

About Transylvania

Transylvania University's philosophy is that the scope, spirit, analytical approaches, and integration of knowledge inherent in liberal education are the best preparation for life beyond college. At the same time, Transylvania recognizes that specific career goals are important and integrates these within individual programs of study.

The nature and purpose of Transylvania are expressed in the following mission statement adopted by the faculty and Board of Trustees:

Through an engagement with the liberal arts, Transylvania University prepares its students for a humane and fulfilling personal and public life by cultivating independent thinking, open-mindedness, creative expression, and commitment to lifelong learning and social responsibility in a diverse world.

Transylvania University is committed to excellence in undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences. For over half of its distinguished history, the College has been affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), whose ideals of tolerance and freedom of inquiry the college shares.

The College believes that all students, no matter what career or vocation they choose, benefit from liberal education; and so the College encourages the free search for knowledge and understanding drawn from the natural and social sciences, the humanities, and the arts. By so doing, the College strives to empower students to develop lifelong habits of learning and intelligent, respectful discussion.

Transylvania's mission is to cultivate open-mindedness, independent thinking, creativity, lifelong learning, self-awareness, and social responsibility, all through thoughtful engagement with the liberal arts in preparation for a fulfilling personal and public life.

To support this mission, the College community values curiosity and thoughtfulness, as well as social, emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. By encouraging students to participate and collaborate in learning, community service, and governance, the College seeks to prepare students for the responsibility of fostering a healthy society in a world shared by many different people, cultures, and nations.

Specifically, the College's goals are

To develop students' intellectual and creative abilities;

To stimulate the search for knowledge;

To promote open and fair-minded examination and discussion of values in all forms of endeavor;

To encourage inquiry and conversation across the traditional academic disciplines;

To stimulate in students an understanding of themselves and their relation to others in a diverse, ever-changing world;

To promote opportunity for students to develop as independent thinkers and leaders;

To foster a campus community characterized by compassion, respect, ethical concern, and social responsibility; and

To establish a foundation for graduate and professional study and a variety of satisfying careers.

These goals, taken together, enable the College to provide its students with the basis for continuing intellectual development and for purposeful, responsible, and fulfilling lives.

Building on Transylvania's mission statement, the College has adopted the following commitment to diversity.

Commitment to Diversity

One major goal of Transylvania's institutional mission is to stimulate in students an understanding of themselves and their relation to others in a diverse, ever-changing world. We aim to foster a campus community characterized by compassion, respect, ethical concern, and social responsibility. Given these objectives and an enduring commitment to diversity, we affirm the following expectations:

To face the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, Transylvania continually seeks to foster diversity within the campus community. All members of the university community should develop an inclusive attitude that is grounded in acceptance of and respect for the dignity of all peoples. This affirmation recognizes that each person has unique gifts and talents that are to be embraced and celebrated, thereby strengthening and enriching our community. We also acknowledge and strive to understand prevailing societal structures that may influence the status of minority groups. In our Transylvania community we value the richness that comes from a range of individual differences, including dimensions of age, culture, education, ethnicity, exceptionalities, gender, geographical origin, language, politics, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

In order to create an optimal campus-learning environment, Transylvania University expects all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to honor these values.

Founded in 1780 by an act of the Virginia legislature, Transylvania has been aptly described as a pioneer. Its name, in fact, stems from the university's location in the vast settlement region of western Virginia called Transylvania by a pioneering land company whose chief scout was Daniel Boone. This portion of Virginia, which would become Kentucky in 1792, still marked the nation's western frontier when Transylvania became the sixteenth college in the United States and the first college west of the Allegheny Mountains. As such, it has been linked with famous names in American history since its inception. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Aaron Burr were early supporters of the fledgling institution, and Henry Clay was both a law professor and a member of Transylvania's Board of Trustees. The university also takes pride in a distinguished roster of alumni who have helped shape American history, including two United States vice presidents, a U.S. Supreme Court justice, 50 U.S. senators, 101 U.S. representatives, and 36 governors.

In its early years, Transylvania included a school of medicine, a law school, and a seminary, as well as a college of arts and sciences. Today, Transylvania is a distinguished liberal arts college enrolling approximately 1,100 students. Transylvania University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools [1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; Telephone number (404) 679-4501; Web site www.sacscoc.org] to award the Bachelor of Arts degree. Transylvania's education program is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education at the initial teacher preparation level. Affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) since 1865, the university is also a charter member of the American Association of Colleges and Universities and a member of the American Council on Education, the Association of American Colleges, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Southern University Conference, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III.

Transylvania offers 36 majors as well as the option of designing an individual major. Students are expected to gain a strong grounding in liberal education throughout their academic career at Transylvania. However, the university also emphasizes career planning and offers advising, practical experience, and resources. A major in any discipline allows entry to a wide variety of opportunities after graduation, ranging from graduate or professional school to specialized positions. Preparation for the latter is often achieved through majors in such fields as business administration and computer science.

Small classes and close student-faculty relationships are among Transylvania's most distinctive assets. Although many faculty members are recognized for their research and writing, their primary concerns are teaching and advising. Students repeatedly cite their personal relationships with the faculty as being among the most valuable aspects of their Transylvania experience.

Another distinctive asset is Transylvania's location in Lexington. The city, which lies in the heart of Kentucky's beautiful Bluegrass region, is among the most progressive and dynamic metropolitan areas in the nation. Home of the University of Kentucky as well as Transylvania, Lexington offers an exceptional range of cultural and recreational activities. Students and faculty take full advantage of these opportunities and regard them as a valuable extension of campus life.

Transylvania is concerned not only with students' intellectual growth, but also with their development as individuals. Participation in campus activities is an intrinsic aspect of student life. Students may choose to participate in music ensembles, theater productions, publications, political organizations, and student government, as well as in social, recreational, and athletic activities.

Now in its third century, Transylvania is a vital institution with a continuing commitment to the academic excellence that is its legacy.