

Calumet College of St. Joseph (CCSJ) Statement on Academic Excellence, Public Trust, and Service to Students and the Nation

1. Admissions Transparency, Fairness, and Educational Purpose

CCSJ is committed to an admissions process that is transparent, fair, mission-aligned, and focused on each applicant's preparation, promise, achievements, and potential to contribute to and benefit from our academic community.

Our admissions criteria are publicly available through the CCSJ admissions catalog, which is posted on the CCSJ website, and describe the academic preparation, application materials, review process, and institutional priorities considered in admission decisions. We seek to ensure that prospective students and families understand how applications are reviewed and what qualities support student success at CCSJ.

Admissions decisions are guided by our educational mission and by each applicant's demonstrated readiness for college-level study, achievement, character, leadership, service, and alignment with the opportunities offered by the institution. CCSJ does not make admissions decisions on the basis of unlawful discrimination. We regularly review admissions policies and communications to ensure they are accurate, accessible, and consistent with applicable law.

In summary, CCSJ addresses admissions transparency, fairness, and educational purpose in the following ways:

- Maintaining clear public descriptions of admissions requirements and review criteria.
- Reviewing admissions webpages, recruitment materials, and application instructions for clarity and consistency.
- Training admissions staff on fair, lawful, and mission-consistent review practices.
- Providing prospective students with clear pathways to ask questions and receive guidance.

2. Free Speech, Open Inquiry, and Respectful Campus Discourse

CCSJ affirms that learning is strengthened by open inquiry, thoughtful disagreement, and respectful engagement across differences. A college education should prepare students to listen carefully, reason well, test ideas, and engage constructively with others.

Our policies and practices support the free exchange of ideas while also protecting the safety, dignity, and educational rights of students, faculty, staff, and guests. We expect members of our community to engage in debate and expression in ways that are consistent with institutional policies, applicable law, and the orderly operation of the college.

CCSJ maintains policies governing campus expression, events, demonstrations, classroom conduct, safety, and disruption of institutional activities. These policies are designed to protect lawful expression and peaceful assembly while preventing harassment, violence, threats, or substantial disruption of classes, research, public lectures, residence life, and campus operations.

In summary, CCSJ addresses free speech, open inquiry, and respectful campus discourse in the following ways:

- Publishing or updating campus policies on expression, demonstrations, speakers, and event management.
- Educating students and employees about rights and responsibilities related to expression and civil discourse.
- Supporting programming that models respectful dialogue and constructive disagreement.
- Ensuring that campus safety and student conduct processes are enforced fairly and consistently.

3. Intellectual Pluralism, Academic Vitality, and Faculty Excellence

CCSJ is dedicated to the pursuit of truth, the advancement of knowledge, and the development of graduates who can think critically, communicate effectively, and engage complexity with humility and confidence.

Academic excellence requires exposure to rigorous scholarship, serious questions, multiple perspectives, and disciplined inquiry. Across our curriculum, students encounter ideas, texts, methods, evidence, and traditions that challenge them to reason carefully and deepen their understanding.

Faculty hiring, evaluation, promotion, and professional development are guided by academic quality, disciplinary expertise, teaching effectiveness, scholarly or creative contribution, service, and alignment with institutional mission. The institution values academic vitality and encourages faculty to foster classrooms where students learn to examine evidence, consider competing arguments, and develop well-supported conclusions.

In summary, CCSJ addresses intellectual pluralism, academic vitality, and faculty excellence in the following ways:

- Reviewing general education and major curricula to ensure intellectual breadth, rigor, and coherence.
 - Supporting faculty development in pedagogy, civil discourse, and evidence-based teaching.
 - Encouraging programming, lectures, and forums that expose students to varied viewpoints and scholarly traditions.
 - Ensuring that faculty evaluation processes recognize teaching excellence, academic rigor, scholarly contribution, and student mentorship.
-

4. Affordability, Value, Student Outcomes, and Responsible Stewardship

CCSJ recognizes that students and families make significant investments in higher education. We are committed to affordability, transparency, responsible stewardship, and strong student outcomes.

As an independent Catholic college, we work to provide a high-quality educational experience that prepares students for meaningful employment, graduate study, civic leadership, and lifelong learning. We provide information about tuition, fees, financial aid, scholarships, net price, academic programs, graduation requirements, and student support services so families can make informed decisions.

We also recognize that value is measured not only by first employment, but also by long-term capacity for leadership, adaptability, ethical judgment, communication, problem solving, and service. At the same time, we take seriously our responsibility to help students complete their degrees, manage educational costs, and pursue pathways that support financial stability.

In summary, CCSJ addresses affordability, value, student outcomes, and responsible stewardship in the following ways:

- Providing clear cost-of-attendance, scholarship, financial aid, and net-price information.
- Strengthening advising, retention, career preparation, internship, and completion initiatives.
- Reviewing academic programs using student demand, completion, employment, graduate study, and mission relevance.

- Pursuing operational efficiencies that support affordability while protecting academic quality.
 - Expanding partnerships with employers, communities, schools, and nonprofits to support workforce and civic needs.
-

5. Academic Rigor, Teaching Excellence, and Learning in the Age of AI

CCSJ affirms that academic rigor is essential to student learning and long-term success. We are committed to high standards, effective teaching, meaningful assessment, and a culture of academic integrity.

Artificial intelligence is changing how students learn, create, research, and demonstrate knowledge. CCSJ is responding by helping students and faculty use AI responsibly, ethically, and appropriately while preserving the central importance of original thinking, disciplined inquiry, writing, analysis, creativity, and mastery of essential skills.

Our faculty maintain expectations for student learning through course design, assignments, examinations, projects, clinical or field experiences, research, performances, and other forms of assessment appropriate to each discipline. The institution also supports academic integrity policies that address unauthorized assistance, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and misuse of technology.

In summary, CCSJ addresses academic rigor, teaching excellence, and learning in the age of AI in the following ways:

- Updating academic integrity policies and course-level guidance related to AI.
 - Supporting faculty development on AI-aware teaching and assessment.
 - Reviewing grading practices and learning outcomes to maintain appropriate rigor.
 - Helping students understand when and how AI tools may be used responsibly.
 - Prioritizing teaching excellence through assessment, feedback, professional development, and student support.
-

6. Research Integrity, International Engagement, and Protection from Improper Foreign Influence

CCSJ is committed to the integrity of academic programs, research, scholarship, creative activity, and institutional decision-making. Where applicable, we maintain policies and practices designed to protect research integrity, comply with federal requirements, disclose conflicts of interest, and safeguard sensitive information.

As an institution with limited research activity, CCSJ supports scholarly inquiry that advances knowledge, serves students, contributes to communities, and aligns with our mission. We also recognize the importance of responsible international engagement and appropriate safeguards to ensure that foreign gifts, contracts, partnerships, visiting scholars, research arrangements, and data access do not compromise academic independence, institutional integrity, or legal compliance.

In summary, CCSJ addresses research integrity, international engagement, and protection from improper foreign influence in the following ways:

- Maintaining conflict-of-interest, research compliance, data security, and sponsored-program policies.
- Reviewing foreign gifts, contracts, partnerships, and research arrangements for compliance and institutional risk.
- Training relevant faculty and staff on research security, disclosure obligations, cybersecurity, and data protection.
- Ensuring that academic programming and personnel decisions remain under institutional control.
- Coordinating with legal counsel, auditors, compliance officers, or external experts as needed.

7. National Service, Workforce Needs, Civic Leadership, and the Public Good

CCSJ answers the national call to action by preparing graduates who contribute to their communities, workplaces, families, state, and nation. Our mission is expressed through teaching, scholarship, service, workforce preparation, civic engagement, and community partnership.

As an Indiana independent Catholic college, we play a vital role in educating teachers, public safety personnel, business leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, public servants, nonprofit leaders, ministry leaders, artists, health professionals, and engaged citizens. Our graduates strengthen Indiana's economy, serve local communities, and contribute to the nation's prosperity and civic life.

We are committed to academic programs that respond to student aspirations and urgent workforce needs, while preserving the broad education that helps graduates adapt to change, lead with integrity, and solve complex problems.

In summary, CCSJ addresses national service, workforce needs, civic leadership, and the public good in the following ways:

- Aligning academic programs with mission, student demand, workforce needs, and community priorities.
 - Expanding partnerships with employers, K-12 schools, healthcare organizations, nonprofits, government, and civic institutions.
 - Supporting internships, clinical placements, student teaching, undergraduate research, service learning, and career-connected learning.
 - Preparing students for ethical leadership, civic participation, and service to the common good.
 - Communicating clearly how the institution contributes to Indiana and the nation.
-

Summary

For 75 years, CCSJ has served students and the public through rigorous education, personal mentorship, academic inquiry, and commitment to the common good. We recognize that public trust must be earned through transparency, accountability, excellence, and service.

In response to the Department of Education's call, CCSJ reaffirms its commitment to:

- Transparent and fair admissions practices.
- Free inquiry, civil discourse, and campus safety.
- Intellectual vitality and academic excellence.
- Affordability, student success, and responsible stewardship.
- Rigorous teaching and learning in the age of AI.
- Research integrity and protection from improper influence.
- Service to Indiana, the nation, and the public good.

We will continue to review our policies, practices, and public communications to ensure that they reflect our mission, meet the needs of students and families, and strengthen confidence in independent higher education.

Approved by:

Dr. Ron Tulley, President

Ms. Vicki Znavor, Chair, Board of Trustees

Calumet College of St. Joseph