



## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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*2024-2025*

## AGAPE CENTER FOR LOCAL AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

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The Agape Center is committed to cultivating experiences for students through local and global opportunities by doing the following:

- Educate students by providing transformative semester-long and short-term experiences that encourage them to reflect, learn, and grow as they navigate the complexities of becoming global citizens in a diverse world.
- Equip students through a variety of trainings and credit-bearing courses to highlight issues of power and privilege, cross-cultural understanding and best practices to prepare students for lifelong service and reflection.
- Engage with the community around them whether it is locally or globally. Opportunities include weekly community outreach, all campus service day, local and global service trips, and off-campus academic semester long and cross-cultural courses.
- Embracing the diversity of God's Creation by providing safe, transformative learning environments and opportunities for students to engage the world as reconcilers and servant leaders at home and abroad.

### **Engagement Opportunities**

#### *Outreach Teams*

Outreach Teams sends small teams of students into a variety of local service-learning experiences in the greater Harrisburg region each semester. Service Opportunity Leaders are trained on facilitating service experiences and reflection as well as maintaining relationships with community partners. We partner with approximately 12 agencies on a regular basis.

#### *Service Trips*

Service Trips are organized experiences for teams of students and educators to serve with partnering organizations approved by the University. During fall and spring academic breaks, these experiences are domestic. During two weeks of summer break, students can participate in an international service trip organized by the Agape Center. All students will participate in orientation sessions and debrief sessions for these trips.

#### *Credit-Bearing*

Messiah University is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage the world around them; we do this through a variety of ways:

- **Cross-Cultural Courses:** 3-week courses taught by Messiah

faculty traveling to a variety of destinations. Students can fulfill their third language and ELI requirement. Recruiting for these courses start almost a year prior to the course departure (i.e., March 2024 May-Term 2025 courses) – individual deadlines vary by course.

- Semester long off-campus program: Students can fulfill 12-18 credits at an approved domestic or international program partner. Students can fulfill their third language when studying internationally and all locations fulfill the ELI requirement.
  - December 1 – Messiah’s pre-approval deadline for following fall semester (i.e. December 1, 2024 to participate in a Fall 2025 program)
  - April 1 – Messiah’s pre-approval deadline for following spring semester (i.e. April 1, 2025 to participate in a Spring 2026 program)
- Service Learning: Credit-bearing service-learning and community-based research occurs in many courses throughout our curriculum using a blend of content, service and reflection that totals a minimum of 40 hours a semester and satisfied the experiential learning initiative requirement (ELI) for graduation. Service-learning grants are available for faculty interested in developing or enhancing their courses. We also offer co-curricular service-learning ELI credit by participating at an approved Agape community partner 20 hours of service + 5hrs of reflection + 5hrs of learning throughout one semester. To gain this ELI credit, students must inform the Agape Center at the beginning of the semesters.

### *Service Day*

Each April, the University pauses to celebrate in service to the local community. Since no day-classes are scheduled and many offices are closed, students and employees are expected to participate in a service activity during the day. Off campus, students and faculty join community partners during the day in service to the region.

Students can also learn about costs, deadlines, and requirements by browsing the Agape Center homepage at [www.messiah.edu/agape](http://www.messiah.edu/agape)

## **INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS & INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

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Intercollegiate sports participation is an opportunity for developing one’s physical potential, learning positive life lessons, and developing supportive

relationships. Messiah is a member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Division III and fields 22 intercollegiate varsity sports that compete within the Middle Atlantic Conference and Commonwealth Conference. Our tagline—Pursuing Athletic Excellence and Developing Christian Character — expresses our twin goals for those who represent Messiah in intercollegiate competition.

**Men’s Sports**

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Indoor Track and Field
- Lacrosse
- Outdoor Track and Field
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

**Women’s Sports**

- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Field Hockey
- Indoor Track and Field
- Lacrosse
- Outdoor Track and Field
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Volleyball

**INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

Our intramural sports program is dedicated to facilitating a fun, safe, and competitive outlet for Messiah University students and employees to participate in organized sports activities while exemplifying Christ-like attitudes and sportsmanship. Intramural sports help students create lasting memories and friendships, build and develop character, and enjoy a physical challenge. We look forward to seeing you on the field! The Messiah campus and surrounding area provide opportunities for many outdoor activities, including hiking, canoeing, and fishing. The Sollenberger Sports Center hosts an indoor pool, fitness center, racquetball and basketball courts, and indoor track.

**MULTICULTURAL & INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS**

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The Multicultural and International Students Programs (MISP) Office provides support, advocacy, and a safe space so that multicultural and international students can experience transformative learning and a sense of belonging on campus. The MISP Office is located on the second floor of Larsen Student Union and falls under the Office of Diversity Affairs.

**Multicultural and International Student Orientation**

The Multicultural and International Students Programs (MISP) Office

hosts a multiple-day orientation filled with informative sessions, opportunities to connect with educators and peers and a chance to foster this special sense of belonging on Messiah's campus. The orientation serves as a holistic introduction to the students' new home and family; Messiah University.

## **MULTICULTURAL STUDENT PROGRAMS**

### **The Multicultural Scholarship Program**

The Multicultural Scholarship Program seeks to equip students with the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to critically engage with issues surrounding racial and ethnic identity while integrating faith and leadership practices toward addressing the complex realities of our current world. There are two types of multicultural scholarships: **the Martin Scholarship and the R. H. Flowers Scholarship**. Through the Multicultural Programs staff and student leaders, Multicultural Scholars are equipped with the tools necessary to successfully and efficiently engage in university-related activities. Students are encouraged to utilize the knowledge and experiences gained through this program to promote justice and equity both on campus and beyond.

### **The Multicultural Council**

The Multicultural Council is comprised of the African Student Union (ASU), Asian Student Association (ASA), Black Student Union (BSU), Caribbean Student Association (CSA), International Student Association/MuKappa (ISA), and La Alianza Latina (LAL). The goal is to foster a common knowledge of cultures in the Messiah University community, with the mission of serving the entire student body through efforts of improving campus life for students from underrepresented racial/ethnic populations. All the clubs hold regular meetings and events. These programs foster a sense of belonging and celebration of cultures.

### **The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration**

The MLK Commemoration week invites the campus community to reflect on the prophetic ministry and vision of Dr. King, and the call of God for all Christians to respond to the contemporary suffering of God's creation and human struggles for justice, reconciliation, and peace.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS**

### **F-1 Visa Advising**

The Designated School Officials (DSOs) at Messiah University inform and educate international students on an F-1 visa about U.S. government regulations and assist them in achieving positive results in maintaining their status.

### **Adjusting to Life in the U.S. (GEST 140)**

This one-credit course is offered to all new international students (those on an F-1 visa, missionary kid students, third culture kid students) for the fall semester. The *Adjusting to Life in the US* course is designed to provide on-going, in-depth orientation regarding cross-cultural adjustment to the United States in general, and specifically to the United States classroom as experienced at Messiah University.

### **Friendship Family Program**

This program provides a mutually beneficial friendship between Messiah University's international students and individuals or families that are Messiah employees. The Office of International Student Programs matches one to two participating students with a family or individual. The intent of the program is for students and families to forge organic connections through their relationships with one another.

### **The Rafiki House**

The Rafiki House is special-interest housing for students committed to living in community focused on multicultural and international diversity. The very word "Rafiki" means friendship in Swahili and this house has a rich history at Messiah University. The house also provides an intentional space for multicultural and international students to find each other, fellowship, and spend time together in an informal setting.

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## **OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

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The Office of Student Engagement exists to promote student engagement, provide intentional leadership development experiences, and encourage thoughtful dialogue while promoting a sense of belonging for all students.

Visit the Office of Student Engagement (SE) website at [www.messiah.edu/studentengagement](http://www.messiah.edu/studentengagement) for more details and up-to-date information.

### **SERVICES**

#### **Larsen Student Union**

Larsen Student Union functions as a central social location for students on campus. In addition to the full service Union Café, there are pool tables, booths and tables, meeting rooms, and board games available for all

students at the front desk. Larsen is home to a number of offices, services and program areas, including the Student Government Association, Student Activities Board, Multicultural Council, The Pulse Media Hub, Multicultural Student Programs, International Student Programs, the Office of Student Engagement, and Minds Matter.

### **Student Break Shuttle**

In order to meet the needs of students, the Office of Student Engagement coordinates a free-of-charge van shuttle to Harrisburg area train and bus stations, as well as the Harrisburg International Airport. This service is provided for fall, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and spring breaks. For details, visit: <https://www.messiah.edu/transportation>.

## **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Student Government Association (SGA)**

The Student Government Association serves as the official representative body for Messiah University students. Specifically, SGA coordinates student representation to University committees, allocates the student activities fee to student organizations, officially recognizes and charters student organizations, and provides the official student representative voice to University administration and faculty. Organized through the Executive Cabinet, Student Senate and Committees, the Student Review Board, the Student Diplomatic Core, and the Student Engagement Council, SGA works hard to represent the needs and concerns of all students. For details, visit [www.messiah.edu/sga](http://www.messiah.edu/sga).

### **Student Activities Board (SAB)**

SAB exists to provide diverse activities designed to encourage active student engagement on campus and in popular culture, reconciling the relationship between culture and God. With funding from student activities fees, and through the work of student executives and volunteers, SAB regularly hosts concerts, dances, films, variety shows, excursions, cultural engagement experiences, and a number of other special activities throughout the year. For details, visit [www.messiah.edu/sab](http://www.messiah.edu/sab).

### **Mentoring and Leadership Development Opportunities**

Educators and other staff members serve as advisors and assist students in assuming leadership positions on campus to offer encouragement as they serve and lead. The Student Engagement Office supports both students and advisors in ongoing efforts throughout the year to seek to strengthen students' leadership experience in the areas of character, calling, and competency.

## FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

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### **Welcome Week**

This orientation program is designed to provide a holistic transition experience for new first-year and transfer students that is characterized by safety, inclusion, and a warm welcome to the campus community. This program usually lasts a week and includes arrival, check-in, academic sessions, social programs, and informational sessions for all new students at the University at the outset of the Fall Term.

For details visit: [www.messiah.edu/welcomeweek](http://www.messiah.edu/welcomeweek).

### **Winter Orientation**

This orientation occurs prior to spring term. Like Welcome Week, this orientation aims to welcome students to the University in a safe and welcoming environment. In this case, the target students are those who enroll or transfer at Messiah University midyear. We use our Winter Orientation programs to provide these students with the tools that will help them succeed at Messiah.

### **Orientation Groups**

Every new student is assigned to an orientation group that typically consists of the students enrolled in their First-Year Seminar class. Through participation in orientation groups, led by student orientation leaders, new students will feel a connection to the Messiah community, will become knowledgeable of the culture and opportunities on campus, and will be equipped to succeed academically, socially, and spiritually at Messiah.

## **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Team Building and Group Facilitations**

The Office of Student Engagement serves Messiah University by providing opportunities for leadership development and teambuilding. Programming events include team problem solving initiatives, group functionality assessment, goalsetting workshops, and conflict mediation. Staff and student leaders focus on proper technical and group facilitation skills. Understanding the significance of group process, God's creation, and the challenge at hand are all integral elements of the program. These experiences also provide an opportunity to take students out of their comfort zone and to more holistically pursue the issues of leadership, identity, and spirituality.

### **Orientation Leaders**

Leaders are selected based on their prior leadership experiences, academic



record, and ability to serve as a mentor to first-year students. Typically, orientation leaders are sophomores and juniors who work closely with First-Year Seminar instructors and the Office of Engagement to provide enthusiastic support for new students in their transition to university.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

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Messiah University recognizes that students have many interests and abilities. Messiah seeks to facilitate programs and activities which foster personal, academic, social, and spiritual growth, and enhance vocational development. A list of recognized student organizations that exist for the purpose of fulfilling such outcomes in a way that is consistent with the mission and identity of the University is online: [www.messiah.edu/clubs](http://www.messiah.edu/clubs).

### **Policy for Recognizing Student Organizations**

#### **1. *Relationship between Student Organizations and Messiah University***

All student organizations existing at Messiah University are encouraged to be recognized by the University. Recognition is a clear indication that the organization supports the mission, identity, and objectives of Messiah University. Student organizations and their activities are viewed as sponsored by the University as opposed to being conducted by the University. This distinction has implications for both the tax deductibility of potential donations to student organizations and for the University's financial reporting. Finally, student organizations are not permitted to maintain off-campus bank accounts; rather they will receive an account in the Business Office.

#### **2. *Rights, Privileges, and Student Organization Guidelines***

Student organizations must be recognized in order to be afforded the following rights and privileges:

- a. The use of the University name, mascot (name and image), word mark, and letterhead
- b. Reservation of classrooms and other spaces in University-owned property
- c. Safekeeping accounts at the Business Office (student organizations are not permitted to maintain off-campus bank accounts)
- d. Opportunity to advertise on campus (official network email account, mass emails, University website, hanging posters, etc.)
- e. Able to fundraise (must be approved)
- f. Invitation to Opportunity Fairs and Admissions Open Houses
- g. Official listing in University publications and yearbook
- h. Administrative support for programming and event planning and execution

### 3. *Criteria Used to Approve New Organizations*

- a. All student organizations must demonstrate support for the educational mission, identity, values, outcomes, and Community Covenant of Messiah University. When reviewing organizations and determining if an organization should be recognized, the University's mission and identity, as well as the university-wide educational objectives, will be compared to the stated mission, goals, and objectives of the petitioning organization.
- b. Student organizations must have a well-developed plan for continued funding. There are four primary funding sources:
  - i. Student Government Association (SGA) allocations (only if SGA grants the organization chartership and the SGA Finance Committee approves the organization's budget). Please note this is not available within the first year of recognition.
  - ii. Fundraising efforts by the organization (only if there is adherence to University fundraising guidelines).
  - iii. Funds from budgeted University departments who are cooperating with and/or are supportive of the activities being carried out by an organization.
  - iv. Tax-deductible donations can happen indirectly by means of a gift registered to the program of a cooperating department existing within the University's operating budget.
- c. Student organizations must demonstrate that they are providing a new opportunity for the University community. Every effort will be made to limit the number of organizations that have identical or very similar objectives. University departments that have similar goals and objectives must support and affirm the goals of the proposed student organization (e.g., Philosophy Club and Department of Philosophy; touring choirs and the Department of Music).
- d. Organizations must provide evidence that there is ample student interest to support the organization.
- e. Student organizations must demonstrate that they have the support of an advisor. This person must be a full-time Messiah University educator with experience or expertise aligning with the club's mission. An employee with expertise in the club's mission who is not a full-time educator may also serve as a club's advisor instead, pending Cocurricular Education Council approval.
- f. Student organizations that exist primarily for the purpose of Christian fellowship, teaching, worship and/or theological exploration are required to initiate and maintain communication with the Campus Ministries Office. This includes securing the support of Campus Ministries for their proposed organization.

- g. Student organizations that exist primarily for the purpose of athletic competition against non-Messiah University opponents are required to work with the Office of Student Engagement and Athletics administrative staff to regularly complete requirements.
- h. New student organizations for which the proposed primary purpose is community service, missions, or support of external non-profit organizations (i.e. fundraising, campus chapters, etc.) are required to submit a letter of recommendation from the Agape Center for Local and Global Engagement.

#### 4. *Process for starting a New Organization*

Any group desiring to organize and be recognized as a student organization should follow the following procedures:

- a. Obtain and complete an Application for Recognition from the Office of Student Engagement website or contact the SGA VP of Organizations. The application will include the following:
  - i. Organization's purpose statement
  - ii. Statement that demonstrates how the proposed organization supports the mission and objectives of Messiah University
  - iii. Names and roles of officers/leaders
  - iv. Example of organization's events and activities
  - v. Financial plan
  - vi. Written letter or signed advisor document confirming the full-time employee who is willing to serve as the organization's advisor
  - vii. Signatures from at least 15 students demonstrating interest in the organization
- b. Present the Application for Recognition to the SGA VP of Orgs. The SGA VP of Orgs will conduct an initial screening to determine if the guidelines have been followed. If the application is complete, it will be forwarded to the Office of Student Engagement.
- c. The Director of the Office of Student Engagement or the Vice Provost of Student Success and Engagement will then meet with the applicant(s) prior to submitting the application to the Cocurricular Education Council.
- d. The application will be reviewed and subsequently approved or denied by the Cocurricular Education Council based upon the established criteria.
- e. A year after receiving official recognition, student clubs may then apply for SGA chartership. This is a separate and distinct process that is governed by the Student Government Association.
- f. Additional letters of support may be required from campus offices that overlap with the mission of the club. See criteria in section 3.

#### 5. *Presently Established Organizations*

By April 15 of each year, every student organization will submit an application for renewal to the Office of Student Engagement and the SGA VP of Orgs, which may require an annual report summarizing the prior year's programming, names of the new officers and the advisor for the next year, any changes to the organization's structure or bylaws, an accurate student involvement roster (including fall and/or spring semester membership), and future plans and initiatives. If an application for renewal has not been submitted by the posted deadline, it will be presumed that the organization is terminated, and the organization will be removed from the roster of recognized organizations for the upcoming academic year.

Student organizations that were required to seek the approval of a particular office or department, as part of their recognition, must continue to receive approval from that office/department as part of their recognition. See section 3 for details.

#### *6. Revoking of Recognition Status and Sanctions*

If an organization does not adhere to established University guidelines regarding fundraising, programming, and event planning, it may be removed from the list of recognized organizations. In addition, if an organization's practices are counterproductive to the University's mission and objectives, it may face sanctions or disciplinary action, and its status as a recognized organization may be revoked. In cases where responsibility needs to be determined, the organization's officers and advisor of the organization will have a hearing with the Director of Student Engagement to determine responsibility and appropriate sanctions. Appeals can be made to the Cocurricular Education Council. The Student Government Association maintains a separate review process and reserves the right to enforce probation, suspension, and revocation of any student organization's status should they fail to meet the standards and expectations of all student organizations.

Last Updated: 4/2023 Governance Path: Cocurricular Education Council/Community of Educators Senate