct and harassment for incoming students and new employees. The training includes both primary and ongoing trainings for the prevention and intervention of sexual misconduct. Topics include definitions related to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, safe and effective bystander interventions, etc.

New students are invited to participate in the university's online sexual misconduct and harassment trainings during their first semester as a student at Richmont. The university offers incentives for students to complete the online training.

Richmont requires all new employees to complete an online training in sexual misconduct and harassment as part of their new employee orientation process. The new employee's supervisor and HR manager are required to approve the training is completed in order for the new employee to continue the first day of employment.

The university also offers ongoing training in these topics available to the entire university.

## Advising the Campus Community About Sex Offenders

Convicted sex offenders are required by law to register their names and addresses with the State of Georgia Department of Corrections; likewise, in the state of Tennessee. Interested persons may obtain state information on individuals registered as sex offenders by visiting the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Sex Offender Registry website.

## Sources

U.S. Department of Education (2016). *The handbook for campus safety and security reporting*. ERIC Clearinghouse.