CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide a record of the basic policies, regulations, and guidelines that have to do with academic matters at Dickinson College.

I. History and Purpose of the College[1]

A. The Mission of Dickinson College

Dickinson College was founded explicitly for high purposes: to prepare young people, by means of a useful education in the liberal arts and sciences, for engaged lives of citizenship and leadership in the service of society. This is the historic mission of the College and that to which we still subscribe as we face the future.

The American Revolution brought into being the world's first modern democracy and launched an ambitious social and political experiment. Our founders, John Dickinson and Benjamin Rush, were themselves leading figures of the revolution and the new republic. They recognized that the success of the American experiment would depend on the power of liberal education to remake colonial society and to produce a democratic culture. With this important goal in mind, they transformed the Carlisle Grammar School (which had been founded in 1773) into an institution of higher learning: Dickinson College. The College was chartered on September 9, 1783, less than a week after the Treaty of Paris ended the Revolution and guaranteed recognition to the United States by Great Britain and the rest of the European powers.

Dickinson College, therefore, began life as the first college formed under the banner of the young republic and, more importantly, as a revolutionary project – dedicated to safeguarding liberty through the creation of an educated body of citizen-leaders. Although the urgency of the American revolutionary period has diminished, the core mission of Dickinson College remains the same – and as vital as ever.

Dickinson College prepares aspiring students for engaged and fulfilling lives of accomplishment, leadership, and service to their professions, to their communities, to the nation, and to the world. Our founders intended the College to be a powerful agent of change – to advance the lot of humankind – and we expect no less today.

B. The Vision for Dickinson and Its Future

Dickinson College has a vision for its future that is both mindful of our heritage and appropriate to the challenges we now face. We must continue to fulfill our historic mission, but within a modern context and with a forward-looking, innovative, and disciplined vision for the College that engages America and the world.

Drawing on the wisdom of Benjamin Rush, one of our founders and one of the young nation's foremost educators and reformers, we seek to connect Rush's eighteenth-century vision for the College to our contemporary aspirations. By enlisting the support of John Dickinson, one of America's leading public figures, Rush sought to give the College a

---

[1] This section is an extract from the Strategic Plan approved in May 2002 by the Board of Trustees.

national profile from its inception. Today, we must continue to be a college of national prominence and consequence that is unequivocally regarded as one of the best in America. Our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and distinguished founders deserve nothing less than an unchallengeable claim to excellence and distinction. This continuing aspiration, derived from the founding vision of Benjamin Rush, is fundamental to our future success.

Rush's shoulders, therefore, are those upon which we stand to glimpse our future. In addition to his practical ambitions for Dickinson, Rush's vision for the College had three principal elements which we affirm and translate into contemporary terms:

- Dickinson is committed to providing a useful education in the context of a liberal arts and sciences curriculum and within a residential setting.
- Dickinson is characterized by a willingness to cross borders of all types – geographic, cultural, linguistic, disciplinary, pedagogical.
- Dickinson is marked by its enterprising spirit, its courage to exercise leadership, its capacity for innovation, and its decisiveness.

II. Memberships

A. Accrediting Agencies

- Middles States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools
- Pennsylvania Department of Education
- University Senate of the United Methodist Church
- The University of the State of New York
- The American Chemical Society

B. Professional Organizations

- Association of American Colleges and Universities
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities

C. Central Pennsylvania Consortium

The Central Pennsylvania Consortium, composed of Dickinson, Franklin and Marshall, and Gettysburg Colleges, was founded in 1967 to provide an opportunity for exchange of educational ideas and information among faculty, administrators, and students in the cooperating institutions. Through joint action, means are found to strengthen and broaden existing programs and to offer a number of worthwhile cooperative programs that could not be undertaken by a single institution.

III. Fairness Statements

A. Employment Discrimination

Dickinson College is an intellectual and social community which values justice, free inquiry, diversity, and equal opportunity. It is a fundamental policy of the College to

respect pluralism and to promote tolerance, civility, and mutual understanding within its community. The College does not discriminate on such bases as race, color, sex, political and religious beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origins, veteran's status, or disability.

This is in keeping with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the federal Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990. Dickinson College provides equal employment opportunity for qualified persons, and promotes the full realization of such equal opportunity through positive, continuing programs in every department. This policy of equal employment opportunity applies to everyone, in every aspect of employment policy and practices, and in all operations of the College where it has employment responsibilities. See the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy and Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Grievance Procedures statements found in this Handbook, Chapter Eight, Sections VI and VII.

Dickinson College provides for the prompt, fair, and impartial consideration of all complaints of discrimination. The College's Affirmative Action Plan pertains to any employee or applicant for employment. Such affirmative action applies, but is not limited to, hiring, promotion, transfer, recruitment advertising, lay-off, rates of pay, or other forms of compensation, training, and selection for training. It is the policy of the College that in the process of recruitment for and appointment to the work force, every reasonable effort will be made to seek out women and members of minority groups. Qualified candidates will be identified from among them and encouraged to apply. All employment solicitations or advertisements placed by or on behalf of Dickinson College note that it is "an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer; we especially encourage minority candidates to apply."

B. Harassment

Dickinson College holds that students, faculty, administrators, and service support staff members have a right to be free of harassment by any other member of the College community. Harassment—physical or mental—is defined as coercion, punishment, or the creation of a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment. The interpretation of harassment will be based upon a reasonable understanding of mature behavior, a respect for academic freedom as articulated in the 1940 Statement of Principles of the American Association of University Professors, and the College's commitment to constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.

While all forms of harassment are unacceptable to the College, sexual harassment deserves special note because our appreciation of its particular features has emerged only in recent times. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome sexual conduct that constitutes a condition of a person's employment or which impedes a person's performance by creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive climate. The sexual harassment of employees or students of the College is forbidden. Faculty, administrators, and others who teach or supervise students should understand the fundamentally asymmetrical nature of their relationships with students. They must not abuse the power inherent in this relationship. Sexual relations—even ostensibly consensual ones—between College employees and students are unprofessional. Such behavior by faculty

and other employees is subject to the full range of sanctions available to the College, including dismissal.

Persons who believe they have been subject to harassment may seek redress through normal judicial and administrative proceedings of the College (described in the *Academic Handbook*, the *Student Handbook*, the *Administrative Handbook*, and *You and Dickinson*) or through the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Grievance Procedures found in this Handbook, Chapter Eight, Section VII.