

Ambassador Bible College

STUDENT HANDBOOK



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in all nations



AMBASSADOR BIBLE COLLEGE

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About Ambassador Bible College

Ambassador Bible College (ABC) is an intensive nine-month educational program focusing on the truths of the Bible, Christian living and the fundamental doctrines of the United Church of God, *an International Association*.

The program seeks to prepare young adults as disciples of Jesus Christ so that they may serve and lead as they get ready for the duty of teaching future generations. The curriculum thoroughly examines biblical doctrine and leads students systematically through the books of the Bible. Our goal is to help students avoid the pitfalls of modern life while building a strong and lasting relationship with God and a life that reflects the example of Jesus Christ.

What should you expect to gain from ABC?

- Foundational knowledge of the Bible—from Genesis to Revelation.
- Understanding that will help you build a strong relationship with God and Jesus Christ.
- Comprehension of and commitment to the core values and foundational doctrines of the Bible.
- Opportunity to internalize God’s truth and implement biblical principles in your daily life.
- Knowledge of how to give an answer for the hope that lies within you and defend your faith.
- A personal path to strong, godly character.
- Friendships to last a lifetime.

Program Description

In addition to a challenging seven-hour-a-day educational curriculum, ABC provides ample opportunity for social interaction, leadership and service. Students can choose from a number of extracurricular activities.

Since the ABC program is located at the home office of the United Church of God, students also experience the daily operations of the church and have many opportunities to interact with the office administration and staff. At the successful completion of the program, students receive a diploma in biblical studies.

Academic Policies

Tuition

While tuition covers a portion of the costs of a student's education, ABC is supported by the United Church of God, which underwrites most of the expenses. Tuition for the program is \$2,500 per person, which includes breakfast and lunch each class day of the academic year. Married couples who attend ABC together pay only a single tuition fee of \$2,500.

Tuition is due by August 15. If tuition has not been received before the beginning of the first day of classes, the student's admission will be cancelled for non-payment.

A limited number of partial tuition waivers are available. Contact the ABC coordinator for a waiver request form. Waiver applications are considered based on individual need and pastoral recommendation.

Students are responsible for arranging and financing their own housing, transportation and other living expenses. Many students choose to share housing and/or to carpool to reduce personal expense, and some also choose to work part-time.

Refund Policy

If a student needs to withdraw from the program after paying the tuition fee, the refund will be 100 percent in the first week of classes, 75 percent in the second week, 50 percent in the third week and 25 percent in the fourth week. No refund will be available after the fourth week.

Class Attendance and Assignments

Every ABC student is expected to attend every offered class, including modules, forums and assemblies. Regular class attendance is required of all students. Attendance will be taken for each class.

It is a student's responsibility to plan his or her schedule to avoid conflict with ABC courses. Students are expected to make progress toward completion of the ABC program by being in regular attendance, actively participating in class and completing assignments and tests.

The administration reserves the right to dismiss any student who is not actively involved, in regular attendance, completing assignments and/or making satisfactory progress in the program.

Excused Absences

Absences from class are not automatically excused. All absences must be explained in writing to the registrar via the provided forms. A request for excused absence must be submitted even if the student participated in classes online during their absence. Students must turn in an excused absence request to the registrar by noon of the first class day of their return.

Students will not be penalized for absence due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Normally, an absence will be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Appointment with a doctor, dentist or other medical professional
- Serious illness, death or funeral of a close family member

Requests for excused absence directly before or after one of the scheduled class breaks will not typically meet the criteria to be excused. Students should carefully review the program calendar before making travel arrangements for the Feast of Tabernacles or other travel during breaks from class.

Other requests for excused absences should be made to the registrar for approval; approval will be determined at the registrar's discretion.

Although there is no specific limit to the number of excused absences, excessive absences may require the student to withdraw from enrollment.

Unexcused Absences

Each student is limited to four unexcused absences for each course. Students with more than four unexcused absences in any course will not receive credit for that course, regardless of the actual earned grade. A student must earn credit for at least 90 percent of the credit hours available in the program to receive a diploma.

Tardiness

Two bells ring to announce the beginning of each class session. The second bell indicates the start of class. Students will be counted tardy if they are not seated in class when the second bell sounds and the instructor is ready to begin class. Tardy students will be counted absent if attendance has already been completed before they have arrived in class. Students will also be considered absent if leaving class for more than 15 minutes during a class session.

Reasons for tardiness and requests to be excused should be presented to the registrar. Three instances of unexcused tardiness will count as one unexcused absence.

Leaving During the School Day

There may be occasions when a student needs to leave the building during the school day. Whether the student plans to return later in the day or not, building policy is that the student must sign out when they are leaving and, if possible, verbally notify the ABC administrative assistant as well. The sign-out sheet is located near the student mailboxes.

Make-up Work

Students are responsible for making up all class work that is missed due to absence or tardiness, whether excused or unexcused. Class sessions are recorded and made available to students who have been absent. Missed class work must be submitted in a timely manner, in accordance with the stated policy of individual instructors.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be defined as using someone else's ideas, words or other original material without appropriately acknowledging the original author or creator. This can be cutting and pasting someone else's writing or artwork into your own, recreating someone else's writing or artwork and submitting it as your own or changing words or media but retaining the original ideas of someone else.

Plagiarism is not acceptable. While some assignments may require students to use a variety of outside sources, we expect students to acknowledge these sources through appropriate citations and to submit assignments that contain the students' original thoughts, ideas, interpretations and effort.

Should a student submit an assignment that is determined to include plagiarized material, the student may be asked to repeat the assignment. Repeated instances could result in further disciplinary measures, as determined by the instructor and/or other faculty members.

Grading Policy

The syllabus for each course will explain the grading policy for that particular course. Grades may be based on one or more of the following standards of performance:

- Objective or subjective testing
- Written assignments
- Oral presentations
- Class participation
- Attendance

Courses consisting of 20 classroom hours or less will be graded on a pass/fail basis. All other courses will be graded on the basis of percentage scoring of required tests, assignments and attendance. A minimum score of 65 percent will be required for a student to receive credit for any course.

Graduation Requirements

A student must earn credit for at least 90 percent of the credit hours available in the program to receive a diploma of biblical studies. Students not receiving a diploma will not be recognized at commencement activities.

Grade Appeal Policy

A student may appeal a grade within two weeks of the end of the semester. Appeals must be presented in writing to the coordinator of ABC and will be considered by a committee consisting of the president of the United Church of God, the coordinator of ABC, and two other faculty members. A student who has filed an appeal of a class grade will receive a decision concerning the appeal within two weeks of making the appeal.



Classroom Policies

Dress Code

The ABC dress code is based on biblical principles of modesty and neatness. Modesty is mentioned in the Bible as an important godly characteristic (1 Timothy 2:9). As ambassadors for Jesus Christ, it is important that we have a neat and appropriate appearance.

ABC classes are held in the home office of the United Church of God. The building and all who work or study therein represent the Church, so it is important that we display an appropriate measure of decorum before our guests and visitors. For example, home office staff members wear a variety of neat and clean attire and dress according to their job responsibilities.

Students should be comfortable in what they wear, but should not appear sloppy, careless or unkempt. Clothing should be distinctively masculine or feminine, reflecting a wholesome appreciation of God's plan (Deuteronomy 22:5). We recommend business casual clothing. Nice casual shirts and slacks for men, and a nice casual shirt with slacks or skirts for ladies are preferred.

During the school year, there will be many activities outside the class day. While the specific dress for some events may vary, appropriate and modest attire is expected at all occasions.

Additional guidelines regarding grooming and attire for class include:

1. Clothing should not have holes or tears.
2. Dresses/skirts should be of an appropriate length (knee-length preferred).
3. Clothing should provide appropriate coverage and avoid revealing one's undergarments, midriff and bosom. Remember that the class day may include a variety of activities, so plan accordingly.
4. Avoid extremes in dress and hairstyle. Follow biblical instructions on hair lengths.
5. Proper grooming and personal hygiene is expected.
6. If men have beards or mustaches, they should be neat and trimmed.
7. Do not wear shorts, tank tops, athletic clothing, halter-tops or spaghetti straps.
8. Do not wear clothing with offensive writing or slogans.
9. For men: shirts with collars are recommended, but nice T-shirts (not undershirts) are acceptable.
10. For ladies: leggings, yoga pants and leotards may not be worn unless beneath a dress or skirt of appropriate length.

11. Bare feet/stocking feet are not allowed in the building.
12. Hats of any kind may not be worn in class.

Dress Code Violations

If a student wears clothing that fails to meet the ABC dress code, the student will be asked to change into proper clothing and asked not to wear the inappropriate item again. The student may be sent home to change clothes. Progressive disciplinary action will be applied if dress code violations continue.

Cellphones and Internet Usage

ABC strives to maintain a positive, productive learning environment for all students. To keep electronic distractions to a minimum, the following guidelines are in place for the use of cellphones and the Internet during the class day:

- Cellphones or similar devices may not be brought into the classroom or used during class periods, except in cases where the instructor is conducting an activity during class time that explicitly requires them to do so, or a student specifically obtains permission from the instructor to keep his or her device in class.
- Students are provided with a place in which to store cellphones. Phones may not be left in other areas of the building and must be silenced when not in use.
- Cellphones and other devices may be used during class breaks and at lunch breaks.
- During class time, computers should not be used to browse the Internet, receive or respond to e-mail, access social media sites, play games or for any other activity that would distract from class.
- Students may not set up a hotspot or wireless access point.

Exceptions to the policy regarding cellphones may be made if a personal emergency exists. If there is a vital need to check for and/or receive a call (i.e. parent with sick child, family emergency or similar need), the student must inform their instructor in advance that he or she may need to be excused to take an important call.

Classroom Guests

Visitors may attend a limited number of classes for up to one week with permission from the class instructors. Faculty permission should be requested in advance if you plan to have a visitor during the class day. If the visitor will be present for breakfast and/or lunch, please inform the Food Service Manager in advance for planning purposes. Guests of ABC students may enjoy breakfast and lunch free of charge for up to one week, in line with biblical principles of hospitality.

Network Policy

Students attending ABC may use the student network. Use of the student network is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of that privilege. It is a violation for any student to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose, general rules and policies of the network.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Network Use

Acceptable use is primarily that which furthers the educational goals of ABC and helps students remain in contact with friends and family while at ABC.

Under no circumstances are students of ABC authorized to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while utilizing United Church of God-owned resources.

Bandwidth

Currently the student network accesses the Internet through a connection shared with the home office. The connection is a limited resource. Students are requested to be mindful of this limitation and not to use the resource excessively. The home office IT department may at any time restrict student access to the Internet if necessary.

Access Points

Students may only connect to the student network from the designated access points. The ABC wireless access points are available in the main ABC class area, cafeteria, conference room, library and mailroom. Students may not connect to any other networks in the building.

Respecting the Facilities and Staff

ABC is located within the home office of the United Church of God, which also serves as the meeting hall for the Cincinnati East congregations. Throughout the day, the home office is a busy place for employees, students, members of the local congregations and other visitors. There are some specific guidelines that help us care for the facilities and share this space respectfully during the work week. Please note that there are specific policies in place for some areas, including the library and the dining hall. Please be familiar with and adhere to these policies.

Respect for Staff

The home office staff members enjoy getting to know each year's ABC students. However, the home office is also their workplace. Students are asked to be mindful of the tasks that are carried out in the home office and to keep noise and distractions to a minimum during the work day.

Students are expected to remain within the areas designated for use by ABC. Student belongings should be kept within designated ABC areas (the student lounge and the lecture hall), as well. Please keep all areas—whether designated as student spaces or not—tidy. The home office frequently hosts visitors, and we want to give them the best impression of who we are and what we believe.

Food and Drink

- No food should be brought into the lecture hall during class or on breaks.
- No food is allowed in the library except during scheduled meetings.
- Beverages are only allowed in the lecture hall and library if they are in spill-proof containers.
- If there is a spill, let the administrative assistant know immediately so that the stain can be cleaned properly.



Code of Conduct

We believe it is the responsibility of every Christian to lead a godly life (1 Timothy 4:7-8; Hebrews 12:28). The Word of God is the absolute authority in every issue of life. ABC students must therefore recognize the authority of the Word of God and strive to live by biblical standards in word and conduct (Colossians 3:17).

ABC students are expected to pursue excellence in character and to live above reproach. They should not engage in any immoral, illegal or unethical activity. They should also avoid any activity that may negatively affect themselves, other students, Ambassador Bible College, the United Church of God, the community or the name of God. Every student should avoid practices, relationships and entertainment that are opposed to godly conduct or that would appear to be so. The following rules are basic guidelines to help students live their faith in very practical ways both in and away from the home office. Each student is required to sign a statement agreeing that he or she will strive to live by the Code of Conduct.

Students are expected to respect the physical and psychological wellbeing of others. Those who are consistently negative toward other students or the standards, faculty or administration of ABC and/or the United Church of God will be considered out of harmony with the purpose of ABC. Any student whose personal conduct or attitude is not consistent with the standards of ABC may be dismissed.

Alcoholic Beverages

- No ABC student should ever be under the excessive influence of alcohol.
- It is a violation of biblical standards and Ohio statutes for an adult to provide alcoholic beverages to those who are underage. Students should not provide or knowingly facilitate access to alcohol to any underage ABC student. This includes failing to adequately safeguard any alcohol or drugs that he or she possesses.
- The possession, use, sale or supply of alcoholic beverages by an underage person is also a violation of Ohio law, and therefore violates biblical standards (Romans 13:1-5).
- Violation of this policy will result in discipline and possible dismissal from ABC, and the individual may be reported to law enforcement.

Drugs

Use of illegal drugs violates biblical standards as well as Ohio law (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 13:1-5).

- No ABC student should ever be under the influence of, possess, use, sell or supply illegal drugs or drug-related products.
- Students should not abuse prescription drugs or over-the-counter products.

Violation of this policy at any time will result in discipline and possible dismissal from ABC, and the individual may be reported to law enforcement.

Harassment and Violence

ABC expects its students and staff to treat one another in the way they would wish to be treated (Matthew 7:12). Harassment of any type—including sexual harassment—is a serious matter. Any threat of violence (even in jest) will be taken seriously.

Incidents of harassment or threats of violence will result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or dismissal. A student may also be reported to law enforcement.

Pornography and Inappropriate Visual or Written Material

Possession of inappropriate visual or written material including, but not limited to, pornography is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action with the possibility of dismissal.

Proselytizing

The United Church of God is the sponsoring body for ABC. Its scripturally-based doctrine, teachings and traditions are its standard for belief. The Council of Elders, administration and worldwide membership expect those teachings to be the standard taught and practiced at ABC.

Soliciting other students to join a specific church organization or to adopt a contrary belief or interpretation of Scripture is not permitted at ABC. Students are taught to prove all things and make their own decisions about church affiliation and biblical beliefs, without pressure from others. Any reported pressure by anyone connected with ABC to change fellowships or adopt other teachings and practices will be investigated, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Sexual Immorality

ABC upholds the biblical standard of sexual morality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5). The highest standards of social conduct between men and women are expected. Students should avoid being alone with anyone of the opposite sex, as this may give the appearance of wrongdoing. This includes but is not limited to a dwelling or bedroom.

Students shall not engage in sexually promiscuous behavior (e.g., pre-marital sex, adultery, homosexuality, etc.), encourage promiscuous practices, take part in sexting or engage in sexual innuendo. Violation of this policy will result in dismissal from ABC.

Stealing

Any student found guilty of theft will be suspended or dismissed. The student will be responsible for restitution and may be reported to law enforcement.

Tobacco

The possession or use of tobacco, smokeless tobacco, vaping products, electronic cigarettes, related paraphernalia and tobacco-like products in any form is a violation of biblical standards and also prohibited for reasons of health and safety. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff or any other form of tobacco. Vaping products include vaping liquid and vaporizers of any kind. Students possessing these in any form will be subject to disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Measures

Our desire is that disciplinary measures would be unnecessary for ABC students. It is our goal to treat all students with Christian love and take the appropriate action out of care and concern (John 7:24). Disciplinary measures are sometimes necessary, and are undertaken with a student's best interests, edification and spiritual growth in mind (James 5:19-20).

Procedure

When a student observes a fellow student not abiding by the ABC Code of Conduct or otherwise behaving in an ungodly manner, that observing student has the obligation to bring the inappropriate behavior to the offending student's attention. All serious offenses must also be reported to the dean of students. If, however, the offense is not one that would automatically bring probation or expulsion and the student acknowledges the offense and is willing to change his or her conduct, then the issue need not go further.

If the offending student is not willing to acknowledge the offense and/or is unwilling to change their conduct, then the observing student has the responsibility to give the offending student the choice of voluntarily going to the dean of students or being reported to the dean of students. From that point, the offense will be handled by the administration of ABC.

When a student's violation of the Code of Conduct becomes known to the administration, he or she will be required to meet with the dean of students, typically with another faculty member present. The dean of students will inquire about the offense and hear the student's explanation. Appropriate steps will be taken to determine which, if any, of the following disciplinary measures should be applied:

1. Warn the offender not to repeat the offense (1 Thessalonians 5:14; Colossians 1:28).
2. Rebuke for the offense by verbal reprimand (Titus 1:13; Revelation 3:19; Proverbs 27:5).
3. Administer disciplinary action according to the Code of Conduct, which may include probation with social restrictions and/or exclusion from extracurricular activities (Hebrews 12:11).
4. Temporarily suspend from ABC for a specified period of time (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).
5. Dismiss from ABC.

Before disciplinary measures are taken, the decision will be discussed with the ABC administration.

Any disciplinary decision may be appealed in writing to the dean of students. When a student appeals a disciplinary decision, all relevant information previously held in confidence will be brought to the appeals panel to review the disciplinary decision. The student must waive his or her rights to that confidential material for the appeal to proceed.

The appeals panel will consist of at least three members of the ABC administrative team or faculty and the ABC class president. The panel's decision will be final.

Student Life

ABC seeks to provide more than an academic education in the Bible. Our additional goal is to provide a variety of activities and services that will help students in their personal and social lives as well as in developing leadership, character and practical skills. Counseling for various matters is available through our resident ministry, and faculty members maintain an open-door policy. We strive to give students the tools to have a positive, productive year while at ABC.

Counseling Services

While our goal is for your ABC experience to be joyful and useful, we recognize that life can bring unexpected challenges. The faculty members at ABC, as well as local church elders and counseling professionals, are here to help. Whether you are facing serious decisions such as baptism or marriage, need help with a difficult situation, or just need a listening ear, you are welcome to speak confidentially with any faculty member or elder in the area. If other professional advice is needed, we will be happy to direct you to someone who can help.

Educational Enrichment

Field Trips

Occasional excursions to interesting educational sites add variety and fun to the academic year. Students will enjoy the break from routine and the chance to socialize.

Forums and Assemblies

Forums and assemblies alternate weekly. Attendance is required, but no grade is given. Forum provides the opportunity for students to hear reports from the Student Council, discuss any upcoming activities and give updates on class projects. Assembly features special presentations from administrators, faculty members or guest speakers.

Extracurriculars

There are many opportunities for students to pursue outside of class. Social activities are planned by the Student Council and the faculty to provide uplifting experiences for all students. Faculty members frequently interact with students through dinners, picnics, game nights, movie nights and other fun events. Students are encouraged to take an active role in helping to plan and prepare for these activities.

In addition, there are several volunteer opportunities available to students:

ABC Times

The student newspaper allows interested students to record their class year with articles and photos. Students develop their writing and editing skills in preparing each edition. Volunteer student writers often assist the managing editor and photographer of *ABC Times*. Some years, the *ABC Times* staff also makes a class yearbook.

Ambassador Chorale

The Ambassador Chorale presents beautiful, inspiring music to local and outlying congregations each year. The director holds a meeting at orientation to provide details to those who are interested in volunteering for this service opportunity.

Technical Support

Students who assist with technical support help by making class recordings, running the sound system and other technical needs.

Cards

Students send cards of encouragement out to brethren who are sick, as well as cards of thanks to guest lecturers, visiting module instructors or those who have hosted ABC students in their homes. The student representative attending to these cards stays up-to-date on prayer requests and sends cards around the class to be signed.

Social Committee and Service Committee

Students may serve on the Social Committee or Service Committee by aiding the social activities leader or service projects leader in the planning, budgeting and execution of class events.

Student Council

The Student Council is composed of student committee heads and class officers. The council meets regularly with the dean of students to serve the needs of the class by recommending and planning student activities. During meetings, council members share committees' progress and help one another be effective by asking questions that committee members may not have considered and providing suggestions and encouragement. The council approves committee plans and actions or identifies issues that need to be resolved before a project continues. In matters where a class vote is not required, the student council finalizes decisions where necessary. The council reports to the dean of students.

Class Officers

Class officers are appointed by the ABC administration, with input from the student body.

The *president* conducts Student Council meetings and hosts all forums and assemblies. The president looks after the needs of the student body, oversees the student committees and works to maintain class morale and cohesiveness. The president interfaces regularly with the faculty and reports to the dean of students.

The *secretary* aids the president by recording council meeting minutes, preparing class correspondence and updating records for the following year's class.

The *treasurer* is responsible for collecting payment for various class expenditures, keeping an accurate record of money received and dispersed, overseeing fundraisers and maintaining a working knowledge of the class's financial account.

The *class monitor* ensures that the lecture hall stays clean and organized and provides support for the set up crew.



Social and Service Committee Representatives

The Social Committee representatives plan social activities for the class, suggest events for smaller groups to attend and coordinate ABC activities with local church events to avoid schedule conflicts as much as possible. The Service Committee representatives plan service projects which serve the Church and the local community. Representatives from both committees work together to plan larger projects such as the charity auction.

Music Coordinators

Representatives are appointed by and work with the chorale director to assess musical talent and help with the ABC Chorale throughout the year. There may be more than one, depending on class size and Chorale needs.

ABC Times Managing Editor

The editor produces the student newspaper and helps keep the ABC webpage up to date. Some have also produced a yearbook at the end of the year.

Message Board Editor

The message board editor maintains upkeep of the bulletin board in the lecture hall to keep students updated on upcoming events, news and sign-up sheets for various activities.

Technical Support Representative

The technical support representative attends to the technical needs of the class by recording classes, maintaining the webcast for students who may be participating remotely and aiding in microphone, laptop, PowerPoint and video support.



Alumni Affairs

ABC considers its alumni to be vital to the development and promotion of the program. We strive to maintain communication with our alumni. We offer our alumni the following:

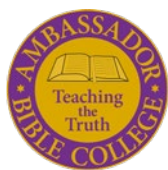
- E-mail communication concerning special needs and projects.
- Referral and mentoring by local leaders after graduating.
- Opportunities to participate in alumni service projects.
- Participation in ABC promotional meetings at United Youth Camps and Feast sites.
- Special consideration for participation in United Youth Corps projects.
- Help to organize ABC orientation and graduation activities.





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