



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM WEBINAR

24 SEPTEMBER 2020

Admissions Questions

Q. Procedure for Acceptance

A. Go to: <https://www.the-collegium.org/admission-process-and-application>. It's a little difficult right now to talk about timelines, since we don't have a history to guide decisions about that.

Q. Are SAT/ACT/CLT required?

A. Go to: <https://www.the-collegium.org/admission-process-and-application>. These tests are not required, but we would recommend the CLT. In any case, the admissions page will give you kinds of materials we need to assess a student's readiness to do college-level work.

Q. Will you accept transfer students?

A. Yes, but next year we will offer only freshman courses.

Q. Will you accept dual enrollment courses?

A. Yes, they will be reviewed as transfer courses. All transfer courses must be substantially the same as courses in our curriculum to be accepted. For example, if a student had a music course in Jazz History or non-Western music, such a course would not equate to anything in our music courses. We could not accept those credits. On the other hand, if a student had taken a course on St. Thomas Aquinas, it might well equate to one of our theology courses.

Q. Can you apply as a junior or senior?

A. Once we have junior level courses, we will accept junior transfers. We will likely not accept senior transfers. They would not be able to earn enough credits at The Collegium to be awarded a Collegium degree.

Housing/Student Life Questions

Q. Will dress code be enforced?

A. Yes. More importantly, it is critical that students – and parents – buy into the whole vision/program before coming. As a parent, if you make exceptions for one child you know exactly the kind of chaos that creates in the family. Everyone (students and parents) who comes should be fully familiar with who we are and what we have to offer, and what our expectations of them are.

Q. Will men and women live in separate areas?

A. Yes. The hotel is divided into two halves on each floor with fire doors at the entrance of each half. We can secure those doors and house men on one side and women on the other. In addition, there will be someone from the faculty living in the hotel. Currently, my wife and I live there. We may continue to live there next year. However, in any case, someone from the faculty will be living on site.

Q. Parking? Place for bikes?

A. There is plenty of parking, but you will have to pay for it. I have not yet figured out the bike situation. My bike is in our apartment. That is always an option. The apartments are very large.

Q. Will there be a student center for mingling/studying?

A. We are aware of the need, and we are working on options. It will depend on funding. There are several small coffee shops and the like downtown.

Q. What is the campus like? What is near the campus?

A. See these links:

1. <https://www.the-collegium.org/liturgy-and-spiritual-formation>
2. <https://www.the-collegium.org/student-life> - video with a facilities overview
3. <https://www.the-collegium.org/extra-curricular-activities>

I would add to this that everyone who has visited so far has commented that, while the pictures and descriptions give an idea, you cannot begin to understand how amazing The Collegium is until you step into St. Mary's, walk into the historic hotel, see the shops on the square, etc. It is truly providential!

Q. How will the surrounding area impact campus life both positively and negatively?

A. The campus is a downtown campus. It's not downtown like New York or San Francisco. It's downtown in a town of 40,000 in an area that is politically very conservative. So the downtown creates the "feel" of the campus. That is neither positive nor negative. It's just what it is.

Like any downtown, downtown is where the homeless of the community gather. I could tell you how when St. Lawrence was ordered to surrender the treasures of the Church, he brought in all the homeless and said, "These are the treasures of the Church." However, if I were a parent, while I might be touched by such a story, I would really want to know if my child is going to be safe. To that concern I can say that my wife and I live in the hotel where students will be housed. We walk the streets of downtown, and we are safe. There are restaurants and evening events downtown. There are students from the University of Maryland and the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts downtown. Would I say that you could be wandering around downtown at 1:00AM and be safe? No, but I would not recommend that you do that on any campus.

On the positive side there are lots of unique opportunities for students in the downtown. For example, if a student were interested in working with children, the children's museum is across the street from housing. If a student were interested in journalism, the newspaper is two blocks away. Of course, there are lots of places to eat and things to do downtown. See: <https://www.the-collegium.org/extra-curricular-activities>.

TLM Questions

Q. Is the TLM every Sunday?

A. Yes, every Sunday, all Holydays of Obligation, and many feasts. I am confident that it will grow as we grow.

Q. What if the TLM priest is transferred? Will you reach to FSSP or ICKSP if the priest is transferred?

A. Let me preface this by saying that creating "what-if" scenarios can lead to paralysis. There are many things about the future that we don't know, but they cannot stop us from moving forward in faith.

To answer the specific question, the TLM Mass has been at St. Mary's since the "Indult" days. The bishop seems to be cognizant of this, as he continues to assign priests to St. Mary's who can say the TLM. Right now there are two priests in the parish who say the TLM.

In addition, priests and seminarians come to St. Mary's to help with solemn Masses. The diocese is fully aware of this. And virtually all the seminarians today want to learn the TLM. Most of the vocations are coming from more traditionally oriented parishes.

All of which is to say, that I think the Mass at St. Mary's is secure.

As for reaching out to a traditional order, that conversation is premature, and I don't think it will ever be necessary.

Curriculum Questions

Q. What is the curriculum?

A. It is listed here: <https://www.the-collegium.org/curriculum>.

Q. Minor in music? Instruments?

A. I would like to think that music will be an important part of The Collegium culture: we have sung Lauds and Vespers, sung Angelus and grace at meals, sung TLM. I am, then, eager to see students with musical talent and interests come to The Collegium.

We will assist them in continuing their musical studies if they wish. We can help find applied teachers. (Students will have to pay for lessons.) We will figure out some way to allow them to practice. In the early years, I can commit to teaching theory and aural skills if that is desired. All of this may evolve into a formal minor, but it is too soon to know that. We will certainly have a schola/choir, and we will encourage instrumental students to use their talents in the service of the Church. (Of course, that is within limits. We won't have piano music at Mass, but perhaps pianists might want to learn the organ.)

Q. Relationship with University of Maryland for math and science?

A. This is already a possibility with Hagerstown Community College (HCC) for math and science courses at the lower level. If a student were to take courses there because they wanted to pursue a particular field of study, medicine, for example, we will accept those courses in place of the math and science courses of The Collegium. In addition, we are small enough that it *may* be possible for us to rearrange our class schedule to allow students to take courses at HCC.

The University of Maryland at Hagerstown is a center, not a branch campus. All of the programs offered there are for juniors, seniors, and graduate students, and they are offered by different branch campuses in the system. Would it be possible for our students to take courses there? I am not sure yet. That is a topic we are willing to explore, but it will have to be addressed after we are open and have students who may want to pursue this option.

Q. Will there be tutoring?

A. We are committed to helping any student that we admit to be successful. Tutoring will be made available. Either faculty will help, or perhaps student tutors will help.

Q. Will The Collegium be accredited?

A. Yes. We must first be permitted in the state. The permitting is in process. Once that is complete, we can notify the Middle States accrediting agency and begin that process. It should be completed before our first class is graduated.

Library Questions

Q. Will you focus on library books and resources prior to 1962?

A. Anything we have in our collection that deals with Church teaching will focus on the perennial, unchanging teaching of the Church.

Q. Will The Collegium have its own library or collection of books?

A. Yes, we already have about 2,000 books. When we go through all of them, I am guessing that about 1,000 of them will pass scrutiny. We are working on a reading room, but nothing definite yet.

Q. Is Washington County Library open late for studying?

A. The library currently closes at 6:00PM. I don't know if these hours are normal or COVID adjusted. We are working on a reading room. We just don't have anything definite yet. The dining hall is a possibility. It is very large and in a quiet building. We will use it for dining during a few hours of the day.

Q. Does the University of Maryland have a library that could house Collegium books?

A. No. It might be possible for students to use the computer terminal there. That is under discussion. However, the center has neither a library collection of significance nor the space for one.

Comparison to Other Schools

Q. Can you give a candid critique of other options, including and especially TAC?

A. On the surface I can say we are less expensive. We are similar to the great books programs in that we are a strictly liberal arts program. We differ from these programs in that we have more flexibility with regard to our text selection and our teaching methodologies. (It is important to me that The Collegium faculty members be dedicated to teaching and have the skills to apply multiple pedagogical methods, depending on the needs of the students.)

However, perhaps the most important difference is the we are specifically dedicated to serving traditional Catholics. No other school does this. Others will accommodate traditionalists - some better than others, but no other school is specifically dedicated to serving the traditional community. That is our mission.

Staffing Questions

Q. Who are you interviewing for staff positions, and what are you looking to accomplish with those hires?

A. I hope to make a call for applications late in the fall. Currently, I receive letters every week or two from people interested in teaching at The Collegium. I am not worried about having an adequate pool of applications, even if I stay up at night worrying about hiring the “right” people.

Who will the “right” people be? They will

1. Be practicing Catholics;
2. Be committed to the traditional mission of The Collegium;
3. Be dedicated to teaching;
4. Be able to employ a variety of teaching methodologies;
5. Sign the Oath Against Modernism.

Q. What led you to open the Collegium? Your resume? Background?

A. I worked in a Jesuit school for 21 years. I had no expectations of leaving, but as the school became more and more secular it became more and more difficult for me to remain. Eventually, I just had to leave. It was in looking for another position that I realized the crisis was not just in my institution. It was system wide. I ended up in an administrative position in a large public institution. Today I see that this was God’s work. He had given me many opportunities and blessings in my life. This last stage was a final preparation, after which He said, “Ed, I have done great things for you. Now you are ready to do something for me.” The Collegium is that work. So, I can honestly say that God led to open The Collegium. It was not something I sought, but something I was compelled to do.

To parents, led me add that I know well the pain of seeing your children leave the faith. There is no greater pain for a parent. If I can save a few families from this horror, whatever sacrifice is required for The Collegium, it will be worth it. You have my promise that at The Collegium we will do everything possible to help your children grow in the faith that you have sacrificed to nurture in them. Our hope is the same as your hope: that as they transition from home to independent adulthood they will see the faith as a critical part of their lives here on earth and they will be committed to seeking out the support they need to stay faithful in a world that would rather see them crushed spiritually.

As for my background, it includes forty years of work in higher education, most of that in Catholic institutions. My area of expertise is sacred music, in particular Carolingian chant. I am an expert in the earliest music notations in the Western world. You can see my curriculum vitae here:

<https://www.edwardschaefer.net/curriculum-vitae>.

Money and Enrollment Questions

Q. Will you accept federal financial aid?

A. No.

Q. Will tuition increase?

A. I can't answer that at this time. We are committed to keeping the cost as low as possible.

Q. 120 in each class or in the entire school?

A. 120 students in the entire school. There are two reasons for this. First, a purposely small school allows us to stay true to our mission. We will not be pressured to "soften" the mission in order to fill classes. Second, there are financial benefits to staying small. Most significantly, it helps us keep our infrastructure costs under control.