

# THE FIVE ACADEMIC PRINCIPLES

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## The Five Academic Principles

These principles govern all courses and other educational experiences at the College.

### Innovative, Student-Centered Learning

Guilford embraces effective and adventurous pedagogy. Learning formats are chosen to promote dynamic exchange among students and between students and faculty.

The College places the individual student at the core of its educational mission. In an environment committed to the value of interdependence, each student is encouraged to develop an individual viewpoint through the sharing of ideas with other members of Guilford's intentionally diverse community.

### Challenge to Engage in Creative and Critical Thinking

Guilford emphasizes these activities: identifying and solving problems; delving below the surface of things to understand phenomena in their complexity; considering how frameworks and perspectives affect observations and analyses; appreciating the interplay of believing and doubting; and combining intuition, imagination and the aesthetic sense with reasoning, quantitative analyses and factual knowledge.

Students learn not only to develop and synthesize ideas but also to articulate them clearly via the spoken and written word and other forms of creative expression. In particular, the College emphasizes writing as a mode of both learning and communicating, and thus students write intensively throughout their years here. Guilford especially values courses that connect different ways of knowing, hence the College's interdisciplinary emphasis.

### Cultural and Global Perspectives

Guilford strives to prepare students to be citizens of the world. Thus the curriculum is designed to encourage students and faculty to respect and learn from people of other cultures and to foster an understanding of ecological relationships within the natural environment. By interacting with people from different cultures and gaining sensitivity to other ways of life, students deepen their academic investigation of Western and other traditions. In the process, students are challenged to envision better societies and to work collectively with others toward mutual benefit.

### Values and the Ethical Dimension of Knowledge

The Quaker ethos deeply influences the academic program as it does all other aspects of College life. In particular, the curriculum nurtures the spiritual dimension of wonder, the pursuit of meaning in life, and sensitivity to the sacred. It also promotes consciousness of those values necessary to successful inquiry: honesty, simplicity, equality, tolerance.

Guilford's courses explore the ethical dimension of knowledge. This often requires close attention to such issues as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, social justice and socioeconomic in historical and contemporary contexts.

## Focus on Practical Application: Vocation and Service to the Larger Community

Noting the call of George Fox, a founder of Quakerism, for schools to teach "things civil and useful," Guilford's teachers help their students choose majors and sequences of supporting courses that fit their interests and aptitudes and lead to work and service possibilities that will bring personal fulfillment and challenge. The College also upholds each individual's obligation to the larger community, hence its commitment to personal responsibility, social justice, world peace, service and ethical behavior. Rooted in the Society of Friends' social testimonies, the College aims to help its graduates learn to evaluate the effects of their actions and the implications of their decisions.