

Regent University's Christian Community and Mission Policy¹

1. Key Characteristics of Regent's Christian Community and Mission.

Regent University is a Christian community that exists to exercise and express Regent's Christian beliefs. Key characteristics that reflect the distinctive Christian nature of the Regent Community include:

- 1.1. **Regent's Commitment to Biblical & Historic Christian Beliefs.** The Regent Christian community is based on Regent's Christian beliefs, which include the Statement of Faith.
- 1.2. **Regent's Mission.** Regent University serves as a center of Christian thought and action to provide excellent education through a biblical perspective and global context equipping Christian leaders to change the world.
- 1.3. **Regent's Christian Community Members.** Regent's Christian community consists of persons who voluntarily agree to function as *Regent Representatives* and *other community participants*. For purposes of this policy, with respect to students, a "Regent Representative" is a student leader, who by virtue of his or her leadership position: (1) regularly represents Regent's Christian mission to outside audiences or who speaks for Regent's mission to internal audiences; (2) regularly exercises leadership in the context of distinctly Christian activities (such as student chaplain); or (3) is engaged in student government. Regent's trustees, officers, and employees are Regent Representatives. Alumni, volunteers, and contract workers are not Regent Representatives unless Regent specifies that such an individual is considered a Regent Representative and that individual expressly agrees in writing to this status. All others who are not Regent Representatives constitute "other community participants." In respect of individual positions, Regent's conclusion as to who is a Regent Representative is determinative.
- 1.4. **Pervasive Christian Exercise and Expression.**
 - 1.4.1. *As a community.* Regent's Christian community is an exercise and expression of both Regent as an institution and of each Regent Representative individually. All Regent community members, including both Regent Representatives and other community participants, are expected to contribute to the furtherance of Regent's mission. Thus, Regent reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine membership in that community. Prior to employment or admission, a key consideration in employee or student selection is fit with our university mission. Regent welcomes those participants who may not share Regent's religious beliefs to eligible non-employment or non-leadership roles, if they agree to be

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instructed in accordance with these beliefs and conduct themselves according to our standards of conduct.

- 1.4.2. *All Regent Employees Are Ministers.* All Regent employees, regardless of position are called to serve at the University. Each employee is commissioned as a minister. This commissioning is signified by a ceremony for all new employees, and it affirms the ministerial role the new employees have already assumed by virtue of entering employment at Regent. As such, each employee is deemed a minister for our academic community (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 5:10). In support and recognition of the entire University being a ministry, all employees are to perform their duties as a ministry, whatever their position might be (Colossians 3:23). For example, all employees are expected to be able to conduct the ministerial duties described in Section 2.1.4.
- 1.4.3. *Through its Mission Based Activities.* Regent subscribes to the Christian belief that all its activities, including the duties of every Regent Representative, should express Regent’s religious beliefs and be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. Therefore, all Regent activities further Regent’s mission and are an exercise and an expression by Regent, and by each Regent Representative, of Regent’s Christian beliefs. Regent believes that, because all knowledge comes from God, the learning process in all subjects can and should be one of spiritual growth. Therefore, Regent considers all instructional activities in all subjects to be a form of religious worship. Even subjects taught at secular schools are taught at Regent with a specifically Christian focus as part of integrating faith into all aspects of learning at Regent. Regent engages solely in activities that further its Christian mission.
- 1.4.4. *Missional Use of University Facilities.* The Chapel and all other Regent facilities have been built for the glory of God and dedicated to Him. As with Joshua’s declaration that he and his household “would serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15), Regent University has been founded and maintained as a community dedicated to serving God. Consistent with this purpose, Regent facilities shall not be used for any purpose contrary to the Regent Statement of Faith, its Community and Mission Policy, or other applicable policies. Determination of whether a use is contrary to these policies or intent shall rest solely with the spiritual determination of the Regent Chief Executive Officer or his or her Designee.

2. Christian Community Standards.

The following community standards articulate the requirements that apply to members of our community. To the extent the Chief Executive Officer determines necessary or advisable to further Regent's mission or to cultivate Regent's Christian community, the Chief Executive Officer, or his or her Designee(s), may establish additional standards based on Regent's Christian beliefs for the activities and programs conducted within the community or for Regent Representatives or other community participants. Detailed binding applications of the Community and Mission Policy are found in pertinent other policy documents, such as the Student Handbook, Residence Life Handbook, Faculty and Academic Policy Handbook, Employee Handbook, or Health Plans. This Christian Community and Mission Policy is foundational and shall be inviolable such that all other policies must conform to this policy.

2.1. Community Standards for Regent Representatives.

- 2.1.1. *Roles and Expectations.* In response to God's calling on their lives, Regent Representatives exercise and express Regent's Christian beliefs by working together to advance Regent's Christian mission. Regent Representatives are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading and/or representing Regent's Christian community as an expression and exercise of Regent's Christian beliefs (Matthew 5:13–16; Colossians 3:23; 2 Corinthians 3:2–3). Accordingly, each Regent Representative shall be expected to (i) model Regent's Christian beliefs for others, (ii) perform all their duties as a service to God, and (iii) comply with the belief, conduct, and practice obligations in this Policy.
- 2.1.2. *Christian Beliefs.* Each Regent Representative shall faithfully affirm their agreement with Regent's Statement of Faith and other Christian beliefs and shall not subscribe to or promote any religious beliefs inconsistent with these beliefs (1 Corinthians 16:13; 2 Timothy 2; Jude 3).
- 2.1.3. *Christian Conduct Standards.* Regent Representatives shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) endeavor to conduct themselves in a manner that affirms Biblical standards of conduct in accordance with Regent's Christian beliefs. Such conduct standards include Regent's *Standards of Personal Conduct* in the Student Handbook, Employee Handbook, and Faculty and Academic Policy Handbook.
- 2.1.4. *Christian Ministry Activities.* Each Regent Representative shall be ready, willing, and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as worship or prayer services (Ephesians 5:15–20; 2 Timothy 4:2). Other ministry activities that all employees shall be equipped and willing to perform include, but are not limited to, giving communion, laying on of hands for prayers of anointing or healing, providing spiritual ministry to other members of the community, leading devotions and Bible studies,

sharing Regent’s religious beliefs with others, and modeling that everything one does is done “as to the Lord” (Colossians 3:23).

2.2. Community Standards for Regent Students.

In furtherance of its mission, Regent’s Christian community educates and equips students who have agreed to learn and participate in the life of the Regent community. Although students generally are not considered representatives of the Regent Christian community for purposes of this policy (*see* Section 1.3, above), they do contribute to the community, and to the accomplishment of Regent’s mission, as other community participants. Accordingly, Regent students are required to comply with applicable Christian community standards and must agree to certain commitments as community participants.

2.2.1 *Christ-Centered Education.* All students must acknowledge that Regent is a Christian community and must agree to receive an education in accordance with Regent’s Mission, Statement of Faith, the Community and Mission Policy, and other applicable policies. Degree-seeking students in the School of Divinity shall subscribe to the Regent Statement of Faith.

2.2.2 *Christian Standards of Personal Conduct Applicable to All Students.* All students must abide by Standards of Personal Conduct as set forth in the Student Handbook and other applicable policies. These include customary standards widely present in many educational settings, such as prohibitions against academic dishonesty and conduct standards more distinctively tied to our Biblical worldview and Christian belief.

2.2.3 *Requirements for Students who Function as Regent Representatives.* Students who assume a role as a Regent Representative, as defined by Section 1.3, are also required to affirm Regent’s Statement of Faith and other applicable policies binding on all Regent Representatives, including Regent employees.

2.3. Christian Community Standards for Alumni, Volunteers, and Contract Workers.

As stated in Section 1.3, alumni, volunteers, and contract workers are not Regent Representatives, unless Regent specifies that such an individual is considered a Regent Representative and that individual expressly agrees to this status. Nevertheless, when any such persons serve with Regent, they shall be required to acknowledge that they understand and agree to support Regent’s mission and values in accordance with this Policy. Regent reserves the right to give preference for such service to alumni, volunteers, and contract workers who share Regent’s Christian beliefs regardless of whether such an individual also serves as a Regent Representative.

3. Regent's Community Commitments.

All members of the Regent community are to strive for loving, respectful, and peaceful interactions with others at all times (Romans 12:18). Every member of our community shall treat each other with dignity and respect, as persons made in the image of God. Given our academic mission, our aspiration for loving and peaceful discourse is not to be understood as discouraging robust engagement or respectful disagreement in a manner that does not compromise our religious beliefs or alter our community standards. In this regard, we encourage the Regent community to exemplify our motto of "Christian Leadership to Change the World."

Specific applications of Regent's religious beliefs about marriage, sexual conduct, sex and gender, and abortion, as described in this section, are in the Student Handbook, Employee Handbook, Faculty and Academic Policy Handbook, Health Plans, and other applicable policies. For example, these handbooks and policies address admission and conduct standards, preferred pronoun use, housing placement, use of bathroom facilities, and other related topics.

- 3.1. **Marriage.** Regent subscribes to the Christian belief that God has instituted marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman. This is God's creation design for humanity (Genesis 2:18, 21–24; Hebrews 13:4) and has been clearly reaffirmed as normative for humanity throughout Scripture, including by Jesus (Matthew 19:4–9). In the context of marriage, humankind's differentiated, gendered existence is implicitly relied on to teach us about the mystery of the relationship between Christ and the church (e.g., Ephesians 5). Regent shall recognize and solemnize only such marriages for all policies and programs in the Regent Christian community. Regent's facilities shall be used to recognize and solemnize only such marriages.
- 3.2. **Sexual Conduct.** Regent University fully accepts the teachings of the traditional Biblical view with regard to the goodness of our sexuality, the importance of chastity, and the place of heterosexual marriage as God's intended context for complete sexual expression to occur (Gen. 2:21–24). Husbands and wives are called to exclusive sexual fidelity to one another, and single persons are called to abstinence. Sexual misconduct that is prohibited includes disorderly conduct or lewd, indecent, or obscene conduct or expression, involvement with pornography, premarital sex, adultery, homosexual conduct, or any other conduct that violates Biblical standards (e.g., Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:7–23, 20:10–21; Matthew 5:27–28; Romans 1:20–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 13, 18–20; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:17–19; Colossians 3:5).

- 3.3. ***Sex and Gender.*** Based on our shared understanding of Biblical teaching, Regent University believes that God created humans as male or female (Gen. 1:27; Mark 10:6) and that the creational intent is for a person's gender to be the biological sex the person has at birth (Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 12:7). The complementary relationship between males and females is a consistent teaching of Scripture both before and after the fall. This point is explicitly reiterated by Jesus (Mark 10:6). All Regent Representatives must faithfully adhere to this view and its implications for conduct. Other community participants who may not share Regent's religious beliefs agree to follow the University-wide conduct standards as stated in this and other applicable policies.
- 3.4. ***Abortion.*** Regent affirms the Christian belief that all individuals are created by God in His image and each human life is sacred (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17). Regent also holds that persons are divine image bearers from the point of conception (Isaiah 44:24; Psalm 139:13–16). Regent accordingly believes as a matter of Christian conviction that no procedures should be performed or medicines taken to terminate a pregnancy and take the life of an unborn child (such procedures are referred to herein as abortions), except in extraordinary circumstances where other Biblical, moral principles prevail, such as where medically necessary to preserve the life of the mother.