



G E T T Y S B U R G  
M A S T E R ' S C O M M I S S I O N

## Guidelines

Gettysburg Master's Commission is not for the average student. It is a place where a student seeks to excel in their relationship with God and with others. Thus, mediocrity – the curse of our age – is something that we seek to eradicate from our lives. We desire to savagely pursue God and the things of God. So then anything that will keep us from getting in contact with Him is something that we remove from our lives.

Below are some guidelines that will help you, as a student, understand the day-to-day operation of Master's Commission and also assist you in living your life as a Master's student. Again, the standards are high, but we believe that God has called you here for a purpose and He will develop you into the person He desires you to be.

**Teach ability:** One of the most important requirements for Master's Commission is to have a teachable spirit. That means that the student is open and willing to learn. None of us have all the answers and none of us have it all together (including us as your leaders). We all have so much more to learn and need to rely upon God and the people He has placed in our lives to teach us. We are not expected to be perfect, just willing to learn by having a teachable spirit.

**Submission:** Ephesians 5:21 says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." What that means is that we, as the leadership of Master's Commission, need to submit to you as Christ submitted to the church. That means being willing to give our lives for you. You can be fully assured that the leadership of Master's Commission is incredibly devoted to you as servants. We are here to

serve you by providing the opportunities for you to meet Christ “face to face.” In serving you, we (staff or upper classmen) seek to mentor you one-on-one, love you where you are at, and set for you the standard God has called you to live your life by. In doing that, there may be some things that occur and some things that you are required to do that you may not understand. We ask that you be willing to submit yourself to the leadership God has placed you under, just as the leadership is willing to submit themselves to you. Master’s Commission is about mutual submission – everybody serving each other.

**Spiritual Life and Character Development:** The purpose of Master’s Commission is “to know Him and make Him known.” In learning to know Christ (which we all are doing), we seek to accomplish this through several different avenues.

- Firstly, there is Tuesday Afternoon, Wednesday Evening, and Thursday Morning Prayer. Students are expected to arrive on time (at the latest) and lateness will not be tolerated. This will be an hour of prayer where students and staff can meet “face to face” with God and hear what He is speaking to us about our lives.
- Secondly, all students will be enrolled in Valley Forge Christian College classes. In the classroom environment, the student is able to not only experience textbook learning, but also glean from the experiences of our seasoned pastoral staff and professors. The student is expected to follow all class guidelines and adhere to the professor’s policies. Students are not allowed to cut from any class unless there is an extreme emergency or the professor prior to the class gives permission. Deviation from the professor’s standards for the class is not acceptable. These classes are an excellent time for the student to learn and grow. Any failed classes will result in not graduating from Master’s Commission. We desire to gain all we can from the opportunities God has presented to us. Thus, a spirit of excellence is what we are striving for in all areas of our lives, which includes our education.
- Thirdly, every Friday morning, we will have “Coram Deo” in Latin this word means Face to Face with God. This is the Master’s Commission chapel, where the student will be involved in community worship and hearing the word God wishes to speak to Master’s Commission, there will be a number of guest speakers. During “Coram Deo,” we seek to experience God’s transforming power, just like the early church experienced it in Acts. This is not only a time to be challenged, but a time to be changed by the power of God.
- Fourthly, every student will memorize 4 Scripture verses per week and write a one-page reflection paper. Scripture memory quizzes will be on Thursdays. Students who fail to pass a SMQ (no more than 2 major errors per verse) will come under disciplinary action. Every student is also expected to maintain an up-to-date prayer/devotional journal. This journal is to include personal thoughts/reflections, insight from God/Scripture,

prayer requests, and sermon notes. Students are expected to **always** take sermon notes when in any service.

- Finally, We believe that salvation is not an event, but rather a process, culminating with the believer discipling another person. Thus we wish to make disciples, not conversions. The discipleship process does not happen in the context of a classroom alone or in hearing a sermon once a week. Rather, discipleship is a 24-hours a day, 7 days per week process. The Gettysburg Masters Commission staff is available upon request to all students for mentorship and accountability. True discipleship doesn't happen without high accountability. This high accountability could also be called "tough love." Master's Commission loves the individual student so much that we will be incredibly honest and loving to them about issues in their life. Through the input of the staff person and through hearing God's voice during our prayer times, we seek to have every student graduate from Master's Commission with a deep knowledge of God and an incredible desire to run after Him.

#### **Lateness:**

In following the day-to-day schedule of Master's Commission, lateness will not be tolerated. Being on time not only shows how much you care about something, but also how much you respect something. We believe that each student deeply cares about and respects the opportunity God has presented them in attending Master's Commission. Thus we ask that the student display this attitude in their daily actions by not being late to scheduled events. Discipline for lateness will be retroactive each semester.

#### **Discipline for Lateness:**

1 <sup>st</sup> time	Warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> Time	2 hours of Work Detail
3 <sup>rd</sup> Time	4 Hours of Work Detail
4 <sup>th</sup> Time	8 Hours of Work Detail

\* Not to be completed on your Sabbath\*

**After hour's life:** During enrollment in Master's Commission, there will be many times where you have the opportunities to "hang-out" with others away from the MC staff or other students. Lack of integrity is one of curses of 21<sup>st</sup> century believer. Thus, the MC student is expected to maintain MC standards and

convictions wherever they are. In order to assure this and the avoidance of the appearance of evil, the following guidelines will help the student:

- **Curfew:** All students will have an 11pm curfew and midnight for interns, unless if given permission by a staff person to be out later. Only the staff may give permission to be out past curfew. Students breaking curfew will be brought under discipline.
- **Entertainment:** Pornographic and sexually explicit material (magazines, movies, TV programs) is never acceptable and will result in immediate disciplinary action. Viewing R-rated movies will not be allowed. Music that doesn't promote a sense of holiness or purity is not edifying and should not be listened to. GMC staff adheres to these guidelines and are not asking any more of you than what we would do ourselves. GMC is not here to dictate your convictions. We leave that up to the Holy Spirit to convict you of your entertainment habits. We believe that although "all things are permitted, not all things are beneficial." Thus, we choose to refrain from exposing and tainting our lives by such material and instead live holy, blameless lives.
- **Alcohol and Drug Use:** All use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, nicotine products, and abuse of prescription drugs is not permitted while enrolled in Master's.
- **Modes of expression/style:** There is no limitation to tattoos, piercing, etc. Yet before a student is able to alter their body in a permanent, public sense (i.e. tattoo or body piercing), they are to meet with the directors informing them of their desire and then spend one month seriously praying and asking God if this is allowed by Him. After 30 consecutive days of praying on this issue, the student may meet with the directors again, along with a consultation with their parents and then proceed with their desire. This guideline is not to stop a student from getting a tattoo or piercing, but rather a method to help the student decide for certain if that's what they wish to do. God's word by no means condemns these modes of expression, yet we are to be responsible with our body and make sure our lifestyle does not negate our message.

**First Year Student-to-Student Relationships:** As a program, we are not against relationships. On the contrary it is our desire, that all of our students develop healthy, vibrant relationships. Unfortunately, relationships for many college age students can become a huge stumbling block. Many in today's society have not seen healthy relationships modeled. Most of us have experienced circumstances that have left us broken and incapable of having whole relationships. And even more tragically relationships can take the driver's seat in many of our lives, distracting us from hearing God's voice, seeing areas in our life that he wants to transform, and dealing with issues or sins in our lives that keep us from fully experiencing a relationship with him.

- In order to limit the distractions for the student, Master's Commission does not allow any first year students to pursue an individual, exclusive relationship with any person anywhere.

- Secondly, no first year student is allowed to visit a student of the opposite sex's home or home-opener during enrollment in MC. The only exception will be ministry team or family time.
- Thirdly, at no time will any student be allowed any unsupervised alone time with the opposite sex (i.e. two students off by themselves, riding in car alone). Everything is to be visible, non-exclusive, and in groups of people.
- Fourthly, physical contact beyond what communicates friendship is not allowed (i.e. no long hugs, hand holding, kissing, stroking hair, laying on/next to each other, rubbing hands/feet, etc.)
- Fifthly, students are not to communicate to another student, whether directly or indirectly through another student, of their attraction.
- Lastly, those around you will judge the fruit of your actions. God has called us to judge each other's fruit (1 Cor. 5:12). Both the staff and your fellow students have a Biblical obligation to judge each other's fruit and hold each other responsible for the fruit you are bearing. If a certain action is causing you to bear bad fruit, it is everyone's obligation: to confront you on that fruit and encourage you to change your actions so you can bear good fruit (Matt. 7:15-20).

Our number one desire is that student's focus on developing their relationship with God and that it becomes their foremost priority. Nothing should come a close second. It is their relationship with God that becomes the necessary foundation for their life. First year students are not merely saying no to exclusive relationships, but getting the foundation ready for the rest of the house, which includes relationships. The reward will far outweigh the sacrifice.

**Leaves of Absence:** If a student desires or is required to leave Gettysburg to go home or elsewhere (separate from a Master's Commission function), it is necessary that they receive permission from the staff. We do not seek to control the student's life or separate them from their family, but rather provide a place for the student to be removed from the distractions they dealt with before Master's. Sometimes, when a student desires to go home, there is a temptation to participate in past distractions. However, there will be a 5-day break for all students over Thanksgiving weekend, a 2-week winter break for all students over the Christmas Holidays, and a spring break. Other than that, all leaves of absence must be cleared through the staff of Master's Commission. You will be required to fill out a "request to leave" form before leaving so we are able to answer any calls we receive of your whereabouts.

**Home Openers:** During the nine-month stay, students will be staying with a home opener – a member of Freedom Valley Worship Center or a local church-who has opened their home to the student. The home opener is expected to provide housing and food for the student. The student is to remember that though they are living at the house, they are still a guest and should treat the

home opener with respect and love. Yet though they are a guest, they are still a part of the family and are expected to assist in household chores. The student is to keep their room and bathroom of use clean and tidy. They are also to be willing to help with anything their home opener asks of them. They are serving us by opening their house. We are to serve them by helping them in any way we can. Also when you leave for a night or more, we ask you to leave the name and number to where you will be with your home openers. This is so if they are called of your whereabouts, they will know how to answer.

**Weekend Services:** Freedom Valley Worship Center currently holds three services a weekend – Saturday at 6:30pm and Sunday at 9:15am and 11:15am. The student is expected to attend at least one weekend service a week and serve at another, preferably with their home opener. The student are expected to participate in weekend service ministry (i.e., worship team, A/V team, usher team, nursery, Kid’s Connect, etc.). If a student is ministering outside of the main service during one service, they are required to attend another main service.

**Health Insurance:** Each student is encouraged to be fully covered by Health Insurance. Master’s Commission will not be able to cover hospitalization and/or doctor visits and is not held responsible for any health related incidences. Since every student will be enrolled in 15 credits of VFCC classes for the year, they will all be full time students. So then, if a parent’s insurance is only able to cover a child-enrolled full time at college, that type of insurance will be applicable.

**Vehicle:** Since the ministry opportunities are so frequent and varied, each student will be required to have access to a reliable vehicle throughout the term. Liability insurance is required for every vehicle in the State of Pennsylvania. If you are from another state or country, it will be your responsibility to ensure that your vehicle is adequately insured during your stay in Gettysburg. **Parking for all first year students is in the front, west-side parking lot. Parking for all 2<sup>nd</sup> year students is in the back, west side lot. During weekend services, all students are to park in the back, gravel parking lot or in the parking at the back entrance.** Please do not park in the immediate front lot at any time, including non-office hours.

**Finances:** The student is suggested to have sufficient funds to cover any personal expenses that they may incur throughout the year. Since students will not be allowed to seek outside employment during their stay, it is advised that each student would have at least \$1,300.00 in personal savings (approximately \$35 per week) for spending money. Students will be responsible for purchasing gasoline for their vehicle

**Laptop Computer:** Due to the need of class work papers and the growing need of usage of computers, all students are required to own and have a laptop computer while at Gettysburg Masters Commission.

**Gym:** All students and staff receive a gym membership to a local gym. The bible says 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God* furthermore we entitled to take care of our body in every way not just spiritually. With that our students and staff are required to work out four times a week for an hour.

**Library Usage:** The Gettysburg Master's Commission currently has library usage of the Gettysburg Public Library. This library has agreed to grant us the privilege to use their materials. There are a few ground rules to follow in usage and borrowing of these library materials.

1. All students must get a library card using their home openers address with the students name on it.
2. Borrowed books are never to be returned late. Gettysburg Masters Commission is not held responsible for any lost or damaged items.

### **Graduation Standards:**

1. At least 70% grade in all classes
2. 70% average home opener evaluation
3. No more than 3 room inspection failures
4. 150 verses memorized
  - 4 verses per week and life application sermon
  - 50 verse mid-term; beginning of January
  - 100 verse final; graduation week
  - 100% on all scripture verse tests waives 100 verse final
5. No more than 15 absences/tardies per year
6. Complete 2 service projects (Fall and Spring)
7. Graduate from School of the Word (101 – 401)
8. Maintain a consistent exercise and fitness regimen
9. Fulfill MC covenant requirements
  - a. No exclusive, romantic relationships
  - b. Submission to authority
  - c. No working except for tuition or missions trip issues
  - d. Servant attitude