

Preamble

“Self-direction, the development of identity, private choice of values and the awakening of a personal creative force, are aims of education at Villanova.”¹

Augustine reminds us that *“God determined to plant in every single soul the seeds of understanding, the basic elements of wisdom.”²* It is the task of an Augustinian school to nurture such seeds in each student and to encourage our students *to realise the fullness of their potential, as they strive to integrate the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of life and culture.”³*

As a school for boys, Villanova commits itself to providing a rich educational environment in which the curriculum, the teaching and learning practices, the discipline approach, and the activities of the community’s life are all designed to encourage the development of understanding and wisdom in the young and adolescent males in our care as they grow into responsible and capable young men.

In teaching methodology as in discipline practice, we are reminded by Augustine that *“free curiosity is of more value in learning than harsh discipline.”⁴* He cautions against attempting to enforce particular views upon students thus restricting their ability to think reflectively and critically themselves, though within a sound values framework. The College Prospectus echoes this call by stating that we do *“not attempt to conform students to the established order of society, but... to develop the person from within to become a fully integrated human being.”⁵*

A school’s curriculum offering, taken as a whole, embodies its philosophy of education. Villanova’s founding fathers, supported by their Augustinian traditions, valued a liberal education with classical influences. Fr Ben O’Donnell, the College’s first Rector, himself criticised what he saw in the late nineteen-forties as a push for more simply “utilitarian” forms of education. In his first Rector’s Report at the end of 1948 he emphasised the necessity for a student’s education to be much more than just a preparation for employment.

“...schools are often blamed because they do not confine their curriculum to what are termed the useful subjects. The ‘New Look’ in education is pragmatism... It will send forth from schools, not our schools I hope, children who are culturally immature, who are mere cogs in the wheels of industry, or mere technicians, ...”

Fr Ben O’Donnell OSA, December 1948

From its very beginnings then, Villanova valued an approach in which each of the academic, the spiritual, and the physical aspects of a student’s development were important and to be promoted. This holistic approach, centred on a largely academic curriculum and within the framework of a strong faith community, continues faithfully until the present day.

Definition of Curriculum

The College views ‘curriculum’ as *“all the planned learning opportunities offered to learners by the educational institution and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented.”⁶*

Policy Statement

As a Catholic school in the Augustinian tradition, Villanova College aims to educate both the mind and the heart, through a broad curriculum based on sound educational, human and spiritual values.

The College curriculum is designed to best encourage the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and aesthetic development of young and adolescent males in the context of a constantly changing Australian and global society. The curriculum provides the framework, differentiated in structure and approach across the three schools of the College according to the developmental needs of students of different ages, within which students are enabled and encouraged to search for knowledge, understanding, truth and wisdom, and to grow in confidence and independence, by developing skills in learning that prepare them for life’s opportunities and challenges.

The broadly-based academic curriculum provides ever-increasing opportunities for students to pursue areas of particular interest and talent as they progress through the Year Levels.

Related Documents

The goal for learning, our values and beliefs, and our specific developmental aims for each Villanova student are described in the *Villanova College Curriculum Framework*. This framework underpins the development of all courses of study conducted by the College. The *College Curriculum Operational Policy Statement* and the *Learning and Assessment Operational Policy* document provide further guidance for staff in enacting this *College Curriculum Policy*. Each course operates according to an appropriately accredited *Work Program* which demonstrates its response to the relevant syllabus document. The pedagogy employed across the three schools of the College, while differentiated in order to best suit the learning needs of students within each school, is informed by the *Villanova College Position Paper on Inclusive Practice* as well as the ongoing work of developing an authentic Augustinian pedagogy in the Australian context.

Policy approved by College Council 27th October, 2010

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1. *Villanova College Prospectus*
 2. *St Augustine - Sermon 117.11*
 3. *Villanova College Mission Statement*
 4. *St Augustine - Confessions .I.14.23*
 5. *Villanova College Prospectus*
 6. *Villanova College Prospectus*