The Campion Book

The Ideal of a Liberal Arts Education in the Light of Faith and Reason

A Founding Statement on Campion College Australia

2014
The Campion Book was written by a Campion Founding Fellow, Karl Schmude, and adopted by the Campion Institute Board in 2014 as a founding statement of the College.
INTRODUCTION

The birth of Campion College Australia was preceded by a long gestation, at first intellectual and spiritual, and later organisational and institutional.

The initial form envisaged was that of a university in name and status, Campion University, and the earliest documents reflected this expectation; but it soon became clear that, in Australia’s higher education environment, dominated by government regulation and public funding, a private liberal arts institution would not gain immediate approval as a university. Thus the name of Campion College Australia was chosen, designed to honour the Oxford scholar and Jesuit martyr of the 16th century whose courageous faith and robust intellect had inspired a series of lay Catholic educational movements in Australia, beginning with the Campion Society in the 1930s.

As the formal process of planning began in 2000, various statements were prepared which outlined Campion’s vision and mission as a Catholic tertiary college offering an undergraduate degree in the Liberal Arts. In May 2002, Campion’s Brag began distribution as a newsletter explaining the purpose of the proposed college; in 2004, a comprehensive Development Plan was formulated - ‘Creating the Campion: the Birth of a Catholic Liberal Arts College in Australia’; and in 2005, a substantial set of papers was prepared in support of Campion’s successful case for institutional registration and course accreditation.

Since the College opened in 2006, various articles and reports have revealed the nature of Campion College as a distinctive institution in Australian higher education, but no single statement has yet been produced of the kind which one of Campion’s sister institutions in America, Thomas Aquinas College, prepared at the outset of its development. Known colloquially as the ‘Blue Book’, because of the colour of its cover, the Thomas Aquinas College publication has served

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as a ‘founding document’; an authoritative statement of the educational vision of the College, and a touchstone for the assessment of new challenges and developments against the original vision of the institution.

The present work is designed to serve this definitional purpose - as a founding narrative on Campion College. It seeks to capture the culture of Campion; to reveal its identity as a Catholic institution of the Liberal Arts in the Western intellectual tradition, and to provide a benchmark for the College as it continues to chart a course of development in the 21st century. The College strives to prepare future leaders of society and the Church in Australia, and its educational and religious character is shaped by the pursuit of the Liberal Arts in a Catholic culture that fuses the insights of faith and reason in the pursuit of truth.

The first years of Campion’s experience have served to sharpen its sense of mission, and provided a useful prelude to this statement of the College’s founding principles.
I THE EDUCATIONAL CRISIS – A CATHOLIC RESPONSE

Campion College Australia opened its doors in February 2006, but it owed its origins to a new connection with the centuries-old Catholic tradition of the Liberal Arts that was forged in response to the cultural and religious turmoil of the late 20th century. Campion is thus a young college with an ancient history.

In the 1960s, Australia shared with the rest of Western society the stirrings of a cultural and religious revolution. The apparent certainties of the post-war years gave way to a broad upheaval of culture and faith. For Catholics, the turbulence of the culture – involving such disparate developments as the Vietnam war, student and worker uprisings, and a transformation in sexual mores – was reinforced by the changes in religious culture following the Second Vatican Council.

A crucial arena affected by this conjunction of changes was that of education. Here the Catholic people felt the full force of an interruption to faith and learning – to the transmission of a religious faith to their children, and to a tradition of learning that carried the meanings and memories of that faith across the generations.

In 1973, an orthodox Catholic lay association devoted to the evangelisation of education came into being in Australia. Initially called the Fellowship of John XXIII, it later became the Campion Fellowship, in recognition of the Campion Society founded in the 1930s as Australia’s first Catholic lay association of adult education. Prior to the birth of the Fellowship, an early member of the Campion Society, Alf Schmude, had introduced his son, Karl, to the Catholic intellectual renaissance of the 20th century, notably through the writings of the polymathic apologist G.K. Chesterton and the cultural historian Christopher Dawson. Chesterton’s ability to demonstrate the intellectual appeal and spiritual vitality of the Christian faith inspired the desire for a Catholic response to the secularist incursion of Western society, while Dawson’s grasp of
the historical nature of the cultural crisis, and of the type of educational institution to confront it, defined the character of the Catholic response.

A new need in Australian life had become clear – namely, an education in Christian culture, in the varied patterns of life and thought that were the continuing expressions of the Incarnation in history. A new institution was required to offer such an education, a cultural grounding of faith and learning. Such an initiative, making Christian belief credible and a Christian life practicable for the great majority of ordinary people, was now fundamental to the preservation of a Catholic identity in secularist Australia.

Chesterton’s inspiration and Dawson’s insight – the contributions of an imaginative artist and an intellectual architect - formed the first seedbed of Campion College. An early outcome was a plan to establish an Institute of Christian Culture in the rural city of Armidale to which the Schmude family had moved in the early 1970s. The proposed institute was framed around the ideas which Dawson had published on education and culture during the 1950s, and which he consolidated into a book, *The Crisis of Western Education* (1961). By this time Dawson was serving as the first Professor of Catholic Studies at Harvard University. He looked in hope to the extensive system of Catholic higher education in America, and advocated a foundational program of studies in Christian culture incorporating the classical Liberal Arts. This program – outlined in a long appendix to *The Crisis of Western Education* - constituted an essential basis of the curriculum that later developed at Campion College.

Dawson argued that the survival of any civilization was vitally dependent on its educational tradition. In the early pages of his book, he set forth his argument:

‘A common educational tradition creates a common world of thought with common moral and intellectual values and a common inheritance of knowledge, and these are the conditions which make a culture conscious of its identity and give it a common memory and a common past. Consequently any break in the continuity of the educational tradition involves a corresponding break in the continuity of the culture. If the break were a complete one, it would be far more revolutionary than any
political or economic change, since it would mean the death of the civilization...”

Dawson believed that such an educational rupture had taken place in the West. A vacuum had arisen in universities from the disappearance of ‘the classics’, the study of Graeco-Roman language and culture that formed the Western tradition. This educational foundation was being replaced by a dual approach which intensified the collapse of a common culture of learning. In teaching, there was a utilitarian emphasis on vocational training, and in research as well as in teaching, an ever-growing subject specialisation. Modern education, in Dawson’s judgment, was being reduced to ‘a disintegrated mass of specialisms and vocational courses’.

Yet the destruction of a common educational tradition was having a deeper cultural impact. It was contributing to a huge fragmentation of Western culture itself – the breaking up of a way of life which would, in time, empty out meaning and memory and disenfranchise the great mass of people, spiritually and socially, leaving them prey to the most profound evils – of spiritual emptiness, intellectual confusion, and moral uncertainty. In Dawson’s words:

‘Modern civilization in spite of its immense technical achievement is morally weak and spiritually divided. Science and technology in themselves are morally neutral and do not provide any guiding spiritual principle. . . . For modern society, like all societies, needs some higher spiritual principle of co-ordination to overcome the conflicts between power and morality, between reason and appetite, between technology and humanity, and between self-interest and the common good.’

For Catholics, Dawson thought that the disintegration of traditional culture was especially serious. It weakened the basic sense of Catholic identity among ordinary people, and would finally destroy the very idea and possibility of a Christian people. Dawson recognised that the cultural underpinning of the Catholic faith - its philosophical outlook

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5 Ibid., p.159.
and legal framework, its literary and aesthetic expressions, its scientific energies - had long been supplied by this classical tradition. The disappearance of these cultural influences, Dawson argued, would expose Catholics in the West to the full force of secularist modernity without the educational and cultural support provided by the old heritage of Christian humanism. Only an historical steeping in Christian culture, in the spiritual springs of cultural expression throughout history, could anchor – and reanimate - a sense of Catholic identity at the popular level.

The systematic study of Christian culture would provide a means of understanding Western civilization from within. It would demonstrate the integration of natural reason and supernatural faith that underpins the Western tradition, and, in Dawson’s hope, give ‘the mind a unifying vision of the spiritual sources from which Western civilization flowed’.\(^5\) Such a process would call for a rediscovery of the tradition of liberal education – of the Liberal Arts as a coherent program across the major disciplines of study; in particular, history, philosophy, literature, science, language and theology.

Following Dawson’s death in 1970, other developments reinforced the destruction of a common educational tradition in the West – notably, the influence of political ideology, both in terms of intellectual currents and orthodoxies, such as post-modernism, and the growth of all-absorbing political governance, particularly in Australia, conditioned as it is by the government funding of universities and employment-driven educational programs and priorities. These developments have continued to undermine the role of universities in nurturing a sense of cultural identity and a spirit of citizenship among its students.

The need for a Catholic educational response to the changing cultural conditions became increasingly urgent. As the 1970s progressed, the possibilities of creating an institution in Australia which would address these challenges, and give expression to Dawson’s ideas, gathered momentum. They were aided by new contacts made with American Catholic scholars, such as Fr Joseph Fessio SJ, founder of a Liberal Arts centre, the St Ignatius Institute at the University of San Francisco, and Dr James Hitchcock, Professor of History at St Louis University and a

well-known author who first visited Australia in 1977 on a lecture tour organised by the Fellowship of John XXIII. A crucial American Catholic leader was Dr Warren Carroll, the founder of Christendom College in 1977, with whom Karl Schmude began to correspond in 1970. Dr Carroll had established, within an organisation known as the Society for the Christian Commonwealth, a Christian Commonwealth Institute (CCI), which offered courses similar to those outlined in Dawson’s *The Crisis of Western Education*, and presented under the title, ‘The History and Principles of Christendom’. In 1975, the inaugural President of the John XXIII Fellowship, Mr John McCarthy QC, attended a CCI course in Virginia with his wife Christine, further cementing the connection with orthodox Catholic educational initiatives in America. Of decisive significance was the growing interest of a Brisbane businessman, James Power Senior, in a Catholic Liberal Arts education. After a visit to Christendom College in 1984, Mr Power enrolled his younger children there, and he subsequently played a monumental role in planning and funding what later became Campion College Australia.

Christendom College was part of a movement of new orthodox Catholic Liberal Arts colleges in America during the 1970s, including Thomas Aquinas College (founded in California in 1971) and Thomas More College of Liberal Arts (in New Hampshire in 1978). Their emergence gave a major boost to the planning of Campion College. Not only did they supply a new source of inspiration and personal contacts, but they also served as institutional models, showing the feasibility of a Catholic undergraduate institution offering a broad liberal education in a modern secularised culture.
II THE SHAPING OF A NEW INSTITUTION

By the late 1990s, the conception of a new Catholic Liberal Arts college in Australia had begun to assume practical possibility. This awareness came from a growing appreciation of factors which were both positive and negative. On the positive side, the seedbed already identified – namely, the educational proposals of Christopher Dawson and the institutional models of the American Catholic colleges - remained powerful and appealing; and the approach of a new millennium gave a special impetus to the need and opportunity for action. On the negative side, the condition of higher education in Australia had declined sharply since the 1960s. In an institutional sense, universities suffered a dimming of public support and government funding, reflected in troubling trends such as a perceived decline in professional integrity and the subversion of traditional disciplines by political and social ideologies. In an educational sense, university programs became increasingly fragmented and utilitarian, focused on vocational training rather than intellectual development and cultural initiation.

A development of vast – and finally incalculable - importance was the collapse of a popular Catholic culture in Australia. In the half-century from the end of World War II to the turn of the millennium, Australian Catholics underwent deep changes in social class and ethnic composition. They moved from a largely working-class background shaped by Irish sensibilities and traditions to a middle-class culture that was ethnically – and even emotionally - diverse. The religious changes that took place in the wake of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s occasioned further upheaval, weakening the religious symbols, memories and practices that had animated a popular faith. These changes served to expose the Catholic people, intellectually and spiritually, to the broad impact of the prevailing culture’s secularizing tendencies. They gave an apparent religious imprimatur to the processes of modernisation and release from the past that were already taking place in the wider society. In combination, these huge shifts

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underlay the diminishing impact of the family, on the one hand, and of the Catholic school system, on the other, in shaping the cultural identity and religious loyalty of Catholic children.

At the same time, a new generation of Catholics was emerging, influenced especially by the leadership of Pope John Paul II and the initiative of World Youth Day and other movements of evangelization. Thus Campion came into being at a time of deep transition – between a traditional Catholic culture that was dissolving and a new one struggling to be formed. While Christopher Dawson had described the final decades of the 20th century as ‘the age of the plough and the harrow, not the time of harvest’, James Power Senior often referred to Campion, from the earliest days of planning, as a ‘little flower in the desert’.

In the face of these varied circumstances – the utilitarian subjugation of the university and the dissolution of popular Catholic culture - the time was ripe for the birth of a distinctive institution of higher education. Campion was conceived from the beginning as distinctive in two key respects - its educational offering (a broad, integrated program in the Liberal Arts) and its religious character (an institution with a clear sense of Catholic identity, neither triumphalist nor defensive).

In the long tradition of Catholic universities, Campion’s governing vision is to provide an education of the whole person in the light of truth. It seeks to offer a liberal education, characterised by academic rigour and quality and faithful to the mind of Christ as expressed authoritatively by the Catholic Church. It strives to prepare students for life, not only temporal but also eternal (hence the College’s motto, ‘Educating for Eternity’), fostering their intellectual maturity by a vital synthesis of natural reason and supernatural faith, and offering an environment of Christian culture conducive to the nurturing of spiritual life and the formation of moral character.

Campion’s response to the challenges of transition has been to foster a new culture animated by the perennial wisdom of Christian humanism. Its mission is nothing less than a reconsecration of the academy – a revival

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of learning and truth, both secular and sacred, for the good of the Church and of Australia. In the words of Pope John Paul II:

‘Without in any way neglecting the acquisition of useful knowledge, a Catholic university is distinguished by its free search for the whole truth about nature, man and God. The present age is in urgent need of this kind of disinterested service, namely of proclaiming the meaning of truth, that fundamental value without which freedom, justice and human dignity are extinguished.’

Thus Campion does not view its mission in any narrow religious way, as though it could be content with addressing the confessional needs of the Catholic people and ignore the longing for spiritual depth and intellectual meaning on the part of the broader community. The College has recognised from the outset the need to refocus and rejuvenate higher education generally in Australia, recognising the insight of Christopher Dawson, that Catholic education can only survive in a secularised society if the broader culture continues to be influenced by a Christian presence, which will secure an acceptance of Christian truth and tradition among the great mass of people. Otherwise, in Dawson’s belief, Catholics will become a sect rather than a people, and risk being consigned to a ghetto existence that is scarcely viable in a modern and pervasively technological State.

Thus the Campion approach is undeniably ambitious. It is to offer, not a better version of the higher education programs available in Australia, but rather a different model of education – philosophically, religiously and culturally - which can progressively influence the education and culture of the society. In the words of C. S. Lewis: ‘The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts.’ It is this kind of outlook which inspired Campion’s creation of the Centre for the Study of Western Tradition in 2010 - as a sign of the College’s wider

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8 John Paul II, Ex Corde Ecclesiae (From the Heart of the Church). Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, 1990, Sec.4.


cultural aims and as a vehicle for attracting an extended academic and professional audience.

In its planning and early operational phases, the College considered several issues which are of continuing significance. The first is whether it should seek university status. Two kinds of barriers have been acknowledged – one philosophical, the other practical. The philosophical difficulty is whether Campion can maintain the educational primacy of the Liberal Arts if other undergraduate degrees are introduced and an irresistible challenge is posed to undergraduate teaching by the research imperatives of postgraduate degrees. The practical challenge is achieving the title and status of a university when such recognition, as currently applied by Australian regulatory authorities, depends on the offering of various degrees up to and including doctorates. For both these reasons, the College has not actively pursued university status, and further consideration of it would no doubt take account of the integrity of the Liberal Arts as a foundational degree, as well as the practical possibility of higher institutional status being available as a result of new government policy, such as the creation of a category of ‘university college’.

In practice, Campion has acquired the ‘silent’ status of a university, in that its BA degree, particularly since the introduction of Majors in 2011, has achieved general acceptance in Australian universities for Campion graduates applying for postgraduate enrolment in the humanities. Those seeking admission to other postgraduate degrees, such as in medicine, are required to sit for an additional test (eg, GAMSAT) in order to qualify.

A second issue is whether the College should embark upon postgraduate programs. To a certain extent, this has been part of the initial desire to attain university status and follow the conventional path of offering a wide range of degrees. However, as the College focused in its first years on the sole qualification of a BA in the Liberal Arts, it became clear that it had a degree of unique, if limited, appeal, and it has progressively sought to strengthen, in various ways, this special market position in Australian higher education.

The issues that have governed the consideration of postgraduate degrees at Campion have been related to educational focus and
marketing message. The College has wanted to ensure that any extension into postgraduate studies does not lead to a distraction or dilution of attention from the core undergraduate degree. This degree has attracted increasing praise in the College’s early years, both from Campion graduates who can personally attest to its educational efficacy, and from individuals and groups outside, such as academics at other institutions, and learned bodies like the Australian Society for Classical Studies. In consonance with this feedback, and the College’s sense of its own mission, the favoured postgraduate degree at this stage has been one that is organically related to the undergraduate degree, such as a Master of Arts in the Liberal Arts or in a more specialised form reflecting the integrated character of a liberal education.

The other issue of concern in relation to possible postgraduate offerings is avoiding any mixed messages in marketing. The College projects a clear identity as a Liberal Arts college, offering an undergraduate degree in the Western tradition that is unique in Australia. It has not sought to replicate any other institution of higher education, including the two Catholic universities, Australian Catholic University and Notre Dame Australia, which offer a standard range of postgraduate degrees.

A third issue for the College is the possibility of offering its courses by distance education. This mode of delivery was envisaged from the earliest days of planning – in part because it was thought that a significant number of potential students would not be able, for work, family or other reasons, to study on campus, and in part because Australia has a proven track record in distance education. More recently, the rapid spread of online learning has given new impetus to this possibility. For a number of reasons, however, chiefly pedagogical and logistical, the College has held back on this development. The defined nature of Campion’s undergraduate degree – consisting of core subjects in the Liberal Arts which are taught as an integrated program and in a highly communal and interactive way – does not easily lend itself to online learning. Moreover, the College’s staff have little experience at this stage in adapting the in-person program to an electronic audience. The degree noted previously, that of a Master of Arts in the Liberal Arts, was initially conceived as being offered by distance education, but this was not favoured by the accreditation
authorities on account of the College’s perceived lack of experience and expertise in online learning.

From the outset, an issue of practical import for Campion has been the extent to which it prepares students for the workplace. Its fundamental approach has been to foster intellectual and social maturity as a necessary basis for the pursuit of vocational studies in any field. It does this, not by offering vocational training directly, but by supplying a solid educational foundation that will equip graduates for any career path, including for work opportunities that might not yet exist but could emerge in the future from social change and technological innovation. On the one hand, the College seeks to cultivate the key qualities that lie at the heart of any successful vocation - intellectual understanding and conviction, spiritual discernment and devotion, and moral strength and boldness. On the other, it seeks to cultivate certain fundamental skills and attributes, such as the powers of analysis and synthesis, a facility in oral and written discourse, a breadth of outlook and sympathy, and intellectual balance and perspective - all of which are important for any vocational path which students might pursue after their Liberal Arts degree. The College also supplies career planning and advisory services, such as an annual series of career seminars presented by specialists in teaching, law, medicine, journalism, business, and other professional areas.

Campion thus occupies a unique ‘market niche’. Australian universities do not offer this kind of education in the Liberal Arts, characterised as it is by a core curriculum in which the subjects are integrated and a common cultural conversation takes place across the three years of the degree. The testimony of Campion’s early classes of graduates suggests that such an education is markedly effective, and according to the experience of overseas institutions, particularly in the USA, it carries enduring value for graduates in the workplace. Such graduates are recognised for their ability to gain admission to the most prestigious universities for postgraduate study, while more than half of the Fortune 500 CEOs have a degree in the Liberal Arts.
Governing Principles:

- **Distinctive institution widening educational opportunity**
  Extend educational choice in Australia by providing an alternative model to the prevailing university patterns, which tend to reflect a secularist outlook that limits academic ideals, and stifles and distorts the pursuit of truth by excluding religious faith as a valid source of insight and inspiration.

- **A Liberal Arts model for Australia**
  Maintain a distinctive and compelling model of Liberal Arts education in Australia, in which a love of truth and learning is recognised as the basis of intellectual and social freedom.

- **A Catholic culture**
  Nurture a cultural milieu which is genuinely and faithfully Catholic in its intellectual integrity and institutional character.

- **Privately funded higher education**
  Affirm the cultural value of private higher education, which affords as much freedom and independence as possible from the political and bureaucratic conditions of government-funded institutions.

- **Vocational preparation**
  Highlight the benefits of a Liberal Arts education in cultivating the kind of foundational skills, particularly intellectual and communication, which provide a preparation for any career path.
III PHILOSOPHY OF THE LIBERAL ARTS

Campion College is inspired by the value of the Liberal Arts as a fundamental program of university-level study, offering a time-proven means of intellectual development, cultural preparation, and vocational grounding.

The Liberal Arts is an ancient tradition of learning, originating in Greek culture and transmitted to the Roman and medieval world and, in time, via the Renaissance to the schools and universities of modern Europe and America. It gradually assumed systematic form in a curriculum of seven subjects – composed of the ‘three’ (trivium) of grammar, rhetoric and dialectic, which emphasised writing, speaking and reasoning and roughly resembles the modern humanities, and the ‘four’ (quadrivium) of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, which focused on subjects that form the basis of scientific knowledge and application. In its modern form, the Liberal Arts has been a blending of the humanities and the sciences, an educational program which prepares citizens for cultural leadership rather than providing training per se for a particular professional or technical vocation.

A liberal education – from the Latin word ‘liber’ meaning ‘free’ - is designed to form the mind and heart so that a person can enjoy and exercise true freedom by knowing and embracing the truth. Such learning reflects a classic Christian belief - that freedom is not only a pre-condition of searching for the truth but is also the fruit and fulfilment of knowing the truth. It is a realisation of Christ’s promise that ‘the truth will make you free.’ (John 8:32).

A Campion education seeks to restore meaning to the concepts of ‘liberal education’ and ‘intellectual freedom’. It offers a higher education fit for a free person, challenging the narrow assumption that an undisciplined freedom is sufficient to discover truth, or that freedom is a void rather than a value - an absence of restriction rather than the presence of purpose.
The freedom offered at Campion is the freedom of authoritative knowledge. It is gained, continuously, by the application of natural reason and supernatural faith to the intellectual and spiritual patrimony of Western culture. Faith and reason, in the words of Pope John Paul II, ‘are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth,’ and each provides penetrating insights into the fullness of reality.\(^\text{11}\)

The dynamic blending of faith and reason forms the basis, and the balance, of learned enquiry at Campion College. It reflects the spirit of Christian humanism and the ideal of a Catholic higher education, which were expressed by the English scholar Alcuin to the emperor Charlemagne in the 8\(^{\text{th}}\) century:

‘If your intentions are carried out, it may be that a new Athens will arise in France, and an Athens fairer than of old, for our Athens, ennobled by the teaching of Christ, will surpass the wisdom of the Academy. The old Athens had only the teachings of Plato to instruct it, yet even so it flourished by the seven liberal arts. But our Athens will be enriched by the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit and will, therefore, surpass all the dignity of earthly wisdom.’\(^\text{12}\)

The Liberal Arts at Campion is designed as a well-rounded undergraduate program that cultivates genuine freedom of mind by opening it to the discovery and embrace of truth. It comprises a curriculum of various subjects, notably history, philosophy, literature, theology, science, language, and mathematics. At the time of the College’s original accreditation (2005), a core curriculum of only four subjects was approved. As a result, the proposed science subjects of biology, physics and chemistry were reduced, with only biology being retained, while language (specifically Latin) and mathematics were included as accredited subjects but put aside for possible later implementation. In 2009, Latin began to be offered as an additional, elective subject, and in 2013, mathematics.

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The vital aim of the core curriculum is to enable students to gain insight into the world, embracing:

- its history and inner dynamics as well as external processes and patterns;
- experience in philosophical and theological reflection and its part in establishing the context and meaning of human life and progress;
- an appreciation of the imaginative life, especially through a study of literature and the fine arts; and
- an understanding of scientific principles and interpretations.

A study of the Liberal Arts is an historically proven means of serving the prime purpose of a university - namely, teaching people how to think and to achieve an intelligible grasp of truth and reality that will enable them to live well.

The purpose of studying the Liberal Arts is not the accumulation of knowledge but the cultivation of wisdom; not the filling of a pail, in words attributed to W.B. Yeats, but the lighting of a fire. The central achievement of a Liberal Arts education is the growth of wisdom. At Campion, students are encouraged to strive for wisdom in an environment exalted by the knowledge and love of truth and the inspiration of Christian humanism. They have the opportunity of developing a distinctive quality of mind and character, formed by the fusion of religious faith and natural reason, which invests human life with the dignity of the divine.
Governing Principles:

❖ Liberal Arts and leadership
  Affirm the formative value of the Liberal Arts as a foundation for citizenship – in the City of God and the city of man – and as a means of cultivating qualities of leadership rather than being limited to professional or technical training.

❖ Truth and intellectual freedom
  Recognise the Christian understanding of freedom as involving the discovery and embrace of truth, and as being the fruit and fulfilment of knowing and loving the truth.

❖ Faith and reason
  Nurture the life of faith and reason as conducive to wisdom and the spirit of Christian humanism and forming the essential basis of a Christian culture and identity.
IV CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Campion College is distinctive as an institution in willingly affirming its Catholic inspiration and identity while being independently governed. It does not claim any formal affiliation with the Catholic Church, or any official ecclesiastical or canonical status.

The religious identity of the College is expressed in loyalty to the Catholic Church in matters of doctrine and in a continuing effort to maintain its policies and practices in harmony with the life of the Church. The College seeks to be Catholic in mind and body – that is, to affirm the intellectual value and validity of the Catholic faith as well as an institutional fidelity to Catholic teaching. This fidelity informs the culture of Campion, embracing its academic programs and the selection of staff as well as its moral aspirations and pastoral practices.

Central to Campion’s Catholic identity is a recognition of the role of the Church as a legitimate accrediting authority - providing the kind of guarantee of authenticity and responsible freedom in matters of supernatural faith as other accrediting agencies exercise in the sphere of secular subjects and pursuits.

The College acknowledges the illuminating truth of the Catholic faith, integrated with the knowledge conferred by natural reason. As Pope John Paul II noted, the ‘privileged task’ of a Catholic university is ‘to unite existentially by intellectual effort two orders of reality that too frequently tend to be placed in opposition as though they were antithetical: the search for truth, and the certainty of already knowing the fount of truth.’

Campion subscribes to the belief that the Church has an acknowledged competence in its own sphere of theological enquiry; and, more broadly, that its authority safeguards the search for truth by keeping in balance a range of intellectual rights and freedoms. These include:

- the right of **individual scholars** to 'search for the truth', as John Paul II stated, 'wherever analysis and evidence lead them';  
- the right of **students** not to be misled or victimised;  
- the right of the **institution** to have its defined identity and purpose respected; and  
- the right of the **community** to have the common good protected.

Campion College recognises a responsibility to ensure that its students receive a proper understanding of Catholic belief and thought and are exposed to the richness of the Church's spiritual, moral, intellectual and cultural traditions.

Such traditions reveal an array of characteristically Catholic ideas – in particular:

- the truth and beauty of Trinitarian love, based on the mystery of the Trinity, of God as a single nature made up of three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - in loving communion with each other and with His human creatures;

- the family-centred nature of human life, also expressed in a trinity - father, mother, child - and exemplified in the family of Christ - child, mother, father;

- the sacramental principle of material reality as a channel of spiritual life and sanctification;

- natural law as an immutable guide to human life;

- subsidiarity and the proper distribution of social function and economic order; and  

- the common good as a fundamental principle of social justice.

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14 Ibid., footnote to Sec.12.
These perspectives play a vital part in forming a Catholic mind, and contribute to the framework of understanding for students’ intellectual maturity at Campion.

A practical sign of the College’s acceptance of the Church’s appropriate authority is the Oath of Affirmation, as expressed in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Such statements of commitment are not uncommon in universities, as a pledge of integrity and accountability, and the Oath of Affirmation at Campion is taken by the College President as well as Catholic academic staff in theology, as an indication that they are teaching in full communion with the Church.

As part of a pluralistic society, Campion strives to make a distinctive contribution to Australian culture. It offers a clear alternative to educational institutions governed by different principles – in particular, those which embody a secularist worldview that excludes religious faith; a belief in relativism, which, ironically, finally manifests itself as an absolute rather than relative principle; and a tendency to regard contemporary culture as normative and the key determinant of questions of religious truth and moral legitimacy.

At the same time, Campion seeks to nurture its identity and contribute to intellectual and social freedom by an approach that is quintessentially Catholic – striving to build, not destroy, and to redeem rather than condemn. As Jacques Maritain commented on the Church’s responsibility to non-Christian cultures:

‘Our ardent desire should be not to destroy such cultures, but to serve them loyally; I mean to say, to help them rediscover whatever authentic elements they may contain of everything that is venerable, wise and true, to purge themselves of their impurities, to disencumber the tooting which invites the building on of more exalted truths. If we do so, they will make ready to receive at the appointed time the visit of the Son of Man. The peculiarly Catholic task is to foster and stimulate the truth everywhere.’  

Governing Principles:

- **Catholic fidelity**
  Maintain the institutional independence of Campion College while recognising the authority of the Catholic Church as an accrediting body in areas of faith and morals.

- **Evangelising by fostering the truth**
  Immerse students in the riches of Catholic thought and life and inspire them to foster the truth wherever it is found.

- **Rights and freedoms**
  Maintain an appropriate balance of rights and freedoms between the various individuals and groups that comprise or are influenced by Campion as an institution of higher education – academic staff, students, the College itself, the Church, and the broader community.
V ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Campion’s academic program consists of disciplines that are core in nature and integrated in approach. The College affirms the fundamental value of four disciplines – history, literature, philosophy and theology – as sources of knowledge and insight and as means of developing a balanced understanding of reality.

The Campion program is taught within the historical framework of Western culture, giving access to a spiritual, intellectual, social and aesthetic heritage that enriches both the mind and the imagination, exposing students, in Matthew Arnold’s celebrated phrase, to ‘the best which has been thought and said in the world.’

The core subjects studied at Campion are central to this cultural heritage:

- **History** – a record of the human past and the lived experience of a people, revealing the social inheritance of events, characters, ideas, values and memories which have shaped the traditions of Western culture.

- **Literature** – the gateway to human experience transfigured by the imagination; a source of inspiration and meaning, dealing with the immediate sphere of human experience as well as the ultimate reality of human destiny.

- **Philosophy** – the rich tradition of Western thought which seeks to realise the root meaning of philosophy – the love of wisdom – and to develop an understanding of intellectual and moral order and a capacity for clear thinking and communication.

- **Theology** – the foundational beliefs of Catholic faith and tradition, studied in relation to the history of Christian revelation and vital areas of doctrine, so as to foster an informed grasp of spiritual truths and moral values.

The value of the core subjects is enhanced by being studied together as part of a core curriculum. Various models of Catholic Liberal Arts education centred on a core curriculum have emerged in North America in recent decades. They range from Thomas Aquinas College’s study of
the Great Books as a treasury of original works that have inspired and shaped the Western mind, to Christendom College’s program of subject-based courses in recognised academic areas. For two reasons, the Campion approach has favoured the Christendom model. One is the practical need for compatibility with the subject structure of degrees common in Australian higher education, so that the entry of Campion graduates into post-graduate programs is ensured. The other is a pedagogical belief in combining the study of primary and secondary sources as a foundation for the mature mind. Both primary and secondary sources are studied in the Campion curriculum – primary, so that students can engage directly with the writings that have animated Western civilization, and can come to appreciate the intellectual context and meaning of this heritage; and secondary, so as to familiarize students with the cultural environment in which this heritage has evolved and been interpreted – and, in turn, exerted influence – and thus enable them to acquire a sense of historical perspective and understanding as well. By fusing primary and secondary studies, the Campion program cultivates a cultural perspective to equip graduates to deal with the challenges of the 21st century as effective citizens and leaders.

While the core curriculum at Campion respects the distinctiveness of each discipline and the methodological norms by which each is characterised, the integrated nature of the program enables students to make connections across the disciplines, bringing together ideas and insights to heighten the capacity for intellectual synthesis.

By undertaking the same subjects as an integrated whole, students are initiated into a common historical and intellectual tradition. They speak a common language and explore a common canvas of experience. They participate in a common cultural conversation across the three years of study. This approach differs decisively from the customary experience of the contemporary undergraduate, who studies a wide and unconnected choice of electives that gives rise to a fragmented approach adverse to intellectual integration and balance.

At the same time, the Campion curriculum serves a larger and higher purpose than the common pursuit of knowledge, important though this
is. It not only exposes students to a tradition of higher learning, a shared heritage of thought and value and aesthetic expression: it also initiates them into the community of a higher culture, the culture of Christian humanism. It is this incarnational merging of the human and the divine which moulds the intellect and forms the character of a Campion student, and which is at once the fount and the fruit of a Campion education.

Thus the unifying principle of the Campion program is culture rather than knowledge of the contributing disciplines. The ultimate focus of study is the cultural life of a Christian people, which is an integrated reality not simply identified with any single strand of this life – whether it be historical experience, literary expression, philosophical understanding or theological reflection. On this account the whole of the Campion curriculum is designed to be greater than the sum of its parts.

The College is limited by external accreditation requirements to four core subjects, and thus it has focused on the disciplines of History, Literature, Philosophy and Theology across the three years of the Liberal Arts degree, in the belief that they are central to the College’s mission of intellectual and spiritual formation. Yet it also recognizes the importance of subjects outside of the core program which can contribute to the educational development of students – in particular, science, mathematics and language. To the extent that such subjects form part of the Campion program, they are presented in the context of the Liberal Arts – that is, with the aim of teaching students their role and value in a liberal education, rather than as a full preparation for higher studies or career choices in these areas.

Certain science subjects are set as compulsory in the final year of the Campion degree, but in the main the courses in science, mathematics and language – at this stage, Latin – are offered as electives, which students are encouraged to undertake as additional areas of study in harmony with the broad intellectual purpose of a Liberal Arts program.

Through the study of Science, students are exposed to the discoveries and principles relating to the physical universe, which are analysed for
their intellectual and religious importance as well as historical and social impact. Mathematics acquaints students with an array of concepts which contribute to clear and rigorous thinking and assist in evaluating the ideas of others. Latin is a language of singular significance, both for its intellectual qualities and its cultural influence as an organ of the Western tradition.

The BA degree in the Liberal Arts is arranged on a chronological basis, so that students can systematically pursue the core subjects within a common timeframe and against a common cultural backdrop. First Year is devoted to the Ancient World, Second Year to the Middle Ages, and Third Year to the Modern World. Special attention is given to appropriate introductory courses as well as subjects of importance outside the historical framework; though these, too, are studied in an integrated way. For example, Moral Philosophy and Fundamental Catholic Moral Theology are undertaken in the same semester.

A vital feature of Campion is its recognition of the importance and value of a core undergraduate degree and the primacy of the undergraduate experience. Such an experience is foundational and formative. For many students, nothing rivals undergraduate life for its depth and intensity at the time, or its later reliving of intellectual discovery and spiritual growth.

There are memorable evocations of undergraduate student life in literature, in such novels as Compton Mackenzie’s *Sinister Street* (1913) and Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), but Campion has already attracted its own testimony to the profound nature of the undergraduate experience – as in the Valedictory Address delivered by Paul Smeaton at the College’s 2009 Graduation ceremony:

‘Over the past three years the sound of the sacristy bell at Campion has plucked us from the tribulations, justifications, and frustrations of the history of Western man’s pursuit of knowledge and of our own. In the oasis in the middle of each day we are reminded of the true high point of history, the source of all strength and comfort. Our earthly, academic pursuits are put into their rightful context – at the foot of the Cross. Mass is about to begin.'
‘My fellow graduates and I have been greatly blessed to study at Campion. We have been given a unique opportunity to pursue a classical education in a world which has taken great care to close so many of the doors to the transcendental. If I were asked what was the purpose of a degree at Campion, I would respond that it was to open those very doors.

‘While we may not possess gleaming treasures, or harbour vast stores of knowledge, we know where to find them, we can articulate and express the perennial truths of human existence and, what’s more, we have a willingness to do so. In short, we possess the very seeds from which the Kingdom of Heaven can grow.

‘It will not be easy for us to leave this place . . .’
Governing Principles:

- **Curriculum of core disciplines**
  Recognise the pedagogical benefit of core disciplines as sources of fundamental knowledge and means of developing a balanced understanding of reality.

- **Primary and secondary studies**
  Acknowledge the value of studying both primary and secondary sources in engaging directly with the sources of intellectual insight and the works of interpretation that have exerted historical influence and helped to form the identity of a people.

- **Integrated approach**
  Foster the integration of subjects throughout the Liberal Arts program, by the choice of subjects and the process of chronological arrangement, for the sake of intellectual coherence and synthesis as well as of cultural unity.

- **Undergraduate experience**
  Maintain the value of the core undergraduate degree as foundational and formative in its spiritual, intellectual and social effects.
APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

Chapter II – The Shaping of a New Institution

- **Distinctive institution widening educational opportunity**
  Extend educational choice in Australia by providing an alternative model to the prevailing university patterns, which tend to reflect a secularist outlook that limits academic ideals, and stifles and distorts the pursuit of truth by excluding religious faith as a valid source of insight and inspiration.

- **A Liberal Arts model for Australia**
  Maintain a distinctive and compelling model of Liberal Arts education in Australia, in which a love of truth and learning is recognised as the basis of intellectual and social freedom.

- **A Catholic culture**
  Nurture a cultural milieu which is genuinely and faithfully Catholic in its intellectual integrity and institutional character.

- **Privately funded higher education**
  Affirm the cultural value of private higher education, which affords as much freedom and independence as possible from the political and bureaucratic conditions of government-funded institutions.

- **Vocational preparation**
  Highlight the benefits of a Liberal Arts education in cultivating the kind of foundational skills, particularly intellectual and communication, which provide a preparation for any career path.
Chapter III – Philosophy of the Liberal Arts

❖ **Liberal Arts and leadership**
Affirm the formative value of the Liberal Arts as a foundation for citizenship – in the City of God and the city of man – and as a means of cultivating qualities of leadership rather than being limited to professional or technical training.

❖ **Truth and intellectual freedom**
Recognise the Christian understanding of freedom as involving the discovery and embrace of truth, and as being the fruit and fulfilment of knowing and loving the truth.

❖ **Faith and reason**
Nurture the life of faith and reason as conducive to wisdom and the spirit of Christian humanism and forming the essential basis of a Christian culture and identity.

Chapter IV – Catholic Identity

❖ **Catholic fidelity**
Maintain the institutional independence of Campion College while recognising the authority of the Catholic Church as an accrediting body in areas of faith and morals.

❖ **Evangelising by fostering the truth**
Immerse students in the riches of Catholic thought and life and inspire them to foster the truth wherever it is found.

❖ **Rights and freedoms**
Maintain an appropriate balance of rights and freedoms between the various individuals and groups that comprise or are influenced by Campion as an institution of higher education – academic staff, students, the College itself, the Church, and the broader community.
Chapter V – Academic Program

- **Curriculum of core disciplines**
  Recognise the pedagogical benefit of core disciplines as sources of fundamental knowledge and means of developing a balanced understanding of reality.

- **Primary and secondary studies**
  Acknowledge the value of studying both primary and secondary sources in engaging directly with the sources of intellectual insight and the works of interpretation that have exerted historical influence and helped to form the identity of a people.

- **Integrated approach**
  Foster the integration of subjects throughout the Liberal Arts program, by the choice of subjects and the process of chronological arrangement, for the sake of intellectual coherence and synthesis as well as of cultural unity.

- **Undergraduate experience**
  Maintain the value of the core undergraduate degree as foundational and formative in its spiritual, intellectual and social effects.