Chapel Committee

As Determined by College Administration—1 July 2015

Context

Grace College is a residential college located in the St Lucia campus of the University of Queensland. It operates under the auspices of the Queensland Synod of The Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), and the Assembly of The Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ). According to our Constitution, the College exists to:

(a) provide proper accommodation and tuition for women students of the University for the purpose of giving such students the benefit of collegiate life and of making provision for their care, guidance, discipline and instruction;
(b) encourage a liberal education for its students by endeavouring to draw its students from all faculties within the University;
(c) provide all necessary facilities for the presentation of and instruction in the Christian faith, including worship, study, teaching and counselling; and
(d) encourage students to relate their academic disciplines to Christianity and grow in the Christian faith.

The Role

The Chapel Committee is an important part of the College’s commitment to providing “all necessary facilities for the presentation of and instruction in the Christian faith, including worship, study, teaching and counselling”.

As residents identified as Christian representatives within the College, the members of the Chapel Committee seek to:

- live out the Christian faith through worship, witness and service as role models and encouragers for the College community;
- provide opportunities for residents to encounter and explore Christianity, to worship and pray together, and to learn, grow and mature in the Christian faith;
- model the treatment of all people with dignity and respect; and the respectful understanding of differing faith perspectives;
- offer opportunities for residents for conversation and dialogue about values, beliefs, purpose and meaning;
- listen carefully to the joys and concerns of other residents; and
- provide appropriate feedback to the College Administration about the pastoral and faith life of the College.
The Chapel Committee:

- meets together regularly to pray for the College, residents and the wider College community, and to plan for the provision of worship and teaching opportunities within the community;
- provides pastoral and practical support for Freshers, Resident Assistants (RAs), the Grace College Student Club (GCSC) Executive and O-Week Committee during O-Week each year;
- provides regular opportunities for formal and informal Christian worship and teaching for residents during the semester;
- assists the Principal with formal services (e.g. of Welcome, Enrolment and Valediction) throughout the year;
- maintains a list of local Christian congregations and and organisations for the information of residents;
- encourages residents to link with local Christian congregations, organisations and events while they are at College as part of the whole College experience;
- liaises with the equivalent resident representatives of other Colleges to provide shared faith-based opportunities for support and encouragement;
- fosters and promotes open and respectful inter-faith dialogue;
- works with the Wellness Convenors and GCSC Care Convenors as part of the Personal Formation Team (PFT);
- participates in P-Week training as part of the PFT;
- meets regularly with the Dean of Students (Dean) as part of the PFT;
- liaises with the Community Relations Coordinator (CRC) to connect with the resources of the College’s 2 auspicing churches.

The Chapel Committee will not:

- promote any particular Christian group or tradition to the exclusion of other mainstream Christian traditions;
- align themselves exclusively with any other Christian group or agency on and off campus apart from Grace College as an agency of UCA and PCQ; and
- vilify or denigrate any other religious group or followers of a religious group on the basis of their faith.

The Committee

The Chapel Committee is a group of 5-8 residents chosen by the Principal in consultation with the Dean and the CRC. They will serve for one residential year in the first instance.

The Chapel Committee will ideally represent a variety of Christian traditions within a spirit of ecumenical cooperation.

Application and selection of Chapel Committee members normally occurs in the September/October of the year prior to that for which the Committee is responsible.

One person from the group is identified by the Principal as the Chapel Committee Convenor. Members of the Chapel Committee may serve more than one term; and must re-apply for any subsequent term.
Members of the Chapel Committee must:

- have lived in College for at least one year with older students being strongly encouraged to apply to ensure a good experiential mix;
- be regularly involved in a Christian congregation, participating in corporate worship on a regular basis;
- be committed to a personal spiritual/devotional life, and the corporate Christian Life of Honouring God; Caring for One Another; Serving Those in Need; Being Committed to Community; and Nurturing Each Other’s Gifts;
- be able to articulate an understanding of the Christian faith in a confident and non-judgemental manner;
- uphold the Grace College core values of Community, Collegiality and Care and the GRAPHIC characteristics of being Generous, Reconciling, Aware, Protective, Healthy, Inclusive and Committed;
- have a cumulative GPA of 4.5 or more to allow for the additional load which such a leadership role entails;
- be willing to work as part of a team, attending and participating in meetings of the Committee and sharing the planning and organisational work;
- seek to model the Christian faith while acknowledging their own doubts and failures;
- be committed to acting justly and ethically
- demonstrate the Christian value of welcoming the stranger in relation to other theological, faith and philosophical perspectives; and
- be aware that their behaviour as faith representatives is open to scrutiny and take care with their public reputation in matters such as approachability, support of College activities, use of alcohol, and behaviour at College events.

In addition, the Chapel Convenor will have:

- demonstrated maturity in their Christian faith;
- willingness to be guided by the Principal and/or other appropriate authorities in matters of theology and Christian practice;
- demonstrated organisational ability; and
- willingness to work cooperatively and facilitatively with a team.

The Convenor is responsible for:

- convening the Committee;
- chairing Committee meetings;
- liaising with College Administration about the Chapel program, guest speakers, kitchen and resource requirements;
- liaising with the CRC to connect with the resources of the College’s 2 auspicing churches;
- liaising with the Voluntary College Godparents about the pastoral needs of the College residential community;
- liaising with guest speakers/presenters for the Chapel program;
- liaising with RAs and the GCSC Executive concerning support and assistance between these student leadership groups; and
- liaising with the O-Week Committee concerning support and assistance between the 2 Committees.