



# Graduate & Seminary Online Student Handbook

2022-2023



Clarks Summit University

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# THE COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Clarks Summit University aspires to be a learning community of believers dedicated to biblical higher education, who love and serve God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and who love their neighbor as themselves. We serve students by guiding them to think and act biblically and to live in community with other believers. In this way, we prepare students to serve Jesus Christ in a variety of ministries and careers. The following four biblical principles are the foundation for all student life at Clarks Summit University.

## LOVE GOD

- Matthew 22:37-40
- John 17:20-23
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Colossians 1:18; 3:23-24

As a redeemed image bearer who loves God with all of my being, I commit to give the Lord Jesus Christ pre-eminence in every area of life by seeking an intimate, personal relationship with him and striving for professional competence in my chosen profession for the glory of God. I promise to worship, work, study, and play with all of my might for the glory of God.

## LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

- Romans 12:10
- Romans 13:9-10
- Romans 14:13
- Romans 15:1,3,6

As a redeemed image bearer who loves my neighbor as Christ loved me, I promise to yield my rights for the sake of others, to refuse to be a stumbling block in another's way, to consider others before myself, and to live a life of personal sacrifice for the good of others and for the glory of God.

## LIVE IN COMMUNITY

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Ephesians 3:6-11
- Ephesians 4:2-3,13,15-16

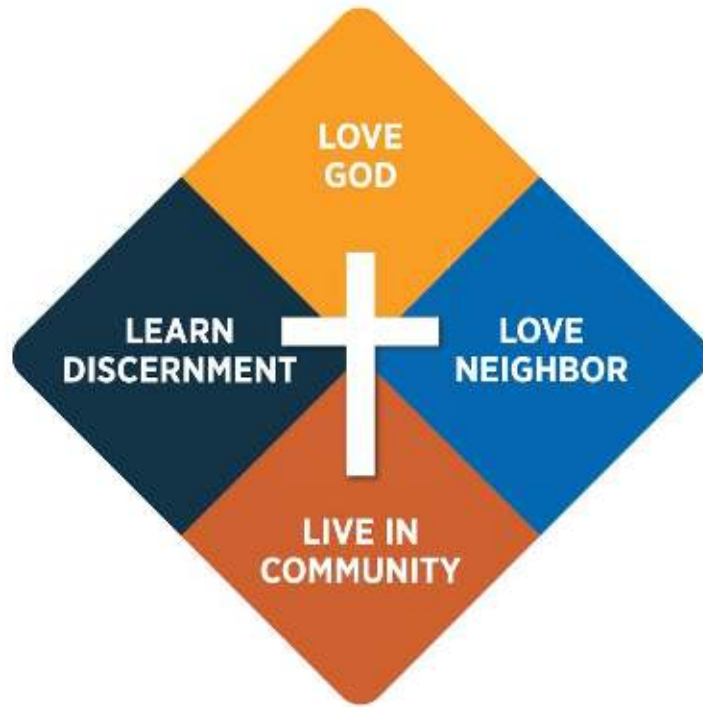
As a redeemed image bearer who lives in community, I pledge to live, learn, and grow together in the university community in such a way as to perpetuate the unity and growth of the body of Christ, and to advance the Great Commission for the glory of God.

## LEARN DISCERNMENT

- Ephesians 5:3-21
- Philippians 2:14-15
- Titus 2:11-12
- 1 Peter 2:11-12

As a redeemed image bearer who practices discernment, I promise to think and act biblically as I engage the culture, interact with media, be a light in my society, and behave ethically for the glory of God.

Therefore, as a member of the Clarks Summit University community, I promise to submit to the Community Commitment and affirm that **I will love God, love my neighbor, live in community, and learn discernment in all that I do for the glory of God.**



LOVE  
GOD

# LOVE GOD

As a redeemed image bearer who loves God with all of my being, I commit to give the Lord Jesus Christ pre-eminence in every area of life by seeking an intimate, personal relationship with Him and striving for professional competence in my chosen profession for the glory of God. ***I promise to worship, work, study, and play with all of my might for the glory of God.***

- Matthew 22:37-40
- John 17:20-23
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Colossians 1:18; 3:23-24

## SEEK AFTER GOD

We acknowledge that loving God cannot be coerced; therefore the university looks to provide students with a variety of opportunities to seek after God.

### ***Church Involvement***

Church involvement is an opportunity to practice the New Testament admonition for worship, fellowship, edification, and evangelism. We view each student's faithful participation in the body of a local church as a crucial element of preparation for future life and ministry.

### ***Ministry Development***

Ministry is comprehensively serving the physical, emotional, mental, financial, and vocational needs of others in Christ's name. We encourage students to identify ministry opportunities and serve unselfishly.

### ***Chapel***

We encourage our online students to join us for chapel three or four days per week. You can find our chapel services livestreamed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ClarksSummitU> or on the CSU YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/clarkssummituniversity>.

### ***Personal Growth***

We encourage students to develop a walk with God through personal Bible study and prayer that is lived out in community.

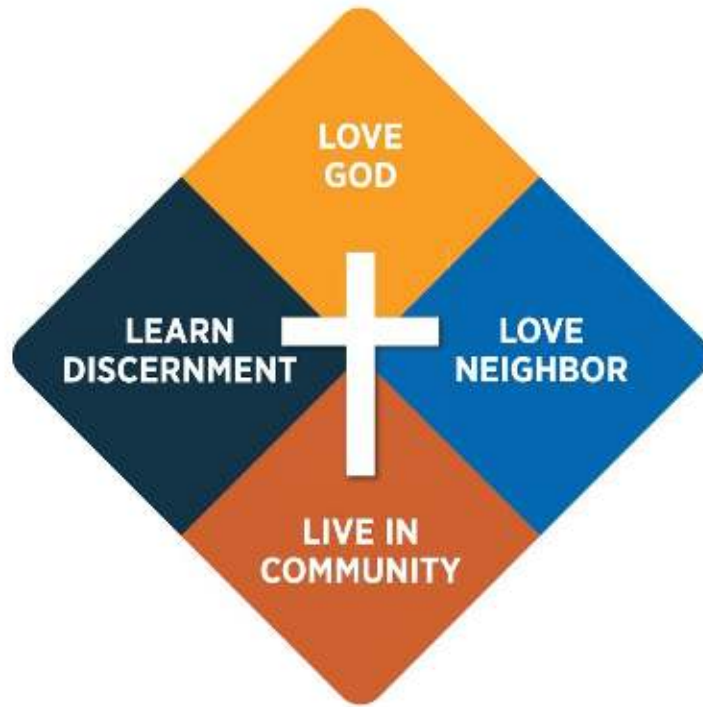
## SEEK TO WORK HARD

We acknowledge that a love for God must be demonstrated through a biblical work ethic applied to every area of life. We expect students to be characterized by a godly testimony, integrity, discipline, servanthood, sportsmanship, and the pursuit of excellence.

## SEEK PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

We encourage students to show a love for God through the pursuit of excellence in their chosen field. We value academic achievement displayed by degree completion, certification, licensure and appropriate credentials.





LOVE YOUR  
**NEIGHBOR**

# LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

As a redeemed image bearer who loves my neighbor as Christ loved me, I promise to yield my rights for the sake of others, to refuse to be a stumbling block in another's way, to consider others before myself, and to live a life of personal sacrifice for the good of others and for the glory of God.

- Romans 12:10
- Romans 13:9-10
- Romans 14:13
- Romans 15:1,3,6

## LOVE AS CHRIST

*I will treat you the way Christ treats me.*

The university teaches the principle of living in light of the work of Christ on our behalf. Therefore, loving the way that He has loved us and commanded us to love is the most natural response. Loving as Christ loved includes submission to every human authority for the sake of, in the fear of, and as though it was Christ.

## YIELD MY RIGHTS

*I will choose your benefit over my rights.*

The university teaches the principle of giving up our rights for the sake of others. This way of life is central to the living and preaching of the gospel as taught and demonstrated by Christ and the apostles.

## DON'T BE A STUMBLING BLOCK TO OTHERS

*I will not hurt you.*

The university teaches the principle of refusing to be a stumbling block in the way of a brother or sister in Christ. In this way we do not use our freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.

## CONSIDER OTHERS BEFORE SELF

*I will not live selfishly.*

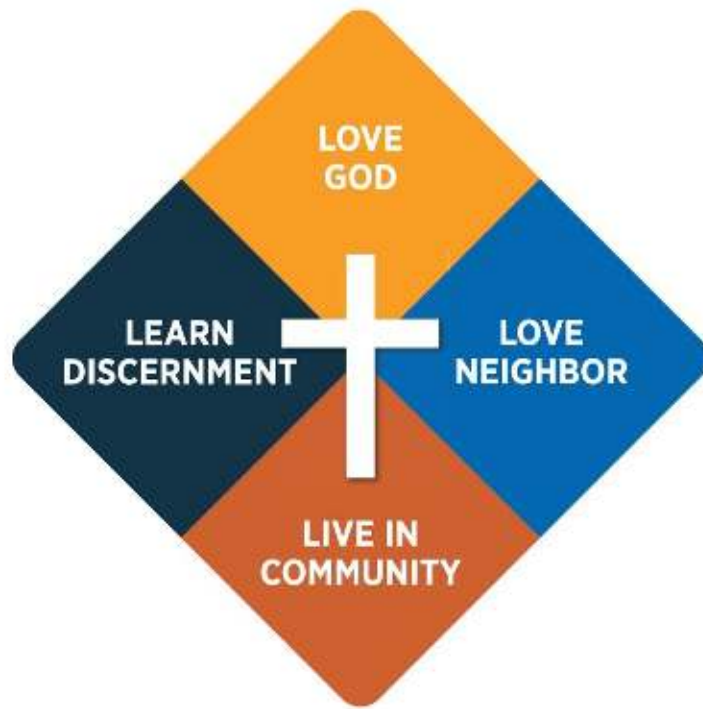
The university teaches the principle of letting the mind of Christ be our mindset as well. This attitude promotes the unity of the body of Christ rather than discord among believers. It also promotes the practice of deference and honoring of others that is the demonstration of true Christian love in the world.

## LIVE A LIFE OF PERSONAL SACRIFICE

*I will do what is necessary for your growth in Christ.*

The university teaches the principle of self-sacrifice for the sake of Christ, the gospel, and others that characterizes true followers of Christ. This is a defining characteristic of our graduates around the world, and it is our desire that it continue to be for years to come.





LIVE IN  
**COMMUNITY**

# LIVE IN COMMUNITY

As a redeemed image bearer who loves my neighbor as Christ loved me, I promise to **live, learn, and grow together** in the university community in such a way as to perpetuate the unity and growth of the body of Christ, and to advance the Great Commission for the glory of God.

- Matthew 28:18-20
- Ephesians 3:6-11
- Ephesians 4:2-3,13,15-16

## LIVE TOGETHER

Living in community is an opportunity to demonstrate love, servanthood, sacrifice, consideration and respect for others.

### ***Dress Code***

The university desires students to dress in a manner consistent with biblical principles.

- Clothing should be appropriate for the student's assigned sex at birth.
- Clothing should be consistent with the university's Statement of Faith.

### ***Sexual Purity***

We recognize the significant and strategic role that sexual purity plays in the spiritual maturity of our students. Scripture refers to the issue of purity from sexual immorality as a matter of doing the will of God and pleasing God (I Thessalonians 4:1-8). Therefore:

- Students, regardless of their relationship status, must strive for moral and sexual purity in body and mind (I John 3:3).
- Students are prohibited from engaging in sexual activity outside of the boundaries of biblical marriage (heterosexual monogamous marriage).
- Students are not to engage in and maintain same-sex romantic or sexual relationships.
- Students are prohibited from accessing pornographic or obscene material or creating links to such sites.
- The university will not support persistent or conspicuous examples of cross-dressing or other actions that are deliberately discordant with the students' assigned sex at birth and will deal with such matters within the biblical counseling and judicial processes of the institution.

### ***Drugs and Alcohol***

The use and misuse of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs places students at risk for the problems often associated with their use. Students find their judgment impaired, which results in engaging in illegal and/or high-risk behaviors.

- Online graduate students are expected to refrain from drunkenness.
- Students are encouraged to refrain from the use of tobacco, nicotine and vaping products.
- Students may not purchase, possess or use marijuana or any illegal drug. This includes the occurrences of self-medication and recreational use of marijuana, prescription medications or newer synthetic drugs in both their legal and illegal uses.

### ***Gambling***

Students are expected to refrain from gambling and other forms of betting.

### ***Student Services***

We provide support services as allowed by law designed to enhance the academic program and care for the well-being of students.

### ***Learning Support Services***

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The purpose of accommodations is to provide

equal access to educational opportunities to students with disabilities. Academic standards are not lowered, nor are essential elements of programs changed.

### **Career Services**

Career Services can help students become familiar with their strengths and abilities through career and personality testing. They can assist students with selecting an academic program that will allow them to use those skills in practical ministry. Cover letter, resume, and interview preparation help is available as well as job placement services.

## **LEARN TOGETHER**

As a learning community dedicated to biblical higher education, we strive to strengthen the church of God and influence society by cultivating an environment that promotes academic excellence and Christlikeness. Students are challenged to pursue biblical truth and wisdom, to embrace a Christian worldview, and to develop professional competence and relational skills. For additional information on academic policies, see the current university catalog.

## **GROW TOGETHER**

All members of the Clarks Summit University community share the responsibility of upholding the principles of the student handbook. We ask that each member of the university community work diligently to support and enforce this sacred trust between us.

### ***Students Voluntarily Seeking Help***

Because grace is so important to the Christian community, we encourage students to voluntarily seek help for any personal problems, including those that involve violation of community standards. When a student voluntarily confesses to an action of which the college has no prior knowledge, they can obtain confidential support from the counseling service staff or a willing faculty or staff member. Counselors, faculty, or staff are not obligated or expected to share this information. In order to allow for grace and restoration, information about the student's behavior will not necessarily result in disciplinary action. However, confidentiality cannot be promised in situations where the behavior poses a threat to the student or others or is in violation of the law.

Students seeking help should:

- Cease all involvement in the activity that violates community standards.
- Take the necessary steps for restoration as determined by faculty, staff or counselors.
- Be aware that seeking counsel from a faculty or a staff member does not void an investigation or discipline that may occur from information received from other sources.
- Understand that their voluntary act of repentance and acts of restoration will be taken into account if disciplinary steps are necessary.

### ***Judicial System***

The university judicial system seeks to be redemptive and restore students to a good standing before Christ and in the university community. However, punitive measures may be used to enforce community standards and policies. The Office for Student Development is not required to impose the same discipline in all situations involving the same offense. The university reserves the right to instruct, correct, discipline, or dismiss students whose conduct it deems does not conform to the student handbook.

### **Student Affairs Board**

The Student Affairs Board consists of the Office for Student Development associate deans as well as a student and faculty representatives. This board meets to handle major violations of the student handbook and to consult about student-related issues. Students may appeal decisions of the Student Affairs Board to the Vice President of Student Development.

### **Dismissal**

The university reserves the right to dismiss or deny the enrollment of those whose behavior or influence upon our community should prove to be contrary to the best interests of our students, contrary to the student handbook, and to be disobedient to Lord Jesus Christ. The dismissal of a student occurs at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Development. Dismissal may be without the benefit of refund.

## Readmission

The university readmission process for students who wish to return is as follows:

- Students must apply for readmission through the admissions/enrollment department and complete a readmission application.
- All fines and restorative processes must be fulfilled prior to application.
- Upon completion of the readmission application, students will be made aware of additional requirements needed for the readmission committee.
- Students who have been dismissed will not be allowed to return for at least one year.
- The application for readmission, along with any requirements, will be reviewed by the readmission committee who will either grant or deny readmission.

## Parental Notification

We recognize the God-given responsibility of parents and seek to involve them with students under 21 years of age, whenever possible, in the disciplinary process. Students are encouraged to keep their parents informed regarding all aspects of their university experience, especially disciplinary action.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides guidelines for releasing any information that is included in a student's educational record, including records of discipline. Access to educational records is limited unless the student has signed a form consenting to the release of his or her educational records. However, the university is permitted to notify parents concerning:

- Medical or mental health emergencies
- Discontinuation, extended absence, or dismissal
- Violation of university drug or alcohol policy

## LEGAL POLICIES

We consider the behavior described in the following sub-sections as in opposition to the student handbook as well as in violation of local, state, and/or federal laws; and for both reasons therefore, not permitted. These behavioral expectations apply to all students, on campus or online. We encourage community members to report to university officials all incidents that involve the following actions. Any student to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following misconduct is subject to (but not limited to) legal consequences, as well as institutional sanctions such as fines, suspensions, and/or dismissal.

### *Violations of Integrity*

- Falsification
- Academic Dishonesty
- Unauthorized Access
- Collusion
- Violations of Trust

### *Violations of Righteousness and Justice*

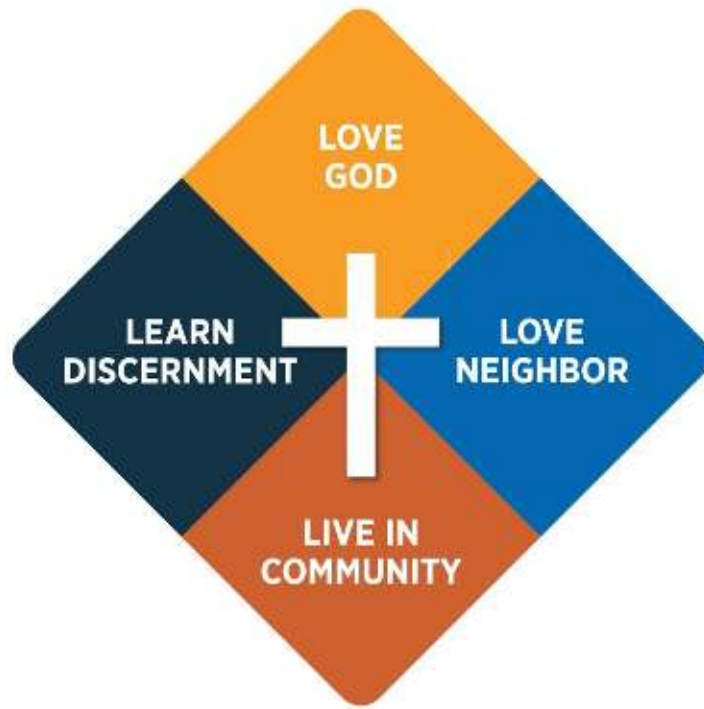
- Discrimination
- (Unwelcome) Harassment
- By standing
- Abuse of Conduct Processes
- Retaliatory Discrimination or Harassment

### *Violations of Respect*

- Harm to Persons
- Threatening or Intimidating Behaviors
- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Hazing and Humiliating Pranks
- Intimate Partner/Relationship Violence
- Stalking
- Sexual Misconduct

### *Violations of Responsibility*

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Prescription Medications
- Failure to Comply
- Financial Responsibilities
- Arrest
- Other Policies
- Health and Safety
- Violations of Law



# LEARN DISCERNMENT

# LEARN DISCERNMENT

As an image bearer who practices discernment, I promise to **think and act biblically** as I engage the culture, interact with media, be a light in my society, and behave ethically for the glory of God.

- Ephesians 5:3-21
- Philippians 2:14-15
- Titus 2:11-12
- 1 Peter 2:11-12

## CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to being involved in the process of teaching and challenging students to apply their faith to every area of life.

## ENGAGE THE CULTURE

### *Evangelism*

We seek to help students interact with other cultures in such a way that they will be able to build relationships that will provide a context for communicating the transcultural truth of the gospel of Christ.

### *Worldview*

We seek to assist students in understanding the impact of various worldviews on thought and life. We help students develop a biblical worldview through which they can relate to their world more accurately as image bearers.

### *Apologetics*

We help students defend and articulate their faith transculturally. Students are trained to conduct this creative endeavor that requires thoughtful integration of biblical theology with the inter-cultural social norms, beliefs, values and practices.

### *Community Service*

We prepare students for a life of servanthood by providing a variety of opportunities to serve our local and regional communities in the name of Christ.

## INTERACT WITH MEDIA

Because of the influence of entertainment and media in our culture, the development of godly wisdom, discernment, and discretion in this area is very important in the selection of the media we use or create. Biblical discernment flows out of a love for God, love for neighbor, and consideration of community.

We call upon our students to let the following biblical passages pervade every area of their lives, including their use of the arts and media: Matthew 10:16; Ephesians 4:17-20; 5:1-21; Romans 14:4-10, 19-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:13b-14; Galatians 5:25-6:10; James 5:16-20.

- The content of web pages, profiles, blogs, photo pages and online communications belonging to students must be in accordance with the standards reflected in the Scriptures as well as the university handbook.

## BE A LIGHT IN SOCIETY

### *Social Justice*

We challenge students to live out the principles of pure religion found in James 1:27. This involves seeking the proper application of law, service and redemption for those suffering and afflicted in society and globally.



### ***Respect for Authority***

We teach students to honor and respect all forms of authority established by man in accordance with the admonitions of 2 Peter 2:11-13 for the Lord's sake and the testimony of Christ.

### ***Respect for Neighbors***

Our students represent the Lord Jesus Christ in the respective communities in which they may live, work, recreate, and worship. The name of Christ and the hard-earned, good reputation of those associated with the university is one that students are expected to maintain.

## **BEHAVE ETHICALLY**

### ***Work***

We encourage students to work for one's employer as for the Lord (Colossians 3:23). This work ethic includes the principles of going beyond what is required as well as honesty and integrity in all of their business transactions.



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