



UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

Policy Manual

Policy #:	STU-5002	Policy Title:	Campus Ministry Policy
Effective:	08/28/2023	Responsible Office:	Office of the Chaplaincy
Date Approved:	08/28/2023	Approval:	Vice President for Student Development
Replaces Policy Dated:	08/01/2019	Responsible University Official:	University Chaplain

SCOPE:

This policy applies to the University of Richmond and all of its Affiliates. As used in this policy, the term “Affiliates” means organizations or entities in which the University owns a controlling interest or has the right to elect the majority of the entity’s governing board.

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POLICY STATEMENT:

STU-5002.1 – Policy

Opportunity for religious practice and spiritual exploration are central to a well-rounded collegiate experience, healthy campus community, and citizenship in a world richly textured by religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. To that end, the Office of the Chaplaincy is committed to creating an inclusive community to support the wide range of religious and spiritual backgrounds, experiences, and practices present in the student body.

New campus ministries are established only by the invitation of the Office of the Chaplaincy. The Office of the Chaplaincy will determine the need for a new campus ministry by evaluating the religious climate of student life. Every effort will be made to ensure a wide range of campus ministries are present and that each ministry offers a religious or theological perspective that is not already being met. Our desire is to shape a religious ecology that is reflective of the varied and dynamic campus and world in which we live.

The Office of the Chaplaincy appoints campus ministry leadership through relationships with larger regional, national, or international denominations or religious organizations. Campus ministry leaders are required to meet certain qualifications, including:

- Endorsement by the organization prepared to supervise and assume ultimate responsibility for the Campus Minister's activity.
- Ordination and/or good standing with a regional/national religious organization.
 - If not ordained, the nominated Campus Minister should be professionally trained for religious work. A completed Bachelor's degree is required. In addition, a candidate will need one of the following: an appropriate Master's degree, or special coursework or certifications through the regional, national, or international sponsoring organization. The candidate should also have experience in campus ministry or related areas (youth work, congregational ministry, teaching, etc.).

All campus ministries are also required to abide by a Covenant of Mutual Respect and Understanding, provided by the Office of the Chaplaincy. This agreement includes a list of expectations and responsibilities for all campus ministry leaders and sending organizations and their shared commitment to working supportively within a diverse faith community. Ongoing campus ministry leaders will be required to review and sign the agreement (<https://chaplaincy.richmond.edu/practice/ministries/covenant.html>) at the beginning of each academic year.

In addition to Campus Ministries and Chaplaincy led programs, students may apply to form a religious or spiritual registered student organization (RSO) through the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) if an existing program in the Office of the Chaplaincy can't meet a demonstrated need. Students seeking to establish a religious or spiritual RSO must follow the standard processes for establishment of an RSO. The University Chaplain (or other designated Chaplaincy staff member) will participate in the RSO affiliation review process for all potential religious and spiritual groups. This Chaplaincy representative to the review committee will not have a vote in the affiliation process; rather, the representative will serve as an advisor and provide additional context as necessary. Any religious or spiritual RSO enjoys all the rights and responsibilities of other RSOs.

STU-5002.2 – Expectations for Campus Ministry Leaders

- Campus Ministers must be under the direct supervision of a recognized regional, national, or international denomination or religious organization;
- Campus Ministries are required to clearly state their sponsorship of all programming they offer in any form of publicity;
- A Campus Ministry must receive prior permission from the Office of the Chaplaincy before inviting an outside speaker or organization to campus;
- If an individual or organization is invited to campus by a Campus Ministry, the respective Campus Minister is responsible for that person's or organization's behavior while on campus;
- Every Campus Minister is required to uphold the Chaplaincy's Covenant of Mutual Respect and Understanding
- In accordance with the University of Richmond's Student Handbook (<http://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook>), the University limits the sale of items or solicitation of any business in residence halls or on-campus apartments.

- Only those religious organizations approved as Campus Ministries through the Office of the Chaplaincy may be active on campus; and
- Any unauthorized individual or organization will be asked to leave the campus premises.

STU-5002.3 – Expectations for Religious and Spiritual Registered Student Organizations

- Religious and Spiritual Registered Student Organizations must complete all standard application, registration, and training processes as outlined by the Center for Student Involvement and remain in compliance with the University of Richmond's Registered Student Organization Handbook.
- As with other RSOs, any new religious RSOs must have staff or faculty advisors. Special care should be taken to ensure that students are not advised or funded by off-campus advisors or outside organizations. This is a key distinction between Campus Ministries, which are led by trained and vetted religious life professionals, and RSOs which must be student led and advised by a staff or faculty member who is a current employee of the University.
- Religious and Spiritual RSOs must send a student representative (preferably President) to Student Religious Leadership Council (SRLC) meetings. These meetings will be initiated by the Office of the Chaplaincy on an occasional basis, and will include student representatives from affiliated Campus Ministries and Chaplaincy Programs.

STU-5002.4 – Unrecognized Religious Organizations

Unrecognized religious organizations are those that (a) have not been formally recognized by the Chaplaincy as a Campus Ministry, (b) were previously recognized by the University of Richmond and lost that recognition as a result of a University and/or national organization conduct process, or (c) have not been approved as a Registered Student Organization through the Center for Student Involvement.

The Chaplaincy invites students to explore the diversity of religious and spiritual opportunities on campus and throughout Richmond. However, the Chaplaincy and the University of Richmond do not sanction the activities of unrecognized religious organizations. Students are strongly advised to use caution when joining an unrecognized organization.

Unrecognized groups are not monitored for compliance with important University policies, such as those related to non-discrimination, harassment, and hazing, and their staff do not complete the mandatory training required of other staff, faculty, and Campus Ministry volunteers. Additionally, students should be advised that scholarships made available through unrecognized off-campus organizations must be reported to the Office of Financial Aid and may impact their financial aid.

Unrecognized religious organizations are prohibited from utilizing campus resources (including facilities, funding, and communication platforms like Spiderbytes and digital flyers) and are prohibited from participating in Student Organization programs like SpiderFest. They may not carry necessary levels of liability insurance and are not supervised by or affiliated with any Chaplaincy organization. Students participating in these unrecognized organizations will not be entitled to any of the benefits offered to students of recognized organizations.

RELATED POLICIES:

[Covenant of Mutual Respect and Understanding](#)

POLICY BACKGROUND:

Original policy in existence since at least 1991.

Previous policy dated July 1, 2017

Current policy reviewed by President's Cabinet on August 5, 2019, before approval by Vice President for Student Development on August 11, 2019

Policy reviewed and updated on August 1, 2023. Revised policy reviewed by President's Cabinet and approved on August 28, 2023.

POLICY CONTACTS:

University Chaplain, Chaplaincy Office