



# **Student Handbook**

**Academic Year  
2023-2024**

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## From the Office of the President



Ascent College is all about “Cultivating the Call” in people’s lives. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are “God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works.” Our mission at Ascent College is to prepare people for the work God has created them to do. You’ll find Ascent College to be...

### **PASSIONATE**

At Ascent College, we strive to create an atmosphere where students can grow into passionate followers of Jesus Christ. That environment includes chapel services, small groups, and personal interaction with instructors.

### **PRACTICAL**

Students don’t have to wait until they graduate to put what they learn into practice. Through Christian service, practicums, and internships students have a variety of experiences to help them learn by doing.

### **PURPOSEFUL**

Everything we do at Ascent College is about cultivating the call to ministry. As such, our curriculum focuses on ministry-related courses and programs. Many of our faculty are pastors of local churches and bring this pastoral experience into the classroom. Our prime mission is to cultivate your call into Christian ministry!

Please visit our website at [www.ascent.edu](http://www.ascent.edu). If I can assist you in any way, please don’t hesitate to contact me at [rrhoden@ascent.edu](mailto:rrhoden@ascent.edu). We look forward to serving you at Ascent College.

Dreaming Together,

**Dr. Rob Rhoden**  
President Ascent College

## Purpose

The handbook is designed to be a guide for life at Ascent College. It will inform you about what you can expect from the school as well as what is expected from you as you prepare for Christian ministry.

In addition to your academic studies and spiritual development at Ascent College, God will give you opportunities for character growth. It is important for you to choose to listen, observe, and participate in activities that help others as well as yourself.

Ascent College will equip you for ministry and your personal life will be enriched as you follow the high calling of a true disciple of Christ.



## About Ascent College

Ascent College provides exemplary postsecondary learning from a biblical perspective by uniting comprehensive academics with practical ministry experience, preparing individuals spiritually, practically, and academically for professional and lay ministry. This mission will be accomplished through a curricular program, instruction by qualified professors, and the partnership of successful churches, called Partner Sites.

The school offers the following concentrations:

- Biblical Studies
- Intercultural Studies
- Worship Leadership
- Ministerial Leadership
- Children's Ministry Leadership
- Youth Ministry Leadership
- Christian Counseling with a Focus on Psychology
- Christian Counseling with a Focus on Pastoral Ministry

All students are required to take core courses in general education and religion. The structure allows students to achieve broad academic and practical outcomes.

## Nondiscriminatory Policy

Ascent College admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs. The college reserves the right to withdraw a student for what it considers to be a necessary cause at any time.

## Mission Statement

With a student-first philosophy, Ascent College exists to cultivate the ministry call of Christian men and women to fulfill their destiny through sound Biblical education and leadership development. Ascent College will prepare Spirit-empowered ministry leaders to be passionate, principled, and:

- Scripturally grounded and Spirit-empowered
- Cultivating healthy relationship
- Skillful and strong multipliers
- Sowers of generosity
- Sent and/or Senders into the world
- Seekers of relational accountability

## Philosophy of Ministry

Ascent College intends for each student to graduate with both practical experience and the academic training provided by the college. Together, Ascent College and its Partner Sites offer the theoretical and practical tools necessary to enable students to maximize their influence as Christian leaders.

### Statement of Five-Year Plan

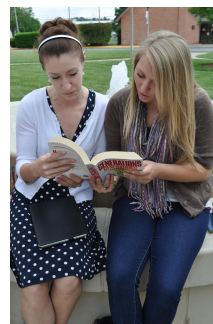
Ascent College intends to maintain its core posture of providing exemplary postsecondary education from a biblical perspective by uniting comprehensive academic learning and practical ministry experience in its planning for the next five years. Our plan also includes pursuit of increased enrollment, and an increase of administrative staff and faculty.

## Spiritual Life

Every student at Ascent College learns foundational skills for a strong relationship with God. The school facilitates the spiritual life of students through chapels, small groups, large church gatherings, and quality spiritual training.

### **The Word of God and Prayer**

Inasmuch as the Bible is inspired by God and is God's revelation to humankind, all students are expected to study its contents daily in personal devotions. Likewise, students are expected to pray daily as an act of worship that glorifies God, reinforces our need for Him, and advances God's purposes in the earth. Daily Bible study and prayer are the foundations upon which Ascent College builds a culture of academic excellence and leadership development.



## **Chapel Services**

Chapel services are a key component of our commitment to build a community of faith that is supportive, encouraging, and enduring. Students will be given ample notice of the dates, times, and location of chapel services throughout a term. Attendance is encouraged and a virtual option will also be available.

## **Church Attendance Policy**

Ascent College supports and is committed to instilling the biblical concept of the local church into the school's framework. Thus, church attendance is mandatory for all with the expectation that students are actively engaged in their local services. Students involved with a Partner Site will attend the Partner Site church services and other spiritual activities as described by the Partner Site. Students not connected with a Partner Site will engage in practical ministry and spiritual development at a local church in their area.

## **Practicums**

These connections and involvements at the Partner Sites or the local church will be documented through the Practicum programs. These Practicum programs are integrated into the curriculum and students receive spiritual mentoring as well as practical experience through the required Practicums. These Practicums have an element of spiritual development via local church involvement and mentoring from local church leaders. Refer to the Ascent College Practicum Manual for a detailed description of these mentoring elements.

## **Academics**

### **Orientation**

All students are required to participate in the orientation sessions at the beginning of their first semester of enrollment. Orientation serves to assist students in adjusting to college life, and includes a general overview of policies, procedures, introduction to Populi (student portal), and student services of the college.

### **Registration**

Returning students should meet with their advisor by appointment during the current term in order to plan their schedule for the next term. Early registration dates for returning students are listed on the official calendar found on the website. All students are to complete registration prior to the first day of class. Students who do not register prior to the first day may register late during the first week of class. A late registration fee may be charged. Contact the Registrar for late registration instructions.

### **Academic Advising**

All degree-seeking students will be assigned an academic advisor who will assist the student in course selection and planning, as well as be available for advice at any time throughout the year. The academic advisor approves scheduling, but the student must assume responsibility for fulfilling all degree requirements. The online student information system (Populi) provides a degree audit that identifies remaining courses of the student's degree plan. This degree audit is available by logging into your student account.

### **Course Load**

A full-time academic load is a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester or 6 credit hours each eight-week session. Students are expected to work with their academic advisors to avoid scheduling problems and deficiencies.

### **Drop/Add Procedure**

A student may add or drop a class until the last day of the 1<sup>st</sup> week of each session in the semester without financial penalties. Dropping courses after the first week will result in financial penalties. Refunds for

withdrawals are discussed under the Financial Policies section. Drop/Add forms are available online. No student is allowed to change a class without completing the form online.

### **Withdrawal from College**

A student must complete an Institutional Withdraw form with the Academic Dean to officially withdraw from college. Failure to attend classes is not considered an official notice and can result in a failing grade for all courses in progress at the time the student ceases attendance. Institutional withdrawal forms are available from the Academic Dean, and will include Federal Financial Aid Exit Interview, surrender of student ID, and a forwarding address.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected and encouraged to attend class regularly. A student who misses more than 20% of classes for any reason is subject to automatic failure in the class. He or she may be dropped from the course and can receive a grade of “F” for the course, unless the Academic Dean has granted a waiver. This waiver will be considered only when the student provides adequate justification of a medical or personal emergency that necessitated the class absences. Even with the waiver, it is expected that the student and the instructor would meet one-on-one at the discretion of the instructor, and as necessary, to review the material missed.

Likewise, students attending an online class are expected to engage in online courses weekly and meet assignment due dates and discussion forum due dates. Students should be aware that a failing grade may result from lack of participation in discussion forums for online classes.

In like manner, an audit student who misses more than 20% of the classes or discussion forums will be withdrawn from the course.

### **Incomplete Grades**

A grade of “I” indicates incomplete coursework. An “I” may be recorded when a student is passing but is unable to complete the course due to illness or serious personal emergency. It is the student’s responsibility to request an incomplete grade by completing the Request for Incomplete Grade online and submitting documentation to justify an extension.

If approval is granted, the student must establish a schedule of completion with the instructor and complete the prescribed coursework by the designated date. An “I” may be recorded for a maximum of one term and is not computed in the student’s GPA. If an “I” is not changed by the end of the following semester, a final grade will be computed based on the work completed by the student. The new grade is permanently included in the student’s GPA.

### **Independent Study**

Independent studies are individualized, directed studies taken without classroom instruction or regular interaction with a faculty member, but have a designated faculty member who mentors the student in his or her individualized study. The student is required to plan with the mentor an individualized schedule of reading, research, and study. Assignments, papers, tests and other means of assessment may be completed by appointment, mail, email, remote proctors, internet, etc. Independent studies may be granted for the following reasons:

1. To offer the student an opportunity to expand their college experiences with a special/advanced topic course that may serve special needs such as specific career goals, graduate school prerequisites, etc.
2. To complete a graduation requirement without which the student’s graduation would be unreasonably delayed.



3. To resolve scheduling conflicts beyond the student's control involving required courses which cannot be taken in a later semester without negative impacts on the student's program of study. No student may complete more than 9 hours of independent study in the Bachelor program or 3 hours in the Associate program, unless the curriculum committee has granted a specific waiver for each such independent study. All other academic policies in the academic catalog apply to independent studies, e.g., criteria for requesting incomplete grades, deadlines for registration, tuition and fees, etc.

### **To Register for an Independent Study**

The student must coordinate with his/her academic advisor who will inform the student if the request has been approved or denied. If approved, the student will register for the independent study.

### **Classification of Students**

#### Year status:

- Freshman: 1-30 semester hours completed
- Sophomore: 31-60 semester hours completed
- Junior: 61-90 semester hours completed
- Senior: 91-120 semester hours completed

#### Full-time status

Students carrying a minimum of 12 hours per semester are designated as full-time students.

#### Part-time status

Students taking less than 12 hours per semester are designated as part-time students.

#### Conditional status

Students may be placed on conditional status if all requirements for full acceptance (all official and unofficial documents have not been submitted) are not fulfilled and approved by the Registrar. Conditional students cannot be enrolled in future classes until cleared by the Registrar.

#### Provisional status

Students may be placed on provisional status if requirements for full acceptance (GPA below 2.0) are not met. The provisional status will be removed if the student achieves a cumulative GPA of 2.0 during the first semester of enrollment. If the provisional student does not achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0 during the first semester of enrollment, the student will be subject to academic dismissal.

#### Audit status

Students who audit a class are not required to complete assignments or take tests. No credit is earned when a class is audited. Ascent College will permit audits subject to the following regulations:

- The registrar must grant the student permission.
- Auditors do not receive grades or credits for classes attended but are eligible to receive continuing education units (CEU).
- Audited classes are not eligible to be granted for credit status at a later date.

### **Policy of Repeating Courses**

Students may repeat courses in an attempt to improve their GPA. Students wishing to repeat a course must re-register and pay the standard tuition per credit in effect during the semester in which the course is retaken. Students must identify on the registration form that the course is being retaken as a repeat course. When a course is repeated, the last grade points and semester credit hours earned replace the previous grade points and semester credit hours in computing the GPA. However, all grade entries on the transcript remain a part of the student's permanent academic record.

### **Transfer of Credits**

#### Course Credit

Credits may be accepted from Advanced Placement (AP) programs, the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and military education on a case-by-case evaluation.

Credits from a postsecondary institution accredited by both the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) are transferable to Ascent College if the classes are comparable and applicable to the degree plan. Credits from other postsecondary institutions may be transferable and are evaluated on a course-by-course basis. Every effort is made by administration to transfer as many hours as possible to avoid loss of academic credit. For more detail, please refer to the transfer credit policy on our website, [www.ascent.edu](http://www.ascent.edu), under the Student tab, Policies and Procedures link.

#### Policy on Credits Earned at less than “C” Level

Transfer credit will not be granted for a grade below a “C”.

#### Policy on Credits for Military Experience

Veterans who have successfully completed courses in the military service-training program may submit a record of the courses to the Registrar for review. No credit is awarded for technical or vocational training.

#### Policy on Credits for Experience

Ascent College awards credit for life experience. For more detail, please refer to the transfer credit policy on our website, [www.ascent.edu](http://www.ascent.edu), under the Student tab, Policies and Procedures link.

### **Grading Scale**

Evaluation of Course Work:

<b><i>Percentage</i></b>	<b><i>Letter Grade</i></b>	<b><i>Points</i></b>
100-98	A+	4.0
97-94	A	4.0
93-90	A-	3.75
89-87	B+	3.50
86-83	B	3.0
82-80	B-	2.75
79-77	C+	2.5
76-73	C	2.0
72-70	C-	1.75
69-67	D+	1.5
66-63	D	1.0
62-60	D-	.75
59 & below	F	0

To remain in good academic standing, all students are expected to maintain a minimum if a 2.0 grade point average. A student whose semester GPA falls below 2.0 will be placed on academic warning. A student whose semester GPA falls below 2.0 for the second consecutive semester will be placed on academic probation. If the student's semester GPA falls below 2.0 for a third consecutive semester and/or the cumulative GPA is below 2.0, the student may be placed on academic dismissal from the school and must wait for one semester before applying for readmission.

### **Dean's List**

Students who achieve a term GPA of 3.5+ or greater will appear on our Dean's List each semester and may be published in the administrative office or online with the student's permission.

## Transcripts

After a student graduates or for some reason leaves Ascent College, an official transcript may be requested from the Registrar for a \$5.00 fee. Requests for express mail or faxing may be considered for a cost of \$25.00. No transcript will be processed if a student owes a balance on the account.

## Statement on Course Offerings

Ascent College offers the required and elective courses for each degree plan in a sequence that enables both full-time and part-time students to complete the program in a reasonable period of time.

## Practicum

Practicums are included in the approved curriculum for a program as defined in that program's degree plan. The practicum's syllabus contains the expected learning outcomes and training plan. These are provided at the time of enrollment in the practicum.

## Certificate Plans

### Children's Ministry Leadership Certificate

The Children's Ministry Certificate Program is a twelve-credit series of four courses to provide children's ministry leaders with foundational learning and leadership relationships.

Children's Ministry Leadership	12 credits
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### Children's Ministry Pastor Leadership Certificate

The Children's Ministry Pastoral Leadership Certificate is a twelve-credit series of 6 courses designed to equip ministry leaders with specialized skills to minister to children and families in the church as well as in outreach to one's larger community.

Children's Ministry Pastoral Leadership	12 Credits
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### Youth Ministry Leadership Certificate

The Youth Ministry Leadership Certificate Program is a twelve-credit series of four courses designed to provide a foundational understanding of gospel centered ministry to teenagers.

Youth Ministry Leadership Certificate	12 Credits
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### Women's Collective Cohort Certificate

The Women's Collective Cohort Certificate Program is a twelve-credit series of four courses to provide women leaders with foundational learning and leadership relationships.

Women's Collective Cohort	12 credits
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## Degree Plans

### Diploma in Ministry Leadership (33 credits)

The Diploma in Ministry Leadership is a one-year program that will provide the student with basic educational courses to prepare for entry-level ministry in various fields. *This program will also provide the educational requirements for the certified level of credentialing with the Assemblies of God.*

Biblical and Theological Studies	18 credits
General Studies	6 credits
Professional Studies	9 credits

### Associate of Science in Ministry Leadership – Two- Year Degree (63 credits)

The Associate of Science degree is a two-year degree program for students interested in pursuing a foundational education in ministry leadership. This program also incorporates general education requirements, which prepare the student for further study toward the bachelor's degree.

Biblical and Theological Studies	24 credits
Professional Studies	12 credits
General Studies	24 credits
Practicums	3 credits

### Bachelor of Arts in Ministry Leadership (Four-Year Degree) – 120-124 credits

The Bachelor of Arts in Ministry Leadership is a four-year program that is designed to prepare the student for leadership positions in their chosen field in ministry. The program not only equips the student academically, but also is designed to prepare the student spiritually and practically with various practicum requirements and mentoring opportunities. The student will focus on one of seven concentrations: Ministerial Leadership, Biblical Studies, Children's Ministry Leadership, Intercultural Studies, Christian Counseling, Youth Ministry Leadership, or Worship Leadership.

Biblical/theological Studies	42 credits
Professional Studies	36-40 credits
General Studies	42 credits

Courses needed for meeting educational compliance with the Potomac District Council for credentialing of ministers are available through Ascent College (see catalog for specific courses).

## **Christian Character & Conduct**

All students are expected to maintain high standards of Christian conduct both on and off campus. Morally and biblically, certain practices are clearly wrong. Students should abstain from such behavior. These include substance abuse, stealing, slanderous or profane language, dishonesty, occult practices, addictions (mutilation, sexual addictions, eating disorders, drug addiction-both illegal and prescription), and sexual sins (premarital sex, adultery, pornography, and homosexuality). Attitudes such as greed, jealousy, pride, lust, bitterness, needless anger, and unforgiving spirit, discrimination, and prejudice are unacceptable at Ascent College. However, if you find that you are genuinely struggling with such issues, we advise you to seek the counsel of a faculty or staff member.



### **Alcohol**

While enrolled at Ascent College, and on campus, students are not permitted to consume alcoholic beverages.

### **Smoking and Use of Tobacco**

Smoking and the use of any tobacco substance are strongly discouraged for both private and public use and are prohibited while on the Ascent Campus.

## **Academic Integrity**

As a Christian institution, Ascent College is committed to the principle of truth and honesty as revealed in the Bible. Therefore, academic dishonesty is taken very seriously. Academic dishonesty encompasses plagiarism, unauthorized assistance, offering false information, or theft of unauthorized materials related to academic work. If evidence of academic dishonesty is discovered, the student will receive a grade of 0% for the work in question. It is possible for a student to receive a failing grade for the class or to be suspended.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using the intellectual property of others without proper citation, giving the impression that it is the student's own work. Note that any time you download text from the Internet or any electronic document you risk committing plagiarism. Follow the guidelines to avoid the possibility of plagiarism:

- Do not simply cut and paste blocks of downloaded text into your paper.
- If you do record the exact words of your source, enclose them in quotation marks.
- Always cite both the text that is quoted verbatim, as well as the thoughts and ideas of others, which you paraphrase.
- Whether your information is from emails, online discussion groups, listservs, or online sites, give proper credit by providing appropriate documentation.

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and modestly dressed on and off campus. The standard of dress is referred to as smart casual (clean, neat, not worn-out, and not revealing). Suits and dresses are not required, but you should dress in a presentable manner. If your attire is deemed unacceptable, a faculty member will ask you to change into more appropriate clothing and can refuse your admittance to class.

## **Visitors**

Students desiring friends and relatives to visit their Ascent College affiliated residence must obtain permission from the Dean of Students before inviting them to stay. Ascent College is required to protect all aspects of your educational experience. Students wishing to bring visitors to the classroom must get prior approval from their instructor. Each instructor has the right to allow or refuse visitors in class.

## **Lifestyle & Community**

Students are expected to live a lifestyle that brings glory to Christ. A student's time at Ascent College needs to be approached as an opportunity to serve God and he or she should be mindful of their character, commitment, and behavior. It is essential for students to know how to relate to others in a community of Christian believers. Therefore, it is crucial that Ascent College students' attitudes and behavior reflect Christ's character.

## **Diversity**

Ascent College desires to include believers from every racial and ethnic background. All students are admonished to remove all stereotypes and bias from their worldviews, speech, and actions. Racism in any form will not be tolerated and will be met with serious disciplinary action including, but not limited to mandatory counseling, suspension, withdrawal, or expulsion.

## **Unlawful Acts**

Students who are convicted of a crime or are willful participants in a crime while enrolled at Ascent College must report the incident to the administration for review.

## **Sexual Misconduct**

Sexual behavior on or off campus that falls outside biblical intentions and/or explicit guidelines is strictly prohibited. Such behavior includes sexual intimacies outside of a heterosexual marriage, including any

type of intercourse, sensual nakedness, fondling, or sleeping intimately with one another. *See Sexual Misconduct and Violence Policy on the Ascent.edu website.*

### **Inappropriate Dating or Living Situations**

Single students dating married persons, married students dating anyone other than his or her spouse, homosexual activity, or cohabitation with members of the opposite sex is strictly forbidden. Anyone found to be participating in such activities will appear before the disciplinary committee.

### **Pornography**

Possession, display, or distribution of pornographic materials or images is not allowed. Use of pornography for personal entertainment, including Internet and telephone services that provide pornographic images, sounds, or sensual conversation are strictly prohibited. Anyone found to be participating in such activities will appear before the disciplinary committee.

### **Profanity & Obscenity**

Students are not to use language, depiction or activity that is vulgar, coarse, crude or indecent.

### **Fighting, Violence, or Harming Others**

Ascent College disapproves of any conduct that threatens or endangers the health and physical or emotional safety of an individual or the facility. Students are forbidden to use any threatening or intimidating actions and/or language whether acted upon or not.

### **Dating & Relationships**

Students who are dating must always maintain Christian respect for one another.

### **Relationships with The Opposite Sex**

The goal of Ascent College is to establish an environment in which students can focus on their ministry and their relationships with others. Ascent College will offer numerous group activities that will assist students in their development of wholesome relationships with the opposite sex.

### **Public Display of Affection**

Modesty is a must concerning displays of affection. Excessive public displays of affection are not appropriate and are not acceptable on and off the Ascent College campus.

### **Apartment Co-Ed Visitation**

Ascent College does not allow any type of co-ed visitation in school affiliated residences without permission. Permission must be obtained in writing and in the possession of the students during the time of visitation. The following guidelines must be maintained even with written permission:

- When inviting members of the opposite sex to the home, there must be a minimum of three people present during the entire visit.
- Visiting must be limited to common areas of the home such as the living room, kitchen, dining room and den.
- No visitation may exceed the 11:30pm curfew.
- No overnight guest(s) are permitted without written authorization by Ascent College administration.



## Property & Facilities Violations

### Theft

Theft of campus property, property in the possession of the college, or property of a member of the campus community is not tolerated.

### Unauthorized Use of Property

Unauthorized use, unauthorized entry, or misuse of property in the possession of the college, owned by the college, or owned by a member of the campus community is prohibited.



### Vandalism

Ascent College forbids the alteration of any public or private property's condition or placement, including graffiti, paint, or alteration to landscaping.

### Unauthorized Motorized Vehicles

Students are not allowed to use motorized recreational vehicles anywhere on campus. Such vehicles include but are not limited to the following types: go-carts, mopeds, mini-bikes, or motorized vehicles or bikes not licensed for use on public streets.

### Postings & Solicitations

Unauthorized posters, flyers, or advertisements are not allowed. Solicitation of goods or services on campus without approval of the administration is not allowed.

## Disciplinary Policy

The primary goal of Ascent College is to fully restore the involved student(s). Thus, the desired result of all disciplinary actions is to help the student(s) become as successful as possible rather than to be punitive.

The incidents that require correction are reviewed on an individual basis. In each incident the following issues will be reviewed:

- The severity of the violation
- The nature of the incident
- A history of prior misconduct
- The responsive attitude of the student
- The degree to which the individual displays genuine repentance

### Consequences of Violations

A student who fails to meet the standards of Ascent College outlined in this handbook and does not obey Christian, moral, or national laws will be subject to disciplinary action.

### Correction

The student will be informed by the professor or staff person of their failure to meet the standard. The goal of this step is for the student to understand the dynamics of their actions and to agree to comply with the standard in the future. The professor or staff person may require no further steps after this meeting.

### Restorative Action Plan

A student who does not uphold the standards outlined in this handbook will be required to meet with the administration. The purpose of this meeting is to develop a restorative action plan to help the student grow and mature in integrity and character.

## **Voluntary Withdrawal**

A student's failure to meet the objectives and specific goals explained in the restoration action plan will be reviewed by the administration. If the student believes he or she would be best served by leaving the college, then he or she may make a request to the administration to voluntarily withdraw from Ascent College. At the time of the voluntary withdrawal, the administration will define specific requirements to be fulfilled for the readmission of the student. Proper documentation will be provided to the student.

## **Suspension**

After review, the administration will decide on proper disciplinary action. Based on the severity of the violation, the administration may decide to suspend the student for a specified period of time. If the administration allows the student the option of readmission to Ascent College, then specific requirements will be communicated. Documentation of the suspension and readmission requirements will be placed in the student's file.

## **Expulsion**

If the administration decides the student's behavior or character disqualifies him or her from Ascent College, then the student is expelled. Students may reapply after a one-year waiting period.

## **Appeal**

All students have the right to appeal disciplinary decisions made. A student who has additional information that may not have been fully considered may submit a written appeal to the administration. The final and highest appeal authority for the student is the President of Ascent College.

# **Safety Policies**

## **Flammable Agents**

No use or storage of flammable agents or materials in or near buildings is allowed. These include gasoline, paint, propane, butanes, or machines that depend on combustible fuel for operation.

## **Inclement Weather Policy**

We follow the Prince William School District's closure for inclement weather. Online courses will not be affected by weather.

## **Possession of Weapons**

Possession or use of any explosive, dangerous chemical or deadly weapon on campus property or at any college function is forbidden. The term "deadly weapon" includes, but is not limited to, any instrument commonly known as a blackjack, sling shot, bully sand club, sandbag, metal knuckles, switchblade knife, firearms of all types and metal pipes or wooden clubs that may be used as a weapon. Recreational weapons including air guns (pellet, BB, paintball), martial arts weapons, firecrackers, and bows and arrows are forbidden.

## **Campus Security**

Safety and security are the responsibility of the entire college community. Ascent College seeks to maintain an environment, which is nurturing, stable, tolerant, and forgiving. Also, Ascent College seeks an environment conducive to learning and it is the mission of the Office of Campus Safety at Ascent College. The Office of Campus Safety seeks to create and foster partnerships within the college community - students, faculty, and staff working together to identify and solve problems proactively, for it is only when we work together that true safety and security can be achieved.



The Office of Campus Safety is dedicated to creating and maintaining a stable, safe and secure environment for students, faculty, and staff, while upholding the mission of Ascent College. This office will be professional in appearance and demeanor, tolerant in all matters of diversity, and always vigilant. Safety is a natural source of concern and Ascent College believes safety is a shared responsibility of all students, faculty and staff. Therefore, the degree to which Ascent College is safe depends on each member of the campus community.

Our campus is a close-knit community with an excellent security history. The office of Campus Safety maintains a friendly and compliant working relationship with local law enforcement. An open campus affords freedom of movement for the college community, but it also means anyone can traverse the campus without arousing much suspicion. It is essential that every student take some precautions to avoid unfortunate incidents with unwelcome campus visitors. Ascent College staff will notify the city police immediately in the event that they discover anyone breaking a law. Staff will enforce and report all violations of campus policies, and campus regulations. Students who interfere with a staff report and duties will be subject to disciplinary action. All students are expected to cooperate with the police officers on patrol.

Students are urged to carefully consider safety and security on campus, using the suggestions and resources available from student services, and safety and security. All safety issues such as crime, violence, malfunctioning locks, and damaged or missing fire safety equipment should be reported immediately to Campus Safety as well as any situations that are disruptive or inherently dangerous. Failure to report such incidents and safety hazards could endanger you, other members of the College community, and property.

### **What Must Be Reported**

The *Clery Act* requires higher education institutions to give timely warnings of crimes that represent a threat to the safety of students or employees, and to make public their campus security policies. It also requires that crime data is collected, reported and disseminated to the campus community and are also submitted to the US Department of Education. The act is intended to provide students and their families, as higher education consumers, with accurate, complete and timely information about safety on campus so that they can make informed decisions.

Because of the law's complex reporting requirements, the most reasonable and effective way to manage the reporting is as follows. If you observe any crime listed below, or if any person reveals to you that he/she learned of or were the victim of, perpetrator of, or witness to any crime listed below, immediately complete an Incident Report Form and, as indicated on the bottom of the form, send copies to the Dean of Students.

### **Crimes that should be reported are:**

- Murder and non-negligent manslaughter
- Negligent manslaughter
- Forcible sex offenses
- Non-forcible sex offenses
- Robbery
- Aggravated assault
- Burglary
- Motor vehicle theft
- Arson
- All hate crimes involving bodily injury
- All liquor, drug or weapons law violations resulting in an arrest

If you are in doubt as to whether a crime is reportable, please err on the side of reporting the matter. With the exception of liquor, drug and weapons law violations, it is immaterial whether an arrest is made. For purposes of your reporting, please assume that a hate crime is any crime manifesting evidence that the victim was selected because of the victim's actual or perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity/national origin, or disability.

Safety and security are the responsibility of the entire college community. Ascent College seeks to maintain an environment which is nurturing, stable, tolerant, and forgiving. Also, Ascent College seeks an environment conducive to learning and it is the mission of the Office of Campus Safety at Ascent College. The Office of Campus Safety seeks to create and foster partnerships within the college community - students, faculty, and staff working together to identify and solve problems proactively, for it is only when we work together that true safety and security can be achieved.

The Office of Campus Safety is dedicated to creating and maintaining a stable, safe and secure environment for students, faculty, and staff, while upholding the mission of Ascent College. This office will be professional in appearance and demeanor, tolerant in all matters of diversity, and always vigilant.

### **How to Report a Crime or Safety Incident**

All crimes listed above are to be reported immediately to the Dean of Students at 703-753-2731. A form is available through the Dean's Office or upon request. This form should only be completed by individuals who witness the crime or those who are required to report information they receive about specified crimes (described below) pursuant to the federal *Clery Act*. The information collected from these forms will be used to prepare a compilation of statistical crime information that will be included in the campus' Annual Security Report. The annual report must be accomplished no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year that Ascent College receives federal financial aid.

It is the policy of the college to ensure that victims and witnesses to crime are aware of their right to report criminal acts to the police, and to report College policy violations to the appropriate office (e.g., student conduct violations to the Office of Dean of Students). However, if a reporting person requests anonymity, this request must be honored to the extent permitted by law.

Accordingly, no information should be included on the form that would personally identify the victim without his/her consent. College security personnel will use the form to determine the category of crime and location under which the crime should be reported according to the requirements of the *Clery Act*.

## **Student-Faculty Relationships**



Professors are available for appointments during the times specified. Meetings with the administration are by appointment only.

### **Student Conduct**

Students are to demonstrate a respectful attitude in every encounter with administrators, professors, staff, personnel, campus guests, and other students. This standard applies to all areas of behavior, speech, and overall conduct.

### **Classroom Conduct**

Each professor is responsible for maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. If a student is asked to refrain from a disruptive behavior or is asked to leave the classroom, the student

should do so immediately and respectfully. Upon leaving the room, the student should report to the administration office. If necessary, a meeting will take place between the involved parties. If further action is necessary, the President will be advised.

Any student who threatens the physical well-being of a person or property will be reviewed by the administration. Following the review, further actions may include filing a police report, imposing personal restrictions, and/or recommending dismissal of the person from Ascent College. If necessary, the President will be advised.

### **Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

The carrying and use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices are allowed on the Ascent College campus. Users of these devices, however, must be attentive to the needs, sensibilities, and rights of other members of the College community. Furthermore, the use of these devices must not disrupt the functions of the College overall or its classrooms. Students participating in off-campus course related activities must follow the electronic devices policies of the agency or organization where they are visiting or working.

Cell phones, and other personal electronic devices may be turned on and set on silent mode only with the expressed consent of the instructor. Violations may result in lower grades for the class. In addition, cell phones and other personal electronic devices incorporating a camera must be turned off and out of sight in any way in which an individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Beyond the basic College policy stated herein, faculty members, at their discretion, also may have strict individual policies related to cell phones, and other devices as indicated in class in order to provide and maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and the respect of others. These policies may include penalties for violation. If electronic devices are used inappropriately for the purposes of cheating or academic dishonesty, then students who do so will be penalized appropriately under the Academic Honesty Policy of Ascent College.

### **Use of Data and Technology Resources**

Acceptable use of Ascent College data and technology resources is conducting activities by authorized individuals for the purpose for which access was granted and does not disrupt operations and is not otherwise prohibited or considered unacceptable use under The Ascent College Use of Data and Technology Resources Policy. Users of Ascent College data and technology should also consider the following:

1. Users of Ascent College data and technology resources must adhere to all applicable Ascent College policies, standards, procedures, contracts and licenses, as well as applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
2. Ascent College data and technology resources shall only be used by authorized individuals for the purpose for which access was granted.
3. The College reserves the right to monitor technology resources and the use of technology resources for operational needs and to ensure compliance with applicable laws and College policies and standards. To that end, users have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or receive on Ascent College data and technology resources.
4. When the College receives a Freedom of Information Act request, subpoena, litigation or other similar request for information or documents, the College will take necessary measures to access Ascent College data and technology resources in order to comply with its legal obligations.

Unacceptable use is any unauthorized use of Ascent College data and technology resources or any use that disrupts or endangers Ascent College data and technology. Refer to The Ascent College Use of Data and Technology Resources Policy for details and uses which constitute unacceptable use.

## Personal Laptops in the Classroom

Although having a laptop in class opens up new learning possibilities for students, sometimes students utilize it in ways that are inappropriate. Please refrain from instant messaging, e-mailing, surfing the Internet, playing games, writing papers, doing homework, etc., during class time. Acceptable uses include taking notes, following along with the instructor on PowerPoint, and other uses approved by the instructor.

Beyond the basic College policy stated herein, faculty members, at their discretion, also may have strict individual policies related to laptop use in the classroom in order to maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and the respect of others. These policies may include penalties for violation.

## Student Complaint Procedure

Students are encouraged to follow the Biblical principles found in Matthew 18 to resolve conflicts, concerns or complaints. Written complaints shall be responded to in writing within 10 days of receipt of the complaint. If the complaint is rejected, the student shall be notified of the reasons for the rejection. None of the student's rights or remedies shall be limited by participating in the complaint procedure. In addition, a student participating in the complaint process will not be subjected to retaliation or adverse action.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this complaint process, they have the right to contact the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), which provides a webpage for students who may have complaints against a college

(<https://www.schev.edu/index/students-and-parents/resources/student-complaints>). If you are a resident of a state other than Virginia, you may also contact the office in your state for filing complaints against the college. Please contact the Student Affairs Office for further information. Student may also contact The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) 5575 S. Semoran Blvd. Suite 26, Orlando, Florida 32822-1781 Phone: 407-207-0808 to file a complaint against a college. The student complaint will follow these steps below:

1. Students will be encouraged to resolve the complaint themselves by speaking directly to the person involved. If no resolution can be made, then the student is encouraged to complete the next step.
2. Complete the Student Grievance Form (downloaded from the Student Forms page on the [www.ascent.edu](http://www.ascent.edu) webpage) and submit to the Student Dean. The administration will acknowledge receipt of the form to the student within 48 hours.
3. If necessary, a meeting will be set-up to include the parties involved.
4. If no resolution is achieved the complaint shall be transmitted to the President for review and resolution.

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) is the approving authority of education and training programs for Virginia. This office investigates complaints of GI Bill beneficiaries. While most complaints should initially follow the school grievance policy, if the situation cannot be resolved at the school, the beneficiary should contact the SAA office via email [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov).

## Faculty Advisor

The faculty at Ascent College desires to participate pastorally in students' lives as they grow through academic and ministry experience. Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor with whom a relationship can be established in order to enhance the student's learning experience and spiritual life.

Duties of the faculty advisor

- Modeling Biblical character: The advisor will know the student on a more personal level and the student will observe a model of a biblically based life.
- Provide career guidance: The faculty member will draw upon his or her experiences to recommend specific courses and ministry goals for students.

- Oversee student ministry: The faculty advisor will review the student on a consistent basis regarding the student's ministry and academic reports and will make recommendations.
- Serves as a listener: The college staff is available by appointment to assist the student with counseling needs. The church pastors are also available by appointment to counsel the students.

## Financial Policies

### Tuition and Fees

Payment for tuition and other fees is due and payable prior to the first day of class. Payments may be made by cash, check or credit card (MasterCard, Visa or Discover), approved scholarships, or a combination of these methods.

#### Tuition at Ascent College

- \$ 320 per college credit
- \$50 per college credit for auditing
- \$125 for Orientation & Library Resources class

### Paying for College

There are several options for paying for college; to name a few, there are Personal Funds, Private Scholarships and Grants, Federal Grants and Loans as well as Private Loans. Please visit our website [www.ascent.edu](http://www.ascent.edu) for information about paying for your college education. Applications for these additional resources can take several weeks to process so use of these additional financial resources need to be started at least twelve weeks before the semester begins. In fact, many private scholarships and grants have their own specific deadlines for application submission. It is imperative that students initiate financial applications along with their academic application in order to assure financial resources are available prior to the beginning of the semester.

Tuition and fee payments will be due after student has been invoiced to their Populi account. Students who still have outstanding bills on the last day of the semester will not be allowed to attend classes unless special arrangements have been made with administration to pay the semester bill in full.

### Insufficient Funds

A fee of \$35.00 must be paid if a check is returned due to insufficient funds and amount due must be paid in cash or money order only. After a second occurrence, the student will have to pay in cash until further notice.

### Textbooks & Course Fees

Textbook purchases are not included in Ascent College tuition and fees. Students will be responsible to purchase books from any source they choose.

Logos One is Ascent College's official digital textbook provider. Logos provides selected course textbooks through its robust digital platform along with a small package of free resources. The price of textbooks varies by semester. Logos textbooks are accessed through a link on the syllabus page of Populi courses that offer Logos textbooks. In these courses, students must either opt-in or opt-out of receiving Logos textbooks by the add/drop date of that session. Students that have not opted out of receiving textbooks by the add/drop date are automatically opted in, and their student account charged the session's textbook fee. Customer support is available through Logos:

Phone Number: 800-875-6467  
Instant Chat: [support.logos.com](https://support.logos.com)

Email: [customerservice@faithlife.com](mailto:customerservice@faithlife.com)

## Refunds

The application fee and student activity fee are non-refundable, and no refunds are given after the fourth week of classes. When refunds are given, it is preferred that they be given in the form of credit toward a future course(s). However, the student may elect to receive a refund check.

Tuition refunds are pro-rated according to the following table for our 8-week sessions:

- 0-7 days of the class: 100%
- 8-12 days of the class: 50%
- 13-17 days of the class: 35%
- 18-22 days of the class: 25%
- After 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the class: 0%

Refund policies for online students may differ depending on the state in which the student resides. Please contact the business office (703-753-2791) for the refund policy for your state. Class schedules for less than 8 weeks or more than 8 weeks will follow the same schedule as above with adjustment being made for the number of weeks of the class.

## Library Policy

### General Guidelines

The library at Ascent College has been established to bring the best in education and spiritual values; thereby assuring that your time will be well invested. Currently, the library contains thousands of volumes of books, commentaries, and other reference materials. These materials include Internet access, audiotapes, CD's, DVD's, and videos. The materials in the library are for your personal use and are not to be loaned to other people without permission from the librarian.

### Library Usage

- Books may be borrowed for two weeks with a limit of three books.
- Books may be renewed one time.
- A \$.025/day late fee will be charged for each overdue book.
- If the amount owed is over \$20.00, or there are more than three items overdue on an account, borrowing privileges will be suspended.
- Books lost or damaged beyond reasonable use will require replacement or replacement cost and will constitute reason for assessing a penalty of \$15.00. Permanent loss of library privileges may also result.
- Grades, transcripts, and diplomas will not be issued to students owing library fines.



## Intellectual Property Policy

### General Guidelines

#### 1. Ownership of Our Own Intellectual Property

In the course of pursuing its stated institutional mission the college may provide support for the creation of imaginative and authentic intellectual property. When it does so, it shall assert ownership of and all applicable intellectual property rights such as a copyrightable, patentable, or other valuable creative work either as part of his or her job duties, he or she must immediately notify the Executive Vice President for



Academic Affairs of the existence and nature of such creative work. If a faculty member or student is approached by an outside sponsor who desires to enter into an agreement or partnership with such faculty member or student to engage in the enterprise of developing a creative work by providing financial support for such creative work, the faculty member or student will apprise the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of such a desire or interest on the part of an outside sponsor and the college will seek guidance from counsel to protect the interests of faculty members, students and the college.

## 2. Employee Initiated Works

The faculty member or student employee has the right to patent, copyright, publish, or otherwise establish ownership of any such creative work that such person creates by means of his or her expertise or labor on his or her own time. When a faculty member or student employee creates such a patentable, copyrightable, or other valuable creative work, he or she shall have all the exclusive rights to own, market, publish, use, and economically exploit such valuable creative work.

## Graduation

Students must complete the course degree requirements applicable at the time of matriculation into the college as specified in the college catalog current at the time. These course requirements may be fulfilled by successfully completing the course (higher than a letter grade of F) at Ascent College, by successfully transferring the course into Ascent College from another postsecondary educational institution as approved by the Registrar's office, or by successfully substituting the course by another course with approval from the Academic Dean's office.

The minimum requirement for graduation is a GPA of 2.0 overall and 2.5 for area of concentration. The final 25 percent of credits for any program must be earned at Ascent College and a minimum of 30 percent of total credits must be earned at Ascent College in order to be awarded a degree from Ascent College. A personal mission statement as evidenced in the student portfolio prepared by the student and approved by the Dean of Students. Completion of practicum requirements may be defined in the Academic Catalog. All students must demonstrate biblical knowledge proficiency by passing the Bible Knowledge exam.

Students with at least a 2.0 who are within six semester hours of meeting graduation requirements and who plan to fulfill these requirements in Ascent College's summer session may petition the Registrar to participate in spring commencement exercises. He or she will subsequently be granted the degree upon successful completion of the required hours.

Student accounts must be paid in full and cleared by the Registrar before graduation is finalized.

Honors will be awarded to students attaining the following final grade point averages:

- Cum Laude: 3.40 - 3.59
- Magna Cum Laude: 3.60 - 3.79
- Sum Cum Laude: 3.80 - 4.00

Upon graduation from Ascent College, the student will have a quality, academic education and practical ministry experience to aid in ministry. Students should take full advantage of the opportunities this affords.

## Graduation Activities

Each year, Ascent College graduates a class of trained leaders that impact the Kingdom of God. Graduation activities may include a banquet, reception, and Commencement Exercise. Graduating students are strongly encouraged to attend all activities.

### **Graduation Policy**

All students anticipating graduation must submit a graduation petition form no later than November 5<sup>th</sup>. The forms are available online. A graduation fee applies.

### **Placement Assistance**

Our college office receives many opportunities for various full-time or part-time ministry positions and will assist students in obtaining an interview with employing personnel. No guarantee for placement may be made; however, Ascent College does maintain contact with various denominational offices and assists students with placement in ministry occupations where they can.