

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Briercrest College | August 2018

**BRIERCREST**

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY — COLLEGE — SEMINARY

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## SRE IN BRIEF

As a community, we have agreed to pursue life as defined by Jesus. This means that together, we will say “yes” to some things and “no” to other things as we wholeheartedly say “yes” to Christ.

We are going to ask you to...

- Contribute to a healthy campus by abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
  - Because these are unhealthy.
  - Because on college campuses alcohol in particular is a major factor in violence, sexual violence, vandalism, and safety issues. We have been blessed with a really safe campus. We want to preserve that.
- Prioritize your spiritual life by going to chapel and serving the church
  - Because we have observed the value of daily reminding ourselves who God is and who we are in light of that and of thinking about the mission that he has called us into.
- Honour your hallmates by being quiet at night
  - Because we want everyone to be successful in the classroom tomorrow.
  - Because noise at night creates disharmony in the community.
- Guard your hearts by being careful about your media consumption
  - Because we want your worldview to be shaped by Scripture and not by the world.
- Stay healthy and alert by keeping the 12 midnight weekday curfew (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years)
  - Because we don't want you to flunk out or adopt a backwards schedule.
  - Because we want to respect the small community of Caronport in which we live.
  - If you have somewhere to be after hours, just request permission from your RA.
- Respect yourself and others by abstaining from sex outside of marriage
  - Because we have seen the damage that it does to people who are not in a covenant relationship.
  - A further word on respect in a couple of key areas:
    - We are going to ask you to show respect for each other acknowledging that “no” means “no” and that any kind of physical intimacy requires mutual agreement. Violation of this basic respect in the area of sexuality constitutes sexual assault and we will take this seriously.
      - We are fortunate that this has not been a major problem on this campus like it has been for public universities.
      - To ensure that we remain a safe campus, we have drafted a policy to govern how we will handle situations of this nature.
      - The policy is available from Lea-Anne at the desk or in the office of your RD.
    - Second, we are going to ask you to show respect for people who are different than you
      - Particularly with regard to homosexuality and same sex attraction.
      - The use of derogatory language in the past (i.e. “That’s so gay!”) closes doors, making it unsafe for people to share their stories. We do not want to be guilty of forcing people into hiding and secrecy.
      - At Briercrest, we hold to the Church’s historic teaching on homosexuality, but we do so with a kind of humility that celebrates the image of God in creation and grieves the deep brokenness in all of our lives.

- We want this to be a safe campus for all people in every way.

We acknowledge that these are heavy topics, and ask students to show sensitivity and respect to each other in these ways. Respect looks a lot like justice, and justice is important to Jesus.

## **AN OPEN LETTER FROM BRIERCREST STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

Our hearts will change this year as we give and receive love. Our hearts will change through our willing sacrifices and through the sacrifices of others. Our hearts will change as we understand when our desires are selfish and when our desires are motivated by our care for others. Our hearts will change through our failures and our restorations.

Part of developing community is moving past the stage where everything is fine and we all look good. As we acknowledge our mistakes, hostilities, loneliness, and illusions, we will be able to work through difficult relational problems. We will receive grace and truth from each other, and we will grow more mature as individuals and deeper as a community. This means we must not run from times of relational problems and difficulties, because it is only through facing and acknowledging such problems and difficulties that we can enter into loving our neighbour more authentically.

Loving our neighbours is difficult and sometimes involves great personal sacrifice. This sacrifice includes letting go of our evaluations, judgements, and classifications of others, for these prevent us from hearing and truly understanding each other.

Your education includes the best we have to give, as well as our mistakes and failures. As you watch us deal with our mistakes and failures, we hope to model humility and grace. We hope that together we can find ways to better live lives that reveal God.

Just as part of your learning includes our failures, it will also include your failures. There may even be times when you want to hurt the school, or another, or yourself. It is especially at those times that you should feel our resistance. However, it is because we care for you. It is our hope that even in our gravest severity we will be communicating our care for you.

Every decision we make for the SRE involves costs and benefits for you. When we decide that the dormitories will be quiet after 11:00 p.m., it means that from then on you will be able to sleep in peace or concentrate fully on your studies. However, the cost is that you cannot play your music or video games loudly (without headphones), laugh loudly, yell, or run up and down the halls. Often the rules take freedom from some to give protection to others.

There will be times when you may disagree with a rule. Even though we do not ask for agreement, we ask for a couple of things. First, we ask that you talk to us about it. Second, we ask that you abide, at this time and at this place in your life, by all the rules you may not agree with. This will be easier after

you talk to us and understand our concerns. The years you spend here will give way to another phase of your life, and so will the specifics of this document. So for the season that you are enrolled as a college student at Briercrest College we ask that you willingly live within these community standards.

What is written in this document is written to help facilitate the growth of our hearts, and to that end we invite you to labour with us and enter into this adventure with us. We are excited to have you here, learn from you, and grow together. May God be very near to you this year at Briercrest College.

Sincerely,

Your Student Development Team

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Student Responsibilities and Expectations document defines the expected conduct of all of Briercrest's college students, living in or out of dorms. Herein students will find information about what it means to be a student in good standing with Briercrest College, how situations involving misconduct will be handled, and the procedures for appeal of disciplinary decisions. In addition to this document, students will find specific regulations for things like dormitory life, the library, and Clipper teams from the appropriate department or on the web ([www.briercrest.ca](http://www.briercrest.ca)). For specific policies that affect students, students are asked to consult the Student Development Policy Reference Guide. Policies found there are listed at the end of this document.

Upon admission to Briercrest College, a student accepts the responsibility to comply with all of the Student Responsibilities and Expectations (SRE) and/or the rules and regulations of Briercrest College. This commitment remains in place for as long as a student is enrolled at Briercrest, and includes breaks during and between semesters. Students who do not comply with the SRE shall be held accountable for their actions (see **Disagreement with the SRE**).

College students are invited to participate in the rigorous learning community offered at Briercrest College, and in this process they are expected to keep their commitment to a lifestyle compatible with the mission of Briercrest, as defined in this document. This will enable us to stay on task together as learners, not be a stumbling block to others (Romans 14), and contribute to the cultivation of healthy community life at Briercrest. We live this way not merely because we want to be safe, but also because we want to commit ourselves to striving for excellence in academics, areas like the arts, athletics and technology, and most importantly, in the good works God has given us to do (Ephesians 2). Our hope is that college students at Briercrest are not merely learning how to mechanically respond to some external code, but that instead God uses the SRE to help shape their character, giving them all the advantages that Christians find in the "freedom for obedience" (Galatians 5).

Briercrest students are taught to wonder, explore, and think with their heads and hearts. As this happens, they will learn to submit to God and to one another out of love and respect. Students at Briercrest College who have allowed God to work in all areas of their lives will find this learning will extend to all their significant relationships after they graduate.

The following sections provide topically arranged brief summaries of responsibilities and expectations for all Briercrest College students. Students may also review lengthier explanations of some of the more noteworthy expectations (see **Explanations**).

### I. Spiritual Life

- A. Attendance is mandatory at the daily chapel services, at the community chapel services, variety chapels and at the semi-annual Day of Prayer.

- B. Students are expected to attend church weekly. Extracurricular commitments (including sports) should not interfere with regular church attendance.
- C. Students will be involved both as guests and as hosts during the special focus events that Briercrest puts on every year (YouthQuake).
- D. Each student has a responsibility to set aside time in her or his day for prayer and Bible reading.
- E. Each student has a responsibility to use her or his resources (time, money, skills, etc.) wisely and compassionately.

## II. Leisure and Entertainment

- A. Movie and TV entertainment, and computer and video games that have occult connotations or are explicitly violent or sexual in nature are inappropriate. Time spent playing computer or video games or viewing entertainment programming should not keep students from giving appropriate attention to their responsibilities.
- B. Social dancing is not permitted on campus except in the case of sponsored dances. Off campus, students are expected to avoid all dancing that is immodest or sexually suggestive, that includes inappropriate close physical contact with a dance partner, that takes place where alcohol is served (students should use their discretion at formal public events such as wedding receptions), or that takes place while inappropriate music lyrics are being played.
- C. Whether one is assessing entertainment in a public gathering or privately, music, movies, and television shows should be wholesome and acceptable to all. Students are asked to generally avoid and always use careful discernment regarding movies rated 18A/R, and no 18A/R movies are permitted in residence halls without the approval of the RD.
- D. We do not permit manufacturing, using, distributing, selling, or otherwise promoting pornography.

## III. Dress Code

- A. Students should dress neatly, modestly (not provocatively or otherwise distracting), and appropriately at all times, with proper attention given to personal hygiene.
- B. Students with piercings, tattoos, and other adornments that are deemed to be immodest, improper, or indecent will be asked to address the issue.
- C. Swimwear and the removal of shirts are inappropriate in public campus areas. Cross-dressing is not allowed.

## IV. Restricted Behaviour

- A. All Briercrest students will live within the bounds of local, provincial, and federal law at all times.
  - B. No students will consume, distribute, buy, or sell any alcoholic beverages or tobacco products, either on or off campus. Drinking communion wine in a church service is the only exception to this rule. Use of marijuana or other recreational and/or illegal drugs is not permitted.
  - C. There will be no participation in or otherwise promoting gambling, at casinos or elsewhere.
  - D. We do not permit manufacturing, using, distributing, selling, or otherwise promoting any occult activity or objects.
  - E. Students will refrain from the use of profanity, blasphemy, or any other form of crude, vulgar, or inappropriate talk or joking.
  - F. In addition to the obvious fence lines, students must pay special attention to unmarked property lines both within the town and the surrounding farming community. Use of abandoned buildings or driving in fields without permission from the owners is trespassing.
  - G. Students must comply with the directions of College officials or law enforcement officers acting in the performance of their duties.
- V. Facilities
- A. Certain areas are closed to student use outside of designated times and activities: the dining room, the Den, the Hildebrand Chapel foyer, the chapel itself after 10 p.m., music practice rooms (without permission from the Worship Arts department), individual rooms in the residences (without permission from the occupant), upper and lower wings of the administration/academic building east of the student mailboxes after 6 p.m. (unless on school business), and The Landing.
  - B. Certain areas are not ever open for student use unless on school business: areas behind the Hildebrand Chapel stage, building roofs, maintenance buildings, boiler rooms, storage areas, or other rooms or facilities that are designated staff only, and any room or building that is found locked.
  - C. Students must receive permission from the appropriate department or individuals before using any Briercrest or community owned equipment or facilities for non-sanctioned activities.



- D. There will be no unauthorized use or alteration of fire-fighting equipment, safety devices, security devices, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or other emergency equipment.

## VI. Healthy Sexuality

- A. Briercrest College and Seminary invites its students to view their sexuality within the context of their Christian discipleship. Briercrest embraces a biblical view of sexuality, which holds that a person's use of her or his body has spiritual, emotional, and social, as well as physical, implications. In this regard, Briercrest holds that the Bible teaches that sexual intimacy is reserved for marriage, a covenant of love and faithfulness entered into before God between one man and one woman. Furthermore, Briercrest holds the view that God's purpose for marriage is to bring God glory, through procreation, through the enjoyment of sexual intimacy, and ultimately through being a witness to the love of Jesus Christ for his Church. In order to honour marriage, sexuality, and celibacy as good gifts of God both to individuals and to the common good, the Briercrest community strives for purity of thought and action, respectful modesty, personal responsibility for actions taken, and avoidance of behaviours inconsistent with these ideals (cf., e.g., Matt 5:27-28; Eph 5:3; Gal 5:19-21; 1 Cor 6:9-11). Similarly, Briercrest encourages all of its community members to avoid personal and social contexts where temptation to compromise sexual purity would be particularly strong.
- B. Briercrest students are not to date BCA students below Grade 12. When a Briercrest College student is dating a BCA Grade 12 student, there must be complete understanding and cooperation with the guidelines pertaining to the BCA student.

## VII. Harassment

- A. Students must refrain from abusing principles of personal privacy, decency, and common sense when partaking in picture and/or video taking.
  - 1. No pictures or videos should be taken of another without expressed permission.
  - 2. Students must refrain from taking and/or displaying pictures or videos with indecent, crude, or suggestive themes.
  - 3. Students will not take stunting or practical joke-themed videos or pictures that involve trespassing, unsafe activity, embarrassment, the demeaning of another, abuse of private or public property, or the violation of biblical standards, societal laws, or the Briercrest College SRE, whether actual or staged.

4. Videos or pictures taken for class projects, yearbook, or highlight videos must also comply with all the above stated standards.
  - B. We do not tolerate racial slurs or ethnic put-downs.
  - C. There will be no practical jokes that cause or have the potential to cause any emotional, physical, or property damage.
  - D. Briercrest does not tolerate hazing rituals or group/team initiation rites that demean or humiliate others.
  - E. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at Briercrest College. Sexual harassment includes any unwanted sexual advance, requests for sexual favours, or verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.
  - F. All types of harassment are prohibited in electronic communications as well—including any form of cyber-bullying or cyber-stalking.

#### VIII. Community Housing

All single Briercrest College students without dependents are required to live in Residence Life until they qualify for community housing and are approved by the Student Development office to move out of dorm. For the complete community housing policy, including the criteria students must meet to be considered for community housing, please consult the Student Development Policy Reference Guide.

#### IX. Off-Campus Conduct

When off-campus, whether for an evening or for an extended period of time (e.g., weekends, midterm breaks, holidays, summers, or out-of-town internships), all students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with Briercrest College and Seminary's guidelines.

### Treatment of Confessions

On occasion, students will sincerely come forward and confess sinful involvement or violation of Briercrest College expectations. When this happens, our desired approach is one of gentle restoration. It is our goal to see the student gain forgiveness, regain his or her footing, and move ahead. This does not automatically result in the elimination of all consequences, but we factor the forthrightness of the confession and the potential danger to the community into consequent decisions and responses. The student must be aware, though, that there are certain actions and activities that carry with them a responsibility to pass pertinent information on to the proper authorities.

## Disagreement with the SRE

In light of the broad and diverse backgrounds of the Briercrest student body, it is understood that though some rules are temporary, they are still binding and important. Ultimately, even the temporary and limited rules at Briercrest are an attempt to show what love for one's neighbour looks like at this time and in this place.

Students should keep in mind that love for others includes due consideration of both property (whether shared or personal) and time, which will sometimes feel like an inconvenience. Overcoming selfishness in the Christian walk is a goal for all members of the Briercrest community.

While Briercrest College students are free to disagree with a rule or the rationale for a set of expectations, they are not free to disregard such rules or expectations. Should students find they do not understand or agree with a particular rule or expectation, they are invited to avoid cynicism. They should not immediately dismiss a rule as old-fashioned or legalistic. Rather they might ask, "How does this rule connect to the vision, mission and goals of Briercrest?" If students are convinced that a particular rule is inconsistent with the vision, mission, and goals of Briercrest College and Seminary, they should feel free to address that issue, expecting that their questions and concerns will be heard. They are encouraged to take up specific concerns either directly with the Student Development Office or through their Student Government representatives. Students who find they are unable or unwilling to learn at Briercrest College should consider a graceful withdrawal from school. In such cases, all parties must be especially careful of passing judgement.

In some exceptional circumstances, a student may have to disregard a rule. For instance, students should disregard curfew expectations when love for a neighbour demands it (i.e., heading for the dorm in good time, but stopping to help a stranded motorist). Briercrest College students will not disregard rules for matters of their own convenience or out of carelessness.

## Explanations

Some rules in the SRE have provoked more discussion among Briercrest students than others. This section of the document aims to provide a basic rationale for some of the more frequently discussed rules.

### *Spiritual Life*

Fellowship, prayer, Bible reading, and moderate living are always beneficial when done with sincerity. At Briercrest you will be required to do those things, and yet you have the opportunity to choose to do them sincerely. In classes and chapels, you will find much encouragement to be genuine in your spiritual life, and we trust that the Lord will be drawing you continually deeper into an authentic relationship if you will let Him.

### *Dance*

In some contexts, dancing is largely beneficial and enjoyable for the dancers and the observers. In other contexts, it can sometimes become a hindrance to living a faithful Christian life. We in Student Development aim to allow, encourage, and celebrate the sorts of dance that are least likely to be a potential stumbling block in the lives of our students, and we ask students to avoid the kinds of dancing that may become a source of temptation for themselves or their neighbors.

### *Entertainment Media*

The ways we spend our time, the things we think about, and the influences we expose ourselves to will shape who we are, what we believe and how we act. Movies and other programmed entertainment exercise a particularly potent influence, and so Briercrest requires that students avoid (at the very least) the most harmful ones, so that our students will have a chance to learn in an environment with fewer obstacles to healthy ways of thinking.

### *Alcohol*

Briercrest accepts the responsibility to focus its attention and resources on areas central to its overall mission such as discipleship and cultivating lives of service without having the distraction of common challenges that accompany alcohol where it freely used on school campuses. At university campuses across Canada issues around alcohol use and misuse are dominant issues at hand for students and staff with regard to student success both socially and academically. Although drinking in moderation is not necessarily harmful in itself, the line between moderation and excess can be difficult to recognize and tends to vary from one person to the next. Drinking in excess is harmful for both the individual and the community. Thus, by asking all students to abstain from alcohol during each semester of study at Briercrest, we prioritize giving Briercrest students a more stable and productive learning environment. The self-control learned in practicing abstinence from alcohol will also benefit a student in her or his future, whether he or she chooses to continue in abstinence or simply drink in moderation after leaving Briercrest.

### *Tobacco*

Tobacco products have been found to be harmful to the people using them, and can also be harmful to those in their vicinity. The addictive nature of tobacco can limit a person's ability to make wise decisions regarding tobacco use. By asking our students to avoid tobacco usage altogether, we desire to make this campus a healthier place overall.

### *Social Life*

Fellowship and community are an essential part of the Christian life. Briercrest students are encouraged to seek out opportunities to develop healthy social habits in their local communities.

However, we strongly discourage attendance in gatherings at which alcohol and/or illegal drugs are being used. We ask you to avoid such gatherings so you can avoid being in an environment that tempts you to violate the SRE, and so others who follow your example may do the same.

### *Gambling*

Gambling is generally a questionable use of our resources. Some people view their gambling simply as an expensive (and potentially profitable) form of entertainment, but such choices carry with them the danger of entering into an addictive and harmful cycle of gambling. In order to help our students learn healthy ways to use their money and find worthwhile projects for the investment of their resources, we ask our students to abstain from all gambling.

### *Occult*

Occultism grows out of various non-Christian and anti-Christian systems of belief, and it often involves participation in practices that the Bible instructs us to avoid. Exposure to occultism can be a hindrance to Christian growth and maturity; and so, we require our students to stay away from any connection to the occult.

### *Community Housing*

Over the years at Briercrest, we have consistently found that residence life helps to form students socially and spiritually in ways that are very beneficial for the Christian life. That is why we ask most of our students to spend considerable time in our dorm setting. Students who are the equivalent of senior status students in their final year at Briercrest may be permitted to live outside of the dorms, where they can develop other life skills which are not so easily learned in the dorm environment, such as cooking and cleaning and hosting and budgeting.

### *Off-campus Conduct*

Briercrest is an educational institution, and the guidelines that Student Development sets for our students are meant to help students learn how to live healthy, balanced lives. Building those habits for twelve months of the year (and not simply during the days of the academic calendar) will be more beneficial for each student and their respective communities, and will assist in developing a consistent and godly life that will endure beyond a student's time at Briercrest.

This is why we ask our students to live according to the standards set out for students throughout the calendar year.

If you are looking for information on any of the following, please refer to this year's copy of the Student Development Policy Reference Guide:

Grievances, complaints, and special considerations	Student discipline procedures
Disciplinary and appeal levels	Student Development discipline committee
College leadership review committee	President’s cabinet review committee
Community housing application policy	Senior Dorm Rebate policy
Student Life Fee policy	

