

# Randolph College Policy Proposal/Revision Cover Sheet

(Text will re-size as you type)

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>PROPOSAL TYPE</b>	<b>NAME OF LEAD POLICY DRAFTER</b>
	New policy	
	Revision to existing policy	
	Retirement of existing policy	<b>OTHER INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED</b>
<b>BRIEF POLICY DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>POLICY TYPE</b>	
	Standalone	
	Part of Larger Policy Document:	
	<b>RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT OR OFFICE</b>	<b>ORIGINAL SUBMISSION DATE</b>
		<b>DESIRED IMPLEMENTATION DATE</b>

## BRIEF RATIONALE FOR POLICY

Include any external mandates, regulations, accreditation factors, reporting, etc.

### DEPARTMENTS OR OFFICES OF THE COLLEGE IMPACTED

**EXISTING COLLEGE POLICIES IMPACTED BY OR OVERLAPPING THIS ONE**

# RANDOLPH COLLEGE RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LIFE POLICY

## **Religious & Spiritual Life at Randolph College**

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Randolph College was founded as Randolph-Macon Woman's College in 1891 with the financial support of Virginia Methodists, and remained affiliated with The United Methodist Church (UMC) until 2019. On July 1, 2019, the Randolph College Board of Trustees issued the following statement:

“In June, the Randolph College Board of Trustees voted to consider the relationship of the College with [T]he United Methodist Church (UMC).

Throughout its history, the College has been affiliated with the UMC and has benefited from its encouragement and support. In the early years, the UMC provided generous financial support, and more recently, scholarships for Methodist students.

However, in early 2019, the UMC voted to retain language in its official documents that prohibits the ordination of LGBTQ+ persons as ministers, and prohibits Methodist ministers from officiating at same-sex marriages. These official positions of the UMC contravene the fundamental principles of non-discrimination, diversity, and inclusion to which Randolph College is committed, and, therefore, the Board of Trustees has voted to end the College's formal affiliation with the UMC.

Randolph College welcomes all students, faculty, and staff regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender expression, and remains committed to providing a community that supports the spiritual lives of its students, faculty, staff, alumnae and alumni.”

While the UMC voted in 2024 to remove prohibitions on officiating same-sex weddings and ordaining LGBTQ+ clergy, Randolph College has chosen to remain a religiously unaffiliated institution. The College is committed to supporting students from all religious and secular traditions as they explore and experience the spiritual dimensions of life.

The College strives to be inclusive, respectful and relational. Inspired by the College's motto—“the life more abundant”—we value interreligious dialogue and partnerships as essential to the common good of our campus community and our increasingly interconnected, religiously diverse world. The College does not seek to convert students to any particular tradition, but rather to support each student's unique spiritual journey.

## **Religious Diversity and Commitment to Pluralism**

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Randolph College is a diverse campus of many religious, spiritual, and secular worldviews. We embrace and engage with this diversity through the principles of religious pluralism. This commitment requires respectful engagement across religious differences, as well as sincere commitment to one's own tradition. More than mere tolerance, religious pluralism seeks mutual understanding, dialogue, and cooperation among people of different faiths and commitments.

Unanimity of belief is not necessary for unity, and agreement is not necessary for dialogue and participation in campus life. The College embraces its internal diversity as a source of wisdom, creativity, and community strength. By fostering interreligious cooperation and a culture of mutual respect, Randolph College prepares students to engage thoughtfully and compassionately in a pluralistic global society.

## **Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination**

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Randolph College is committed to maintaining a community in which learning and working can be conducted in an environment of human dignity and respect. The College stands opposed to all forms of harassment and discrimination and will work to prevent such behavior within the College community.

Randolph College does not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of religion, nor on the basis of any legally protected category, including gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, family status, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. For more information on this policy, see the College's ["Harassment and Discrimination Policy" in our Policy Library](#).

Randolph College affirms the roles of personal freedom, doubt, and open critical reflection in healthy spiritual development, and our community members, religious groups, and community partners do not engage in harassment, coercion, or deception in any of our programming, athletics, sponsored events, or advertisements. All students are entitled to freely explore, question, or decline participation in religious or spiritual activities without fear of exclusion or retaliation.

## **Administration of Religious and Spiritual Life Groups**

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The Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer and the Intercultural Center serve as the central campus resource and clearing house for all religious and spiritual life matters.

Organizations that are primarily religious in nature, including but not limited to student clubs and groups that work with community partner organizations, must meet with the Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer every fall to choose whether to pursue affiliation as a Student Government club or as an Intercultural Center Registered Cultural Organization.

- Groups that choose to affiliate as a Student Government club are eligible to receive support from Student Government. All student clubs must follow the College's Harassment and Discrimination policy, the Student Handbook guidelines, and Student Government regulations.
- Groups that choose to affiliate as a Registered Cultural Organization through the Intercultural Center are eligible to receive support from the Intercultural Center. The Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer will work with Registered Cultural

Organizations to explore granting certain religious exemptions from the College's [non-discrimination policy](#) (e.g. in leadership positions and religious rituals.)

All community partner organizations must meet annually with Human Resources to provide Certificates of Insurance, background checks, and other information as required.

The College reserves the right to decline collaborations with community partner organizations that do not align with our community needs.

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Violations of this policy that rise to the level of harassment and discrimination are addressed through the Office of Civil Rights, as is described in the College's Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Policy violation concerns that do not rise to the level of harassment and discrimination as defined in the College's Harassment and Discrimination Policy are addressed in the following ways:

- Student conduct violation concerns are addressed through the process outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Community partner policy violation concerns are addressed by the Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer, with the assistance of other offices that the Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer deems necessary.
- Staff policy violation concerns are addressed by Human Resources, and the Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer is informed.
- Faculty policy violation concerns are addressed by Human Resources and the Provost of the College, and the Chief Engagement and Belonging Officer is informed.

Randolph College reserves the right to restrict or prohibit on-campus activities of individuals or organizations who violate any portion of the above Policy.