

# STUDENT HANDBOOK



**RICHMONT**  
GRADUATE UNIVERSITY™

**2023-2024**

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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.

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 policies 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 this 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.**

## **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 Office 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 Office of Student Affairs 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)**. 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.

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 campuses are located at the following physical addresses. Richmond also has an online campus.

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

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

[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 Richmond libraries maintain contractual agreements with other libraries, providing Richmond students with privileges at other area college and university libraries.

### Counseling Centers

Richmont houses the Henegar Counseling Center, Richmond Trauma Center, and the Hope Counseling Centers. Through these centers Richmond 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. 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 local, 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 is approved by the Office of Student Affairs.

<https://studentcommunity.richmont.edu/>

## 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 online orientation process to learn about Richmont Graduate University and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that are essential for success as a graduate student. Students receive information about online orientation as soon as they receive access to their Richmont email account. Richmont's online orientation is completed in Canvas, and students have access to this online material during their tenure as a student. Students are encouraged to refer back to their Orientation course in Canvas as a resource.

### 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 Richmont to connect with students, and that also allow students to connect with Richmont staff and faculty.

#### Email

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

#### Faculty & Faculty Advisor Appointments

Students are responsible to contact faculty and advisors to schedule necessary appointments. Students can reach faculty through their Richmont email account, phone, or in person.

### Changes in Personal Information

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

### **Student Identification Cards**

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

### **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.

### **Copyrighted Material**

Richmont Graduate University recognizes the legal rights of copyright holders in any form. It prohibits illegal downloading and 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.

### **Canvas**

Every student has access to Canvas during their time as a student. Students are responsible to access Canvas regularly and to be familiar with all resources and materials in Canvas in order to successfully complete their courses. Students who encounter problems with Canvas can contact [helpdesk@richmont.edu](mailto:helpdesk@richmont.edu).

Canvas is the university's platform for course delivery. Canvas 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 a method for students to complete quizzes and exams and upload papers; 4) to enhance Richmond students' learning experience.

### **CAMS**

Students will also utilize their CAMS Student Portal to register for classes, review student documentation, manage their student financial account, and review unofficial transcripts.

Students will receive assistance with CAMS during their initial registration meeting. If a student encounters technical problems with CAMS or is unable to log into their Student Portal, please contact the Help Desk at [helpdesk@richmont.edu](mailto: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.

### Program of Study

Students complete a Program of Study *before they matriculate into their perspective program*. Template sequences for each degree program and certificates are provided for students to complete their program. Using this as a guide, Richmond staff meet individually to assist each student as they develop a program of study, outlining the sequence in which he or she plans to take the courses for the selected program. 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. 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.

### Children & Guests Policy

The facilities of Richmond 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. Richmond 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 counselors who offer reduced fees for Richmond students.

Richmont's graduate training programs are small professional communities 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.

## **Student Support**

### **Student Resources**

Richmont maintains an internal website of Student Resources to connect students with resources through the Records Office, Student Affairs, Career Services, etc. Students can access the Student Resources website through their Richmond Office



365/email account. This website is the central location for students to access semester schedules, course syllabi, etc.

### **Library Services**

Students have access to many library materials and databases online. All passwords for databases are provided by the Library. Students can access all of the databases on the Richmond website.

### **Training & Continuing Education**

Richmont conducts and sponsors events on counseling and ministry with a Christian emphasis designed to bring together those in the helping fields to participate in training and spiritual renewal. These events offer periods of instruction, support, and developing of professional relationships.

### **Counseling Referral List for Students**

Richmont maintains a referral list of local coaches, counselors, and spiritual directors who provide reduced-fee services for Richmond students. In accordance with ethical guidelines on dual relationships, faculty members do not provide professional counseling to students. The referral list is available to students on the Student Resources page.

### **Mentorship**

Students have access to a wide selection of alumni mentors during their time at Richmond and after they graduate. All alumni mentors commit to reach out, answer questions, and pray for their Richmond students. Each mentor relationship is unique, and many mentors develop a lasting relationship with their Richmond student. Students interested in obtaining an Alumni Mentor can complete an application on the Student Resources page or contact [alumni@richmont.edu](mailto:alumni@richmont.edu).

### **Student Emergency Fund**

Richmont Graduate University's Student Emergency Fund (SEF) provides limited financial assistance to currently enrolled students who are struggling financially due to uncontrollable circumstance and require emergency monetary assistance as a last resort. Funds must be used to aid in short-term crisis matters which would otherwise jeopardize the student's ability to attend Richmond Graduate University. Students can apply for funds from the Student Emergency Fund online at [richmont.edu](http://richmont.edu).

### **Career Services**

Richmont offers career resources to students as they prepare to secure a job following graduation. Students can obtain feedback about studies, resumes, and interviewing skills as well as obtain information about upcoming employment opportunities. The Office of Student Affairs maintains a database of information that students can access online.

### **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. Richmond's mission is to promote equal educational opportunities and a welcoming spiritual, academic, physical, and social environment for students with disabilities at Richmond 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 online Richmond Student Accommodations Application and upload the required documentation.

The Office of Student Affairs will work with students who are approved to receive accommodations to ensure that their professors are aware of their approved accommodations.

### **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.

### **THRIVE: Wellness & Self-Care**

Richmont Graduate University desires for students to succeed in their graduate program and succeed in their 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. THRIVE is our campus-wide emphasis on wellness that helps students to focus on wellness. Richmond is interested in students' overall wellness, not simply academic performance. We want students to live a satisfying life while in graduate school and develop and practice the tools to find fulfillment in life after graduation. Students are encouraged to create an individual wellness plan during their first semester.

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 Richmont'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.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

A limited number of work-study positions are available at Richmont. Students will receive electronic notifications when positions become available.

### **Scholarships**

Applications for scholarships are available online at [www.richmont.edu](http://www.richmont.edu) or from the Admissions Office. Please consult the university website for all current scholarship opportunities and deadlines.

# **Section Three: 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. Please see the Graduate Catalog for a current list of matriculation requirements.

### 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. An additional, separate list of student rights and responsibilities is provided for students within each school.

## Academic Policies

The Academic Policies & Procedures for the university are included in full in the Graduate Catalog. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for a complete description and complete procedures.

Academic Policies in the Graduate Catalog include: Attendance Policy, Auditing Courses, Registration, Add/Drop/Withdrawal Procedures, Incomplete Grades, Institutional Withdrawal, Transfer of Credits, Computation of Grades (GPA), Academic Exceptions, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), Transcript Requests, Graduate Requirements, Academic Dismissal, and the Academic Appeals policy.

### Expectations of Student 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.

### Student 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.
- 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 Canvas.
- Follows the policies of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **Authentication**

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

- Students submit a government-issued picture identification that verifies their name and address.
- Each student who attends a physical campus 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 to verify student identity.

### **Student Directory 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.

## **Commencement**

### **Commencement Participation**

Richmont holds a commencement ceremony 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. The Graduate Catalog includes the official list of requirements to graduate.

### **Commencement Attire Policy**

There is no greater expression of community at Richmond Graduate University than our commencement ceremony. Commencement is a special ceremony officiated by the President of Richmond where faculty, staff, parents/families, and

alumni share the excitement and importance of students' 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 Richmond degree.

Guidelines for appropriate attire at Commencement have been established by the Richmond 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. Students may wear only one stole of their choice during official commencement activities.

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 Training, Student Affairs, and Academics.



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

## **Institutional & Program Evaluation**

To assure the continued strength of the institution and all programs within the university, several types of ongoing evaluation procedures are maintained throughout the academic year. Student input is essential in determining institutional decisions that affect student life and welfare and is leveraged to generate institutional strategic initiatives, programmatic improvements, and course improvements.

### **Student Evaluation of the University**

Students are surveyed annually regarding all major components of the institution through the anonymous General Student Survey disseminated at the completion of each academic year. This survey includes questions about the overall institution, all departments, and student support at the university. Student input is disseminated to all faculty and staff, is routinely discussed, and is leveraged to create institutional and departmental improvements.

### **Student Evaluation of Degree Program**

The anonymous General Student Survey also includes questions about the student's academic degree program. Students are requested to provide their opinion about their program's effectiveness, student life, student processes, integration, diversity & inclusion, etc. Additionally, graduating students and alumni are surveyed and asked to provide additional feedback on their overall experience within their degree program. This input is leveraged to create targeted programmatic improvements.

### **Student Evaluations of Course/Instructor**

At the end of each course, students are asked to provide feedback through an anonymous online evaluation. Students are asked to rate the instructor and course content. Survey feedback is utilized to make general improvements and is provided to the individual instructors to make adjustments in order to improve courses. These student surveys are completed online and often inform additional degree program improvements.

### **Additional Feedback**

In addition to the methods described above, throughout the academic year, students can provide feedback to their course instructor and to Richmond through email, telephone, and in-person appointments.

## Student Grievance Procedures

Richmont Graduate University maintains that all people should be treated with dignity and strives to treat everyone with respect. Richmond students are expected to demonstrate compassion for individual persons, sensitivity to the needs of the communities of which they are a part of, 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.

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 Academic Appeal process. Please see the Graduate Catalog for instructions on Academic Appeals.

### 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. Failure to act within this time frame precludes a grievance from being filed.***

***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:

- Faculty Advisor

- Office of Diversity and Inclusion - odi@richmont.edu
- Student Affairs – 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 by 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. The Office of Student Affairs will alert other relevant administration if an informal grievance has been expressed regarding faculty or staff within their department. At the discretion of the Office of Student Affairs, all efforts will be made to keep the identity of the student confidential.

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

Upon completion of the informal inquiry, the findings and any recommended resolution as required are communicated to the student in writing from the Office of Student Affairs. Students who are not satisfied with the recommended resolution may choose to file a Formal Grievance.

### **Formal Non-Academic Grievances**

Students 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 Investigative 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 of close personal relation to the student may serve on the committee.

The Student Grievance Investigative Committee includes:

- Student Success Coordinator
- Vice President of Student Affairs
- Dean of School of Counseling
- Dean of School of Ministry
- Office of Diversity & Inclusion Representative

### **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/).

The Office of Student Affairs receives all grievances submitted by a student. 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 may be confidential from parties not relevant to the grievance or its resolution at the discretion of the Office of Student Affairs. Records of grievances are maintained for 5 years.

### **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 Grievance
- Name(s) of Person(s) Student is Filing Grievance Against
- 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 Investigative Committee.

1. Within three (3) business days of receipt of the formal grievance, the Student Success Coordinator will notify the student (complainant) their grievance has been received and will be reviewed.
2. The Student Success Coordinator 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 complainant will be provided with an overview of the steps to be taken during an investigation.
3. The Student Success Coordinator will notify the respondent (person against whom the grievance has been submitted) of the formal grievance submitted against them and the Student Success Coordinator will meet with the respondent. The Student Success Coordinator will then schedule a time for the respondent to meet with the Student Grievance Investigative Committee.
4. The Student Grievance Investigative Committee will meet with the respondent to receive the respondent's response to the complaint, request names of witnesses, request evidence, and review with the respondent the scope and nature of the investigation.
5. The Student Grievance Investigative 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 Investigative Committee may meet again to discuss any new information discovered from these meetings and to create a Written Response.
7. The Student Grievance Investigative Committee will complete a "Written Response of the Student Grievance Investigative Committee" including the grievance and decision of the Committee. The Student Success Coordinator should respond in writing to both the student complainant and the respondent within 60 days of receipt of the filed formal grievance.

### **Written Response of Student Grievance Investigative Committee**

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

- A statement of the grievances/issues under review

- The positions of the parties involved
  - A finding of the results of the investigation
  - A conclusion as to whether there is probable cause to believe that the conduct found to have occurred falls within the definition of the reported grievance
  - Recommended action to be taken
  - Description of student complainant's right to appeal either the finding of the appropriateness of the corrected actions
8. Student Right to Appeal: If the student complainant is unhappy with the outcome, the student complainant may appeal the decision to the Provost within fourteen (14) days of the outcome. The decision of the Provost is final.
9. After completion of the investigation, the Student Success Coordinator shall meet with the senior administrator(s) involved in the student's grievance to review the Student Grievance Investigative Committee's report and reach a conclusion based on a preponderance of evidence (i.e., more likely than not standard) regarding the allegations and appropriate corrective action(s), if any, to be taken with the respondent.

### **Reconciliation When Possible**

Beyond the final decision of the student's grievance, Richmond desires to promote reconciliation when possible. The Student Grievance Investigative 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

### **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

Regarding complaints not settled at the institutional level, Chattanooga campus and online students may contact:

Tennessee Higher Education Commission  
404 James Robertson Parkway  
Suite 1900, Parkway Towers  
Nashville, TN 32743-0830  
615-741-5293

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Richmont strictly prohibits retaliation against a member of the Richmont community 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 reducing a student's grade.

# Section Five: Community Standards

## Community Standards & Expectations of Students

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.

Richmont students are expected to follow all state and federal laws, the ethical codes of their professions and disciplines, and Richmont's expectations for knowledge, skills, and dispositions that come under review each semester.

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.

## 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. Richmond courses are taught from a Christian perspective.

Richmont does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs. Richmond recognizes the rights of all people to live peacefully in society and freely express their beliefs.

## Statement on Nondiscriminatory Language

The faculty of Richmond has adopted the following statement recommending the use of nondiscriminatory language by all members of the Richmond community. Richmond has adopted the statement to be consistent with Richmond'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 Richmond, 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

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. The full policy of Academic Integrity is in the Graduate Catalog.

## 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 IP creation may involve circumstances not covered in this policy. Creators who collaborate with others outside of the university may also be involved in conflicting IP claims. In these cases, creators should consult with the university President in advance to clarify IP rights.

### Resolution of Disputes

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

### Dissemination of Policy

This IP 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, to build each other up, 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.



# **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 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 is conferred by the Richmont Graduate University for satisfactory completion of the requirements 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 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 and certification as a national certified counselor.

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

**Objective 1:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of theoretical and empirical foundations of clinical mental health counseling.

**Objective 2:** Students will develop skills of interpersonal therapeutic processes, clinical assessment, and treatment interventions.

**Objective 3:** Students will develop a practical understanding of counseling ethics, law, and professional standards and act in accordance with ethical codes.

**Objective 4:** Students will integrate Christian spiritual formation and critical theological reflection as these pertain to the counseling profession.

**Objective 5:** Students will demonstrate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary for working with diverse populations.

### 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
- Certificate in Integration

### Graduate 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.

### 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. A detailed description of the thesis program is available through 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.

### 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.

### 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 internship 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.

### Licensure After Graduation

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/>

## 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 Vice President of Student Affairs 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. Students should not use official Richmont platforms or distribution lists to communicate their personal expression of ideas.

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.

### 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.

### **Client & Student Confidentiality Expectation**

Counselors recognize that trust is at the core of the counseling relationship. The American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics specifies 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.

### **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.

## **Enrichment Programs**

### **Programmatic Research**

The goal of programmatic research at Richmond 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 Richmond faculty are expected to write and publish, and several faculty members serve on the editorial boards of professional journals.

### **Lunch & Learns**

Students are also exposed to guest speakers, including Richmond 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.

### **Continuing Education**

Richmont conducts and sponsors events 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 events offer periods of instruction, support, building of professional relationships and renewal for people in the helping ministry.

### **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.

## **Academic Advisement**

Upon acceptance to Richmont, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. The advisor assists the student in becoming acclimated to the Richmont 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 may 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 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 may be 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: Student Performance and Dispositions Review**

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 Performance and Dispositions Review. The full description of the Student Performance & Dispositions Review process is outlined in the Graduate Catalog.



# **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 men and women 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
- Doctorate of Ministry in Spiritual Formation & Leadership

### Master of Arts in Ministry

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**

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.

### **Doctorate of Ministry in Spiritual Formation and Leadership**

The Doctorate of Ministry in Spiritual Formation & Leadership is a 30 credit-hour degree with a continuing relations Ministry Capstone Project that lasts from one to three semesters. The Doctorate of Ministry in Spiritual Formation & Leadership is meant to empower graduates to impact churches, organizations, clients, and communities through practical ministry projects, publications, and a specific focus on leadership development.

The curriculum focuses on:

- Integrating spiritual formation with biblical interpretation, church history, and Christian theology
- Enacting personal and corporate practices of Christian ministry reflective of holistic and mature spiritual formation
- Formulating spiritually-formative strategies for furthering justice and cultural engagement in today's church
- Demonstrating a proficient understanding of specialized course content which will be instrumental in providing additional relevancy to varying areas of influence within the ministry of spiritual formation and leadership

### **School of Ministry Graduate Certificates**

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

## **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 the expression of ideas by students. Any official publication should be coordinated through the Student Affairs 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, Richmond requires 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 Richmond 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.

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 for School of Ministry students are provided in each School of Ministry course syllabus and through the Libraries.

## **Academic Advisement**

Upon acceptance to Richmond, each student in the School of Ministry will receive academic advisement as needed. The program is sequential in nature, and many courses are only offered once per year; therefore, deviation from the planned curriculum may result in inadequate preparation for coursework and a delay in meeting requirements for graduation. 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**

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. The full description of Student Evaluation and Standards of Performance is described in the Graduate Catalog.

## Online Technology Requirements

A student's experience in the online degree program is highly dependent on the quality and functionality of your computer equipment. The full list of technology requirements is listed in the Graduate Catalog.

## Library Resources for the 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 informational needs of students which fosters 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

# **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 & 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, VP of Student Affairs

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Dean of School of Counseling, VP of Administration

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 a 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 Richmond'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, streets, 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 (see below), or designee constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat, a campus-wide timely warning will be issued.

**Atlanta Campus:** President, Provost, VP of Student Affairs

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Dean of School of Counseling, 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, VP of Student Affairs

**Chattanooga Campus:** VP of Finance, Dean of School of Counseling, 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.

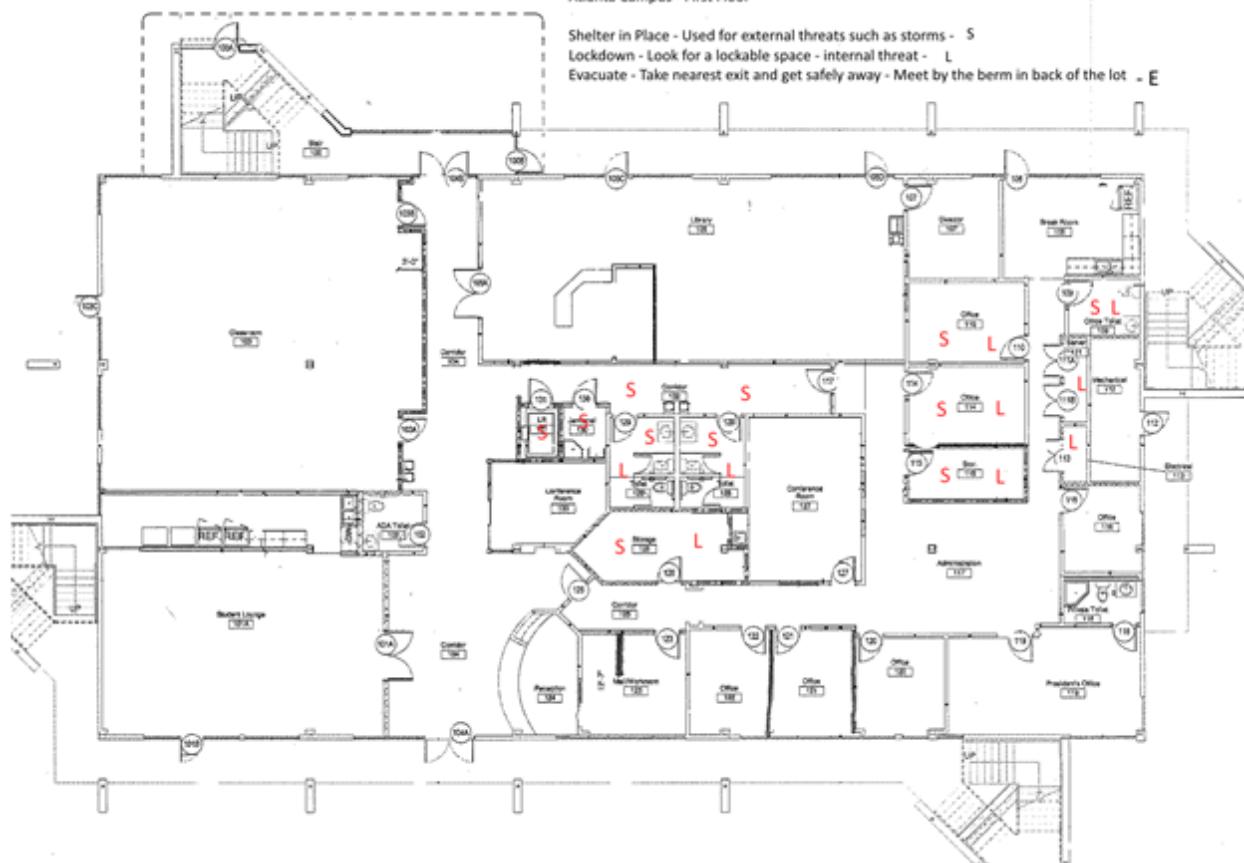
**HOSTAGE SITUATION** – *When you are on a university campus are you are taken hostage:*

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.

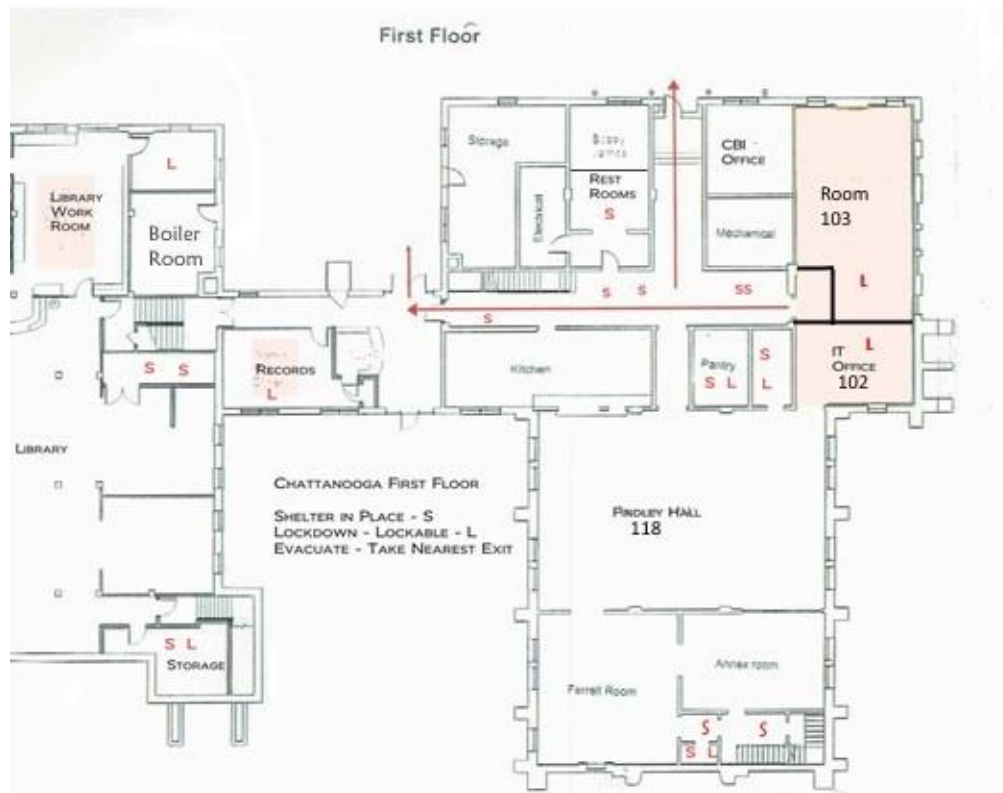
## Atlanta Campus - First Floor

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

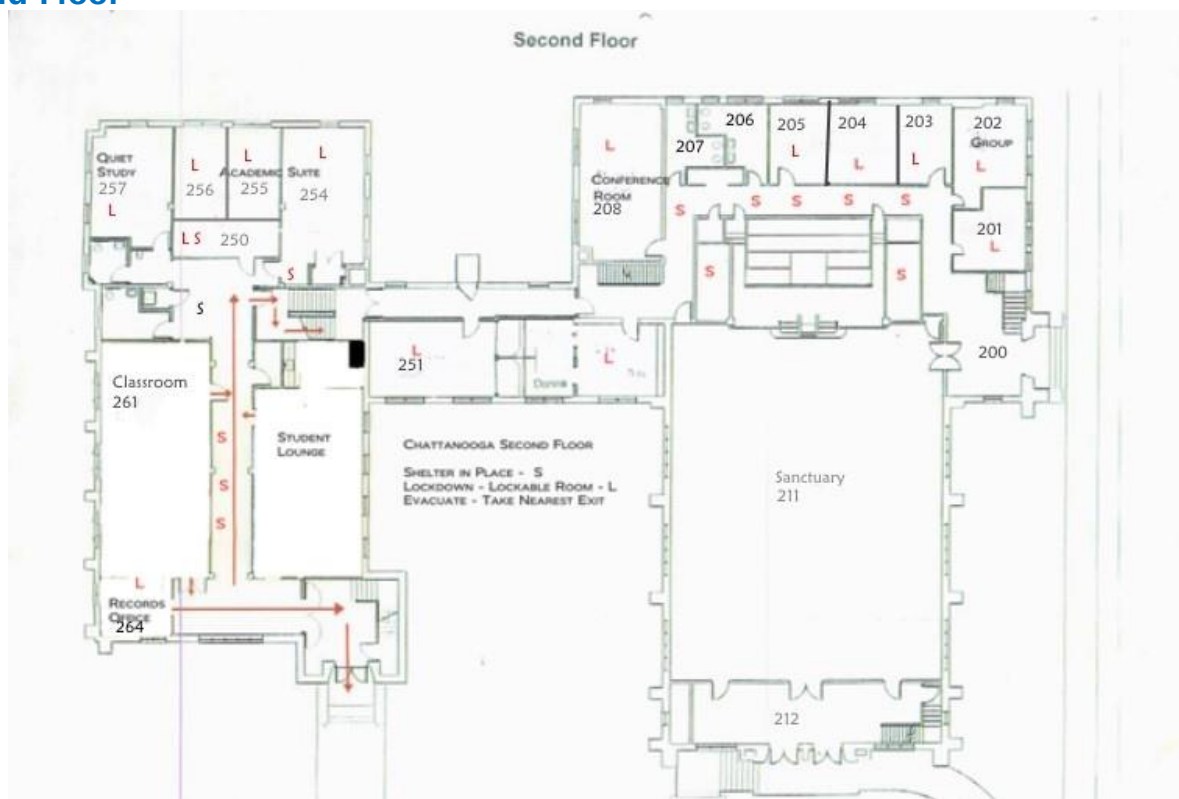




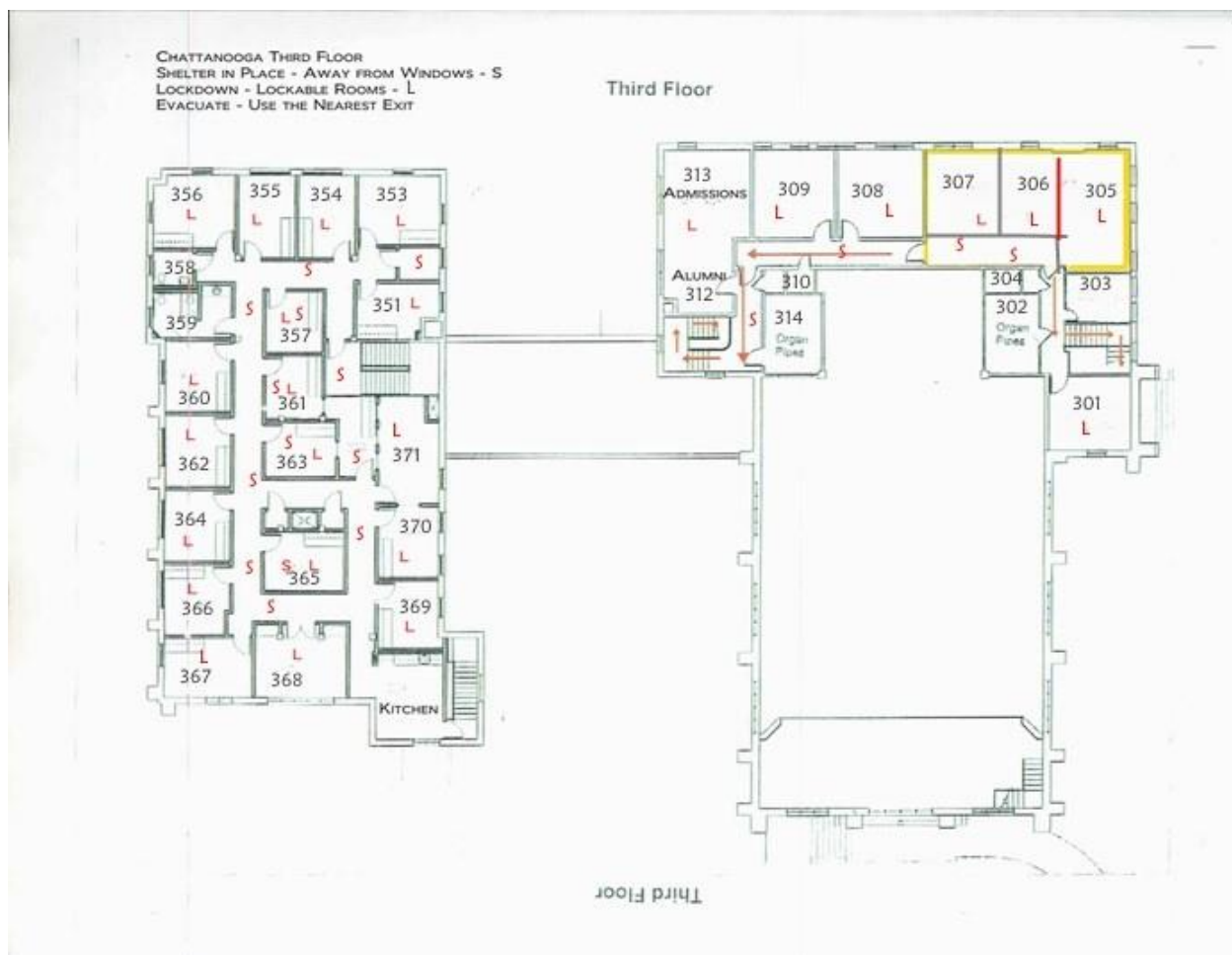
## Chattanooga Campus First Floor



## Chattanooga Campus Second Floor



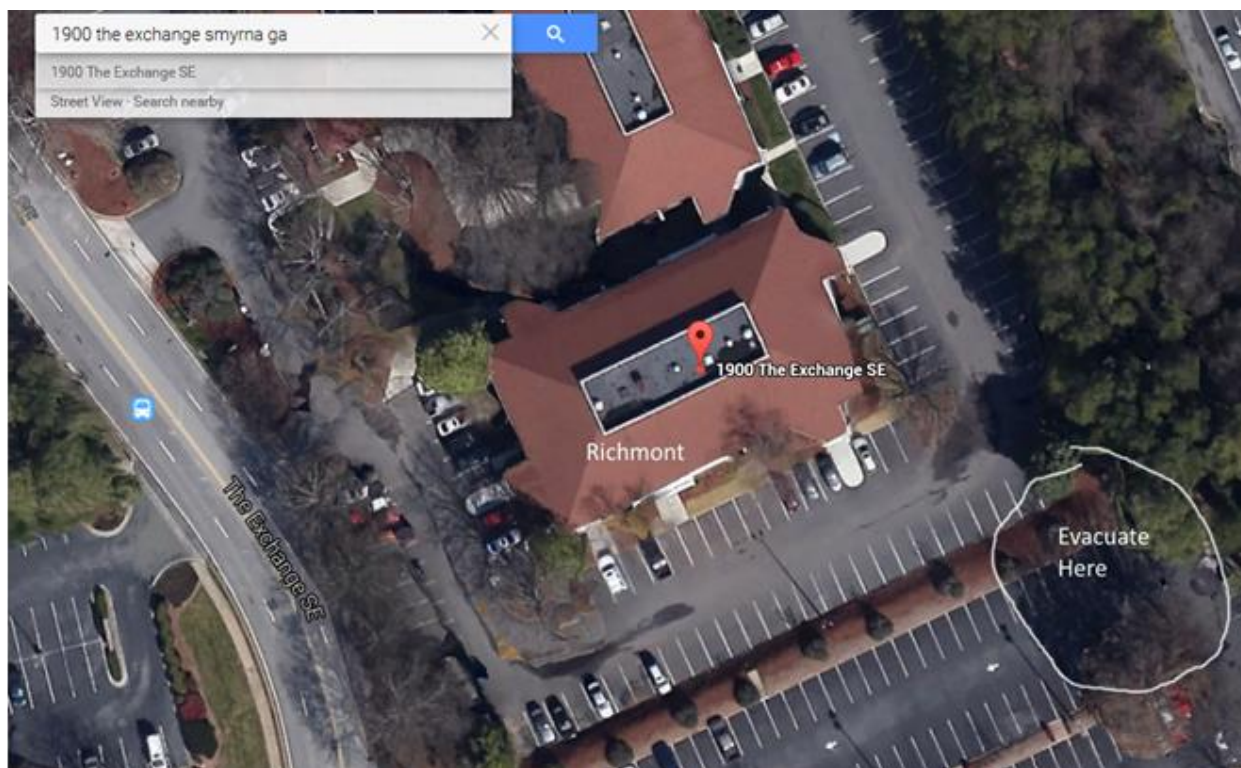
## Chattanooga Campus Third Floor





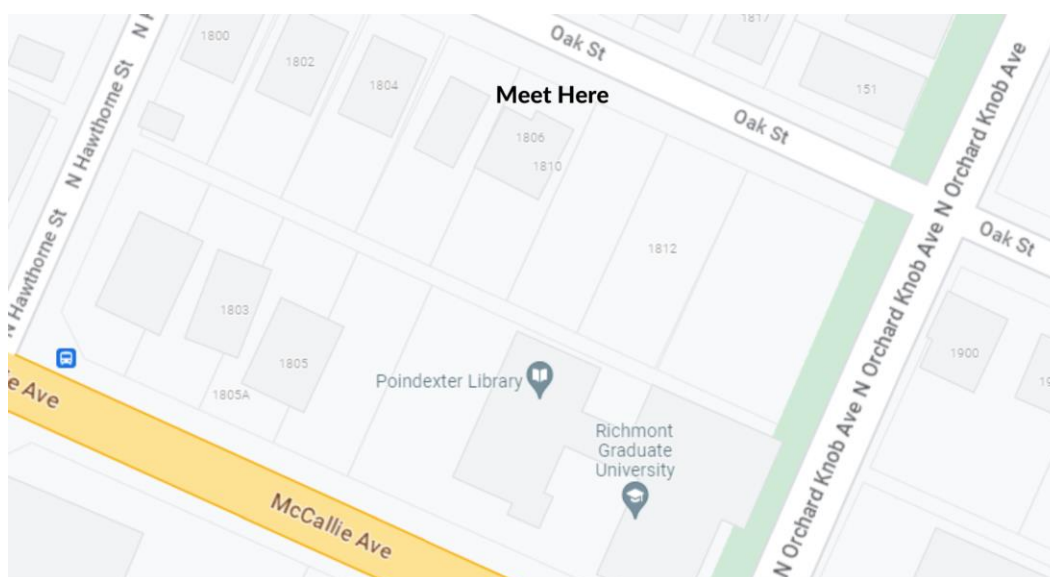
### Atlanta Evacuation Assembly Area

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



### Chattanooga Evacuation Assembly Area

Meet in front of the Richmond 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), Dean of the School of Counseling

<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:tmcpherson@richmont.edu">tmcpherson@richmont.edu</a>
<b>Dean of the School of Counseling</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 911 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>	911	770-499-3900
<b>Chattanooga Police</b>	911	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 Vice President of Student Affairs 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>	911	770-499-3900
<b>Chattanooga Police</b>	911	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
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<b>Facilities Manager</b>	423-648-2410	facilities@richmont.edu
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### 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	tmcpherson@richmont.edu
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	423-648-2673	facilities@richmont.edu
<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, local, state, and federal 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 Richmond 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 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, a large chapel on the Chattanooga campus. In addition, both Atlanta and Chattanooga have counseling centers on their campuses. Richmond is committed to providing for the safety, security, and health of all Richmond 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 Richmond employees are responsible for maintaining provided keys to Richmond 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 re-entering the building.
- An external security service provides a security guard to work on this campus 4 nights per week (Monday-Thursday).
- A security alarm system and panic button for several departments on this campus are 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.

### **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 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**

As a community of Christians with a 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 others, 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.

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.

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.

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.

### **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. 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 coaches, 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 problematic behaviors.

## 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. 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.

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

### **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, other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and/or sexual assault. Sexual harassment occurs 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

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 911 is recommended and will not obligate the victim to prosecute at a later date.

A student who has been the victim of sexual misconduct or harassment should either file a grievance (See Student Grievances) or report the incident(s) to the Office of Student Affairs. 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. Reporting the incident to the Office of Student Affairs will initiate the Formal Grievance process.

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

If the alleged perpetrator of sexual misconduct or assault is a student at Richmont, the alleged perpetrator's name will be disclosed to either the Dean of the School of Counseling or Dean of the School of Ministry. The Dean will follow the Student Evaluation procedure Student Performance and Disposition Review as outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Possible outcomes following these procedures include: Continuance in the Program, Probationary Status with Appropriate Remedial Actions (i.e., Student Development Plan), or Dismissal. Reports of sexual misconduct must be filed within 30 days of the incident or most recent incident(s).

If the alleged perpetrator is an employee at Richmont, the Student Grievance Investigative Committee will follow the Student Grievance procedures as outlined in the Student Handbook. **Student Grievances must be filed within 30 days of the incident or most recent incident(s).** A representative from Human

Resources will be added to the Student Grievance Investigative Committee in cases of alleged sexual misconduct or harassment by a university employee. The student filing the grievance will be allowed to choose one person (a student or employee from the Richmond community) who has had no formal legal training to accompany them throughout their grievance process.

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.

Student victims have the option to change their academic situations after an alleged sexual assault if such changes are reasonably available.

### **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.

### **Time Limits**

Richmont 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 or grievance to the issuance of the Final Determination, shall not exceed 120 calendar days.

### **Confidentiality**

Richmont 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 confidentially maintain 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.

### **Victim Assistance**

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 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 with a written explanation of the student'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.

### **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.

### **Advising the Campus Community About Sex Offenders**

Convicted sex offenders are required by law to register their names and addresses with Department of Corrections in Georgia and the Department of Correction in 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.