

Statement of Purpose

Davidson College is an institution of higher learning established in 1837 by Presbyterians of North Carolina. Since its founding, the ties that bind the college to its Presbyterian heritage, including the historic understanding of Christian faith called The Reformed Tradition, have remained close and strong. The college is committed to continuing this vital relationship.

The primary purpose of Davidson College is to assist students in developing humane instincts and disciplined and creative minds for lives of leadership and service. In fulfilling its purpose, Davidson has chosen to be a liberal arts college, to maintain itself as a residential community of scholars, to emphasize the teaching responsibility of all professors, and to ensure the opportunity for personal relationships between students and teachers. Further, Davidson believes it is vital that all students in every class know and study under mature and scholarly teachers who are able and eager to provide for each of them stimulation, instruction, and guidance.

The Christian tradition to which Davidson remains committed recognizes God as the source of all truth, and believes that Jesus Christ is the revelation of that God, a God bound by no church or creed. The loyalty of the college thus extends beyond the Christian community to the whole of humanity and necessarily includes openness to and respect for the world's various religious traditions. Davidson dedicates itself to the quest for truth and encourages teachers and students to explore the whole of reality, whether physical or spiritual, with unlimited employment of their intellectual powers. At Davidson, faith and reason work together in mutual respect and benefit toward growth in learning, understanding, and wisdom.

As a college that welcomes students, faculty, and staff from a variety of nationalities, ethnic groups, and traditions, Davidson values diversity, recognizing the dignity and worth of every person. Therefore, Davidson provides a range of opportunities for worship, civil debate, and teaching that enrich mind and spirit. Further, Davidson challenges students to engage in service to prepare themselves for lives of growth and giving.

Davidson seeks students of good character and high academic ability, irrespective of economic circumstances, who share its values and show promise for usefulness to society. In the selection of faculty, the college seeks men and women who respect the purpose of the college, who are outstanding intellectually, who have the best training available in their fields of study, and whose interest in students and teaching is unfeigned and profound. The Trustees commit to being faithful stewards of the traditions of the college. They are charged with governing under the Constitution and By-laws and with providing the financial resources necessary for adequate student aid and appropriate facilities and programs, including furnishing the faculty with the time and opportunity for creative scholarship fundamental to the best teaching.

As a liberal arts college, Davidson emphasizes those studies, disciplines, and activities that are mentally, spiritually, and physically liberating. Thus, the college concentrates upon the study of history, literature and languages, philosophy and religion, music, drama and the visual arts, the natural and social sciences, and mathematics. The college encourages student engagement with other cultures through domestic and international studies. The college also requires physical education, provides for competitive athletics, and encourages a variety of social, cultural, and service activities. While Davidson prepares many of its students for graduate and professional study, it intends to teach all students to think clearly, to make relevant and valid judgments, to discriminate among values, and to communicate freely with others in the realm of ideas. Davidson holds a priceless heritage bequeathed by those who have dedicated their lives and their possessions for its welfare. To it much has been entrusted, and of it much is required.