

## STUDENT LIFE COVENANT

REVIEWED: JUNE 2023

Students of Briercrest Seminary are part of a diverse community of Christ-followers: students, faculty, staff, and external partners. Students themselves live in different circumstances. Some live on campus while others remain within their respective communities and either commute for on-campus modular classes or take classes online. Our seminary is proudly international and includes students who come from various areas of the world. We are also an interdenominational seminary with students from various church traditions.

Although we celebrate this diversity, we recognize that Briercrest is not an abstract community of Christians. It has a particular history and calling in theological education and to this end it is necessary to identify aspects of conduct that will shape and inform a set of expectations for student life within the seminary community. In defining these areas of student life expectation, we do not intend to reduce the character of our community to mere contractual obligations. Rather, our purpose is to provide a clear sense of how we as a community understand some of the main contours of Christian character and behavior as we live together.

Seminary students are expected to conduct their lives in an exemplary way that supports the principles and practices that follow. Included in this, seminary students will recognize the broader biblical injunction to abstain from behavior that sets an inappropriate example.

Seminary students are also expected to establish the spiritual disciplines needed to maintain and promote a relationship with God, which is essential to effective service to Christ. This includes such practices as prayer, Bible study, corporate worship, stewardship, and faithful Christian witness. Seminary students are to attend regularly and participate faithfully in a church whose beliefs are consistent with what is believed and taught within Briercrest Seminary.

Moreover, because of our commitment to Christ and our identity as an educational community, we affirm the following guiding principles as central to our life together. Signatories are expected to conduct themselves in the light of these principles:

- We view learning and the pursuit of truth as a Christian calling.
- We believe that life is sacred, and people have worth because they are created in God's image.
- We believe that our relationships should reflect our connection in the body of Christ.
- We believe our minds and bodies should be used in God-honouring ways.
- We believe that marriage is a covenant instituted by God to be marked by a loving, lifelong union of one man and one woman for the purpose of bringing glory to God.
- We view sexuality as one of God's good gifts, to be enjoyed exclusively in the context of the covenant of marriage between a male and a female to the exclusion of all others.

- We value the wise stewardship of resources.
- We believe that maturity calls for us to exercise discretion in our behaviours.
- We believe that everyone should be treated with equal respect and care regardless of race, ethnicity, age, or disability.

Without limiting the spirit of these expectations and principles, Briercrest Seminary will not condone conduct such as the following in any context:

- dishonesty and deceit in personal or business relationships, including plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty
- theft or fraud
- addictive and destructive behaviours as related to substance abuse, alcohol, or gambling
- verbal or physical abuse
- slander and other breaches of trust or confidence
- the possession and use of pornographic material
- sexual and other forms of assault, exploitation, harassment, or abuse
- sexual immorality (i.e., any form of interpersonal sexual activity conducted outside of a church or civil ceremony sanctioned monogamous, heterosexual marriage)
- any criminal activity

Such conduct on the part of a seminary student is just cause for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal. It should be understood, however, that this statement of expectations will not be used to create or maintain a climate characterized by inordinate intrusion, suspicion, or gossip. Briercrest Seminary is committed to pursuing disciplinary action in an atmosphere of trust and mutual accountability, with the aim of bringing responsible restoration and reconciliation whenever possible.